

[1983]

3 Jan.--Have eased into this English Creek year with 2 pp. written this morn, try for 3 tomorrow and then up to 4-5/day, if possible. Am no ball of fire today, but feel tolerable, except for a raging appetite. Walked the n'hood a couple of hrs ago--it's now 10:30--day is overcast but no rain. I find myself in about the mood I'd expect, wishing I had a complete 1st draft ms so I could be revising instead of originating. The one drawback, and it's a minor one, to this book so far is that it'll likely take me until summer to get the draft done; slog will be the usual word, from here to then.

C went back to work today proclaiming the holiday maybe the best ever, with no real travel and only as much hassle of socializing as we wanted to do. Nor has either of us come down with a cold yet. I'm about 90% in accord with her on the holiday; was bothered a bit by never quite getting chores behind me to the extent I wanted. I did come out clean of correspondence, and with major tax work done, and much stuff shuffled off my desk. Also got in some surprisingly lively thinking about possible 2-books-of-a-trilogy beyond Eng Crk; the final one, which would coincide with Montana's centennial as a state, seems particularly alive and alluring. And the middle one, the homesteading one which has daunted me, begins to seem more possible.

In all this, I am trying to rouse myself and keep the work flowing; not give in to what I read in Malaurie's book on the Thule Eskimos is called "the weight of life." We evidently had a major sample of something like that on New Year's Eve, when John Roden was more morose than we'd seen in him in the past few years. Very heavy on his mind, whatever it was. C had suggested I play them a few bits from last summer's Ira Perkins interview abt shepherders, and those brightened John, but nothing else did. Sorrowing to see, a friend so sunk.

We had no great shakes of a weekend, walked Green Lake on Sat. and then y'day, when rain moved in, went to U Dist for lunch, found the Cont'l crammed, tried the U Grill next door, which proved to have a somnambulant waitress and okay food.

5 Jan.--A more comfortable day of Eng^{Crk} work. Possibly just because I feel perkier, but I've also decided to reward myself with an hour of editing to start each afternoon, and that somehow--today at least--encourages the necessary pages to get written by lunch.

I guess it was y'day when there was a message on the phone machine, from Duncan Kelso: "We've got a book." i.e., the Sky pic book. I remain mostly a semi-interested spectator, but Duncan and now Tom Stewart seem to want to do a good job with it, so maybe I'll attend a little more ~~close~~ closely.

Not much else, except rain. Come down maybe 30 of the past 36 hours, I think. Despite it, I've walked the n'hood each morn, the track each afternoon. So far, have not been rewarded with pneumonia.

10 Jan.--A stiff winter so far. In the past hour or so the wind has died, first real lull in a couple of days. Oddly, very little rain with all this, just gust after gust.

Looted the file of unused Sky material and scavenged my day's 4 pp from there. Again, the hr or so of editing was much the best part of the day; material shapes up fairly promptly and well, once I can get a goddamn draft to tinker from.

By Saturday I had cabin fever, so in late morn we went down and walked Green Lake--in whooping weather--then had lunch at The European and I went on to the UW library for an hour of fetching books while C shopped for new jogger's shoes. Saw in the library Mary Coney and then Selma Thomas; it's becoming common for me to meet 2 or 3 or more people I know on each U Dist/UW foray any more.

Wind was even wilder y'day, and we managed only to walk the n'hood. Both did some desk chores. It ticks me off to put in such time on weekends, but I haven't figured how not to. But C's mood is very steady, and mine seems pretty good, so we've just been foraging along. Tonight Duncan Kelso brings his Sky pics over for a look.

11 Jan.--Wild lovely afternoon: bright, cloudless and a blustering wind when I walked the track. Almost springlike warmth, maybe the pleasantest day of this winter.

Duncan Kelso brought over his Inside House of Sky pics last night. C thought them medium good; I thought about the same, but my enthusiasm was upped a little more than that because I hadn't expected them to be as good as they are. Early prints I saw didn't thrill me much. Of the current selection, 2 or 3 are really grand, several are pretty good, and quite a number are just okay. Evidently, though, other people--Tony Angell, Liz, and most significantly Tom Stewart--think them classier than we do. Which is fine by me. This book will simply be bonus moola for me anyway.

Keeping on schedule with Eng Crk, 4 pp. again today. A little worried about my stamina. Only a week and a half into this big year of work, and I'm already thinking in terms of what Orwell said, writing a book is a lot like having a long ~~and~~ illness.

