

Jan. 6, '80--This first week of the year has passed in an odd rapid gait, days gone before I can pace myself to them. The reason is the buildup of chores, matters abeyed while I concentrated on Winter Bros. That and my egalitarian head, which simply lines up jobs without much priority and begins taking them on, catch-as-catch-can. I'm never convinced I've really accomplished anything, in the doing of chores, yet I want them swept away, the decks cleared. Anyway, since we arrived home from the East Coast I have: filled what archival boxes I have (and ordered more) with files of letters, and 2 boxes of sorted photos: roughed two more shelves for the archival closet; winnowed a couple boxes of books from the shelves; cleaned out all accumulated magazines; sorted piled-up clippings until I have just one small stack, which I will try grit through yet this afternoon; answered a bit of Xmas mail; and begun anew on my perpetual making of lists. Also: crawled under house y'day morn in futile attempt to vac up some of the dust which seeps up; took the Buick to radiator shop.

By god, it looks better to have the list down on paper than in my head. Maybe there is hope of kicking this place into shape.

Until today, C and I have managed to walk some every day--she's tackled the washing of the windows at the front of the house this afternoon, and Jean and daughters are coming at 4, so dunno if we'll make it today. Y'day went to Edmonds for lunch, and to get new battery in my watch and pick up Elton Bennett book at Morrows' bkstr, then walked along very windy shoreline north from ferry dock, whitecaps everywhere on water--an oceanic tide, C said. We've also socialized a bit--New Years Eve with John and Jean, pretty staid, they showed some slides of Spain and we some ~~from~~ of coast from my Winter research; John was in an exceptionally equable mood, perhaps because a cold of a few days before had kept him from going to Orcas to work on Pete's dome, as he's done all fall on weekerds. Next evening, open house at Jack Gordons, almost eerie recreation of Thanksgivings past--Peg, Liz, Clint, Ann and Phil. Another ~~quite~~ quiet gathering, people at least proclaiming that their lives are settling down. Quite a mood, I think, of awareness

Jan. 6 cont.--of new decade, of feeling we're all getting older faster than we can account for. Next night, Ann and Phil invited us up to finish off their N Years party supplies of salmon and eggnog. We'd intended to go to Dungeness for the couple of days after N Years, chancy weather--report of 20-30 mile winds on Strait--changed our mind. We do intend to get out more, make better use of weekends.

Nothing yet on Winter Bros; call from HBJ on the 2nd that CHill is out of town until tomorrow, so I'll try her then. I began a rereading of the ms after N Years amid a sinus attack which made me think I was coming down with the flu, was not particularly sanguine about first 40 or so pages. Read it again in better health and mood, thought it looked ~~ed~~ pretty good. So I'll see what CH's reaction is, and then do my rereading. I find it hard to fathom that tomorrow I have to gear up on the ms again, possibly for the next 3 weeks or month.

I do want to find time, as soon as possible--which likely means in Feb. after the Winter work is over--to think about The Sea Runners. I think there's a tremendous story there if I can find the right form and technique: somewhat like trying to imagine from a block of marble what sculpture it will yield. (I can't tell yet, for ex, whether Winter Bros, which has always seemed to me a grand idea, has really been brought into being as I wanted.) It may be an illusion that I can clear time for such thinking, or that I need to: books happen when you begin to tinker them out of the typewriter. But I think I ought to try.

Jan. 7--Running commentary: just now--it's now 9:05-- I called CHill (first tried her at 8:30, no answer) and caught her just arrived back from Guadaloupe. She said Winter Bros is "absolutely terrific", "there's just a few things", asked to call me back in couple hrs~~x~~ as she and Jerry literally just had got their suitcases inside the door.

1 p.m.--But when she called back, about 45 minutes ago, she had some commercial qualms, a measure of bafflement, it seemed. Began by saying the writing again is sentence-by-sentence magnificent, that there is real power in my accuracy of observation and descriptions; "but to be perfectly candid, the lack of narrative will affect the audience." She said it's a "very demanding book--beautiful and moving, and still." I broke in to ask her if the concern about the audience meant there was a problem of taking the book on at all, or whether she was talking about a small press run. She said a small press run, no problem of taking it on.

--She went on to say that the immediacy of Sky, this book doesn't have; one is outside this book, Swan remains quite unknown. Said it's a true book, but again, it makes great demands on the reader, or at least it did on her.

--Said she wants to get reaction from Irene, Rhoda and Betsy. If they react as she has, choices are: 1) go with the book and ~~do~~ do with it what we can; 2) for me to take it elsewhere; 3) sit down and think about recasting it.

I told her OK, I'd wait to hear from her in the next 2 weeks; said I knew this book had to be a transitional one for me, away from the success of Sky, and that I knew too that it is a very strange book.

All in all, CH's main concerns seem commercial--she has some specific editing points on ms, but we agreed to wait until the other readings had been done--leery of how the book will do in light of "creeping conservatism" on press runs now. Not the explosive response I had from her in favor of Sky (C suggests CH may be suffering from Sky syndrome, wanting me to have done that book again), but I knew that wasn't going to happen twice. So, one more step of transition: to guide into print

Jan. 7 cont.--a book the editor isn't 1000% sold on.

2:25--interim while repairman was here to rejig the tangled cords on the blind in this room. So anyway, the situation seems to be that I have a ms which I thought would need revision, and it sure enough does. Life could be worse.

Jan. 12--This was the week of the snow, a fall which began late Monday and eventually added up to 6-7". The region of course swooned dead: some schools closed for 3-4 days, SeaTac shut down for more than a day, bus service floundering. Carol was late to UW on Tues., stayed home on Wed. Late y'day it began raining, and incredibly, there is no hint of snow by now (4:15); I've never seen so much snow vanish so fast, at least since Montana chinook days.

Our days changed a bit during the storm: Carol would begin working the radio while I made b'fast, getting the weather band forecast and then tuning in KOMO, which is the stalwart at such times, the earliest and most complete with school closings and the most listenable with Larry Nelson as deejay and the remarkable orchestration of programming, Nelson amiably back and forth among news inserts, traffic plane, stocks, weather, commercials. His is a class act, a civic asset. Carol then would hike the hill, catch bus at Shoreline, catch another from U District to get home about 1. I kept a fire set up in fireplace every day, in case electricity went off and snuffed the furnace; would light it about 4:30-5 each evening. We kept flashlight by bed. I went out y'day morn, when snow began to take on moisture, and with a broom handle knocked snow off rhod'ns, other plants. And that was about it.

All week since hearing from Carol Hill I've been at work revising Winter Bros, and have hit on what I believe needs doing. Most of the work so far is at start of the book, making it plain that this is a logbook rather than trad'l narrative, saying why Swan enthralles me, and beginning the westernness theme. Y'day was the first day of real writing, and the two pp. I did--2nd and 3d pp. of Day 2--surprised me with their quickness and fluency.

Jan. 12 cont.--Somewhere between six and a dozen inserts of that sort I think will make the book, along with the minor tinkering (4 full pages of yellow pad) I've lined out. It still will be an unconventional book, but more open about its aspirations and direction.

Trudy and Howard Forbes here for dinner last night, long overdue hospitality to them. Interesting folk, knowing damn near everyone of their generation in Seattle. Both seem pleased about my inclusion of their cabin in Winter Bros. We got to talking last night about how they--and I, to some extent--dressed in winter when kids, and the remedies of the time such as goose grease and mustard plaster.

A call this morn while I was brushing my teeth from a Yakima man, Joe Roemer, who was in the 6th grade in WSS while I was in the first. His family soon moved away, to Ennis and Big Timber. He'd been sent Sky by his father, and thought it caught that life--and especially WSS, which he still recalls as an astounding place--exactly. Said at one point the book "haunts" him, hastened to say not in a foreboding way. His father was a forest ranger, and R remembers going into the mtrs with him to count sheep on allotted range. R sounded an interesting gent; he works at Hanford, I think is a chemist but does some writing of manuals. Said he thinks there shd be written a Huck Finn-type book of the Montana life of our youth, for boys 10-12, which maybe isn't a bad idea. Anyway, he rang off by assuring me that, in Montana lingo, I done good.

My current mood has been good, thoughtful about Winter ms, glad to see the revising possibilities in it. There is a kind of click which eventually happens on a ms, and I tend to hear the false ones too early, no doubt wanting to believe that I'm through with the piece of work. But the revising done y'day sounds like the genuine click. C read it for me this morn, and agrees, even though she said she expected not to agree very readily, tending to like the language as I've already set it down.

Jan. 13--Quickly, end of a tending-to-scrap (a few letters, scheduling for UW tomorrow) Sunday afternoon: worked up a couple of sentences to entice reader after lead of Day 2 of Winter, which look pretty good, and see a place a page or so farther on to continue the process. Must spend this week on the western theme and am a bit uneasy about, the process of potshotting at what could be an endless topic. I think I'd do well to read and think for a day or so, then rare back and see what comes quick.

Should note, before I forget, that I read Hamlin Garland's Son of the Middle Border before we went away for Xmas, liked it and was surprised by it, some of the parallels of our lives and books. G's of course was a childhood which made mine look like a picnic, but his book and Sky are akin in feel for the land, the conundrum of being a responsible son, the going away in search of success; even a few precise likenesses, such as G wheeling his ailing mother around the Chicago world's fair of '93, me doing same for G'ma at Spokane. An occasional phrase even rings the same. I had recently written in Winter about a feeling of odd clarity in myself, "a grittiness like diamond dust," and G somewhere has a phrase somewhat like "dust of jewels" or something. I hope my writing is somewhat cleaner than G's--he tends to repeat himself occasionally--but his is a fine book, and I see that it's really the first, in the series of generational western books through Sandoz's and Stegner's to mine. I then got Captain of the Gray Horse Troop, which Mike Olsen touted to me yrs ago, but couldn't get through it, too melodramatic and dated.

Jan. 15, 11:10 a.m.--Just before 9, called Carol Hill to tell her I've spent the past week rereading and reworking Winter, and see places to bolster the structure. Read her 2 examples--the new 2nd and 3d lines of Day 2, "You have met him yourself...The tale-bringer..." and the few lines further on about the book being a day-by-day logbook "of what is uppermost in any of the three of us." She liked them a lot, said it sounds as if I see what needs doing. Also told her, in light of note from her y'day, that no matter what we do, this is going to be a contemplative book, not a bang-bang-bang narrative. More in mood of Thoreau and Eisley, I suggested. She said yes, she's tried to think what the book is like, and while it isn't like anything else, what comes to mind is Walden.

I closed by telling her I do feel good about the prospects of the ms, that I've always felt there's a fine book somewhere in the block of granite if it can just be chipped out. She agreed, saying it seems to be one of those books where its intentions make themselves known as you do it.

So, I think it was a useful call; she seemed to feel better, after hearing what I was up to, and I do, about being able to tell her of considerable progress. Have had a strong morning, writing (mostly from scratch; a few phrases from misc. pages or file cards) additions to days 18 and 25. Last night, I spent 2 hrs after supper working on verbs, as I'd done all afternoon; got as far as p. 100. It does seem to enrich the work; sometime over the weekend I read the Valley section of Sky, and was bowled over by the supple power of the language: decided I damn well better try for something similar in Winter. Must take care not to upset the balance of the book--its mood is different than Sky's--but I think there is a force, mostly in verbs and sentence rhythms, to be put into Winter yet.

Jan. 23--4:10, and I've pretty well played out on Winter, at least for today. Managed to add a couple of pp. on western mass this morn, the most difficult sort of stuff to write: people have been arguing over it ever since Turner, for god's sake. By now I'm fairly satisfied (I think; the next reading will tell) with first 2/3 of ms; have held off on the rest until CHill is heard from. This stage of the process goes back and forth between sheer dogwork--editing in changes of verbs--and pleasure, the sense of having the ms at last far enough along that fine tuning can be done. Since last diary entry, I have had a look at every verb in the ms except in the Qn Chs section, which I'm saving, and now have gone through nearly ~~off~~ all of it for sentence rhythms.

Major news has been John Roden's hospitalization in Bellingham, after falling from ladder last Saturday noon while working on Pete Dewell's geodesic dome. Miraculously his total injury is 5 busted ribs. Jean now is maneuvering to get him to stay in the hospital until there's no danger of pneumonia. C and I have wanted to help in some way, but not much has presented itself yet. I've avoided the dome work because of concentration on Winter and my whimsy back, not really having thought of the danger of it, tho it's obvious enough when the height and peculiar shape and surfaces are considered.

About the time John was falling, C and I were at Ebey's Landing. A fine clear day, although not as crystalline as the day before (the 18th). Got a very long and good look at a sparrow hawk perched in a tree near us, then at the northern end of the ridge path, the place where we ordinarily have lunch, a bald eagle came low through the trees and passed within 35-40 feet of us.

Dinner that night at Nelsons, along with Dan Morgan of Marsh's firm and his wife Marty, Laird's teacher at Bush. Much talk about private schooling--Dan is Yale, Marty is Smithie, and it shows a bit on both of them--until I was wishing Carol would explode about the virtues of democracy.

Feb. 1--4:15 pm; after a logey day, I am finally beginning to brighten. The exertion of writing the character material on Swan--I worked 4-5 days on a total of 3 or so pages--plus having worked thru last weekend evidently caught up with me. This morning I managed to read through the Qn Chs portion of the ms and make notes on possible changes; played out by 10:30 or so, tried unsuccessfully for nap--the feeling was a kind of doziness--and then went for lunch at the Beach Access, which has wretched service and good food. Managed to work an hour or so after lunch, making some cuts in the Qn Ch material; played out again about the time C came home, 1:30 or so. Laid down, read, phone rang abt 2:20, it was Carol Hill.

She said Rhoda Schlamm and Irene Skolnick agree with her (and me) that what the ms needs is more structure, and since that's what I'm revising into it, why don't I proceed without comment from her, and she can comment after she sees my revision. In short, I have a free hand (tho she's likely to suggest cuts once she sees the ms, I think). The lady does have a lot of guts, turning me loose this way.

She also reported that Romano was fired as director of sales a week ago. He got crosswise with Peter J'vich, who's been hired as a consultant to look over the jobs of dept. heads--only J'vich would have the chutzpah to hire his own son as outside expert--over the issue, according to Carol, of not advancing enough books into the stores. She said there's one particular case of a high-priced book which Romano had advanced only 10% into the stores, and that's the one that did him in. I rather liked Romano, once I got past his bombastic style a bit, but I'm neither surprised nor particularly regretful he's gone. I'm more surprised that he lasted thru Carol's regime, because he was hired by Kathy Robbins (as he was in the midst of fixing a salad at home, he told me in Dallas). Also, I'm trying hard, and I think it's particularly necessary ~~xxxx~~ with a publisher as upheaval-prone as HBJ, to be like 19th century

Feb. 1 cont.--Britain: have no permanent alliances, only permanent interests.

Tuesday night, we went to the Ridgemont, on freebie tickets from Annick Smith, for preview of her movie, Heartland. I liked it immensely, strong jobs of acting and incredible attention to detail; a true feel of what homesteading life was like, I think.

Am running down again; ended the afternoon by beginning to paint new shelves for study storage closet, and need to go take a shower. Should note, in case I don't get back to this over the weekend, that I've been deeply worried the past few weeks about prospect of war. Carter gets himself born-again so goddamn periodically, and this time he seems to be emerging as a cold warrior. The Middle East snakepit scares hell out of me; the complications of that cd make Viet Nam look tame. I can't even really articulate the dread I feel; there's some cog in us--at least me--that insists the worst won't happen, can't. But it can, and I can't find reasons why it probably won't. May I read this 20 years from now and grin at my alarmism.

Feb. 8--11:03, have just finished the revise of Winter. It sits in a stack 2 3/4 inches high, heavy with pasted-in portions. Revise took a month and a day, and produced more work on the language--as apart from the structural cobbling I knew was needed--than I ever anticipated. Sometime about 2 weeks ago I re-read some of Sky, realized anew the life and flow of its language, and decided I d better strain harder to get Winter's language to approach it. I think Winter is not the seamless narrative Sky was, but it's a remarkably complicated book done with a high standard of language, and to have accomplished it in 12 months' work I believe is a lot.

Should note that I had hell's own time trying to get underway this morning; needed to add some introspective summary near end of ms (mostly pp. 350-2). At last went out for coffee and an english muffin about 9:30, came back with energy and did it.

Now the process is to have a final look at file cards--the financial affairs desk and the card table

F 8 cont--both are still drifted deep with them, and I should make a quick run-thru of the cards in the book's day-by-day file--and then begin a reading of the ms to note stray items which need checking or cutting. C is to read it for me tomorrow, too. But, and it is hard to realize, Winter Brothers has been ~~announced~~ achieved.

Feb.11--11:20, have just finished quick runthru of Winter ms. Began a re-reading on Sat., then the one thing C noticed about the ms as she read was the blizzard of hyphens and dashes, so I began reviewing specifically for them, blotting out with typing crx fluid. Worked thru until a couple of hrs after supper on Sat., finished the last 25 or so pp. y'day morn. I also managed to insert a last few filecard phrases I'd wanted to use: the "fire and reek" line, and one more reprise of "back where I have never been."

C found nothing to comment on except a few stray words and the hyphens and some parentheses. In this last time thru I don't see much either that I would change (if I had the will and energy). The ms seems to me quite smooth in its language. Whether its structure is going to boggle people, I'll just have to see.

I don't exactly feel elation at the completion, just a kind of calm. My mood is very good, just not giddy.

Friday night we went to the Forbsees for drinks with the English faculty and a few others from Sh'line. A good gathering, tho my back promptly raised hell as it perpetually does at stand-around parties.

Late Sat. morn a call from Amy, saying she hadn't made any progress toward unplugging her downstairs toilet--she'd made the mistake of flushing a scouring pad down with a bucket of dirty water, and I'd taken our plunger and snake to her at the Forbes' party--so I went and battled her toilet for a couple of hours, to not much result.

Y'day, Pete Steen came for brunch, talked for a couple of hours. He did have a tad of business, to feel me out as possible writer or editor on a major

F 11 cont.--research project on sustained yield forestry. It'd be a big project, involving many people and much money yet to be raised, and is some few years down the road yet. I told him I'd probably not be interested as a writer, given the direction I seem to be going, into fiction, but possibly as editor.

Feb. 15--9 a.m. Second sizable snowfall of the winter. This one isn't as heavy as ~~last~~ last month's, only 2-3 inches so far. C has a midterm in history of science, so grimly slogged out of here early to catch a bus. J&J are to come for stew tonight, and C and I had intended to borrow the Forbes' cabin for 3-day weekend beginning tomorrow morn; will wait now to see what the weather does.

On Tues. the 12th I sent off the ms to CHill again, by express mail which supposedly would get to her the next day. I think I improved the ms greatly but doubt that CH or HBJ generally will be much more enthralled with it. The press run could be as low as 3-5000, I think, and I'm bracing myself to the idea that if Winter Bros sells 10,000, that'll likely be a lot. The bright side is that I perhaps did better than I knew in getting \$15,000 advance for such a chancy book.

Phone call from Kathy Mulherin Wed. night, ~~approximately~~ just as I'd taken my second bite of supper, and she then talked for about a half hour. She proclaims herself "thrilled" that Romano got axed, but now the terror among the book reps is that they're next. She says Charles Hensley, the Texas rep, tells her it'll happen within a year; John Boynton, one of the East Coast reps, says 60 days. K herself sounded less antsy about the possibility that I would have expected; probably still the relief of having Romano gone. She has heard, too, from outside HBJ that the total of trade books may go down to 40 or so a year, which jibes with what CH told me; the question is whether J'vich --or rather the J'viches, since his son Peter is pretty much running the trade dept at the moment--is gutting the trade dept. or saving it through efficiency. There's an obvious wave of cutting back among the trade

F. 15 cont.--publishers, and so far, HBJ is less bloody about it than some of the others, such as Harper~~xx~~, where the editor of Jim Welch and Scott Momaday was canned. I may be foolishly sanguine, but I don't feel anxiety about Winter Bros; if the list is cut precipitously and Winter is one of the casualties, that will be another matter, of course. A quandary to come is when, or if, to negotiate a contract for Sea Runners.

Enough HBJ; publishing could ~~xx~~ consume a person's attention like piranhas eating a calf if you let it. The past few days, I've been decelerating from the ms, making hauls to the dump each of the last two morns-- C and I trimmed the vine maples outside the kitchen window Tues. afternoon, and the branches were considerable--and y'day going down to Shorey's for a copy of War and Peace and to Pike Place Market for some food. My mood is pretty good, especially so considering how glum I find the world situation. I've run and saunaeed hard this week, have lost 2#, to 150 $\frac{1}{2}$. This morn, walked the n'hood to be out in the fresh snow.

F. 20--3:05, about to go to Sh'line to run and sauma. Spent the morning on letters about Montana trip, the correspondence chore as ever surprising me: I spent literally the whole half day on 3-4 letters and a few postcards, what with the logistics to be planned. This afternoon, transplanted strawberry plants to patio side of house. Must spend another stint tomorrow on ~~the~~ transplanting in the main bed.

We spent the 16th thru y'day early afternoon at Forbes' cabin at Mt. Rainier. Snowshoed twice, for about an hour at a time at Paradise. Otherwise, read and ate.

Feb. 25--2:15. Went to UW with C this morning, did some further checking of facts for WINTER and arranged for photocopies of 2 sketches from Swan diaries, as possible ill'n. On our way home we bought 3 sacks of topsoil at Denny Hill fuel, a load which made the front end of the Buick dance; am waiting now to see if rain will let up, so I can spread the dirt on the new potato patch and a place for raspberries by back gate.

The weekend and much other time I've spent on chores. Sat. and Sun., in about a half-day total of hard labor, I broke out a portion of ~~top~~ sod and clay for a new potato patch, not wanting to devote a big portion of the garden to spuds as I've done the past couple years. Also dug out about an 8' trench to get some raspberries started; all this, both potato and berry patches, being bucket work, lugging the clay over to dump beneath the cutbank of the hill and then bucketing in forest soil from about 40 yards onto the hill. It is slow, but probably good for me, as long as my back can stand pick-and-shovel-and bucket (so far, it's known it's done labor, but hasn't been too painful).

Other chores done, which I tot up for the assurance that I'm getting anything done: thinned the strawberry patch and replanted one of the 3 main rows; planted peas; made a couple of dump runs with trimmings from trees; patched the roof along the back gutter, where the tar paper is giving way and seepage is starting behind the gutter; lined the garden patch; took excess books to Sh'line library; replaced faulty extension cord to liv'g rm radio and lamp; made first stab at straightening shop; on Thursday, did laundry and crockpotted soup. And there's a ton more to be done.

Carol Hill called about 7:15 Wed. night, the 20th, to say she likes the revise of the ms, but thinks it should be cut by as much as 75-100 pp. Said it would both be a brisker read and more marketable; as it stands, slightly shorter than SKY, she says it'll sell for \$15.95. She says she'd like it to be a gem of a book, and I see what she means. The ~~work~~ work of Eiseley and Selzer, which I'd like WINTER to be comparable to, is in shortish books. She's to see what she can do to cut, then send the ms to me for a look at what she's done.

F 25 cont.--I gulped a bit to hear how much she'd like to cut; I'm at the stage where I simply want to see the damn thing in galleys, and on its way into print. But she had good advice on SKY; her handful of changes all helped the book, and the most perceptive thing she did was not to cut that ms, as I had thought might be necessary. It's the richness of detail which helps SKY immensely. So as of now, I'm surprising myself with sanguinity about cutting WINTER; it is such an open-ended book that it can have either a lot less or a lot more in it, I think, and if we can polish it down to a more compelling read, I'm for it. CH also suggested swapping Day 1 and Day 2, which I didn't want to hear about, having spent inordinate time on Day 1 as a lead; but I think she's right, Day 2 would be the more effective lead. I'm deliberately not looking at the ms until the copy arrives back from her, but am beginning to feel eagerness to see it and think about how it can be made leaner, quicker.

Meanwhile, a letter over the weekend from C Smith in London saying she loved the unrevised version I sent her at Xmas.

Feb. 28--4:10. Have been very much aware the past few days how much time I spend waiting. Waiting to hear from Carol Hill about her cuts in Winter, waiting for galleys of the Tri-Quarterly excerpt, waiting to hear about a G'heim--and waiting to start on Sea Runners because I don't want to be juggling it before I'm entirely done with the Winter ms.

Much fiddle and faddle the past few days, having at last geared myself up to what I've been mysteriously reluctant to undertake, the fact-checking on Winter. Today, amid the total of 5 phone calls it took me to reach archaeologist Richard Daugherty at WSU, I was reminded of what I ~~had~~ came to dislike about magazine writing, the perpetual chasing after nits of fact. I am about finished with the checking, and the ms will be the better for it, but it's been an unfavorable job.

Y'day went to the Pac 3 lunch for the first time in more than a year, and it worked out better than any other I've even gone to: I stayed an hour, got to talk with everyone I was interested in, Ellie made an

F 28 cont.--overture about running an excerpt from Winter, and I got out before the business session ever got underway. Frank was there, 1st time I'd seen him in months; also talked with Delphine Haley, Bill Hunt and Ann Saling, and considerable with Ellie, who says she's pretty well whipped the initial problems she saw with the magazine--getting the editorial well into the middle of the book, expanding range of articles and so on--and is moving on to problems of doing her job better. She is a very good head, and the first 2 issues of the transition from Pac S to Pac NW have been skillfully done.

I talked with Harriet a bit on the way in; she was entirely genial, asking about sales on SKY.

Should report that I feel no interest whatsoever in magazine work now; the cold-turkey cure seems to have worked. Bill Hunt y'day was bemoaning the free lance life--editors leaving just when a relationship has been worked up with them--when it suddenly dawned on him ^{he} was informing of all this, and he semi-sheepishly said, I guess I don't have to tell you all that. I laughed and said I'd been trying ~~to~~ keep a straight face.

Not much else is new, except that Linda Miller called today to say she'll be in Seattle for the trial next week. As she describes it, it's evidently going to be rough-and-tumble between her and Clint. I'm continuing to try to tackle chores, nearly have my nerve up to begin on replacing the posts in the south fence, a tricky job I've dreaded for a year or two. Am doing some reading--have begun War & Peace; just read Court Martial of Custer, a good idea oddly flat in places, many missed opportunities--but so far nothing toward Sea Runners or anything else useful. Perhaps in the morning I should at least put down the possible lead for Sea Runners which occurred to me during our stay at Forbes cabin 2 wks ago.

March 11--At last. Just before noon, I put the revised WINTER ms into the express mail to HBJ.

It caps off a hectic week or more, which I should have made notes on at the time but didn't. On the 3rd, I think it was, a call came from Carol Hill, saying she was finding it impossible to cut Winter as she'd hoped (Rhoda had called the previous Friday, Feb. 29, to say CH would be delayed in getting to me about the ms, that she was having trouble with it) and that she'd talked with Peter Jvich about it and he'd said HBJ would tilt the budget a bit for it, not make it as strictly cost accountable as they try to do with each trade book these days. About 7:30 that evening, a second call from CH, saying she'd no sooner hung up with me than Peter Jvich was back to her to say they'd heard the cost of paper is going up drastically, and that Winter might not be able to be held below \$15 as she wants--might be priced as high as \$18. CH is afraid of pricing the book out of the market that way--Peter J apparently isn't--and so she'd gone ahead and begun to make desperation cuts for me to consider, leaving the decision to me whether to swallow them or let the book go at the possible lofty price.

The ms arrived late Thur. afternoon--I came into the house from running at Sh'line to find the ms packet, the Tri-Quarterly envelope of galleys, and a large box of office supplies pyramided in the living room by C for me; they'd all arrived at once--and about noon the next day, after reading the Tri-Q galleys and hurrying them into the mail, I began going over it. CH's cuts were mixed. She'd had the flu, which probably didn't help clearheadedness, but in any event, logical cuts of extraneous or overweight material were mingled with cuts which changed the entire tone of their sections. Of the Cape ~~Alava~~ Alava day, for ex, she'd suggested cutting the Lake Uzette material which is the point of that section, rather than the Alava dig material at its start. All in all, her cuts came to about 60 pp. I ended up accepting about 16-20 pp. of them, and 5 or so of my own, made about ten moves or inserts, and 30 or 40 editing nicks of various sorts.

March 12--Continuing from y'day: among the cuts were the Graveyard Spit day, most of the "Misqually day, the Bone River day, and the sun-eclipse day; all good enough material but poking out~~ta~~ from the flow of the book. Also cut about $4\frac{1}{2}$ pages from the Qn Charlottes narrative. That section remains my great regret about the book, that I did not manage to somehow make and include 1st-person Qn Ch material; my vaunted scheduling lost to reluctance, or bafflement or something, there. I see now that I should have made a Qn Ch trip before undertaking the ms; it could have shown up as flashback that way. But that was the summer and autumn of Sky, and without my work on promoting it the sales would not have been nearly what they were, so...

The Tri-Q excerpt looks pretty good to me, though I'm surprised others--Kittredge and the editor, Elliott Anderson--seem to think so well of it. It's not a particularly fancy piece of work. Remarkable that I am now in the quarterly that Charlie Newman was editing, during our AF Reserve weekends at O'Haire in '64-5, into its high-powered literary reputation. Newman I have wondered about in recent years: what we would think of one another now, whether we even could talk. Idiot I was not to make more of that friendship, as Charlie was a brilliance. I've never been able to get a grasp of his fiction--and have never managed to track down his book of the 60's--but I did like the man.

Feeling good this morning (8:15 now), am intending to go to Edmonds for coffee--and ~~proceeding~~ pretty quick. A jillion things to be done around here, but I feel a little better about sorting through them than usual. Should note, before leaving this, two other marks of this month: Sky coming out in Britain--S&J catalogue came the other day, listing it with Princess Daisy and Nixon's new book--and Rhoda's report that the Sky p'back as of feb. 29 (pub'n date I guess was the 19th) had advanced 7638 of its 15,000.

March 17--Black mood today. 3 or 4 days of mostly cold rain, which dispirited me considerably over the weekend, and this afternoon came the turndown from the Guggenheim Foundation. Neither this year nor last did I really expect to beat the 10-1 odds (this year more like 11-1), yet good god, what more could I do toward a fellowship than the list of recommenders I assembled this year? Coupled with dubious sales prospects for Winter and thus uncertainty of ^{now} HBJ will respond to Sea Runners proposal, I am feeling like a sinking financial ship.

March 31--Now begins a new era. This morning I began the schedule-in-earnest for the Sea Runners, setting up a pair of file boxes and typing ideas and details onto cards and then starting on the lead. At about 10:30, the call from Carol Hill, saying she's leaving HBJ and the editing profession. The first surprised me not at all--I'd been fairly sure she wouldn't last out this "sabbatical" year--but the second I hadn't expected. I joked to her that this isn't the way it's supposed to work, that editors are supposed to ricochet to another publishing house and pull ~~the~~ their authors along, not veer off on their own (she intends to write). She laughed and said yes, after 20 years she's finally got ~~the~~ two real writers, me and novelist Michael Malone, and she's chucking us in.

CH said she finds herself spending 2-3 hours on the phone to HBJ every day--i.e., the work-at-home routine isn't working, which doesn't surprise me--and so will tell J'vich next week that she's leaving. This really does mark the close of a phase for me, roughly the 3 years since CH read the ms sample of SKY and offered a contract. Now, with an entire half-day as a fiction writer behind me, I embark toward a new editor at HBJ to pick up WINTER BROTHERS and most likely, a new publishing house for the Sea Runners; possibly an agent as well, because CH's departure recasts the contract situation in which I was able to deal fairly well on my own. Much to think about, and I find my mood is intense interest, speculation, some excitement at the decisions to be made. The regret I feel at losing CH as editor is rue rather than despond (despond

likely will come when I first encounter an editor who does not have CH's laissez-faire approach to my words) because it has been clear since Christmas that her role at HBJ is changing, and that she likely was edging toward the door.

It's hard to say adequately how good CH has been for me. In a fast count, I can tick off benefit after benefit of having had her as editor: the freedom she gave me on both SKY and WINTER to go ahead to completion on my own, after shaky samples of each ms; the few but deft changes she suggested in SKY, which among other things resulted in the lyrical prism piece ~~which she recommended~~ which justified the title; the production job on SKY, which she told me she wanted to be a "Knopf-like" book; the work she did on reviewers for it; and of course, the go-ahead she gave me on WINTER, at a time when I had not much more than a hunch about what the book might be. From the start, I've had the feeling that she simply was too remarkable in my life to be true. Now that apparently she won't be in my life, I feel I've gained enough from her to cope without her--which is said to be the ultimate benefit of a remarkable relationship.

On a less earthshifting level: I'm beginning what I hope will be a steady month of work, every morning for the next two weeks on Runners, chores and sundry in the afternoons; the week of the 14th begins the speaking season--readings at Women's U Club and Edmonds on the 16th, the Gt. Falls-Sheridan speech to be written. With the Montana trip in May, it's going to be a busy spring, especially since I am going to try muscle some household chores to completion. Last week was a good tonic for both of us, Mon.-Fri. on the Olympic Peninsula, 50 miles of hiking at Dungeness and the Hoh and Rialto beach. C was ~~pleas~~ pleased to find she could handle the hiking, after so much time away from it and her dicey stamina of the past couple years.

April 2--The third day of work on Runners, and a good and astonishingly quiet and well-paced one. ~~It~~ It's a mark of how prevalent motorbike noise has become in this n'hood that all this silent afternoon I've kept anticipating the racketing whine, feel a bit odd that it's not there. In large part the quiet is due to my complaint this morn to the neighbors beyond the Cochranes, where motorbike noise began in their backyard about 10:30. The plump teenager who was on hand--it was her younger brother, probably 9 or so, learning to ride in the b'yard, asked if it was okay to let him ride, say, from 5 to 6. I shrugged and said if he had to, since we always are listening to All Things Considered then.

Spent Monday morn and much of y'day morn on the lead for Runners, and it seems to me a good one. Have also set up file boxes--just had done so when Carol Hill called on Monday--and today studied maps of Alaska and BC coast, made a point-to-point list of islands and coastal spots the canoe journey could have touched at. This afternoon, have culled file card entries from notebooks.

Went to Sh'line with C at 11:30, ran the track, had lunch with her and Jean in the bleachers, saunaed, walked home, have worked on file cards ever since (now a few min. to 4).

My mood is quite good, some blend of pleasure at how well the work on Runners seems to be going and excitement/interest at fending in the pub'g world without Carol Hill.

Should note that CH's call, before news of her quitting, began with her saying she thought I'd done the right work on Winter Brothers ms; said it seems right to her now. Strange how quickly allegiances to books change; already Winter is fading from my mind, and I have at least three steps--copyedited ms, galleys, pages--to go with it yet.

~~Shun~~ A highly social week for us. Sunday night, at Frank and Linda's for dinner. Frank said that his "worst prospect" P-I article on Mt. St. Helens--have failed to note that C and I became aware of the

Ap. 2 cont.--by seeing P-I headline in Edquist's grocery store in Sequim last Thurs., I think-- was written entirely out of his own volcano knowledge accumulated since his interest in Mt. Baker; only had to look up dates of when certain things happened. The editors said, This is great, but who (what scientists) do we hang it on?

Monday night, Ann and Phil came for oyster stew. The freezer died that day, and y'day was repaired at cost of \$420, the only virtue of which is that it pales before the \$1000 for a new one.

Tomorrow night, Amy comes for a drink, and to report on her London trip. Next night, Jan Bateman, in town for a high school j'm convention, will come for supper.

What else? I have planted tomatoes, recordly early because I've never before been able to get them until about May; came across the flats at Safeway y'day, snapped one up. (I now have to contend with raccoons, attracted by garden compost, as well as slugs: tomatoes went to bed last night with slug traps ~~xxxx~~ around them, paper bags over them, and an arc of wire fencing over all.) Am still pecking away at the fence problem, figuring out what's needed, buying it as I can.

April 10--Carol Hill called late y'day afternoon, abt 4:30, to report on her session of telling J'vich she's quitting. She said he "went into his Yugoslavian dance," professed astonishment--she said he never can believe anyone wants to leave ~~the~~ his magnetic force-field--and after some of that, said, well, what about her authors, would they stay? There were only 2 that he particularly valued, Michael Malone and me. CH responded that she didn't know, both of us were being "wooded all over town." She told him her particular concern is who will pick up with Winter Brothers; he told her he thought Marsha McGill would be the best editor for me; for whatever reason, he didn't think Peggy Brooks--whom CH had suggested, along with Carol Myer, as prospect--was "the right choice."

Out of all this, J'vich asked CH if it'd help if he called me to ask me to stay, so she was warning me a load of charm ^{may be} was on its way. She said he professed how much he admires my work, and emphasized his concern about keeping me. So we'll see what today brings on the phone, if anything; y'day's idea is probably a fairly distant proposition to J'vich by now. If he is eager to hang on to me, it argues for a more rapid contract talk on Sea Runners, for maximum advance, and I think means I must get an agent to handle that (and movie-tv prospects) for me. For whatever reasons, perhaps financial--the staggering economy, and my not altogether rational grumpings that I'd like to get a reasonable annual sum from my work--and perhaps because I feel I've proved my point that a NY agent hasn't been necessary to date but is now, just as Ann and I found we couldn't handle foreign rights ourselves, I'm much more amenable to the notion of an agent. Which may be a change I should suspect in myself: giving up so much of the damn-well-do-it-myself philosophy I've had. But this transition to fiction takes me into a game where I don't know the financial rules and possibilities nearly as well; also, I feel that I'm at a career point with this third trade book that I need a sizable advance and/or strong-selling book, lest I get tagged

April 10 cont.--as a "literary" author without sales prospects. That indeed may be what I am, but the proposition is worth a bit of testing.

As to an agent, if I go ahead and get one, last night I had pretty well decided for Liz Darhansoff, recom'd by Carol Hill; this morn I'm less sure, and thinking harder about Carol Smith. The advantages of Liz D would be her closeness to CHill--they're personal friends--~~xx~~ and so her knowledge of what the traffic will bear at HBJ, etc; that she's in NY, theoretically more available than C Smith in London; and though I'd have to check on this, I assume she'd have some movie-tv expertise. Pluses of Carol Smith is that she's a known quantity to me--CHill agrees she's a "very effective agent"--and operating from London would provide the kind of muzy layer between me and HBJ that I've rather preferred in my dealings, a ~~xxxxxx~~ chance to delay and have some time to think over decisions. Also, she would not be one more newcomer, one more stratum~~xx~~, coming into my life. On the negative side, I think she'd take 15% rather than 10 for "transatlantic" representation. So there's still some coin-tossing to be done on this. I more than half expect a call from C Smith today or tomorrow (and possibly from Liz D as well) if she's still on her most recent NY visit and hears the news about CHill.

Fortunately I am more alert today (and y'day) than on Mon. or Tues.; nothing like an HBJ crisis to concentrate the attention. Monday was a very bleak day of virtually nothing written and pretty severe lassitude, probably an allergy drain of energy. Tues. was somewhat better, I did get the standard 500 words written on Runners, but the woe that day was the muscle (?) behind my right knee which acted up while I was jogging, and which probably means an enforced layoff from running for a week or so. This, and the energy drain I seem to be able to fight only with food, came after last week's weight loss to 146#, when I felt I could go down by about a pound a week the rest of this month. C and I have talked about the revolt of our bodies in our~~x~~ 40s; mine in fact seemed almost to take the 40th birthday as a signal to go flabby

April 10~~cont.~~---and cranky in the legs.

Other news: socializing last week; Amy on Thurs. the 3rd came for drinks, to tell Rodens and us about her spring trip to Britain, report to me on couriering the final version of Winter Bros to Carol Smith. CS was very gracious to Amy and her friend Maureen from Northern Ireland, having them stay for morning coffee, chatting to them amid her agenting chores. Amy said Maureen, from a b'ground where women do not become prof'ls, was absorbed with CS's enterprise and busyness.

The next night, Jan~~x~~ Bateman came for dinner, first time we'd seen her since fall of '77; heard her version of Cuckoo's Nest.

We screwed up the weekend, or rather, ~~let~~ the weather screw it up for us. Saturday was alternately bluster of rain and brief clearing, and instead of chancing the weather for a walk somewhere, as we'd both vowed to do, we stayed in and read. (I went through nearly all of Malcolm Cowley's *Dream of the Golden Mountains*, very fine and useful to me just now as well: reminder that this isn't the first time the world has seemed to be ending) I woke on Sunday with the beginning buzz of a headache, took some Tylenol, and ~~now~~ went through the day with a kind of depressed lightheadedness--perhaps the allergy lassitude beginning, but perhaps the Tylenol too. We did walk the Seattle waterfront and have salmon and chips, but it was a flummoxing weekend of the sort we've vowed to try avoid.

Y'day afternoon I went downtown for maps of the Sea Runners' route--mounted on plywood with stickpins tracing the route from island to island (I was amidst that, map and wood strewn across study floor, when Carol Hill called) they're remarkably intriguing--and other chores, including purchase of new rainpants, one more step in the grind-it-out campaign to get things done around here. Late Tuesday afternoon, I took advantage of space of clear weather to level the garden patch, with C's help, and plant beans, carrots and beets, covering them with plastic sheets against the daily downpours we've been having.

April 10 cont.--Also y'day afternoon: ended the afternoon of chores by going to Edmonds to pick up pub'c flyers on my reading there next week. The flyers are pretty good, outlines of Swan and Swell facing each other, albeit the young artist, Paul Renault, left the s off Winter Brothers. Stopping by the Morrrows' bookshop beforehand to see if they'd got the word about the reading, I found they have a poster and window display of Sky. Got caught inside during the hardest shower of the afternoon's many, so visited with the Morrrows--learned that Ingrams is closing down its Bellevue warehouse, one more complication in getting books into stores here--and ordered a copy of Yellowfish (which Betty found Ingrams lists a single copy of, on its inventory fiche).

April 20--All remained quiet on the eastern front until Friday and Saturday. In the Friday mail, a letter from Tom Stewart, ed-in-chief at Atheneum, inviting me aboard if I found myself "bereft" at HBJ. That afternoon about 4, a call from Rhoda, saying she's been let go, as of the end of June, and reporting that sr eds Gene Stone and Peggy Brooks are being sacked at the same time. In y'day's mail, a letter from J'vich himself, hoping I will continue with HBJ and closing with the odd line that "I trust you will find us at home, ready, willing."

April 21--Marathon day on the phone, and it's only 12:30. I began the day by drafting a letter to J'vich, then called Carol Hill to try it on her, and see what advice she has. She listened to the letter and said it was fine, then said she thought what should be done is for Liz Darhansoff to see Peter J'vich and ask for an advertising and promotion amendment to Winter Bros contract, try to get \$15-20,000 support. The leverage would be to get HBJ to talk turkey on that before letting them have the Sea Runners proposal; CHill said it's an "outrageous" tactic but if HBJ won't do it, we haven't lost anything. CH also said: it's a terrible time in the book business right now, and I don't have much hope of healthy press run on Winter Bros without some such tactic;

April 21 cont.--that the way to handle reviews for Winter is to get to Stuart Harris, who knows the reviewers; and that Peter J'vich is under contract to run trade dept. to Dec., at least.

Next called Kathy Mulherin in SF, intending to ask her about HBJ sales confce procedure; instead found out she's been fired, along with 9(?) other HBJ travelers, leaving only 2 on East Coast and the guy in Texas. Remarkably, she sounded more composed than usual, says she has been rationally job-hunting with only a day or so of panic so far. Asked if she wanted to stay in Bay area, she said she thinks so, although the ~~place~~ place has "filled up with faggots," her own n'hood now feeling the trend.

Began calling bookstores for figures on Sky sales as arguing point to HBJ, found that Hunters and Kay's Bookmark sold about 100 apiece, B. Bailly and F&N more like 300.

Norma Ashby then called from Gt. Falls, asking if I can be there on Thurs. to tape show instead of the original Friday, as she has to be in Billings. Said I could.

Wrote brief, bland-as-possible response to Tom Stewart, and postcards of G'heim thanks to Wright Morris, Ray Carver and Geoffrey Wolff.

Was fixing lunch when phone rang again, this time Marcia Magill from HBJ. Simply a courtesy call, which began with rather forced joviality of her stressing our common Scottishness, saying her family name originally was Magillivray. She's very different from CH's intense efficiency, and not very impressive in this intro; altogether too much good cheer, we-can-work-it-out tone, and not enough nitty-gritty. I simply hit her up about the cover situation, and said I'd write her a letter backgrounding Winter Bros. The advantage of the situation may be that she seems to be somebody I can handle.

Sometime in here, the fence-builder called and said he couldn't make it today, will be by in the morning to finish fence between us and Cochranes.

About 12:15, I called Liz Darhansoff, who sounds younger than CH, and coolly pleasant, if that's possible.

April 21 cont.--Outlined to her the situation of Winter Bros. and the Sea Runners proposal, asked her terms (10% for US rep'n), told her Carol Smith has been handling overseas rights (she asked if I was happy with her, I said I have been; she said it wouldn't be any barrier to ~~make~~ a deal between us). We left it that she'd get copies of Winter Bros. and Sky from Marcia Magill, she'd read them and talk to CH about the ad-and-promo amrdmt; I'd get the Sea Runners proposal off to her, and she'd get back to me within the week. Told her about Tom Stewart's letter, she ~~xx~~ laughed and said he'd be glad to hear he'd beaten J'vich in the race of letters, added that S is a good editor.

So, then. Some progress on the day, wheels set in motion, at least. If all clicks, I can come out of this with improved prospects for Winterx Bros and some \$\$; if only part clicks, I should at least come out with \$\$, unless Liz D doesn't like the Sea Runners at all. But then if she doesn't, Carol Smith probably would happily take it on.

4:35, just back from Sh'line. Right leg muscle still gimpy, walked only 2 rounds of track, saunaed. Just before I went up, Lee Soper of U Bk Store returned the call I'd left for Marilyn Martin, looked up sales figure on Sky for me: it's 786 hardback, astounding.

With all today's furore, I'm losing sight of last week, when I did 2 readings on Wed. and then on Thurs. we went up to Sh'line to hear IF Stone. The Wed. noon reading was at U Women's Club downtown, audience of 150-200, I think. Pat Armstrong came along as my guest, seemed pleased. The club looks like a geriatric rally, at first glance, but there are some lively minds there. Saw Jane Paige, who taught with C as part-timer at Sh'line, and a young historian named Nan Hughes, who knows Margaret Svec. The night reading, at Edmonds, was about 50, inc. friends such as LeWarnes, Ann Saling, Petersons (Wanda instigated the reading). I had all the setting I could ask for, the stage readied for "And Miss Reardon Drinks at Little"; sat at a linen-covered table ~~in~~ near center-stage.

Thurs. was our 15th anniversary, Ann and Marshall came for dinner to celebrate before the Stone talk. A good evening, high mood for us all.

April 21--It took the first couple days of last week to ready for the readings; astounding amount of time, it seemed to me. Late in week, I tried to get underway on the Montana speech; got some material together, but it looks as if it'll have to be a forced march next week to get it done. I blithely blathered ^{and} too large a topic, western storytelling, as a topic.

In the midst of all this, on Friday the fence builder came, put up the fence between us and Hirsches, got the frame up between us and Cochranes.

April 24--Hard to scrape together time enough for a diary entry these days. Briefly: mailed the copyedited ms of Winter back to HBJ at 2:30 this afternoon, having reviewed it y'day and this morn. Made, I estimate, 75-100 small changes; no real dispute on copyediting, and only 4 small queries for me to handle.

Just as I came back from leaving the ms at photocopy, Rhoda called, with Marcia Magill's ass't Ann Garvin with her, to talk about ill'ns. Not a particularly clear or satisfactory conversation, with Rhoda off-base about what kind of ill'ns I prefer (linework), Ann maybe a bit apprehensive about me, and me weary as hell from the ms work. Wrote Rhoda a clarifying note, got the ms from photocopy, mailed it, stepped in door from post office and it was Rhoda again, saying the HBJ brass had calculated that an 8-page insert of pics would add \$1,50 to the jacket price, making it \$12.95, and Peter J'vich would call me in the morning to try talk me out of the insert. Since I have never wanted the insert, it finally came clear to me how backwards things have got. Anyway, told Rhoda I'd like to talk with Peter J. If and when he calls, will press him on putting the maps as end-papers.

I think y'day was quiet on the phone; on Tues., I got a call from Rhoda on Marcia Magill's behalf, checking to be sure it was okay to send Winter ms to Liz Darhansoff. About an hr later, a call from Liz, saying Magill had told her the ms would reach her pronto (near week's end, actually). Liz said she'd ~~xxx~~ begun reading Sky the night before, thought it very fine, thought I could write a

April 24 cont.--"wonderful" novel. She plainly was impressed with Sky. I had just finished writing the proposal for Sea Runners when she called, told her I'd send that, the ~~the~~ Winter contract, and letters from J'vich and Tom Stewart of Atheneum, and wait to hear from her next week.

This has been a week of forced march, the phone marathon of Monday, the concentration required for the Sea Runners proposal Tuesday, then the past 2 days of scrutinizing Winter. Now (4:05) I'm fairly tired, but can maul around in the mail pile for 40 min. or so. Jack Gordon is coming for supper, in our determined effort to see other human beings. The week so far is amply successful, ~~now far~~ to the extent that I can tell: the obtaining of an agent evidently underway, HBJ walking on eggshells around me, and Winter reading very well, both livelier and tidier than I would have thought possible, to me.

April 25--Today worked on descriptive letter about Winter Bros for Marcia Magill for the HBJ sales meeting, wrote permissions graf for copyright page, ~~skidd~~ some other trivia. Marcia called, instead of Peter J'vich, about 11:15, said: she's liking Winter very much as she reads it; does not intend to present it as regional bk, thinking readers outside this area will be interested as well; thinks there ought not be pic of Swan in the ill'ns, just use of his Haida art and some samples of diary handwriting; they'll have some cover version by sales conf'ce, will show me what they come up with. I lobbied her for putting the maps as end-papers, now that the expense of 8 pp. of photos has been elim'd. She talked a bit too much again, but I noticed her decisions were okay--against a Swan likeness, for the intriguing handwriting, ~~xxxx~~ appreciation of the appeal of the bk's details, etc.

Next week, probably another heller. Liz D ~~was~~ likely will get back to me about whether or not she'll agent, and then may begin negotiations with HBJ. I have to write the Mont. speech--wish I had it done, but I do have sufficient time. Also, went to Gp Health at noon today, found my suspicions right, I do have a pulled hamstring.

May 3--10:45 a.m., and tomorrow at this time we should be well on our way to Montana. This was an interim week, not much seeming to get done except that I at last, I think by end of Wed. afternoon, finished the speech for Gt. Falls and Sheridan. The past couple days have gone to chores. No writing done in the past 3 or so weeks, although I've had two ideas in that time, for a "Blue as the Odyssey" piece about how a book gets written and the mulling, done with C, about an Ernie Pyle biog.

No progress on the HBJ-agenting situation this week: I at last called Liz Darhansoff y'day about 1:30, not having heard boo from ~~her~~ her, got on the phone not a boo but a very distressed croak; she's been flu-ridden all week, sounded like hell, and we agreed I'd call her Mon. or Tues. from Missoula.

There has been progress on WINTER BROS--a phone report from Rhoda y'day with so much, I'm not sure I like it all. The good news is a Paul Bacon cover, which sounds spiffy, and the plans to use several--evidently 8 or so--of Swan's Haida drawings throughout the book; so-so news is that end-papers are intended, all right, but not of maps as I'd wanted--of diary pp. instead, with maps to go in front matter. C has argued the advantage of maps as end-papers, saying they helped Snow Leopard so greatly; I think I agree, but not completely, given that the one hard-to-follow journey of Swan's, in the Qn Chs, is not among the maps I suggested, and so isn't followable even with end-papers. I may have blown the situation there, on that journey; a problem being to match Swan's place-names of the time with the current ones along the Qn Chs west shore. The really questionable ill'n news, I thought at the time, is Marcia's notion to run the pic of Swan and Johnny Kit Elswa on the back of the book. I'm coming around on that now, wondering if it might not be okay to give readers this one touch of actuality in the book.

What else? Jeff Klauder visited and had cheeseburger supper with us night before last; ~~good fun~~ he has the Smith family's remarkable handsome looks, and in

May 3 cont.-- dark pinstripe suit and white shirt looked entirely like what he is, a young Philadelphia lawyer. We drove him to Edmonds for the sunset, and showed him where Lois and Doug lived.

I had lunch with Archie, at ~~commander~~ Alexander's in Bothell, on Tues. Good to see him, we don't do this nearly as often as when he was downtown. He has much being juggled in the air as usual, including some magazine travel stuff I hate to see him do but he maintains he has to for the \$; said he's getting a bit perturbed that if he doesn't turn out a substantial piece of work soon, people are going to write him off as a guidebook writer. Said he did some more work on his L&C novel, sent it in to H-Mifflin and Harper first novel contests; I wished him well, but odds there are astronomical, probably worse. He thinks the Alaska Airlines book he's doing is good just as a book--he has a bunch of wild tales collected from the Alaska flyers and execs; I can see it could be a lively book, in a jouncy sort of way--but is having trouble getting it regarded as anything but a corp history. No luck so far with nat'l pubs, thinks he'll try it with Alaska NW, the logical place for it.

Not much else doing. Much of the week has been edgy for me, unable to exercise, or even walk very much, because of this hamstring. It seems better now, but I don't expect it to be really okay until about June. Weather has been exquisite much of the week, and I don't do much but sit and look out into it.

May 5--Missoula, 10:15: just called Liz Darhansoff, she has agreed to agent for me. On Winter Bros, she advises that it's not a good idea to push HBJ for ad and promo guarantee, that it's better to work within the current HBJ mood of exhibiting their concern for me and hold off on the Sea Runners proposal until this fall, to see how they do. She'll take on some hassling of Winter Bros for me "for friendship--I love to bother publishers"--and will talk with Marcia Magill before the sales conf.

She asked how I'm fixed for money: whether I can wait a while on Sea Runners because the book business is so dismal just now, and also because I ought to have a ms sample of 50 pp. or so to show pub'rs. I said I could wait until mid-fall.

This is a tricky situation, and I wish I was more sure that I'm right in agreeing that Liz should proceed this way. She after all is going against Carol Hill's original idea on the ad-and-promo guarantee; she says, however, J'vich has never gone for such a thing, and she thinks it's ill-timed to hassle him on it, that as evidenced by his letter to me the ad money will follow if Winter Bros gets good reviews, particularly if they don't have me signed to a next book by then. My reason for agreeing with her is that to have any chance at all for a guarantee on Winter, we'd evidently have to sign away the Sea Runners now, a point which has bothered me. I've known from the start that ~~the~~ Winter Bros is a chancy seller; there's a fine line here between getting the best possible chance for it, and being so obdurate on its ~~the~~ behalf that future projects get effected.

May 6, Missoula--8:25, just back from b'fast at Perkins Pancake House which sits astraddle Rattlesnake Creek. Last night, were upstream for dinner--at Jim and Lois Welch's big frame house which has vast backyard opening onto the creek. Bill Bevis and Juliette Crump arrived same time we did, us in gunboat Buick, them on bikes: the six of us had a drink in the backyard, looked at the creek, running high and rough just now. After dinner, Dick Hugo, Ripley Schemm, R's son Matthew and one of his friends who'd been fishing with Dick that afternoon arrived. A long pleasant evening--Dick and Ripley left about 11, we got up to go about 11:30, stayed on for a final drink which stretched to another hour.

I very much like Jim, unprepossessing and pleasant. Asked to see where he writes: he has a loft-like room at the back of the house, looking into the backyard; fairly clean desk and a typing table alongside at right angle, with electric portable on it; a bed nearby, low set of bookshelves and an overflow strew of books, awaiting more shelves downstairs. The room is long, a bit like our apartment in Evanston when first married, with many posters of Jim's reading appearances. A hilarious pic from Lewiston newspaper, Dick Hugo seated, Jim standing at his side, with Jim veeing the first two fingers of his left hand beneath the crest of Dick's head, so they poke up like bunny ears.

Jim is between books now--indeed, I think he was a year ago when we were here, when he either had or was about to get galleys--but has in mind a historical novel on a band of Blackfeet in the late 1870's, when the reservation shifts their lives. He has some of the story from a grandparent, I think he said. Meantime, he's soon off to Germany, for a 2-week tour sponsored by USIA.

May 6 cont.--Asked Jim what his work habits are, he said when he's writing he tries to write 6 nights a week, for 4 hours or so, turning out 3-4 pp. He is a night owl, preferring to go to bed about 4, get up at 10:30--a regimen which would kill me, but otherwise our typewriter habits may not be too different.

Last week Jim's editor, Ted Solotaroff--he handled Jim's work at Bantam, now does so at Harper & Row--was in town, and Lois was repeating S's story of having taken a grad class from Maclean at the U. of Chicago. Whatever the topic was, Maclean read aloud from one student paper, said it cleanly strung ideas along as if they were on a clothesline, then began reading from S's polysyllabic opus, said aloud he didn't really want to read any more of that; caught S after class, told him he was bright and all that, but if he continued to write that way, he'd be flunked. S evidently looks back on that as a turning point, a forced focus on clean writing, for him.

While we were drinking in b'yard, I was startled when Lois said there was a phone call for me. It was a friend of Maclean's, prob'ly the person he stays with when here in Missoula, relaying message from M. that he won't be here during our stay, is coming to Bozeman in early ^{June} Jan. for honorary doctorate, then won't be back until mid-June or so.

Also in the backyard, talked with Juliette for awhile, heard her tale of woe about having been turned down ~~from~~ for promotion, difficulty of dance people in theatre arts dept. Also, Bill told me of using Sky in his Montana Writers course winter quarter, said his students liked it immensely. Said he polled the class of 95, and 92 were from within the state; he said they say the small-town life is

May 6 cont.--as I wrote about it, which I told Bill startles me, as I have the feeling --logical enough, in terms of time--that I'm 20 years out of date on Montana life. Bill suggested many Montana towns haven't changed that much, perhaps haven't had a major change since the Depression, with the exception of the Eastern Mont. oil and coal towns. Bill, endlessly interesting, said what intrigues him about Montana is the combination of high energy in the people and the rural life, which he thinks is rare: none of the indolence of southern and midwestern small town life, a kind of shrewdness here among the town types who just would be dumb loafers elsewhere.

At dinner, Bill told story of teaching ~~xxx~~ a class William Stafford's poem, Traveling Through the Dark (?), about the narrator having hit a pregnant doe with his car, and Bill's Montanan students finding the poem wrong, incomplete, askew--because the driver doesn't then pull the fawn from the dead mother. To Bill's astonishment, the class took off into a realm of discussion that the only justification for the narrator not to have pulled the fawn was so it wouldn't be brought up bottle-fed, lose its wildness.

Dick Hugo is looking very heavy, said he's not writing at the moment, though admits he has a mystery novel coming out from St. Martin's "probably this fall." He was drinking a bit more than the other few times we've been around him--4 or so beers, I guess--and had more ego on display, probably (or perhaps) because the Pulitzer Prize a few weeks ago went to Donald Justice of Iowa rather than him. Dick brought up the topic himself, pretty much out of nowhere. Also said he

May 6 cont.--has an offer to spend fall semester at U. of Arkansas for \$25,000.

One interesting moment, leading out of Bill's story of the Stafford poem: Dick said he didn't think that poem nearly Stafford's best, though it's touted that way, just as Yeats' Second Coming is always overpraised. Jim and Bill at once took him on about Second Coming, didn't give him an inch.

Other doings of y'day: I went uptown to call at The Fine Print bookstore, found it closed for the day, went across to The Little Professor, at once was invited for a Winter Bros signing this fall. Lenora, of the couple who run the store, had in fact written me that very morning, dug the letter from her outgoing mail.

At 1, C and I met Lois Welch on campus, had lunch at sandwich shop, heard Lois's report of having headed faculty committee which fought the UM president on faculty cuts, and pretty largely won. After lunch, I poked around in the liberal arts building, found Bill Farr, talked for $\frac{1}{2}$ hr or so, heard about his project of a photo book of Blackfeet history; said a quick hello to Dave Emmons on way out. I ~~gan~~ gather that Emmons and Hampton of the history dept., as well as Bevis, have used or will use Sky in courses. This summer, there's to be a Western topics summer session, Emmons and Farr and Bevis and Kittredge and several others all teaching some one-month Western course.

May 9, Gt. Falls--10:30, in the Arnsts' basement, C doing washing and ironing in next room, Genise baking bread upstairs, desperately needed rain coming down. I'm the only one not in useful motion, tired and groggy this morn. Must do final work on the speech today, so am glad to have the entire day in which to find a couple of energetic hours.

Moving backward: pulled into Gt. Falls y'day just before noon, had lunch at Gordon's, went to KRTV for Norma Ashby taping at 1:30. Saw it this morn, it looked pretty good, better than I had expected because in the last min. or so of the show Norma got into questions about writing habits and I got leery of where she was headed. She is an original, a chatty lady whose mouth and all the rest of her is perpetually on the go, and meantime she's doing a very smooth interview job. Y'day as we talked a bit beforehand, I mentioned Heartland, and she promptly had Annick's phone number and other particulars out of me.

Pulled in here immediately afterwards, regrouped briefly, went to the Heritage to leave word for the librarians' brass that I'm in town. After supper, x went to a reception at Paris Gibson Square, spent most of the time with Gt. Falls librarians, including the extension librarian John Campbell, who either had a few drinks in him or features a heavy-handed charm; he did however bring his bookmobile home from a northern circuit the other day down the Bootlegger Trail, so he has his virtues. Also talked with Cecil Kincaid, wife of Bob Kincaid; ~~was~~ Bob on behalf of the Valier American Legion sponsored me in high school speech contest which Prestbo won. She said the Chadwicks are coming tomorrow night, which moves and delights me.

Night of the 7th, we stayed in WSS with Gordon and Sherri, at Thelma's house. Gordon is dealing in commodities--his 14th year, and he says he's never had a losing one--and has

May 9 cont.--just made the decision to build a million-gal./year alcohol plant in Ringling. We were shown the house they're building on the hill behind the cemetery, a fine imaginative place designed by Wayne Berg. Views of mountains in all directions--Berg has designed the place on a grid basis, with squares opening through walls to allow the views.

Theresa Buckingham had us and Gordon and Sherri to dinner, Theresa as winsome as ever. She's doing a book of her columns with the Meagher County News, and I tried to steer her away from Rademacher's highest estimate, by which she'd have to sell her 100-pp. or so book for \$4.50 just to break even; there's an intermediate ~~of~~ at about \$2.50 which makes some sense.

Therese~~m~~ looks and acts much the same as ever, but Fred B. is showing age; that very night was his first meatless meal, under new regimen of doctoring for an ~~ix~~ ulcer. He is bright and talky, however, told Sherri stories of her grandfather, Web Rader. Fred also had noted a target of opportunity--the new nurse, daughter of Jim Smith of Ringling--when he was at the hospital being checked over, brought home full particulars for his bachelor son Rick.

Rick had just been visited by Dirk Niewoehner --somebody joked that both WSS's celebrities were home--with Dirk accompanied by blonde. None of the B'hams seemed much upset by the blonde, but they were a bit baffled that she and Dirk were vegetarians and went off someplace to cook beansprouts instead of getting a good beef meal.

Visited with Ken Twichel briefly, heard his latest family woe--recalcitrant student son; said hello to Joyce on the way out, found her sounding as fliberty as ever but looking good, younger with some weight loss and new hair color. Gordon's banker Mike Grove came by--straight from a party at Andy Grande's, which had featured a long phone call from Andy's

May 9 cont.--wife to me, the point being that she's a Scripps College grad and Sky had showed up in the Scripps alum news as a recommended book. A little of that goes a helluva way, and C and I agreed an overnight is plenty in WSS.

Jay and Linda came in before supper to say hello, Linda had me sign four books for the family. I'm interested at how well the two families, Gordon's and Jay's, seem to get along. None of the four is much like any other of the four; maybe that somehow helps.

Wed., we'd intended to continue from Annick Smith's up the Blackfoot, but as ~~we~~ we got to the highway the gas ~~gauge~~ gauge seemed to be slipping, and we wondered whether the tank had been punctured, so we headed back to the freeway and possible garage at Missoula. False alarm, so headed on. Snack lunch at pull-out just across MacDonald Pass, stopped in Townsend to see Emma and Walt, missed Wally in the canyon somehow--which I regretted because we've also missed connecting the last two times in Seattle. ~~Jim~~

Overnight at Annick Smith's the 6th was a good interesting visit. Annick has a qtr-section, an~~d~~ old homestead, on Bear Creek up the Blackfoot Canyon, maybe 30 miles out of Missoula. The two-story log-house--I kidded her that it looked like the one in Comes A Horseman--sits in the middle of a hundred~~or~~ or so cleared acres, timber~~d~~ and hills all around. There are drawbacks, such as wretched iron-tainted water; she'd recently drilled 400+ feet in unsuccessful try for a better well. But it's a beautiful place, and Annick is a remarkable lady. The phone rang constantly while we were there, one aspect or another of her effort to get Heartland into general distribution; best prospect may be Randy Finley buying the pic.

Annick had a dinner party; us, Bill Kittredge, Jim and Lois Welch, Ripley Schemm, and

May 9 cont.--Alan Cook, now of Louisville Rep and formerly prof of directing at UMont, and his wife, passing thru on their way to summer theatre in Salinas. C and I had brought a quart of Wild Turkey as gift for Annick; it got worked through during the evening--the pair of us quit midway--with Jim Welch drinking it with water, then without water, then, when the WT ran out, poured himself about a third of a glass of rum. There was a general wince or flinch as we all thought of what a hangover Jim was going to undergo.

A number of stories told. In no particular order:

--Bill K., when teaching a detective lit course with Steve Krauzer, had the ultimate plagiarism case. Bill read a student's story, gave it a B, passed it to Steve, who puzzled over it briefly, then recognized it as one he'd written himself, under a pen name, for some pulp mag. The plagiarist was skewered royally, but Krauzer in turn was pissed that Bill gave it only a B.

--I had asked Annick how the cast of Heartland was to work with, and she and Bill had agreed they were pretty good, though Rip Torn could have moments of being difficult; the saving grace, they said, was ~~thaxx~~ that he usually was right about the scene. Bill met Torn when he arrived in Harlow, having driven in rented car from Billings, and he told Bill driving through the small Montana towns during the night had given him an idea, that to truly get into the mood of this western country he maybe ought to carouse in those little bars and kick some ass. Bill replied, "Rip, I can't really begin to tell you how bad an idea that is. In the first place, we'll have to delay shooting about 6 weeks while you heal."

May 9 cont.--Annick and Bill added that Torn is from a Texas rural background, he did his own riding for the film--in fact, would go off on his own and practice riding during breaks--and managed even to rope a calf, as I thought I had seen in the movie. They said the chief problem in working with cattle had been to get the calf-birthing scene; time after time, the ready heifers calved at night, until finally the cast stayed up all night waiting for the next birth.

--From Lois, I think by way of Ted Solotaroff: S was in Maclean's class one day when he was talking about Croce and intuition. Maclean illustrated with a fishing story: that he had been out with another fisherman, they cast and cast and caught zero, until the other fisherman suddenly said, let's go downstream and try it. They did, caught fish as fast as they could haul them in. Maclean asked his partner how he knew the fish would bite there; they guy shrugged and said, well, he'd noticed these bugs floating down and... That, said Maclean, is intuition.

--A detail from Kittredge: Annick had noticed Carol's brown ~~tax~~ loafers and commented on them, added that for some reason Dick Hugo wears them too. K said, you know why, don't you? It's an alcoholic's trick; they can't face tying their shoes first thing in the morning. (Said he'd got that from Richard Yates, maybe in Rev'y Road.)

It became evident, this second evening among the Missoulians, that Hugo, who resumed drinking about a year and a half ago, is getting on their nerves a bit. There were oblique comments of sympathy for Ripley, who married Hugo during his 7 or 8 yr dry period, a mutter of some sort from Jim Welch, and Kittredge said Hugo had come up to him on campus recently and said Jesus, he'd been drinking for four days,
~~xxxxxx~~

May 9 cont.--hadn't been able to turn it off, in a self-romanticizing way which recalled to me the sentence he'd thrown randomly into a letter to me last summer about his drinking. I hope to christ he's not going the Roethke route, dreaming himself into self-destruction.

--Kittredge said he'd had Kim Williams in a writing class, and whenever he asked the class to discuss something, up went Kim's hand and out came, BILL, I THINK... He also said Kim has a ms, which she's never done anything with, about her housekeeper in S. America, very intriguing stuff.

--One thing we notice about the Missoula crowd is the edge of adventure, or at least occurrence, they have in their lives. Kittredge had just come back from doing a reading at Davis; a bit tanked up from reunion with his SF buddies from Stanford days, he got on the wrong plane, ended up in Helena instead of Missoula, had to take the bus the next morn, early and hungover. While we were at Annick's, his father called, or someone called about him: he's 79 or so, and simply had ~~blown~~ blown into town from wherever he lives in Ore. or Calif., had a few drinks at the Eastgate and went to bed at the Village Inn. I think it's his father Bill was telling a Depression story about, that for awhile he was in the turkey business, and would sneak truckloads out onto other folks' grassland whenever the coast was clear.

--Oh yes, another Eastgate note: Jim Crumley had arrived back, from his year as writer-in-residence at Carnegie Mellon, and his car was parked in front of, yes, the Eastgate. Kittredge said he saw it and drove right on past, giving Crumley a few days to drink out his homecoming.

--One casualty note of the Missoula gang: Rick DeMarinis, who we tried unsuccessfully to call, evidently has starved out of novel writing, taken a prof'p at Tempe.

May 15, Sheridan--8:20, Sheridan Center motel, with traffic howling past. All else here has gone well, except for this so-so motel. Last night's speech to Friends of Library, I slowed a notch or two from the pace I gave it at Gt. Falls, and it seemed to go very well. Audience of 180 at the Golden Steer supper club; even the food was pretty good, the service snappy, and the FOL business meeting was run by Jan Holcomb with great briskness. I signed 15-20 books before the dinner, about the same afterward. Odd incident afterward, which also worked itself out well: a crippled man, possibly a cerebral palsy victim, was in the audience, came to the head table on his crutches, and tried to talk to me. I shook hands, but couldn't understand him. He propped there as I uneasily talked with others at the very end, then another man who had been talking with Kent came over, as things quieted down, explained that the crippled man had a few questions for me--he's himself at work on a history of Sheridan--and served as translator. Very calmly and matter-of-factly done, and as we left we saw the interpreter helping the crippled man into his van, to deliver him home; remarkable little episode of samaritanhood.

We were shown around the Sheridan Public Library in early afternoon by ass't director Helen Graham; the library is a stunner, a gift from someone, as many civic amenities are in Sheridan. Helen pointed out one regular patron who works several hours every day on her mss; he^x mind goes in and out of gear, but she determinedly piles up these mss and sends them down to Gene Gressley at the U. of Wyo. archives; Helen said Gene has an arrangement with the woman's daughter, he annually writes the woman a letter of

May 15 cont.--thanks for his work, then sends the mss on to the daughter.

The state librarian Wayne Johnson and two of his staff flew up from Cheyenne, Wayne piloting. We just saw them at breakfast here, and Cheyenne is socked in; he said he'll try hire an instrument-rated pilot here, have him fly them down, send the guy back on airline. Alternative is for Johnson and his staffers to fly commercial, then somebody come back up and get the plane. It's a seven-hour drive between here and Cheyenne, well over two by plane.

It's noticable that money is flowing in this state, from its energy resources. Johnson said at last summer's ALA in Dallas, he had 3/4 million dollars to spend on computer system to tie the state's libraries together, was royally wooed by computer firms. Y'day's Casper paper says the number of business outlets in the state increased by 25% last year.

The weather is fine again today. Sheridan is beautifully situated, with Bighorn Mtns rearing to the west; we intend to gone on to Cody, then thru Yellowstone and up to Bozeman. The trip has gone smoothly. Carol made a shrewd save of it in Billings; curious about gassy smell, she had Buick mechanic look over the carburetor, he found it leaking, possible fire hazard; fixed it pronto, and we seem to be in business. The speaking and reading has gone well enough: Billings was a colossal day--the public library in the morning, Eastern Mont. College in afternoon, 5-7 reception at EMC president's house, dinner there, then Dave Cohen's talk show on KGFL from 9-10--which I'll try detail later on. Still, I'm a bit uneasy, and think I should be, about being a performer. I do think occasional trips such as this ~~do~~ go with the territory, but I'd better stay cautious about how much of it I do.

May 19--8:30, just set up shop in the Bonnets' basement. Mt. St. Helens blew y'day, the ash began arriving in the night; at about 4 a.m., Carol and I, in Jill Bonnet's west-facing bedroom, heard a noise against the house like a gust of wind, looked out to find the night very murky. Our car is coated with ash; was relieved to find, just now when I went for the typewriter, that the interior seems ~~okay~~ free of it.

About 8:30 I called Eleanor Mast, whom I was to interview at 10, to cancel, found her more than willing to forget it; an emphysema sufferer, she said she's going around with a nose cone. Will await this afternoon to see if the rest of the itinerary--reading on campus at 3, reading at dinner this evening--indeed goes forward.

The ash could bollix us if it shuts down long-distance travel again tomorrow, when we had intended to head for Choteau-Dupuyer. Think we will try buy an extra air filter for the Buick before starting out.

News of the ash problem is spotty and none too reliable; watched Today in Montana at 9, they ran yesterday's CBS videotapes and map of the ash plume spreading east, rather than showing what the current extent of the plume is. Have been listening to local radio KBOZ, which alternates between fairly inane chatter and news bulletins.

Virtually all schools in the Gallatin Valley closed--except the two which affect this household today, Manhattan where the Bonnet kids attend and MSU where I'm to be this afternoon.

The day is dusty-looking along the horizons, the Spanish Peaks to the south visible but murky, the Bridgers to the east behind a smog-like wall, and the Tobacco Roots not visible at all to the southwest. ~~Visibility~~ Visibility isn't bad here at the house, atop this little rise of land; the Otts' farm nearly a mile away is clearly seeable.

May 19 cont.--Carol commented this morn, as we got up to this situation, that there are some things in life you just can't control. Certainly I hadn't thought of this prospect, of being caught in the downwind plume.

We learned of the eruption last night about 8, when we arrived back at Mike and Gail Malone's house after dinner downtown at the Overland. Their daughter Molly had the TV on, and Carol and I casually glanced at CBS Newsbreak, I guess it was, to see the volcano pics arrive on the screen; Molly just then came out of the bedroom to say she was listening to bulletins on the radio. We had a short drink and talked a bit, then Molly came out to say ~~x~~ a dust cloud was expected at 9, and we pulled out pretty promptly. Just a position of all this: when we arrived and were getting the first word of the volcano, the Malone's ~~x~~ teenage son Tom was sitting on their 2nd-floor porch facing the Bridgers, painting the outline of the mountains with an oblong slice of face, as if seen in car's sideview mirror; the evening was so lovely and springlike we commented back and forth with Gail Malone about it as we walked to our car from the restaurant.

Busy session 2-4 y'day at the Museum of the Rockies, when a steady line of people had me sign books the full 2 hours. The museum had bought 100, I think, and about 3/4 of those had sold ahead of time; I turned over the 11 paperbacks I had left, and they went at once, too. I think there are 5 or so books left, for sale at the dinner tonight (if there is a dinner). Nellie, Alice and Edith Brekke came; their brother Maynard had preceded them about 10 minutes; Ross Higgins' widow, and Gary Higgins; the former June Pitman of Ringling; the Culps, formerly of WSS; the Onstands--he buried both my mother and my grandmother Doig; Jean Thorson; some of the

May 19 cont.--Hansons formerly of WSS; Horace and Billie and Pat Morgan; Eleanor Mast and a granddaughter.

Mike Malone collected us at the end of the signing, led us to his house for drinks. Liked him, evidently a sharp fellow; at a year younger than I am, he's graduate dean of MSU. His fellow historian, Rich ~~Rick~~ Roeder, is a more mixed case; interesting talker, but evidently has been through a recent divorce and a heart attack scare which turned out to be pinched neck nerves, and he worries out loud about his life. Also for drinks and dinner came Mary Pace, mid-40s divorcee, local high school English (poetry) teacher and member of state board of regents, with her live-in, Mike Ellred, college student in his late 20s. C and I decided promptly ~~a~~ that she has a lot of sass and balls to display that relationship--admired her ~~now~~ little bit for it.

Some general catching-up, as the trip somehow hasn't allowed time or convenience to do diarying recently: we pulled into Bozeman late morning of the 17th, Sat.; stopped by Phillips bookstore, found they'd sold out of Sky. Went to Jane Graham's Sage bookstore to look for 1st editions of Guthrie's books. Found a Way West--also a Wayne Overholser and one of Mildred Walker's lesser-known works--and Jane ultimately agreed to let me have one of the copies of Big Sky she had at home. Spent a total of \$30 on five books, I think not a bad buy. Had lunch, went out to Museum of Rockies when it opened at 1 to let them know we'd hit town, spent some time ~~at~~ there--good-looking museum--then came out to Bonnets, 14 miles west of town. Jan and Den were to play their guitars at a barbecue farewell party for one of Den's co-workers, so we went along. It turned out to be about a 6-hour beer bust--C and I, laying off after about the second beer, feeling somewhat generation-gapped, as ~~many~~ everyone there but the 4 of us was under 30,

May 19 cont.--mostly 25 or less. My hamstrung right leg, which doesn't like long days, was about ready to cave in by the time we headed for home after 11. And y'day while we were out, Jan and Den and kids spent even more hours --early afternoon until about 10 at night; we were home an hour before they were--at barbecue at their nearest neighbors, the Otts: amounts of time spent together, and partying, which stagger us.

Before Jan and Den came home ~~xxxxxxx~~, C and I spent 10-15 minutes on their front porch, as the last light went: about 9:15-9:30, I suppose, talking over the day, and Sky's continually astonishing success, and looking at the western horizon where the ash cloud was due to arrive from. A fine moment, as we treasured each other. People respond to her with great warmth; she was kept busy the entire 2 hours y'day at the museum, with people going over to her after I'd ~~xxx~~ signed their books.

The 16th, we spent the night at Old Faithful Inn, never having done so and figuring one time, while likely plenty, it ought to be done. We had a rough-board-walled room in the original wing of the hotel, claw-footed bathtub and ~~granite~~ marble washstand; surprisingly nice. Meals were something of a hazard, as the college kid waiters zoomed around, forgetting something every step ~~of~~ of the way. TWA has just taken over the Yellowstone concessions--and Zion and Grand Canyon, and Cape Kennedy!--and a banquet for the airline brass and evidently a bunch of travel agents was being held. The first step they could take in management is to revise the table-setting: every table is set for four, then when only two persons sit down--as was the case with 90% of the tables the meals we ate there--the young waiters whisk away the extra 2 setting only to replace them immediately when the table is emptied. The man-hours which would be saved if they would set for two, and add as needed,

May 19 cont.--would be vast, ~~and~~ the dining room commotion would be cut greatly.

Dour weather in the park, but we saw many elk and buffal~~o~~, grazing on roadsides casual as cows. Saw Old Faithful go off once; did no real walking because of my damned leg.

The 15th, we overnigheted in Cody, after a magnificent drive, sheer bonus we hadn't known anything about, across the Bighorns from Sheridan. Agreed it was some of the greatest scenery we've seen: dramatic geology of the Bighorns, including one mountaintop which looks as if it has been shattered and chopped into blocks and shards of stone. Then Shell Canyon, even more dramatic gouge in the earth.

Had tried much of that day--first from the Sheridan motel room, then from an open-air booth in Greybull--to call Rhoda, finally got her when we pulled into Cody motel just before 3. Turned out she didn't really know anything about the sales meeting; I made a few cover adjustments with her--suggested running 1st graf of the book on back cover, instead of Swan pic, and standardizing the capitlzn of subtitle, which currently reads "A Season at the Edge of America." She then switched me to Marcia, who had good news that Winter evidently can be held to \$10.95, considerably less than good news that she can't guarantee as early pub'n date as I've been pressing for; I suspect in fact they're talking closer to Nov. than to Sept. She said she thought the sales conference had gone well, no questions on Winter although they had been "picky" qns on some other books.

Friday, May 23, 1980

Bill Cole called from Medill while you were arranging for photostating of Swan diary pages at the UW. He said he'd been trying to get you, and began by inquiring about our activities. I told him about my teaching job and sabbatical, and your book schedule -- one being published this fall, two novels planned. Were you writing full time, he asked.

He said he was calling to see "if Ivan is interested in talking about joining the Medill faculty." John Bartlow Martin, who has been doing reporting and writing courses, told him last week that he's decided to retire. He is 65 and is developing cataracts. It's late in the year to find out, says Cole.

There's a search committee, and Bill said he hadn't yet mentioned Ivan to anyone, but would if you expressed interest. He promptly mentioned that perhaps a package deal could be worked out for me, although saying that at the moment he has just one position, Martin's, to work with.

He particularly mentioned your reputation with Bill Hornby, Denver Post editor and past president of ASNE. Cole had visited Hornby's place about 15 miles south of Livingston, seemed particularly impressed with the library. He said Hornby may be your biggest fan. I inferred that the conversation had quite an impact on Cole's own estimate.

I said that I regarded the call as flattering and was sure that you would, but that my guess was that your commitments for the next several years wouldn't allow you to teach.

He can be called at home over Memorial Day weekend: (312) 251-9532. Office numbers: 492-5328 or 5091. His secretary's name is Marcy.

May 25, Sunday--Y'day midafternoon, called Bill Cole, told him I don't want to leave writing or to leave the West. He said Medill has had a scheduling arrangement with John Bartlow Martin, giving him time to write--he's finished the Adlai Stevenson bio during his years on the faculty, and written a novel--but I told him even so, though I was vastly flattered, I shouldn't lead him on that I have any desire for the job. He said if I ever want a quarter as a visiting instructor, now that Medill is going more and more to a 4-quarter year, to give him a couple quarters' notice, and he'd see what could be done. Cole is a true ~~sixer~~ charmer, and does his best to keep possibilities open.

The circumstances of this job offer, surely one of the best journalism faculty positions in the country, are odd, the kind of thing which Sky has put into my life. Cole evidently was visiting Bill Hornby on his place 15 miles south of Livingstone, rocking on the porch and gazing at the Yellowstone, when Hornby sang my praises as a western writer.

With that not very difficult decision delivered to Cole, I'm hoping things will begin to quiet down. Y'day featured, besides a pile of mail relating to the Mont. trip and a letter to Marcia Magill about the Winter map sketches she had sent, a phone call from Dan Levant asking me to look over a Montana ms for him and a call from Hyde Tenace inviting us to drinks with a friend of hers, Ancy Baird, who much admires Sky. Bowed out of the invite on excuse of my hamstring, agreed to look over the ms for Dan. I've also been asked by Carol Z. of PNQ to look over Hal Simonsen's ms on Pac NW lit coming of age, which I think I will beg off from on grounds of ~~ing~~ ignorance.

May 27, 4:30--Only energy for brief entry. Wrote couple hundred words of Runners this morn, finding it hard to gear up on that when the next impending task is Winter galleys, later this week. Then turned to How a Book Happens speech for this fall in Billings--I hope it can become a standard talk for me--and dug some of Sky chrono'l sequence out of archival boxes. Late this afternoon, have worked on letters. Not much of a day for production.

It's raining, as it did most of Memorial Day weekend. John and Jean and Frank and Linda all finked out on Carol y'day, so she walked the Arboretum in the rain by herself, said she had a good time. They all came for lunch, which was marked by my having let the charcoal burn too low and consequent very slow cooking of burgers and confused finishing of them in the broiler.

I should be writing of Mt. St. Helens, especially in light of having spent y'day afternoon with Frank, the expert on volcanoes, but can't seem to get to it just now. I may in fact be suffering some of the dread or confusion the volcano has spilled out, although with me it's hard to tell: I've had an accumulation of matters, such as Carol Hill's departure and the consequent messing about with HBJ, and then the pile of chores meeting me on return from Montana, pressing down on my mood.

May 28, 3:25--Useful day at UW mss, excavating from Stepan Ouchin's Sitka diary; he's later than the period of Sea Runners, but there was considerable useful detail anyway, about Russian holidays, turns of phrase. Eve Lebow suggested it to me last week when I was getting the Swan diary photostats.

Not too much else to report, and there won't be for a few days, as Carol took a call from HBJ today saying the Winter galleys are on their way, likely be here tomorrow. ~~For~~ I've not yet managed to get myself lined out on projects, have been doing bits and pieces of just about everything. One exceedingly useful chore would be for me to go through my pocket notebook from the Montana trip, and another would be to try fill in some diary pages of that trip; will try finish out the afternoon on one or the other.

May 28, randoms from Montana trip:

--Wayne Arnst, when Evel Knievel announced intention of skydiving into a haystack, suggested in his Trib column that the haystack be run through some cows first.

--As we were leaving the Gallatin Valley to the south on the 19th, to start around the volcanic ash, the governor of Mont. had changed his mind about keeping the state closed down that day, and soon after 7:30 schools and businesses which firmly had been announced closed for the day were being opened, to the confusion of the two talk-jockeys of KBOZ radio. One of them finally said in exasperation: "No one knew from diddly what was goin' on where and when."

--At MSU, I was introduced, with exceeding shyness, by a big bearded writing prof named Greg Keeler. He later, by coincidence, brought up the exact Joan Didion quote I had been pooh-poohing in the Gt. Falls and Sheridan speech.

--From Bevis, about his Montana writers class when he taught Sky: he told them that at last there's an eastern Montana writer--me--and was promptly set straight by a kid from Wibaux. I told Bevis I had never in my life thought of myself as an eastern Montanan, nor been called one until the day I was huckstering Sky in Missoula and a guy said he ordinarily collected only western Montana writers but Sky was so good, he was willing to make an exception.

--Another from Kittredge: as we were leaving Annick's, she commented on Carol's classic brown loafers, somehow the talk turned to Hugo (I think) wearing them, Bill said, you know why, don't you? It's an old alcoholic's trick, evades tying shoelaces when you're at your morning shakiest. Said he'd heard that from Richard Yates, maybe in Rev'y Road.

--In WSS at Gordon and ~~for~~ Sherri's, we slept in one of the boys' rooms--Brad's?--with his tarantula. It reposed, in a small aquarium-like tank with a towel draped as a lid, right beside the bed.

May 28 cont.--From Lois Welch, of Portland b'gnd, the night at Annick's: the "real westerners" from the Pac. Coast who've migrated to Missoula faculty don't go western, with boots, adventure, etc., as the other transplants, such as Bevis, tend to.

June 3, 4:15--Y'day morn about 9, mailed Winter galleys by express mail, after working thru the weekend on them. As ever, I don't know why proofreading is such a debilitating chore, but it sure as hell is. Carol pitched in and did almost a day of work for me (the galleys arrived late Thursday, so actually it was 3 days of work), or I'd still be at them. The galleys were quite clean, and I did very little rejigging.

Today, sample pages came from Marcia, and they look very fine, especially the use of Swan's Haida artwork with section pp. The book is going to be handsome, with the art, the endpapers and maps; our only real wrangle has been about using the pic of Swan and Johnny Kit Elswa on back cover, which I apparently have won on, by reiterating that I'd prefer to use the space for quotes.

I'd like to have a clearer response to Winter, upon this reading of galleys, but don't. It does seem a smooth enough book, at last, after the final pair of cuttings and revisions; in fact, seems to me a considerable piece of technical virtuosity, shaping such an amount of material into the diary format. But whether it'll be a popular read, I still can't tell.

There's also the difference, from Sky at a similar point, that I am under way on the next book, find it contending in my head--and often winning--with time and thought I should be spending on promotion plans for Winter.

Today, wrote C Smith about my taking on Liz D as NY agent; we'll see if that brings a British blast. Asked her to continue as my overseas agent, for Runners as well as Sky and Winter, on the theory that I'd like to split the responsibility, see how things work out with Liz D before getting in too deep with her.

June 5, 3:30--At last got down to work on Sea Runners again, managed a rough 500 words. Have been reluctant to submerge myself into it as I need to, and in fact didn't really do so today, just potted together material on R-A Company style of administration. Intend much the same tomorrow, and try get more serious next week. I still am dogged by this game right leg, which prevents me getting exercise and so makes me both logey and dispirited. I really am not much of a patient, which doesn't augur well for me in age. This leg problem in fact has seemed to me a kind of taste of old age, hobbled with it, then a couple of days of aching ~~stuck~~ shoulder because of sleeping on it wrong (to favor the leg), then sneezing from the season and the house's dust, an accumulation of ~~pid~~ piddling ills which combine with cabin fever. I really haven't anything major at the moment to be worried about; the leg is (godawfully slow) finally seeming to mend, Winter Brothers is well into process, Sea Runners continues to look pretty good, there's some interesting travel ahead for us on it. But I have felt befuddled, achey, not of much use recently.

Last night answered qns for Kathrin Maloof's book group. Kathrin invited G and me to dinner beforehand, a stylish German meal as we'd expected.

June 23, 2:10--Back from Gp Health therapist, and exercise and sauna at Sh¹line. The leg at last is improving, began to do so 10 days ago when therapist Liz Johnson began me on stretching exercise: flat on back, leg straight up, pull it toward my head with rope across instep. It's now about 2½ months or so since the leg ~~is~~ started acting up, a span that appalls me.

Last week was a fairly strong one on Runners. Carol hiked at Dungeness Tues. and Wed. The first day, I had trouble gearing up; the next, I put in one of those long exerting days which have a kind of hum of useful effort to them. Put in some more work on Thursday, managing to do the first rewrite, all in all, of the first 15-20 pp. Friday was a lost day; felt rocky and unambitious, did almost nothing but read Charles McCarry's spy novel, Secret Lovers.

Today, spent the morning sweeping the desk clean, answering some letters--fan mail, and about possible Montana huckstering trip this fall. Feel somewhat better than I have, having been plagued by logeyness because of lack of exercise. Also am fat, 153½#.

There's also been distraction of chores, and matters to be thought about, primarily the Alaska trip and HBJ. I suppose things have gone at least as well as ought to be expected with Winter at HBJ, but I am irked, and getting more so, that they won't tell me the pub'n date or print run. Marcia maintains they don't have either yet--she's now on vacation until July 7, so I'll see what that weeks bring--but I find that hard to swallow. Also, there's no visible move yet to market Winter. It may be that I lack some of the drive I did to sell Sky--I wasn't yet at work on another book then--and simply want things to happen automatically. But things do seem to wobble more than when Carol Hill was on the scene.

Thursday night, went with Rodens to the David Storey play "Home", with Clayton Corzatte, Robert Loper, Marjorie Nelson and Suzanne Ludlow. Brilliantly performed.

June 25-- 2 pm, just called Bill Hunt to inquire about Alaska research. Jim and Lois Welch are coming for dinner. I spent the morn at UW. Amidst all this, should take time to do brief mood entry.

Am feeling improved, although I notice that as much walking as I did at UW this morn makes the hamstring leg ache. My weight is up, but ~~without~~ without having my gullet tied shut I don't know that there's a helluva lot to do about it just now. Have had a week, so far, mostly of desk chores and background reading for Runners; nothing written since last Thursday. Am going to have to get off the dime fairly promptly, do some strong scheduling and looking ahead. By about mid-October-- Oct. 1 probably would be better--I want to have the 50 page sample of Runners ready (and it needs to be damn good), the Billings speech written, and most likely a G'heim application in. Not to say the promo stuff to be done for Winter. The summer is going to get choppy after the next couple of weeks: prep'n for Alaska trip, then C's folks, then Oly Peninsula hiking.

Undoubtedly I'm having some mental drag because of larger events: the St. Helens explosion, which raises the question whether other volcanoes will follow it and change, or make impossible, our life here; the outlook that Reagan is going to be nominated, and maybe win; two computer false alarms about missile attack, which reinforce my belief that the war machinery will spring a leak which will murder us all. I tend to think of not much else but the writing, and have the tacit hope, I suppose really assumption, that I can go on for the next three decades or more, perhaps end up having done 15 or 20 books: when the fact is that obliteration, either by war or cancer or god knows what else loosed by this society, is at least as likely. I try to keep perspective on this country, but it's goddamn hard when the political process sorts out Reagan and Carter as choices.

Some of this is fed by physical awareness, the flab and sputters of my body the past year or so. I keep looking at what's happening and thinking, why wasn't I notified? I have the image of the way I want to feel, the weight and condition I want to be, and it's the

~~May~~ June 25 cont.--shortfall between those, and the almost not to be admitted fact that health and condition likely are going to be a constant struggle from here on, that depress. Probably next, to continue this hypochondriacal evaluation, will be my eyes, which are starting to tire more rapidly, I think.

Out of this, I should try build my physical mood toward equivalence with the rest of my life, which is pretty damn good. Our home life stays steady, on the long scale I'm doing a reasonable amount of good work (Winter Brothers seems to be quite fine, in looking over the galleys), and if we're not getting rich, we stay more or less even. It may be--I think this the case, and believe I even anticipated it--that the year before last, the year of Sky, was just such a high that nothing can match it. Each book seems to take on a life of its own, in the ~~work~~ pattern, the feel, etc. Winter probably was too much work for the timespan; if I can elbow time so that I can have a little more fun with Runners, things should be okay.

June 30--4 pm, we're just back from desperately needed dump run, of an agglomeration of tree limbs, old magazines and god knows what all. This is the best day of summer so far, clear and warm but with a breeze.

Began editing Runners again this morn, toward getting a draft typed by Marilyn or Merlyn before we go to Alaska. The ms seems pretty good, for this stage of the game.

Last week, Thursday I think, Carol grappled with the Alaska travel schedule, and the next day I wrote letters trying to align accommodations. The trip at last began to take form for both of us, both beginning to look forward to it now.

John and Jean here for drinks on Saturday, Jean left on Amy's tour the next day. C and I got the cord of wood piled in the woodhouse last week, which I feel good about.

Friday, we went to Chez Claude in Edmonds for my birthday dinner, both liked the meal a lot. (And neither got to sleep until past 2 because of the

June 30 cont--coffee we drank.) Birthday #41, which was Swan's when he arrived to the Strait country. I wonder if I have another four decades ahead of me here.

Wednesday night, went to Elliott Bay Books and picked up Jim and Lois Welch--their friend Tom ~~Somebody~~ ^{Salin}, a Montana MFA grad they're staying with, works there. At dinner and after, they told us about the Midnight Sun Writers Conference they'd just been at, in Fairbanks. Also there, Ted Hughes, Geoffrey Wolff, Ray Carver, Tess Gallagher. They said Wolff read some from *The Duke of Deception*, and had to fight a stutter in the difficult portions about his father; he had his own 12-year-old with him, whom Lois said was a super kid, but studied his shoes hard during such moments. Jim said it was an affecting, almost eerie circumstance, thinking of the boy listening to his grandfather's failure with his own father.

Lois told of watching the Mt. St. H ash build up like fine snow on the lip of the ~~roofs~~ rain gutter (from an upstairs window), Jim of his trip to the American Studies conference in Germany, where he and Scott Momaday were "questioned"--though he said the eventual end of what the person was saying didn't usually turn out to have a question mark--as to why American Indians aren't more militant. Jim granted, to us at least, that there's some truth to a view of Indians just sitting on reservations, but said the Germans didn't want to hear about people like him who just live in the majority society and make their way. Some book news from the Welches, the most appalling that Bantam let *Winter in the Blood* go out of print when it had sold 36,000 in the previous six months. Solotaroff told them that the standard was that a book had to sell at least 1000 per month; why a book selling at 6 times that rate was killed isn't clear. *Blood* and Jim Lorey now are both to come out as Harper Colophon trade paperbacks. I brought up *Yellowfish*, saying I thought Jim's blurb for it was exceptionally accurate, and all 4 of us agreed in one way or another about the overplotting or overwriting, if what still was a valuable effort.

June 30 cont.--Solotaroff edited that book too, and Jim asked him why he let Keeble get away with things he wouldn't let him (Jim) get away with. S's reply was that some books have to be let go that way, find their form. Which may be true, but I think not of Y'fish, which would have profited terrifically by being edited down to the main plot of Erks and the Chinese, to hell with the Idaho hillbillies and the NY motorcyclist. I in fact begin to wonder about Solotaroff's vaunted editorial hand, at least about western matters. I believe it was him who told Jim that too many poems in Earthboy had wind in them, the wind only being the overriding fact of life in the region Jim was writing of, and Jim said S changed the title of Winter in the Blood from The ~~ix~~ Only Good Indian (there was a Canadian book of essays by that title, but still), while I gather he let stand the title Death of Jim Loney, which some bookstore owners have told me indeed is death, ~~but~~ of the commercial sort. So I dunno. Makes me realize again how magical a time I had with Sky.

It was good to see Jim and Lois, have a chance to repay a bit of their Missoula party hospitality. Jim mentioned, when we said we don't really know any writers here except Satterfield, that it ~~xxxxx~~ gets a bit oppressive sometimes in Missoula, and he and Lois duck out of it all for awhile.

Progress at last on my leg, I think. Walked $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile today at Shoreline, did the lifting exercises for the leg; it still doesn't feel great, but is growing more capable again. Think I'll try be dilligent with exercises the next 2 weeks, then the middle of the 3d week, the ore before Alaska, maybe go to the Dungeness Spit for 3 days to give it genuine work.

HBJ note: called Rhoda this morn, her final day. She sounded entirely happy, looking forward to leaving for Asia on Wed. morn. She said she intends to do some freelancing after Asia; asked her about Brian Dumaine and Margot Mabie, other HBJ casualties, and she said they're both freelancing, Brian having sold something to Life and something else to Smithsonian, Margot now in Sweden for three weeks.

July 1, 4:45--Second strong day of writing. Did about 7 pp. of editing, beginning with Wennberg's appearance into the story. The dialogue seems good to me, excellent to C. At lunch she offered her theory on which of the four might die; I mused, then told her it will be first Melander, then Braaf. She says it's audacious to kill off Melander, which I suppose is so, and is why I'll do it. We laughed a bit, she's begun to identify with the characters so strongly she feels real remorse for Melander.

Second day too of bright warm weather. Just now I drove the Volvo to the top of the hill, got out and walked a circuit, not yet trusting the leg for too much hill work.

Called Ann Garvin this morn, she said she's passed the request for some bound galleys to the HBJ sales mgr.

July 8--Day of rewrite on Runners, second day in a row of considerable steady work, both on the ms and on ~~other~~ chores. Among today's, called Ellie McCarthy at Pac NW to see if she's still interested in excerpt from Winter; she is, but warned me she's a lame duck, leaving the magazine the end of this month. Said she hopes to do some free-lance ms editing, but mostly wants to learn woodworking and carpentry; told me she's been at Pac S $2\frac{1}{2}$ years now, longer than anything she's done, and feels it's fine she got out and got a little scared by challenge again.

Warm bright weather continues, the garden is prospering. Despite June's rain, it's a thoroughly respectable garden; we've had a monumental amount of lettuce from it, and still have almost 20 feet of the stuff out there. I had the first carrots today for lunch, very sweet and fine. The first beets got made into borscht on Sun., which we'll have again tonight. The tomato ring looks strong, altho it's not evident yet whether the blossoms will become tomatoes. Strawberries are the flop so far.

A week ago tomorrow I saw Dr. Stuart again about my leg. It had much improved, he repeated that he thinks the problem is ~~ticky~~ likely an arthritis, but that it could be hamstring or the tilted-in disc ~~at~~ near the bottom of my back. That disc he thinks is a high school

July 8 cont.--football injury; asked me what position I played, I said mostly blocking back, and he said it's thought that players who've done a lot of blocking are the ones with such discs. Anyway, the leg continued to improve until the weekend, when garden work made it rebel. It's toned down again over the past two days, now isn't bad at all--I intend to walk around the neighborhood after supper, for the first time in almost three months.

On the 4th, we went to see Marshall and kids be clowns in the Edmonds parade, met Ann and Wanda Peterson, were invited by Wanda to their b'yard picnic. The P'sons' nextdoor neighbors, Carroll and Susan Bryan, also came over. A good afternoon, both Wanda and Ken very funny in their divergent ways, and their kids, Mark and Carrie, pleasant and mature at 13 and 12. Sunday we saw the Nelsons again, at Bridal Trails State Park horsemanship show. Lisa Roden came by that late afternoon to say hello before heading to St. Paul, and last night Phil came down for supper; he joins Ann in Europe in a little less than two weeks.

Not too much else to report. I have about 35 pp. of Runners approaching readiness for a typist; have been pondering whether to do one more spirited go-through of editing before having this draft typed, and likely will. We seem to be getting things done, tho I have the feeling that the year is going to turn into a footrace before too long, what with getting the Runners sample ready, the Billings speech, and huckstering Winter.

12 Aug, 4:10--Three pp of Sea Runners today which feel successful--scene of the Rn governor and the pastor--and they help me think I am gaining a bit on the work. We arrived back from Alaska on the 1st, a full week earlier than allowed for, and while I managed to do some rewriting, mostly inserting ~~of~~ or changing details, as result of Juneau and Sitka research, most of the gained days went to gestation. That, and catching up on mail, and attempting a few household chores.

I came back from Alaska feeling greatly bolstered. The research went exceedingly well, perhaps the best sustained couple of weeks of research I've ever done, and I had necessary strokes of luck as well, such as coinciding with Gene Ervine of the Nat'l Park Service in Sitka and him showing me his 1845 map of Sitka, confirming location of Wennberg's blacksmith shop, and the Blaschke details about what people ate, wore, did. I had been feeling worn, the nagging I've written of before, deriving from my body's revolt, or at least cumulative sags, the past year; also the uncertainty at HBJ, and of how Winter Brothers will be received. But the Alaska stint, where I felt ~~like~~ that I could by-god outwork, and certainly outdo in focus, anybody else in sight, was a great restorative. Also, the bandy right leg finally is improving, under regimen of walking 6-7 miles a day: more or less, walking around the n'hood in the morning, ~~usually~~ usually as soon as we get up (C has been regimening with me), then almost an hour on the track, 3:30-4:30, then around the n'hood again at sunset.

Sunday night at sunset, we had more spectacle than bargained for, a fire on the Sound. The fishboat Patrician burned; it had caught, according to a bicyclist who was watching it from the top of the hill when we arrived to that usual viewpoint, about three minutes before. We could make out a person in the water just north of the blaze, and watched a pleasure boat arrive and, presumably--we couldn't see this--pluck him out. The long black foxtail of smoke from burning diesel spread south, hanging just beneath the visual line of the far ~~side~~ shore of the Sound, ~~in~~ as far as could be seen. A dozen or so pleasure craft

Aug. 12 cont.--and a southbound tug eventually clustered around the boat; there was an early moment of several of the pleasure craft making course for the blaze at once, like waterbugs. The evening was pretty, the Olympics in soft blue-haze outline and the western sky patterned with cirrus; the sun, half-screamed by a cloud, made a big orange ember, the blazing boat a smaller one. After 10-15 minutes, what we thought was a fireboat--read later it was a Coast Guard utility boat--came very fast up the Sound, moved in on the blaze, it began to diminish.

Fishermen Tread Water And Watch Boat Erupt in Flames

By Larry Lange

Two Seattle men were injured yesterday and barely made it overboard after their 26-foot fishing boat caught fire in Puget Sound off Richmond Beach.

Sam Hinse, owner-operator of the boat, "Patrician," and his passenger, Art Schreiber, were taken to Harborview Medical Center with minor injuries and later released.

The fire igniting about 8 p.m. as the two men, both commercial fishermen, were enroute to the salmon banks off San Juan Island for commercial salmon harvesting, Hinse said.

Hinse said he believes the fire started in the engine's fuel injectors. He said he cut off the tanks, which held 200 gallons of diesel fuel, then emptied two fire extin-

guishers in an attempt to put out the fire, but had to abandon the effort.

The two then jumped overboard into the sound, he said.

"Ten seconds later, things started blowing up," he said in an interview last night. "The cabin fell in. The windows blew out. The radar exploded. "We cut it pretty close," he said.

The Coast Guard dispatched a 41-foot utility boat to the scene, and it extinguished the blaze, but had to return to the scene about an hour and a half later to snuff it a second time after it restarted, said Lt. David Glenn of the Coast Guard's Seattle station.

The boat later sank, Hinse said.

After the two men jumped overboard, they were

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picked up by a pleasure craft, "Kimshell," which later transferred the men to the Coast Guard utility boat for a trip to Shilshole Bay Marina. The men were then loaded aboard an ambulance for the trip to the hospital.

Hinse suffered from minor hypothermia as a result of his jump into the Sound, and Schreiber suffered a bump on his knee jumping off the burning boat.

The boat is based at Fishermen's Terminal. Hinse said he still holds is commercial license and that the boat is insured. He said he plans to purchase another boat and continue fishing once he obtains an insurance settlement from the fire.

"We were very lucky," he said of the escape from the fire.

D

Aug. 18--Hard news at b'fast this morning, the wire service story that Robert Kirsch died. I feel true loss, in a couple of ways. One is the general sorrow that good writing has lost probably its best friend in this country, the single reviewer who was willing to meet each book on its own terms and like it--or not--regardless of who wrote it, who published it, who anythinged it: the book was its own point, to him. The other sense of loss is specific and personal, that I have lost the chance to know something about myself from his reaction to Winter Brothers, if he had reviewed it. Kirsch wrote what I consider the best review of Sky, best not only because he praised it but because he told me new things about it, and about me, and about our time in history.

And goddamn it, he was only 57. It was cancer, which is becoming the plague of our time.

It's now 9:30; in just over 2 hrs, Frank and Lucie arrive. It may be a rugged visit, Lucie's health so iffy the past month or more. C seems in a solid enough mood for it, surprisingly sanguine. I am going to try be attentive when I'm around, but also to use the couple of weeks as a lever for work, try ~~to~~ lurch various things--Montana trip and speech, G'heim, this fall's bookstore trips, as well as some Runners revision--as far along as I can. I've noticed I haven't been exerting work stints of the sort ~~as~~ I used to, as when I'd grind out some project in a given amount of time. I think--hope--I don't have to be as grim about it as I likely was then, but I could stand to force-march thru some of the accumulation around here.

Mark and Lou Damborg here for supper last night. It'd been a long time since they were here--we met for brunch at America's Cup earlier this summer--in our casual friendship with them.

24 Aug.--10:25, C and her folks about to leave for church. I'm taking a day to tinker, get ready to go to Dungeness tomorrow, try to think. Central topic: the remaindering of Sky, 2900 copies. C's first reaction, when Marcia's letter came y'day, was that we ought to buy 'em all. On reflection, the hassle of trying to do something with that many--a half or third that total might manageable--looks tough. Will try work it out this afternoon. Right now my instinct is to buy perhaps 500, to sell at speeches, and even that total could be a boondoggle.

The dumping of Sky evidently--it'll take some phone calls Monday morn to try find out--is response to the IRS policy on inventories, out of the Thor case. It's costly to me because Winter Bros coming out will spur some sales of Sky, especially in Mont. One more damn thing in the book business, which seems to have the dodgiest economics conceivable for everyone involved, publisher, bookseller, writer. Cost-efficiency just doesn't seem to be in it. For ex, the six weeks or so I'm allotting for the huckstering of Winter likely is not going to earn me anything--the book unlikely to get beyond my \$15,000 advance--so I'm in essence doing the work for HBJ; yet for the sake of booksellers and my own need to have a reputation as a writer whose books sell (regionally) and who'll work to sell them, I figure I ought to do it. Maybe this all will pay off on some book--Sea Runners, Last Roof, something, but I wouldn't bet on it.

Extremely busy week. I did make the needed progress on Runners, rewriting nearly twenty pp, up through the escape. I've lost the days, but I think on Tues. I met Ted Lucia for lunch at the Cont'l to talk about signing parties here and in Montana, where he is now; did most of a day of chores downtown--amid it, looked in on the new B. Dalton's, a real factory, and went by Elliott Bay Books, met Dan Chasan browsing there--then on Friday had lunch with Dick Brown, U. of Oregon history dept. head; came back from walking the n'hood that evening, found a Montana car in driveway, it was Carmen and John McDowell of Thompson Falls, looking me up to see if I'm real, first groupyism of that sort. Phone calls and letters flashed in and out: Susan

24 Aug. cont.--Pelzer of Wkly wanting me to review new novel Alaska, I agreed to look at bnd galleys, opened to first p. and saw it began in mid-19th c. Sitka, slammed it shut and told her I couldn't have anybody else's Sitka-version colliding with my own just now; Montana booksellers wanting me to do signings in late October; Ted Lucia calling with surprising news that HBJ will pay promo travel \$\$ for me; I wrote Peter Matthiessen and Michael Arlen asking them to be G'heim references.

Dick Brown of UOregon proved pleasant; he's going to use p'back of Sky in his western history course, has been using Coming Into the Country. By coincidence, in early 50's he used to ride the Milwaukee thru Ringling on way from S. Dak. to Reed College, undoubtedly at the time Grandma and I lived there and I wrote of in Sky. He is undertaking what sounds to me the best regional history idea I've yet heard out here, The Great Raincoast of North America, to try do for this region what Webb did on Gt. Plains.

Y'day, work of another sort, working on veg garden in the morning and in the afternoon, tackling the fence project on the hill. Wrestled the concrete post-base into position under the post that needed it, sawed off rotting grape-stake ends and painted them with creosote, and am calling it good, for this year, up there. Two post-bases and some similar sawing needed on bottom section of fence, then will call it a year on that too, hoping I have the thing shored up enough to get through winter.

Mood at the moment: a bit frayed, having to zing off in so many directions. But I think Sea Runners is going well--C thought the pace very quick and good in the last dozen or so revised pp. she read the other night--and with luck, by this time next week I'll have considerably more done on it, out of the Dungeness days, and perhaps the G'heim application as well; with more luck, taped Sky voices selected for Billings speech.

To refine the above: I am happy enough to be busy, but still a bit baffled and put off by the celebrity business.

28 Aug, Juan de Fuca motel--9:10 am, and shortly I'll begin breaking up the work array I've had here since Monday afternoon. Some time was needed for momentum--Monday's work so-so, Tuesday's full day more useful--but y'day was a greatly valuable time on the Runners ms. Details are in the Blue as the Odyssey file cards; enough to say here I worked over virtually the entire ms--56 or so pages by now--in the day of virtually nothing but eating and drinking coffee and laboring. Some wondrous improvement in the ms. There's a line from Yeats that a poem should have the sound of a well-made box closing, and this ms seems to me to be getting well-made, dovetailed and sanded and even, already, somewhat sheened.

Scene in the 3 Crabs last night. I didn't arrive until about 7:15--worked until 6 or so, then went to the spit, a whooping evening with wind and the waves crashing up into the driftwood so that I didn't go far out, from ~~the~~ concern the water might slosh all the way across the spit--and the place was jammed. One small table emptied in the bar, and I grabbed it, ordered an old fashioned and oyster stew and garlic bread. In center of the bar was a table of a raucous half dozen or so, major domo'ed by a stumpy guy, logger or fisher, in wide red suspenders, workshirt, tin pants. Suddenly in came two huge-bellied raggy-bearded guys; the shorter one must have weighed at least 230, and the other one was big. They wore biker's leather jackets with an iron cross and GHOST RIDERS on the back, and with them was a skinny frizzhead of a girl, also in biker jacket, looking like a mop which somehow had been electrocuted. The bellies of the guys seemed to crowd the room, let along the rest of them. Uh-oh, I thought, here's trouble: the bikers were looming almost

28 Aug. cont--directly atop the table of Tin-pants. He squinted up at them, they at him. "Johnny," he shouted to the shorter biker, "how the hell are you?" "Bobby! How the hell are you?" Cross-clasp handshake--from the logger, "how's your mom and dad?", honest to god--and generally sloppy good feelings.

Table next to me, literally at my elbow, now emptied, and the bike gang of three took it. "Rum and coke with a twist," the huge biker said. "The same," peeped the girl. Sissies, I said in my head. "Beer," said the shorter biker. Sissies, in my head again. "And gimme a whiskey with it." So much for sissydom. Waitress takes order, huge guy asks for milk with meal. Renewed sissydom. "Bring me two more of these rum and cokes, too. Junk sissydom for good, I do.

29 Aug.--8:10 am. No telling how long it will last, but I'm still on the high from the ms work achieved at Dungeness. B'day dinner for Frank last night at Rodens, a good feed, and Jean and I had a couple of hilarious research races, each armed with a 1970 almanac, to look up when the St. Louis Browns became the B'more Orioles, etc. Carol had the good news from Marcia that HBJ has changed its mind about remaindering Sky. I returned call from Deb Easter at Pacific NW magazine, learned that they're dickering with HBJ for Winter Bros excerpt: \$1000 being asked for pre-pub'n use, \$400 for 2nd rights. Evidently Pac NW is swallowing hard and trying to bargain--a scene I regard with immense fondness after my years of scant magazine fees there.

3:10-- Carol and Lucie went shopping late morning, Frank and I had lunch of soup and rolls, talked a bit, then he laid down for nap and I went to Sh'line track to walk. Unexpectedly began to think about the book I'm calling Last Roof on Tough Creek; came home a bit after 2 with all of it fresh in my head and have just now finished about an hour of making file cards--characters, places, language, including the possible epigraph, "They thought they was hard men..."

29 Aug. cont.--This is an unexpected bonus of the creativity which began flowing at Dungeness, I suppose, all the more strange because there was not much sign of it this morn when I looked over the Runners ms again: made half a dozen notes of things I might do to that, but had no real urge to undertake them just now, instead did the list of reviewers for HBJ publicity dept. and other minor tinkering. But I think what was specifically working was a story Frank told last night, of eating in the Twenties in a NY place called something like the Elegant Buffet, nicknamed the Eat 'em and Beat 'Em, because you simply told the cashier what you'd had. In the walking at the track, which often is a creative time for me, I began wondering if I could use, or adapt, Eat 'em and Beat 'em in the Montana book, then trying to contrive some similar nickname, came up with the Cat's Breakfast. From that, and the process is mysterious to me here, flowed the other material I've just put on cards.

I've been fortunate to read in recent weeks the Ian Watt book on Conrad, where he points out all the Conrad books that came out of one or two voyages. Encouraged me to do what I've been avoiding, going back to some of the Montana material similar to House of Sky's. With Winter Brothers and Sea Runners I'll have at least 2 books between the Montana ones, and I think I can afford--the rate at which Last Roof seems to be creating itself in my head, I daren't think otherwise--to do a sort of reprise.

My mood, needless to say, is splendid, though I think it has to simmer down soon. Tiredness ought to set in, if nothing else. But glorious, and advantageous as hell, while it's lasted.

Sept. 12--Two tinkering days, after the week of work and deliberate not-work on the coast. Have answered letters, and a few phone calls. As an experiment, I left on the message machine while we were gone, and the tally was on 16 when we came home; that seemed an appalling total, until we figured out it was only a couple of calls per day across a week. In exactly half the cases, the caller(s) hung up rather than talk to the machine. Anyway, nothing of much significance in the messages, and I've tried simply to nudge details off my desk, to get ready for resumed work on Runners next week. Have given copies of the ms sample to Ann McCartney and Margaret Svec, will do same with John and Jean when they come to supper tonight.

The main catching-up is from Wednesday, Sept. 3. Carol's folks left on the plane that morn. After lunch we were in a mellow mood, mutually invited one another off to the bedroom; on my way, I flicked on the message machine, came back in a minute to hear that C had the speaker on and Michael Arlen was calling to say he'd happily be one of my G'heim references. "That's nice," I deadpanned to C. "Let's screw." Then, not so much later, Jean called to report their house had been broken into, half their silver stolen, and they were cancelling out of the coast trip.

The trip itself was one of the luckiest ever in weather. The only rain came just after we'd hiked off Shi-Shi Beach--we were in the museum in Neah Bay. Otherwise, it was bright or brighter. So much sun at D'ness Sp^{it} the last two days we felt it hard, pulled off the Spit early.

Book news is that HBJ is printing 10,000 of Winter, much more than I'd been expecting. The cover has arrived, and I like it greatly, although the flap copy ~~is~~ has a few silly errors.

My mood remains pretty good, though I haven't managed to gear up on any writing these two days. Ideas are flowing, oddly enough, for Last Roof as well as Runners;

Runners work indeed is mostly matters of detail at the moment. I'm behind in a few things, especially on the G'heim application, but think I'll simply put it off for a week or more and do it under pressure.

Sept. 23--Useful day on Runners, the first time I've got to the ms since the 18th. Friday and y'day, wrote this year's G'heim application. Had just come home y'day late morning from Copy Mart with G'heim xeroxes when phone rang, it was Bill Blair, publisher of Country Journal, wondering if I could meet him for lunch. He'd been interviewed at S. Times by Linda Daniel, who touted me--why, I can't fathom; G and I bump into Linda about once every 6 years; also, I'd met Blair's partner, Dick Ketchum, a year or more ago when he passed thru here. Calculated a little and said I'd meet him within an hr at the Wash. Plaza, and did. Blair has a Presbyterian accent, if that's possible: grew up in Scotland, son of a minister, and while he doesn't have heavy burr, there is a distinctness somewhere at the back of his words. He's probably about sixty, and is the "money man" who, as pub'r at Harper's, "had a run-in with a fellow named Willie Morris," as he put it. Is out here talking to adv'ers, and guys like me, about prospect of Country Journal selling more in this area. I told him what I guess he'd been hearing, that it's thought of out here as a New England magazine.

Somehow the current status of Harper's came up, I said I thought the issue before it ostensibly died was the single crankiest issue of a magazine I'd ever seen. He agreed that Lapham's editing is cantankerous, in the worst abstract way: never a fact in the magazine. Said he saw Lapham recently, L told him the new foundation ownership has neither given him any editorial direction nor even asked him what he's up to--simply pays the loss, which is running at \$1½ million per year, "out of petty cash."

The weekend, we went to Dungeness with Frank and Linda. Hiked 10 or so miles on Sat.--out to where Graveyard starts--then fooled around on Hurricane Ridge the next morn. Fairly low-key weekend, undbtdly good for Carol--whose idea the trip was--on her last weekend before beginning teaching again. Just now, at end of her second day, she seems over any nervousness, happily settled back at it.

Sept. 23 cont.--I feel over a considerable hump of work by having the G'heim application out of the way, and believe I've made good progress on Runners since the start of last week. There was a bleak day or so in there, when I realized the ms was not nearly so far along as I'd thought after the Dungeness stint of work on it; readings by Margaret Svec and Ann McCartney confirmed this, both of them having some trouble with the start. I tinkered again with the lead--my god, how much time have I spent doing that, on how many pieces of writing--and moved material around to intro Melander sooner, got the revise under way; today, it felt as if the ms is starting to get good, ~~the~~ snapping into place.

I'm feeling pretty good, stymied only by the defunct sauna at Shoreline when I'd like to sweat off some weight. Had some dubious moments last week and at D'ness, when it seemed I might be coming down with a bad wisdom tooth; but the sensitivity back there has quieted down the last couple days, I'm biding to see what happens. My leg bothers much less, and I'm trying to make a regimen of hanging from a bar and of doing sit-ups.

Great news of last week, of course, was defeat of Dixy in the primary. Carol was exultant, I was as close as I can get, generally switched low on politics as I am these days. Dixy has been an incredibly wretched governor, inept at administration and ~~vindictive~~ vindictive and arrogant--the worst of all worlds. I may have somewhere in the diary of 4 or so years ago Harriet Bullitt's comment to me that Dixy couldn't even administer the Pac Science Center, a remark I truly took to heart.

29 Sept.--Strong day of work, two fresh pp. of dialogue written--Melander and Karlsson persuading Braaf to join the escape--and 6 pp. edited.

Day didn't start particularly well, had trouble getting awake. Laid down for 15 min. or so, trying to think up dialogue, and was just getting up when phone rang. Ann Garvin, saying Marcia had good news. Then Marcia, repeating that she had good news. Holy moly, I thought, what's going to live up to this billing? It was a remarkably fulsome blurb response from Wallace Stegner; I jotted only a bit, since Marcia is sending a copy, but the thrust is that Winter Bros is what he's long wanted western writers to do, "find the Western present in the real Western past." So, joy in Mudville.

Spent ~~the~~ y'day morn on washing, making soup, etc., then to Rodens for their comments on Runners ms. Remarkably detailed criticism from both J & J, some good ideas. Also, they both seemed to, and Carol agrees, get a kick out of having the ms to focus on, have the change of pace of it.

Saturday, we put the next-to-last post base (for this year) in place, in fast order. I notice the exertion in my right leg, so am contemplating whether to gut through doing the last one, or letting it go thru the winter. The leg quieted down markedly through last week until the post work; am trying to hang by my arms, for sake of leg and back, 2-3 stints per day.

Marsh came to lunch today, after talking to C's classes. He seemed a bit fagged, which he admits is his usual condition. He is a good man in a life not quite suited to him, and I grieve a bit for his situation.

Rain began today, in true earnest, just after I rode to campus with C at 2:30. Still (4:40) coming down generously.

Phone rang the other night, likely Thursday, and it was John Jackson, Montana writer--I think he wrote a novel called Blind Pig. Now living in Hamilton, but calling on behalf of writers' series being put on in Butte. I told him I'd read in the series if I ever was in the area at the right time, but didn't see it happening anytime soon. He finally more or less accepted that, said how much he'd liked Sky, then, when I said I'd be through Missoula in

29 Sept. cont.--a month or so: "Well, maybe I'll ~~go~~ come in and get Kittredge and Crumley, and we'll all go get fucked up together." Told him I didn't think I was up to drinking with them in a herd, might have to do it in platooning over a span of time. "Yeah, you may be right there. I dunno what you weigh, but I guess the four of us would be just about a half a ton of writers."

Can't remember if I noted Pac NW purchase of Winter excerpt, the Ebeys Landing day, for \$400. Also will have review by Jack Bæenner, I assume in same issue. Carol Lazare, HBJ rights mgr, called, said oh so casually she just wanted to keep in touch, then announced the sale, the first and likely last marketing she's managed to do since the Tri-Q excerpt. She said New West is looking at Winter, and 40 other ~~ers~~ mss, all of it amid its change of ownership under Texas Monthly. I see no hope there.

So: the Stegner news was very fine, and the day's work was good. Quit while I'm ahead.

6 Oct.--Stegner quote, read to me on phone by Ann Garvin:

"Doig's reconstruction of the life of James Gilchrist Swan is informed, sensitive and lit by a high-powered imagination, and in playing back and forth between 19th and 20th centuries, in putting himself intimately in the minds and territory of Swan, Doig does what I have been wanting Western writers to do for a long time: find the Western present in the real, not the mythic, Western past. Not much in the Western present derives from Billy the Kid, Pat Garrett or Hopalong Cassidy, but a great deal derives from men like Swan, some of them still to be rediscovered. I admired Doig's *This House of Sky*, a splendid exercise in identify. I admire this book for its broadened horizons and greater historic resonance and for the way Doig stays stubbornly at the heart of his West or Wests. He is not only a writer to be watched, he is already important."

7 Oct.--8:20 a.m.: Y'day's mail brought photocopy of the full Stegner quote, so Ann G. did not fumble it as I thought she had. Y'day also marked, I think, the last writing on the ms sample of *Sea Runners*. Unless I find some unsuspected inspiration in the next day or so, this is the version I'll have Merlyn type up. As I noted on a Blue card, I'm in the odd position of knowing that I've improved the ms sample immensely in the past 3 weeks of work, yet feeling less sanguine about it than I did then. Nerves, I suppose.

Fog this morning, after brilliant days of Indian summer. In about half hour, I leave for W. Seattle library and the start of this season of Winter Brothers. So far, schedule for the next 2 months includes 5 readings, the Billings speech, the booksellers' dinner 20 min. talk, and 15 bookstore appearances. Not much by standards of authors who are on the national circuit, but for me, considerable. Am going to see if I can relax into as much of this as possible, take it as it comes. For one thing, there is less pressure about this book's sales than I felt about *Sky's*, which I knew to be my main shot, ever; I have the money out of the first printing already, in the \$15,000 advance--indeed, out of some 1,200 or so copies beyond the 10,000 first printing; and I've been deep enough into ~~Winchester from~~ *Sea Runners* to not think about much else but it.

7 Oct. cont.--I'll in fact have to gear myself up considerably on Winter Brothers again, which I regard with great affection and no little bafflement; each time I take a look at it I continue to think how odd a book it is. Am truly looking forward to copies of the book, maybe early next week, to see how it reads then. So far, Winter shows signs of exceeding what I wanted: to get out a respectable book as pronto as possible after Sky. Both Edward Hoagland and Wallace Stegner have now said it's better than Sky, a notion I agree with in some technical terms--Winter is as crafted a book, technically, as I maybe can ever do--but possibly indicates it's more a writer's book than a reader's. I.e., Stegner and Hoagland, and Kittredge and Archie, all seem to react to the trove of Swan's diaries, more or less say they savvy how rich and fortunate the material is.

All in all, my mood is pretty good, pretty even-keeled. The minor rebellions of my body even are damping down a bit; Dr. Stuart at Cp Health y'day afternoon diagnosed my bleeding at the butt as hem'd, and the irritation in my upper left gum as cankers. Both gave me some hell on the weekend, particularly the gum, which was tender enough to make me wonder if it was an abcess. But ther@ is progress: my leg is almost unbothersome, almost normal. Have not resumed jogging, and doubt that I will for a while yet, hoping that the walking and dangling by my arms and the sit-ups will get the leg truly normal again, and then I'll see about easing into running. Took a sauna at Sh'line y'day, 1st time in ages--sauna has been only lukewarm since early summer--and weighed 155 afterward, still heavy but down a pound ~~is~~ from a month or so ago.

On the weekend, Sat. morn we went through a bit of the flummox we've vowed to avoid, C asking what I wanted to do, me saying Jesus, I dunno, I mostly don't want to have to schedule one more thing. We worked it out that we'd go up to the Skagit game range, found hunters when got there, the morning haze was clearing at Mt Baker and we headed there. Artist's Point trail was almost as people^s as Coney Island--cars in the jammed lot were

7 Oct. cont--about half Wash'n, half BC--but C said it was the one place she didn't mind being in a crowd, and I pretty much agreed. Colors were wonderfully vivid, the huckleberry bushes in red flame; that's the most colorful single site and moment of the year we know out here, and the trip was a good one. Sunday, C did chores in the morning, I read and dabbled, and in mid-afternoon we went down to the locks, another crowd. Walked the south shore, from Commodore Park west to sts under Fort Lawton, a part of the city I think we hadn't been in.

9 Oct.--Distances. Much thought of them y'day, the crevices and chasms between people. In the audience at my reading at the downtown public library y'day morning, a couple of Skid Roaders drawn by the free coffee and rolls and a warm place to sit. They got up and left, with not great commotion but some, while I was in the midst of the Mt. Rainier day, the piece of Winter I'm most earnest about in these readings. From their point of view I was some rich writer, in a 3-piece suit, who deserved probably worse than mild disruption. Then had lunch with Clint and found we were a bit stiff with each other, a friendship of 16 or so years now dwindling away, it seems. Later, in sauna at Sh'line, I was the one doing the distancing, from 2 guys I find unnerving--Mark the campus go-for and the enormously fat guy who's a perpetual student and locker room hanger-on. Times, I wonder how the human race holds together at all, given our diversity and complexity.

The readings have gone pretty well, West Seattle's perhaps slightly better than y'day's downtown. 30-40 people in each instance.

Am not getting much else done, except dabbling at Montana trip reservations, mild desk cleaning; oh yes, did get together material for Sh'line library display on making of Winter Bros, as asked by John Backus. Merlyn will have the Runners ms sample retyped by tomorrow, then will copyread and send off to Liz, and the fates, on Monday.

9 Oct. cont.--4:40, just to note that ~~now~~ today's reading at NE branch library was the best yet, by considerable. Attention and questions were better, reflecting the UW-related population of the n'hood, I'm sure. Also, my reading choices, the Cape Alava day and last Mt. Rainier day, I think were better.

Classic autumn day, brilliant, a bit cool.

Call from Liz D this morn, to say HBJ had just told her copies of Winter had arrived. She also was checking to see whether Carol Smith ~~was~~ is handling overseas rights, I said yes, I'd stick with that. Told her the Winter advances are said to be 8500, she said that was really good, given the state of the book market, and said she's impressed with the way HBJ has handled the book.

15 Oct., 4 pm--Went to UW today because City Light notified the n'hood that power would be off for 5 hrs--new transformer being installed for the dev't on the hill, latest in succession of nuisances caused to the rest of us--and got home to discover the schmucks have changed the day, to Sat. morn.

Mostly rummaged at the U, bringing home books on Swedish folkways for Runners. Met Lew Saum for lunch at Eur'n Cafe.

First copies of Winter arrived Friday afternoon. Lovely production job. Also, looking thru it, the book seems to have fine language, I think as ~~accomplished~~ accomplished as Sky's, if without the emotional clout. It remains a singular book to me--~~beautiful~~ beautiful and still, as Carol Hill once said of the ms. Anyway, the exhilaration of its arrival lasted me thru the weekend. Monday was a day of chores, y'day was the last public library reading--attended by Ann and Sarah, on pluperfect behavior--and this afternoon and tomorrow, I'm on the talk to be given to the booksellers Sat. night.

Called Carol Hill, Monday morning, to thank her again for work on Winter Bros. Her work toward a novel hasn't jelled; said she seems to need the total, 24-hr-a-day immersion by which she did her other books, and she can't do that and a normal life. She has 5 weeks upcoming at the Macdowell Colony; I told her she'd

15 Oct. cont.--likely write half a dozen books there. She said she doesn't think she'll go thru life as a writer who doesn't write; if she isn't underway by the first of the year, she thinks she'll go back to work. Which is what I've expected.

Y'day, mailed to Liz the ms sample of Runners. One more flip of marble onto the roulette wheel.

Oct. 20, 4:30--An odd teetery time, waiting for Winter Brothers to reach the bookstores and the reviewers. First review came today, from Library Journal, a Los Angeles reviewer whose name is close to woeful and whose view of my stuff is the same. He was one of I think three reviewers unfavorable to House of Sky, and he's consistent on Winter Bros, saying I should have kept myself out of the book. So, all there is to do is to hope this guy is a counter-indicator again.

Also a letter from Sidgwick & Jackson announcing the remaindering of their edition of House of Sky. Sic transit gloria, Monday.

Other than fielding these kicks in the ribs, I haven't had a bad day. Spent an hour or more on the phone, on logistics of Montana and Oregon store appearances, and while I had been putting it off with dread, it didn't go badly. With the exception of calling the 800 number for a Hertz car reservation, which put me through to a woman like a computer with an accent I couldn't understand. Asked me for my something-something number. Blank me. Asked me for my executive identification number. Blank me. Finally told her I was self-employed and just wanted a goddamn car, which I would pay for by Visa.

Then worked at the Billings speech, which I've been doing in pieces, and tomorrow had better try to line out in fairly full chronology.

Sat. night, spoke to the Pac NW Booksellers; the p a system took a howling fit when I was about 3/4 done, I finally abandoned the mike, strolled out into the room and more or less bellowed a finish. I guess it went okay--"considering," as everyone said--and I at least won a sympathetic audience, but I've been a bit glum about the performance.

22 Oct., 4:20--Finished writing the Billings speech about 9:30 this morning, and life improved commensurately. Went to the bank, post office, had a sauna, came home for a light lunch, felt virtuous as hell. Occurred to me sometime on the weekend, when I was dreading the speech work or something else, that I ought to turn around my view of this autumn: think of it not as spate of book-selling and the like, with whatever ~~the~~ else I can squeeze in, but as a run of time which happens to have a few days a week of bookselling in it. ~~xxx~~ Today is the first day I've scrambled atop matters sufficiently to try that view.

Y'day, call from Liz, saying she likes Sea Runners sample, and my writing, but agrees it has the problems I suggested. Particularly, she said it needs more drama, and more dialogue; I at least go along with the latter. She said it's not a big money book, ordinarily she'd ask \$10-12,000 advance, but because she assumed a pub'r either will pay to keep me or pay to get me, she's not uncomfortable asking HBJ for \$25,000. I may be leaving the \$\$ total too much to her, or not have been forceful enough in my estimating--told her I'd like to realize \$25,000 a year out of writing; I don't quite know. Will try take some time in the morning and think about sending her an amending letter.

Called HBJ today for Sky sales totals for Billings speech: 17,500 Hardback, 10,800 paper. Ann Garvin also had Pub Wkly review of Winter Bros, read it to me, a straightforward descptn of the book and conclusion it's a unique portrait of the NW.

In this waiting time, I've tried to think what might happen with Winter Bros, whether it will get a major review--Newsweek, or NY Times or some such--which will send it on its way as the Time review did for Sky. I half expect it may happen, which means I half know that such lightning isn't likely to repeat itself. In any event, I have to keep reminding myself that the book is doing well, 9000 now advanced and the responses from Hoagland and Stegner.

The rest of my ordered copies came from HBJ y'day; something like 110 Winter Bros~~es~~ stacked in guest room.

Nov. 4, 3:50 pm--A day when I'd give much to see some glimpse of the future. It's election day, with the probability that Reagan will win: a prospect I can barely grasp. Meantime, Liz called late y'day afternoon to report Marcia Magill had offered \$7500 for the Sea Runners advance, and it may well mean I'll change publishers. Marcia seemed to tell Liz the problem was less with me and the ms sample than with serious fiction--HBJ thinks I'd sell better by sticking to non-fiction--but in any event, I can't abide that sort of advance unless absolutely forced to. Liz and I have agreed that she'll try Tom Stewart of Atheneum next. If he doesn't go for the Sea Runners sample, then we'd maybe better rethink--i.e., rework--before going on to her next candidates, such as Viking and Knopf. Liz's responses in this have been good, choosing quality houses as prospects for me.

Irony of this is that I thought, in choosing to do Sea Runners, that for once I was trying a commercial book, with a big galloping storyline and all.

Nov. 5, 8:30 am--Should begin the diary catching-up of the Montana trip, and I suppose I will, but this is a disheartening day. I know now how the Republicans must have felt in 1932. Along with my dismay at the election results, I have genuine fear--of the corporate thuggery that'll accompany Reagan to power, of war, of the ripping away of the few environmental gains, of the tone of this country. C says she thinks the vote was less ideological than just fed up with Carter and inflation, and that may be right. But god, some of the neanderthals who now come to office...

Another fear, I hope an irrational one, is that the Rep'ns will twist the political system, as Nixon tried to do; that they will install a kind of cloaked fascism. The country may be stronger than that, but I dunno. I suppose I've been at least this gloomy, the times Nixon won; this time seems imminently worse because of Rep'n control of the Senate and the Supreme Court.

Nov. 7, 8:10--More leg wees, although for a change, it's the left one rather than the right. Seem to have a pulled groin muscle--no inkling how it happened*--which last night had me hobbled all to hell. (*Joke to myself is that probably my sphincter contracted so drastically at the thought of Reagan as President, it produced the pull) Not a very timely ailment; today is a double-header of signing books at Sh'line and Olympia, tomorrow is two stores in Portland. Think I can get through things all right by staying sat.

Have just cleaned the typewriter keys, to evident improvement, and will try do brief catching-up of the Montana trip.

Flew to Billings Oct. 24; as my cab pulled up to the Sheraton, Dick Hugo and Jim and Lois Welch were outside, waiting for Ripley to come down and go driving with them. Good hilarious hello, first time I'd seen any of them since dedicating Winter Bros to the Missoula gang.

Sat in on first panel of the afternoon, on women's history, then met up with Mike Malone, he suggested we get some air. Went over to Hart-Albins bookstore, where I signed a few copies of Sky--they didn't yet have Winter Bros; the new mgr evidently isn't as savvy as Dorothy Lough was--then we went up the street to Penney's, where I bought a red-and-black plaid hunting cap. Mike reported on seeing Mark Wyman at the Western History Confce the week before, said he's much impressed with him, thinks Hard Rock Epic one of the ~~is~~ very best western history books; ~~is~~ would like to see U of Mont hire him. I didn't put that together until later, but that would be the position of Ross Toole, dying of cancer.

~~Returning to the Sheraton~~ Back at Sheraton, ran into Sue Mathew of Eastern, invited her for a cup of coffee, found a table open next to Jim and Lois Welch in the basement coffee shop. Intro'd Sue to them--surprising to me, I'm somewhat broader acquainted among Mont. lit and bookstore people than the other writers seem to be. Lois wrote in comment section of her meal check, "rolls inedibly gummy."

Nov. 7 cont-- Drinking started about 6, and since I was there early to try brace conference organizer Jeff Safford about tape recorder arrangements for my lunch talk the next day, I happily coincided with Norman Maclean. He gave a little skip-and-dip as we came together to shake hands, I said warmly "How are you, sir?" We had about 15 minutes together before others got to us; learned that he has done the first draft of the Mann Gulch book, proclaims he is sick of it, has been fighting it too long (5 years, he said): "Jesus, to get up every morning and have to kill those guys again..." His schedule is a lot like mine: ms work in the morning, then some house chores, then late aft'n, tackle some letters, of which he says he has a constant backlog. He looked good, very much as he had at Miss'a a yr and a half ago; I think possible was wearing the same brown suit. Offered to buy him a drink, he said no, he never eats or drinks before speaking. Some friends came up then, and Norman joked that "a little red-headed history professor from Missoula"--Hampton, of whom more later--was going around boasting he could drink Ivan Doig under the table. I said hell, that was dead right, so could g Girl Scouts, little old ladies in wheelchairs...A bit later, a second tease from Norman, when someone asked me where I live now and N said, can't you tell, he has a Seattle * accent?

The banquet was ungodly slow getting started. The line so clogged the door to the banquet area that Dick Hugo scouted it a couple of times, came back and said forget it, and we all--by now the ^{lobby} ~~lobby~~ crowd had pretty much thinned to writers: Welches, Dick, Ripley, Bud and Carol~~e~~ Guthrie, me--would have another drink. Finally got in and to the head table, and again, nothing progressed. We'd all been being pretty careful with the booze, knowing there was a long night ahead, but after 20 mins. or so of inactivity, I volunteered to forage for drinks; found the bar closed, had to crash a wedding reception or some such and wheedle a Jack Daniels and water apiece for Dick, Ripley, Jim and me. (Lois sensibly had abandoned the scene, feeling as if coming down with flu.)

Nov. 7--cont.--Was sitting next to Dick, so talked with him a bit; said he's writing a play, which isn't going well, may give it up. He's guest-prof'ing at Arkansas this semester, for \$25,000--which Kittredge subqly told me is a \$1000 more than he makes a year at Missoula.

Hampton, seated down at a table just to the left of us, was getting merrier and merrier, went and fetched us some bottles of booze; in I suppose the proper ambience for a Montana History Confce, Jim and I had 3-4 bottles standing on the table in front of us. On that trip or another, Hampton put a foot--his entire leg, rather--down the treacherous space between the head table platform and the back wall, luckily was unhurt, although he went down as if poleaxed and his glasses flew off under the platform.

When Norman at last got to talk, he shook considerably as he read from his ms, and the talk wasn't as fine as the one in Missoula, but it still was very good. His theme was the poetry in Montana prose--"poems...just short of invisible to the passing eye...Their rkythm should be not showing, but invisibly felt..." Some of this of course is what I've tried for in Sky and Winter, but never have talked about it with Norman or anyone else, so it was almost eerie to hear Norman say it.

Carol Guthrie invited me up for a drink afterward, so I spent about an hour with her, Bud, Carol's son, the Koelbels of the Missoula bookstore, and Debbie someone who used to work for them. Bud is shuffling and frail-seeming, but alert and tough as ever; must have the constitution of the legendary army mule. Said he began at the first of Sept. to write the sequel of his mountain men, roughly 1845-70, has six chapters done; astonishing undertaking for a guy of 80, and we're all hoping he's regained the quality he lost in his more recent books.

Call from Dick Hugo to the G's room about 11:15, Dick suggesting it was about time we talked over the next morning's panel. Bud, Carol and I went up; Him was already there, drinking Heinekens with Dick and Ripley.

Nov. 7 cont.--Bud ~~is~~ added a Heinekens to the couple of glasses of white wine he'd had in his own room; by then, I was passing--sober, but not able to mix any more kinds of booze than I'd already had. Dick more or less worked out with us what might be done on the panel, it mostly came down to us free-lancing whatever we pleased.

Out of that, for whatever reason, the panel the next morn proved to be the hit of the convention. Dick did two intelligent moves as moderator. After telling a little story about how it took him 52 years to write his poem about White Center but only the first day or so in the state before his initial Montana poem was done, he said after panel go-round we'd take questions. He added that he knew there always was some Groucho Marx in the crowd who would ask, what's the capital of South Dakota, but he, Dick, knew what the capital of SD was and would damn well tell any panel member, so Groucho, you might as well save the question--which evidently put the audience on its mettle, as the qns were very good. The second thing was, Dick suggested we talk about the place of Montana in our work, turned to Bud--who rasped, "You gave me the wrong cue, Dick." Dick with fine aplomb said, all right, Bud, what cue do you want?--and Guthrie went into a spirited recital of Montana writers of the past, got everyone fairly whipped up about Montana's literary heritage.

Nov. 10--Trip to Portland and Olympia has intervened. Friday the 7th, signing at Sh'line bookstore, sold abt 50. C then drove us to Olympia for 4:30-6:30 signing at Fireside Books in the Olympian Hotel; sold 41 of 50 there. Then had dinner at Gadbaws and talked with the book group, mostly doctors and lawyers, which had invited me down. Next morning to Portland, C doing all the driving because of my game leg (pulled muscle). Horrendous weather, deluge after deluge, which cont'd all day in P'land. Sold 25 or so copies at Annie Bloom's, which I thought slow but the store people thought okay, then 35 or so at House of Titles, again thought good by the store mgr.

Nov., 10 cont.--That night we met Oreg'n book editor Paul Pintarich and his wife for dinner at Jake's. Hellish drive to get there, dark streets and black rain, and coming ~~off~~ along Burnside we ran full-length over a traffic island which neither of us had seen. The Pintariches proved a surprise, both of us expecting from Paul's phone voice that he'd be a brash 30-yr-old; instd, he looks 50ish, is full of obliquities right enough but also very funny. His wife Pat made us both blink: a tall beauty, looking about 30--but they've been married 18 years. They reported that once they kept track of their weights during a festive weekend, and at the end Paul had put on 7 pounds, Pat not an ounce. At dinner she went thru 3 glasses of wine, deepfried zucchini appetizers, some bread, the meal, and then a lethal chocolate dessert of some sort. Paul is in one of those strange straddles the Oreg'n seems to specialize in. He runs the book page, yet has no title; in fact, as I understood it, Malcolm Bauer, semi-retired and called "senior associate editor," whatever the hell that is, nominally is in charge. Weird, like a lot else about the Oreg'n. Anyway, Pintarich is a true book enthusiast, and aspiring writer, working on a book. Best line of the evening came from him, when he parodied our new-style-personable waiter: "Hi, my name is Ralph and I m your waiter, let me tell you the story of western civilization."

Today has been chore day, delivering review copies to Times and P-I, pics for ill'n to Susan Pelzer at Weekly. Mixed bag of a day. Larry Rumley at Times shows no more interest in Winter Bros than if I'd written an Abyssinian cookbook, just as he didn't when Sky won an NBA nomination. I think I'm maybe below average in author ego, but Rumley is a bane to me, with his notion that all books are the same, like squares of linoleum. C and I think we have figured out that he doesn't really like books; if he likes anything about being book editor, it's the fact of getting to spend his time reading rather than out working on a story. At the Weekly, prospects for Winter Brothers look good; Pelzer plans to divide the front page between review and interview with me.

Nov. 10 cont.--Other good news of the day is phone call from Ted Lucia to C while I was downtown, saying Pacific Pipeline has ordered another 800 copies, after initial 700. Ted called earlier this morn, to ask me to do a couple more signings, and said then there'd been a gap of a week or two when HBJ went back to press for the 2nd printing of 2500, when nobody was getting books. Evidently booksellers then drew on Pacific Pipeline, depleting their initial 700, so for once a distbn gap has worked out okay.

4:05 now, feeling pretty good but a bit weary after half a day of running chores. Again, I haven't made it to the Montana trip for the diary. Maybe tomorrow.

Nov. 11--Picking up the Montana trip again. Two more stories from the Billings conference. On the panel, Bud Guthrie talked first, then Spike Van Cleve, then some back-and-forth between them, so that some time passed, perhaps half an hour or so, before Dick Hugo turned to the end of the table where Jim Welch and I were, and asked me to say something. I couldn't resist, so I grinned and started: "Pretty easy money at this end of the table," which brought down the house because it was both admiring of Bud and Spike yet twitted their amount of talking. And, I forgot this in the narrative of Maclean's talk, Hampton of the UMont history dept passed out sitting up in the final five minutes or so of Norman's talk; what's more, did so with a glass clutched in both hands onto his chest, where a corpse would clutch a lily, and with the attentive steering of a buddy who'd come around the table to squat by Hamp, he managed quietly to throw up in that ~~glass~~ glass and others. When the talk was over, Norman got a standing ovation--everybody but Hamp and his attendant, that is--then Hamp was packed off. He didn't show much chagrin the next day, or more astounding, much hangover, but when I saw him in Missoula a week later, swore he was off booze. Two filigrees on this. When I saw him in Missoula, Hamp was with Bill Farr, and Farr straight-faced assured Hamp he'd heard about his Billings behavior even up at Heart Butte. Then someone, can't recall who, told me what is likely instant

Nov. 11 cont.--apocrypha that the UMont historians, Hamp and Fritz and I don't know who else, went home by way of Harlow and WSS, drinking from town to town, and got so bad in one place that the ranchers and local rowdies at other end of ~~the~~ the bar asked of the bartender in incredulity, Who in hell are those guys?

No small irony, then, that we writers turned out to be the soberer and stabler citizens at Billings. It was notable that all of us are in pretty good shape and have work underway.

I flew to Gt. Falls on Saturday ~~night~~, was met at airport about 5 by Wayne and the girls. Not much more than two hours later, the two of us were in his camper headed for Cow Creek, near Blackleaf Canyon west of Pendroy. Pulled in there about 10 that night, and began a marvelous three days along the Rocky Mountain front.

Those days were so big and ravishing I think I'll never be able to deal adequately with them except in some book. Suffice to say that they're the most entrancing since C and I hiked the 5 days in the Bob Marshall in '77, and I'll try just give details here. --First morning, we were out just after daybreak, and tromped in fresh 3" or so of snow up the ridge angling NW from the camper (down by Cow Creek at fence corner). In 20 min. or so, saw another hunter on a stand in the trees, watching west toward the mtns, and went over to talk with him: John Paterson of Billings, who was with sizable hunting party of the neighboring rancher, Salanski. Talked in whispers for 3-4 min., when John looked uphill and said "what's that?" It was a herd of 8-10 elk, about 400 yds up in fog and snow. Neither Wayne ~~xx~~ nor John shot because of the dimness, and W and I took off to try circle closer to them. By Salanski's fenceline we cut their tracks, heading for a little butte of 3-4 saddlebacks just east of us. We hiked there, worked the timbered butte top, came up with nothing--went down, found the tracks again and discvd the elk had gone around the base of the butte, passing about 200 yds from the tailgate of the camper. We mock-cursed for not having slept in, for then Wayne

Nov. 11 cont.--could have downed one when he stepped out to take a pee, and kept tracking. The elk went, of all unexpected places, east out onto a big wedge-shaped flat of field, probably gradually veering away into the brush of Cow Creek. As we tramped after the tracks, looking like two dumb recruits being made to practice on an empty drill pad, a couple pickups of "road hunters," as Wayne scorns them, drove by looking at us curiously. "Doig, go tell 'em you're from Seattle and you're out here on this flat looking for elk, have they seen any?" suggested Wayne. "No, I'll go tell 'em I'm with ~~my~~ the outdoors editor of the GF Trib, you're out here looking for elk..."

--Hiking along this coast with C and our friends, I have a reputation for being sharp-eyed, but I rapidly found it amounted to little in Montana terms, Wayne time and again spotting other hunters at a distance several seconds before I could make them out. Yet I either started to catch on or am good at seeing motion, for ~~that~~ that afternoon I spotted 3 coyotes at considerable distance and had to point them out to Wayne, and the next morning, when we were on the east end of the butte NW of Cow Creek, I saw three does uprude from us about 150 yds, and again had to point them out to W. He drew bead--trying for a head shot, since the deer were standing looking back over their bodies at us--touched off a shot, the deer stood looking at us and we at them. He did the same again--again, deer gawking at us, we at deer. I couldn't resist. I was carrying W's shotgun, unloaded but with slugs in my pocket, since we'd learned the day before there were 3 grizzly sows with cubs in the area. I whispered to him, "Want me to start workin' on 'em with this shotgun?"

The days were full of smartassery and general good humor that way; I'm sure I have not cussed as much since the Air Force stint, and likely too I resumed a drawl which hasn't been heard in Montana since Dad and Clifford Shearer were drinking together in Ringling. We ate grandly--the total of BTUs through my body in ~~those~~ that trio of days must have been astounding--and with lunch and supper would have a pull of Lewis and Clark Blackberry Brandy, or a cup of cocoa laced with Lewis and Clark Peppermint Schnapps.

Nov. 11--1:30, Brant Morgan to come about 3 to interview me for The Reader, so will try spend half hr or so on more Montana details. Since this morning's entry, I've been to Edmonds, signed copies of Winter Bros at Morrrows' bookshop; had coffee afterwd with Jim. He said they've about tripled the store's annual \$40,000 in retail sales in the 2½ yrs they've been there; asked him what specific tricks they've learned, he said that ~~from now~~ he searches for every discount, any 1% or 2%, even if it means cash on the barrelhead instead of delayed payment, to beat the 60%, and also they've decided to push hardbacks rather than p'backs. Next I swung by the S. Times suburban bureau in Lynnwood, to leave copy of Winter Bros for Chas Aweeka, on chance he may do feature piece and thus get around Larry Rumley's supineness.

--Montana again. Or Again, Montana, not a bad title. 2nd day of hunting, just after Wayne missed the does, we looked down from the butte-top to see 4 deer in a coulee about 300-400 yds below us. Watched a minute, then saw a hunter tracking up the draw after ~~him~~ them; had ringside seat of him kneeling, sighting, knocking over a deer--a fascinating perspective, which Wayne said he'd never had, in all his years of hunting. The hunter was Ray Dawes of Fairfield, who'd come by the camper the previous afternoon; each year he camps, alone, in a tent there.

--There at Cow Creek, the total of wildlife seen was: the elk of the first day, the deer of the second, coyotes many hawks--~~about~~ 4, 5 at once circling the guts from Ray's deer--an owl, and a golden eagle we came onto from above, on the east end of the butte.

--The Rocky Mtn Front was stunning, on the 2nd day after the fog and snow cleared. We were under Volcano Reef; Old Man of the Hills emerged just north of it, then Walling Reef behind Dupuyer. Between each of those colossal horizontals, the dramatic canyons; Wayne and I toasted, with cocoa-and-schnapps, the image of Jim Hill's engineers hopefully peering into each canyon, only to find something like the Chinese Wall looming impossibly.

--We pulled out of Cow Creek early afternoon of 2nd day, the pickup chained up against the mud. Beat the mud okay, but a rock conked the muffler pipe apart.

Nov. 11 cont.--We pounded it more or less back into place, drove up to the natural gas test-rig drilling nearby, and on up to mouth of Blackleaf Canyon, where a posse of hunters were unsaddling their horses; then headed through Choteay and out the Augusta road toward Pishkun Reservoir for the night.

--The Front again unbelievable, as we drove head-on toward it in the dusk and descending dark. Clouds had piled atop the mtns during the afternoon, and stopped just even with the east face: in effect, doubling the height of the ~~mtn~~ mtn skyline, the towering black mass and outline against the clear sky all the distance to be seen north and south.

--On way in to Pishkun, Wayne spotted a raccoon in the ditch, stopped, went to back of camper to get his .22 Magnum pistol, 'coon pelts being worth about \$25. The coon played jack-in-the-box at me all the while Wayne was digging out the pistol, then when W got back, had absolutely vanished.

Nov. 14--Hectic, hectic. Liz called, when?--night before last, the 12th?--with word from Marcia that \$15,000 is as high as HBJ will go for Sea Runners. Told her by all means have Tom Stewart at Atheneum look at the sample.

Word y'day from Ted Lucia that Pacific Pipeline is taking another 1000 Winter Bros, which wipes out the warehouse stock of the 2nd printing. (Pipeline itself now has ordered total of 2500.) Will try call Marcia in about half an hour to say, how about more books?

Last night, 5:30-8:30 at the Frederick & Nelson benefit for the Rep, was as grim, in terms of sales, as the same occasion two years ago. Sold 10-12 books; maybe, in fact, more than I sold of Sky two yrs ago. Both a hilarious and infuriating thing: I'm next to Robert Alda, who's huckstering ~~his~~ 99 Ways to Cook Pasta. The Rep glitterati bought his book like crazy, hovered around him, one ~~hawk~~ Rep lady minding his books while he went for buffet. Alda's pitch: "This is not just a cookbook with recipes, this is also a book of stories! You can take it to bed with you!" Frequent addendum: "This is a family project! Alan took the cover picture!"

Nov. 14 cont.--This of course is just what I need at a time when HBJ is offering to semi-starve me for turning to serious fiction. Anyway, I had one whack during the evening. Wandering back with my plate from the buffet, I ~~was~~ stopped over Alda and said, "I dunno if you eat anything but pasta, but they've got some buffet grub back there," which drew a very leery look.

Nov. 16, 9:35 am--Abe Lincoln-style typing, by fireside in living room because the power has been off since 12:30 and the rest of the house, beyond the fireplace halo of heat, is a semi-arctic waste. The outage is thoroughly screwing up a day C and I had intended as a relaxed pecking-away at things. Instead, had to get the fireplace underway at 6:30, go to Denny's for b'fast, then walked the n'hood to kill more time, and the past hour or so have been reading newspapers or tinkering away at open house invites.

I suppose this is the logical end of this week, which has been thoroughly wacky. Began last Sat. in Portland, with the downpours that cut loose during my two signing parties there, went on thru Liz's news that HBJ won't budge above \$15,000 for the Sea Runners advance--then to the F&N Rep benefit party where I spent a day and a night next to Hawkeye's pasta-pushing papa (Robert Alda), and y'day to a day of a total of 15 or so books at the two inept Hunters stores in Bellevue. My mood is pretty good out of all this, although I could stand a sane and quiet Sunday rather than this version.

Just as I typed the above, 9:45, the power finally came on.

Nov. 17--9:10 am. Have just had a cup of Brim and an English muffin with honey to try gear me up for the day. Also, about 15 min. ago, had a phone call from Liz, saying she's waiting to hear from Tom Stewart of Atheneum, who told her the Sea Runners sample is "stunning" and said he'd talk with "his people" over the weekend to see what they can offer. Stewart originally told her, before reading, that \$25,000 sounded high. So now we'll see; Liz has a call ~~int~~ to him, then has to get back to Marcia.

All of this marking, in some cosmic glint of irony, the official publication day of Winter Brothers.

Nov. 18--Today's phone call from Liz was to ask whether either of my books had been taken by a book club. Told her "yes, but..." in the case of Sky; we agreed it sounded better than it'd been, and maybe would help our case with Atheneum. I asked her how prospects look, she says she's sure Tom Stewart wants to do it but Pat Knopf has to okay the money.

I promptly went to Shoreline, trying to shake off lassitude that set in y'day, or perhaps Sunday with that strange bollix of the power ~~not~~ being cut, and looked up Lit Market Place and couple other sources on Atheneum. Also re-read Hiram Haydn's account of its founding, and of his falling-out with Knopf and Bessie-- which landed him in happy embrace with Jovanovich! I dunno. Must simply try continue this publishing game at the level of editors, ignore the psyches on high. Atheneum's list of books for this fall is a pretty good one, quite a number of novels and even some poetry.

The mail brought letter from Marcia, answering my queries about advertising for Winter Bros and saying yes, they'll do a 3d printing. Not, however, saying when or how much.

So, I continue to sit tight, or at least squirm as little as possible. I remain convinced that I need to try attain \$25,000 for the Sea Runners, both for its credibility and mine. I think there's a little less than even chance that we'll get it from Atheneum; a better than even chance that they'll offer \$17,500-\$20,000.

Nov. 18 cont.--Also in today's mail, HBJ's statement on the new no-returns policy. It's going to shift the contract terms to a net basis, and that seems to me an awful bafflement for authors. I'm doubly glad Liz is on hand; given HBJ's control of all the pertinent figures for setting the "net", I'd feel like a Cessna pilot trying to navigate the black side of the moon, trying to outguess HBJ.

My mood? Not bad; am somewhat tired these days, the abrasion on the nerve ends of this contract situation-- Winter Bros & career--the waiting for reviews, and am resorting to a couple hrs nap after lunch, days when I'm not out at bookstores. Also wish I were achieving more toward either ^{See the reviews} Winter Bros or Last Roof; did manage to read a book of Swedish folkways this morn, but that's been about all. I suppose there just is no way I can realize how hectic a time this is, and evidently has to be, except by facing it day by day.

Nov. 19--Y'day's phone calls, as an index of how things go these days. Liz's call, as noted. Then Jeanne Metzger of Everett Herald, wanting Swan pics to go with a review. Then Deb Easter of Pacific NW mag, wondering if I'm interested in reviewing new Woody Guthrie biog. (No.) Then about 4:45, Raymond Sokolov, introducing himself by saying he's written review of Winter Bros for NYTBR (simultaneously cautioning me it may not appear because of space limits) but calling me because of column he writes for Natural History, on declining regional foods, seeking info about coastal tribes and salmon.

Nov. 21, 3:45--0 brave new world, with such decisions in't. Y'day morn just before 9:30, I borrowed a phone in the newsroom of the Bellingham Herald, listened to Liz say Atheneum had offered \$20,000 advance for Sea Runners, drew a breath and said let's take it, you done good.

The decision jangled at me through the day--bookstore parties in B'ham and Oak Harbor--and the long drive home through the wet dark, but today it still seems the sound choice. HBJ's original offer of \$7500 signaled that they haven't any faith in the Sea Runners; their upping of the offer to \$15,000 was a not-too-elegant effort to retrieve my interest, say that they didn't want to lose me as a writer. Ath'm has bid on basis of being impressed with the ms sample; Tom Stewart is an admired-in-chief, and I'd like again to be working with an ~~edit~~ ed-in-chief; and the money from them is considerably closer to my effort to make a more-or-less living wage out of writing. The decision in Ath'm's favor would have been much easier had they offered \$25,000 or \$22,500; \$20,000 was the minimum I had set in my mind, would have asked Liz to shop the ms around some more. She tells me she thinks we've done as well as we could, given the current pub'g scene; that she thinks Ath'm can market a book such as Sea Runners well; and she thinks highly of Stewart.

So, if I can get myself to realize it, the heaviest chores of this time are probably over now: the contract decision made, most of the out-of-town traveling for Winter Bros done, the outlook for Winter Bros reviews good.

Nov. 24, 11:05--Marcia called about 15 min. ago, having heard from Peter J'vich that I've turned down their contract offer. Much graciousness on both sides, as we mutually regretted having to work around ~~the~~ new situation of a middleman between us, and both protesting that there was nothing personal involved, as indeed there wasn't. I told her I feel I have to do the Sea Runners, and the next book after it, as fiction because that's the only way to get at the stories, ~~xxx~~ nine-tenths buried in history as they are; and that I needed support a book at a time. She said their feeling was that they hoped I'd do a big book of non-fiction, and that their offer of \$15,000 for the novel, \$25,000 for a non-fiction book, could become a package deal--which isn't the way it came across to Liz and me; instead, it seemed a wooing away from fiction, particularly in light of the original \$7500 offer on the novel.

Anyway, I guess it is now over, and as I stood in the living room a bit ago, drinking first sips of a cup of tea--phone calls come these days only at ~~maximumly~~ awkward moments: Marcia's as I was in the kitchen heating tea water, Liz's earlier this morning just as I stepped from the shower--and looking out into the birches, waves of realization went through me. I didn't gulp in apprehension, but close. Nobody ever said the decisions would be easy or without consequence.

Dec. 4--The Winter Bros season at last is winding down. Tonight, the U Book Store, the last big signing. Am idling down, catching my breath. Altho there are consequences even to that: just went to Edmonds for coffee and to buy Xmas card stamps, came home to phone machine message from Noah Adams of Nat'l Public Radio, his 2nd fruitless try at getting me.

Tuesday I flew to Pullman, a bruising day I should not have agreed to do. A reading and other activities at WSU fell thru, so all I did was go to the bookstore for 2 hours. It was a good signing, abt 55 copies of Winter and 40 p'backs, all they had, of Sky. But the delays--2 hrs late taking off from SeaTac, more than an hr from Pullman--and the bumpy flight, thru snowy weather, were rugged.

Dec. 4 cont.--Have been trying for days to get to the diary for some summing up of this year, some measurement of just how the hell I'm doing. The chores and tending to Winter Bros have taken all time. But in trying to think it over this morning, I have the impression it's been a surprisingly successful year. The root surprise, of course is how well Winter Bros has done; how strong and broad the coattails of House of Sky are proving to be. I'd hoped Winter might eventually sell 10,000, the absolute upper limit I could wish for. With 15,000 now in print, barring terrific returns it's going to outdo the wish-figure by quite a lot. This has happened with minimum trauma over reviews. The Seattle reviews--Times, P-I, Reader--all appeared Th'giving week, perfect timing for the booksellers, all were politely beneficial. There should be some national reviews, I would think yet this month, but I'm already home free without them; the reverse of Sky's history, for Sky needed reviews such as Time's to legitimize it.

The bookstore appearances to date have been solidly worthwhile, except for two fiascos: Readers Roost in Helena not having any books because of credit problems with HBJ, the Hunter's stores in Bellevue screwing up the ads and most other details of my Saturday there. I tally about 500 copies of Winter Bros sold in the 5 signings I did there, plus another 400 or so books I signed for stores to have on hand; and here, about 450 copies--will go over 500 tonight at U Bk Store, I should think--in a dozen signings. All in all, inking my name into books seems to create 10-15% of their national sales. Also, the small booksellers I've gone around to have seemed hugely happy with me--Oak Harbor, Olympia, Annie Bloom's in Portland. I've taken care, whenever the chance comes up, to point out that I'm trying to help out independent stores, never having gone to a Dalton's or Waldens.

A scattering of things I've either done right, or they simply worked out by luck. The talk to the PNW Booksellers group, a pain to write and a greater pain to try deliver through mike problems, caught the attention of Vito Parilli of Pacific Pipeline; realizing how much a regional book Winter was, he doubled his order, I think from 350 to 700--and rapidly ordered another 800, then another 1000.

Dec. 4 cont.--Among the luck has been the lack of any other strong regional book here this fall. In a sense, Winter is filling a void; according to the S. Times bestseller list, filling it to the point where Winter is 2nd only to Cosmos out here.

The great question, of course, will be whether it was wise to depart HBJ for Atheneum. That too has been a major process of working things out all thru this year: Carol Hill's leaving of HBJ last spring, taking on Liz as agent, writing the Sea Runners sample, bucking it along to Atheneum after HBJ's intial wan offer...I seem at least to have gained an effective agent, a new and interested editor, and at least \$5000 over what HBJ would come up with. Losses? They're yet to show themselves.

The writing year has been an odd one--although I don't know what a normal one would be. The two revisions of Winter Bros, carrying on into mid-March; the first 65 pp of Sea Runners, which I've had the illusion of not truly getting geared into, yet when I stop and count there are already 5 or 6 fully revised ms drafts; the two Montana speeches and the PNW Booksellers shorter talk--spent too much time on all but the Billings speech on the making of House of Sky, which I now hope can be something of a standard talk for awhile.

A thought about Winter Bros before I lose it. The best reaction I've had of it has been from other writers; Stegner, Lavender, Ann Zwinger, Hoagland, Dave Hawke, Kittredge, all have said admiring things to me or to HBJ about it. I think that's a sign that the book will have a growing reputation; it seems to me that even the academics will find it a better and better book, the closer they look at it. None of the reviewers yet has come close to the heart of the book, as Robert Kirsch did with Sky; it'll be interesting to see whether any does.

11:20--Mary Beth Bowen of Nat'l Pub Radio just called, asking for recmdn of actor to read Swan; I'd better quit diary for now, go to Sh'line for Wash. Posts to scan theater listings.

Dec. 4 cont.--4:30. Here's the way things go around here at the moment. Good news of the day is the NPR plans for Winter Bros, and letter from Tom Stewart of Atheneum calling the Sea Runners sample "some of the most exciting and brilliantly written adventure writing I've ever read." On the negative, the review in the UW Daily whips around at the end and faults me for something like being too imaginative, and the IRS again is dunning us for \$2900.

Dec. 16--Am feeling more frazzled than I have any right to be. Or maybe not: Reeburghs are in town from Alaska, and went home about 2 a.m., by which time I'd hit that physically-baffled mood where I was hugely weary and not at all sleepy.

Anyway. Life is okay at the moment, if I can just realize it. Called Ted Lucia today, evidently Winter Bros is down to last few hundred warehouse copies of its 15,000. Barring big returns, the book had done damn well. I did the last of the bookstore appearances last Sat.--noonhour at Frederick & Nelson, along with Archie Satterfield, and we each sold about a dozen books; then 1:30-3 at Montana Books in Wallingford. That, astonishingly, was a near-madhouse. I walked in, was met with 4-person KING tv crew filming for "6 or 7 minutes" on regional writers for a features show, then by somebody who had fished Sixteen Creek and wanted to show me his pics of it, then by a woman who does oral interp and wants to use some of Winter Bros, then by a message with Kaisa the store owner that a radio station, KIRO I think, wondered if I'd be interviewed about regional writing--and almost incidentally, some people were on hand to buy books. I considerably resented the tv crew, which simply assumes anybody will be delighted to cooperate with them; no, I think I resent having to face an unexpected situation of that sort, having to decide on the instant.

Sat. the 6th, we had our splurge open house, likely 60 or so people ~~thru~~ through here that evening. Everyone seemed to have a good time, though the pair of us found two unforeseen problems: the doorbell couldn't always be heard through the din of that many people

Dec. 16 cont.--in the house, and the bartending was an all-consuming chore. We spent most of our time on those two tasks, rather than visiting with guests.

Some good pieces of mail recently. Dave Hawke writes that he's voted for both Sky and Winter for American Book Award; I don't know, however, whether his vote is simply one out of hundreds. And Ted Schwinden, gov-elect of Montana, wrote explaining how the "good people" theme from Sky helped his campaign, and asking to meet me when possible.

Dec. 29--Last night, Noah Adams did a splendid piece on Winter Brothers on "All Things Considered." The production details astounded me--an actor reading Swan, mandolin music background, 3 brief interview chunks with me, and a remarkable sense of pace put into the piece by Adams's narration. We heard the show at the Rodens, where we'd gone for supper and for C to take family pics of the 4 of them.

(Note: carbon copies of Carol's letters to her parents, and an occasional one from me to them, in the '83 letters file provide a week-by-week version of our doings.)

Bozeman, May 19, '80

Dear Mark--

There are a couple of reasons for this impromptu missive. The first is that while, through the years in Montana I've been snowed in and rained out and hailed flat, this is the first time I've been ashed in. The ash plume from Mt. St. Helens reached here last night--this morning at 4, here at some friends' house 14 miles west of Bozeman in the middle of the Gallatin Valley. Carol and I heard a squall-like sound against the windows, which evidently was the biggest gust of it--and Carol and I are holed up while we see if my two reading appearances at Montana State U. go on later today as scheduled. Our Buick is sitting outside under a considerable coating of ~~ash~~ ^{ash}--really a kind of tannish-purplish dust--and we are contemplating how far north we must go, tomorrow if possible, to loop back to Seattle.

The other reason is that we heard unsolicited high praise of Hard Rock Epic last night, and thought you should know soonest. I ~~xx~~ signed books yesterday afternoon at the Museum of the Rockies on the Mont. State campus, then afterward we were taken home for drinks and dinner by Mike Malone of the history faculty (actually he's now graduate dean, teaches only one course). Mike remarked how fine he thought Epic, and how right he thought your review of whatever it was you recently reviewed for the Mont. Mag of history.

Hadn't met Malone before; liked him, and was impressed, too. He's at work on a book about Butte. His history colleague Rich Roeder is starting on the papers of Joseph Kinsey Howard, the Gt. Falls newspaperman and author of "Montana: High, Wide and Handsome," so there's some promising stuff from these guys.

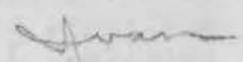
We've been on the road for I think 15 days now. Have spoken in Gt. Falls and in Sheridan, Wyo. (same speech), read twice in Billings, and will read twice in Bozeman today if the ash plume permits. It's the beginning of huckstering the Swan book, I suppose, but it's also a kind of celebration of House of Sky, which Montanans are damn near giddy about. At times I am almost embarrassed for my supposedly level-headed state kin, but mostly I'm just startled and grateful. Now that Sky is in paperback, the university faculty in Missoula is beginning to use it in a big way: there's a summer session on Western themes, totaling 8 or so courses, and I think Sky will be used in at least 3 of them. At Missoula, and at Eastern Montana at Billings, courses in Montana writers are taught, and Sky already is in use in those. It's remarkable to see, and be part of, the kind of literary boom this state has now. Richard Hugo, Jim Welch, Norman Maclean, Jim Crumley, Thomas McGuane, ~~xxx~~ Wm Hjorstberg, Dorothy Johnson--it's hard to think of anywhere else in the country, let alone the west--where there's quite this level of writers at work. I know it's a brief season of glory--people will die, move away, burn out--but it's fun to see at the moment.

Meanwhile, Winter Brothers--the Swan book--is slowly wending its way into print. I hope the book will be out about Oct. 1, but am going to have to hassle the publisher a lot to make that happen, if I can. Have had to fend with a considerable change at the publishing house recently; my editor, Carol Hill, has quit, to write a novel, and I've consequently taken on a NY agent to do the negotiating of the next book contract, probably late this fall. I felt capable of dealing directly with Carol Hill, but thought I'd better get a hired gun, with her gone; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich is going through some turmoil, as several publishers are--firing people, cutting the total of books per year--and I no longer feel I can discern the situation from 3,000 miles away.

Let's see, what else: May has proven a fine time to travel this part of the country, as we figured it would. The country around Sheridan, Wyoming, impressed us; the drive across the Bighorns the other day was just about the best scenery we've encountered anywhere. We've done much visiting on this trip, including overnight with my farming (and commodity-trading) cousin at White Sulphur. Had a couple of interesting days in Missoula at the start of the trip, seeing the writers there; stayed overnight with Annick Smith, the film-maker who's made a very fine homesteading film called Heartland; if she can get it into general distribution, I hope you run onto it somewhere.

And that's about it: lunchtime approaches, and also the dilemma of whether to wash the volcanic ash off the Buick (will it pock the paint?), rag it off (will it scrape the paint), or ignore the matter because more ash dust is on its way. What would their decision have been at Pompeii?

all best--Carol sends her love.



17021 10th Avenue NW
Seattle, Wa. 98177
Saturday morning, May 24, 1980

Dear Den, Jan, Jill, Dan and John

Here we are, back at the old homestead after avoiding ash fallout the whole way. It took us 1364 miles, about double the direct route, but we enjoyed the changing scenery and stopped overnight in Boise at the home of the Idaho state archivist, who is an old friend of Ivan's from the University of Washington. Then it was to Burns, Oregon, and across the desert to Bend, over the Cascades where the coastal rains disposed of the remaining volcanic ash on the Buick. We simply kept going west until we hit the coast at Lincoln City, where the sound of the surf lulled us to sleep on Thursday night. Friday we drove up the coast, crossed the Columbia by the big bridge at Astoria, and wandered home by mid-afternoon.

Quite an unexpected itinerary! We didn't even want to go north up the Interstate 5 from Portland, since the freeway is, yep, in the path of the big mud dam created by the eruption. We did note that the Columbia river was coffee-colored at its mouth, and we could see debris -- most of it apparently coming down the Chehalis river and emptying into the Columbia. A two-mile-long mud bar has built at the confluence of those rivers, and freighter traffic to Portland has been halted. The Corps of Engineers plans to have six dredges working soon.

Besides the debris and possible flooding to the West and south, there's the pileup of debris to the East. The Spokane area was hard hit, with people stranded by the hundred. Some of the roads are open again, but with warnings that ~~sidecast~~ ash probably will blow around for months. Experts here are currently saying that the ash could do the soil some long-range good, but that people should be careful of what they breathe, as the smaller particles can stay in the lungs. Surgical masks are advised in the hardest hit areas.

And the mountain is reasonably quiet at the moment.

Sooo...an adventure. How's it going at the Bonnet ranch? Lucky we all were to be at the edge of it, and as we drove straight south to West Yellowstone we were soon out of the affected area altogether.

It was a good trip, made all the more pleasant by your hospitality. Special thanks to Jill for the loan of the room, and to Jan for the thoughtfulness of that travelers' lunch, which was delicious and kept us moving promptly on our way. And to all of you for generally putting up with our traveling circus.

We're now trying to get life back in order. It took both of us to carry the mail from the post office, for starters. And the laundry and other clean-up are well under way. Ivan is sitting at his desk right now, muttering at the junk in his briefcase as he reorganizes his desk area for a return to the writing schedule. I probably shouldn't remind him that we have a trip to Alaska to plan soon!

Again, heartfelt thanks for the hospitality.

Dec. 2, '80--WSU bkst, Pullman

buyer, Kathy Glagavs (509)332-2537

The signing went well--abt 55 copies of Winter Bros, and 40 p'backs of Sky (all the store had; also had only a few h'backs of Sky)--but the trip, at least this time of year, is not worth it. Flew Cascades twin-engine Beechcraft: 2 hrs late taking off from Seafac, more than an hr late from Pullman, and the flight back very bumpy, while the flight over was touch-and-go because snow was closing airports. A helluva draining day. Anything ever done at Pullman again should *be in spring or early fall, and combined with something at U. of Idaho, Spokane or Boise; I d say Cascades should not be flown again.

Sky has large reputation in Pullman because of Radio Reader; at least 1/3, maybe half of the people who came to the signing said they'd heard it.

*Original plan, which I stipulated, was for me to do a reading, for \$200 and expenses. Am. Studies couldn't put it together, at last moment, and Ted Lucia called HBJ to okay covering my expenses.

at the signing, met Stanton Linden, WSU English prof, who was researching at Huntington last time I was; also, Bill Granberg's wife, and prof who teaches NW course.

Hunter's, Nov. 15, '80

12:30-2 at Bellevue Square, 2:15-3:30 at Crossroads

--neither signing worthwhile; sold perhaps total of 15 books all day. Advertising on King-FM gave wrong day, got corrected, gave wrong day again; signing setup not good in either store. Crossroads people seemed more to know what they're doing, but they didn't have me coincide with end of movie in giant theatre next door, which they say brings in customers.

--Little management evident in these stores. Provided Marge Lopic a set of bound galleys, but think now it's not worth it, and the signings definitely weren't.

INSTEAD: perhaps The Bookshelf in Kirkland, where I went afterward at Ted Lucia's request to put my name in books on hand. Hazel Russell, owner, at least has the place feeling and looking like a bookstore. Couldn't count on much of a crowd there, but likely could equal Bellevue so far.

Hunting is more than the kill

For many years every excuse in the book has been used to be able to go hunting and fishing — providing meat for the table, or providing exercise so we could live longer have been a couple of favorites.

Earlier successes were often based on whether or not game was bagged or fish were crealed. It wasn't necessary to bag a limit, but at least one of whatever was pursued, bird, animal or fish, was expected at home — just to prove we had been afield and not sitting around some water hole sipping a toddy.

Now, although game is still the object of the pursuit, the actual taking of wildlife is less important than still being able to pursue it. Hunting and fishing, instead of being the main objective, now offer an excuse to be in the field.

On opening day of the 1980 general big game season, Ivan Doig, Seattle author of "This House of Sky," and "Winter Brothers," came along to see what a combination big game hunting-salmon snagging trip would produce in the way of ideas for book material. And that was mainly what we bagged, ideas — plus a good look at what hunting in a modern sense could be.

After two days of dawn-to-dusk hiking, stalking, two missed shots at deer, snow, slick roads, chains on, chains off, cold winds, tailpipe hanging on a rock, pickup sliding sideways toward the trees, crisp cold nights, hot grub, cold grub, snagging salmon and nightcaps of blackberry brandy, we arrived at the Sun River Game Range two and a half days after the opening moments of the season — and found that the biggest elk kill in recent history had taken place while we were engaged elsewhere.

As pickups loaded with freshly killed elk passed us by, I suppose we could have lamented that we had not been where many of the elk were taken. On the other hand, if we had killed an easy elk early the morning of opening day, we would have missed the magnificence of exploring the territory we did hunt.

We also would have missed the pleasure of meeting a hunter from the Fairfield Bench area — Ray Dawes.

Ray stepped into our camp on the afternoon of opening day, smoking a pipe and telling us he was camped in a tent back in the brush west of us. Thick fog was pushing visibility to less than 200 yards and a cold drizzle, mixed with snow, dripped from the camper. His tent was getting a little soggy, Ray said, but he expected the weather to clear that evening.

He camped in the same spot for the last four or five years, he said — didn't really care if he got any game, but usually managed to take home a deer.

Opening day of 1979, Ray had leaned up against a fence post before dawn and watched as several vehicles full of hunters rolled past his camp, headed for higher country. He talked with some of them who asked directions.

In the short intervals between vehicles he had been watching a dark form move down an open hillside about 600 yards east. After the vehicles had passed and it became light enough to shoot, he walked over to where the dark shadow had disappeared into some brush in a small coulee.

When the four-point whitetailed buck jumped along the brush edge, Ray dropped it with a clean neck shot. Some might call it lucky.

We saw Ray again the second day of the season, hunting below us as we followed a set of cow and calf tracks around the point of a steep hillside that dropped away far below to the South Fork. We lost the tracks as they disappeared in the rough rocks and heavily timbered north slope where Ray had disappeared around the hill.

Ivan spotted four head of mule deer does and a clean shot would have made an easy drag to put them in camp. Sitting flat on my hip pockets, I aligned the neck of the largest doe with the crosshairs, took a breath, exhaled half and gently squeezed the trigger. Nothing happened. The firing pin failed to contact the primer.

The round was ejected and another slapped in. The does had bunched together, one with its rear toward us, another partially hidden by the first and the others partially obscured by brush. Trying for a head shot, that apparently went between the does' ears, didn't spook the deer. But the second shot, that also went high, did. Ivan was unarmed, unlicensed and along for the research.

Open Air by Wayne Arnst



Disgusted with my shooting, we climbed to where the deer had been standing, checked the snow and could find no sign that either shot had connected. Following the tracks along the hillside, we spotted the deer about 600 yards below us, unharmed and unconcerned. As we watched, two of them lay down.

In view of the two earlier misses and the distance, we opted to not shoot again. The hunter orange of Ray Dawes could be seen coming up a draw below the deer.

From our high vantage point we saw him stop, crouch low and work himself into a position below the deer. He knelt on one knee, rested and dropped a doe we had not seen standing behind a tree. The sound of his shot rolled past us as the remaining deer raced across the hillside, heading for the cover of tall timber in the west.

Ray dressed out the deer and began dragging it down the slope toward a road and his camp. He could have walked to camp and driven the pickup to get the deer, but it was a rough, slippery road and he didn't want to tear up his pickup or the road, he said later.

When Ray saw us on the slope above him he called through the clear crisp air that a four-point muley buck had rounded the slope to the west about a half hour earlier. We picked up its trail but it disappeared over a ridge, in long strides heading for the back slopes of the South Fork.

When we saw Ray again, coming back up the road and smoking his pipe, he started to apologize for shooting the deer he thought we may have been trailing. But, we explained, the ringside seat we had of a hunter making a stalk and successful shot had actually been more satisfying than killing a deer ourselves.

Ray explained he was backtracking where he had dragged the deer because the heart and liver he had placed inside the cavity had fallen out along the way. "I was planning on having some liver and onions for supper," he said.

Ivan and I had seen five hawks circling above Ray's kill site like so many buzzards. Earlier we came over the top of a rise and a golden eagle burst off a rock lip about 150 feet below us, soaring away with sunlight flashing between its wing primary feathers. The day before, we had seen five coyotes, searching coulee bottoms for a meal. Ray didn't seem in any particular hurry, however.

Looking at the jagged cliffs of the Rocky Mountain Front and pointing to where he had last seen the mule buck, Ray said the deer he shot would be good eating, a little extra added to the pleasure of being able to hunt, and camp and live in such fine country.

We pulled out of camp that afternoon and on the way to Pishkun Reservoir saw whitetailed deer and pheasants on the preserve north of Choteau, rabbits, skunks and a racoon on the way into Pishkun (where we caught a limit of kokanee salmon) and gulls and mallards along the ditch banks.

From there we went to the Sun River Game Range, where some Tuesday hunters were wild-eyed and somewhat careless in their pursuit of elk. The contrast was extremely sharp between those individuals crowded into pickups (supposedly "hunting"), and the memory of Ray Dawes' quiet camp in grizzly bear country and his enjoyment of backtracking to find a misplaced heart and liver.

Apparently not everyone can take the time to conduct a leisurely hunt and enjoy it as well as Ray Dawes. But the quality of hunting and the aesthetics of the sport would certainly be improved if they would.

As Ivan said — in this sometimes misguided, frenzied pace of modern hunting, coming upon a hunter like Ray Dawes "is a real bonus."