18 Jan.--Possibly a jinx to say so, but this morn I feel as if I've sprung the lock on the second section of English Creek. Pages have come grudgingly until today--y'day I had to hack out a page and a half in mid-afternoon to get the quota of 4, but today, now just before lunch, I've done 5. Much of the stuff is scraped from Sky leftover raw material, but it's pretty decent scrap. Also have conjured a little more plot for the start of the 2nd section: Mac is away for a week, Jick assigned to dig new outhouse hole, Alec visits, etc. This easing of what had been a considerable clog, day after day of bits and pieces without any real alignment to them, began y'day afternoon at the track when I thought up a new opening line for this section: "I have to honestly say that the next few weeks were pale in comparison with my Stanley episode." As of now, the line both sounds like Jick and points the way for the section to go.

So, a better mood. We had a 3-day weekend, C off on Friday for Martin Luther King day. Decided against

18 Jan. cont.--going out of town, neither of us wanting to spend much time in a car. Walked the Arboretum one morning, Green Lake another; had lunch on Friday in Pioneer Square--Mitchelli's--and dropped off a signed Sea Runners which Jim Wickwire had requested. Jim came out of his office and chatted a few minutes, first time C had met him; she said he's not nearly as steely as he seemed in the tv version of him. We also got some house chores done--trimmed trees, and C washed the living room windows while I bucketed some hill dirt onto the garden and fertilized raspberries and other plantings--and samaritaned Phil a bit, double-dipped as he was in flum and in Ann's moving-out her furniture. Also the bonus of his car battery going dead. We let him use this place Sat. morn while the moving was ensuing, fed him lunch, had him back to supper Sun. night, I jumped his car to start him off to work y'day morn, and all in all he's beginning to look less wan.

Phone call 1st thing y'day morn from Sam Vaughan at Doubleday, following up on his letter inquiring whether I'm interested in sprucing up a book to be done by Edmund Hilary and his son; told him I can't clone myself and will be all year on English Creek, he said the Hilary ms may still be on dead center a year from now, I said if that was the case he could try me again then. And a call this morn from Tim Appelo wanting me to review McGregor's sheep-business book, I told him I didn't have time and sicced him onto Jerold Ramsay.

The rain is back. Last week was often springlike.

I see I didn't note phone call from Tom Stewart, last Tues. or Wed.; he wanted to know anything about Charles Johnson, whose Oxherding Tale he likes, and I passed along whatever stray info I knew, not much, and J's phone numbers and address as gleaned from Sourbeeb. Asked Tom about numbers on the Sky pic book, he estimates printing 4-5,000 copies, selling for \$25-\$30. Hope to Christ that he's right about there being that much of a market, as it would make us a few \$\$ on that basis.

21 Jan.--A week of responsible literary citizenship, by damn. Did my allotted pages, plus one (although some of that progress admittedly was done with mirrors--stuff cadged from Sky rough material) and now can look forward to a week or so of editing. The book continues to shape up rapidly and neatly, whenever I accumulate enough to edit.

Celebrated(?) by picking up my new glasses and going to the U Dist for lunch. Have walked the track every afternoon this week, but haven't managed morning n'hood walks more than about half the time. Am feeling ok, but plump.

Went to Edmonds for lunch with Archie on the 19th. He proclaims himself content with Alaska Northwest and Bob Henning--I think a considerable portion of that is gratitude to have a steady paycheck in these parlous times, but he does have himself convinced, for now, that Henningism is just dandy. We had a recordly long lunch, because Arch doesn't have that much to do until Hemming chooses the divine moment when the magazine is to actually appear. Arch says the free lance budget (Henning tells him) for Alaska mag runs about \$4000 per issue, hence \$40-\$50,000/year and it may be that the budget for his will be a bit higher; so far he thinks he's spent about \$20,000 on articles. Of Dan Levant's financial comedown at Madrona--which I'm somewhat more remorseful about than Archie is, he and Dan having had some kind of snit in Archie's P-I days--he says the rumor is that David Brewster investigated buying Madrona but with stipulation Dan would stay on and run it, which Dan recognized would never work. Anyway, goddamn a society where a Dan goes to the wall and the Seafirst boobs go into retirement with overflowing pockets.

24 Jan.--Time will tell (said the scintillating phrase-maker) whether today's work is as valuable as I think it may be. This is an editing week, and I began with trying to shape Beth's 4th of July speech on Ben English: I put together 6-7 pages, out of scrappy material I did after talking with Mary Lindsey a few weeks ago, and think I've found the major thrust of the speech. Didn't quite manage to complete the chunk; the day's work feels big and draining and fulfilling, all at once; a kind of happy fever, as editing can be.

C too has been going strong today, doing her day's teaching then getting the Buick brakes checked, and now readying for Ann McC coming to supper.

Our weekend was low-key but good, both of us feeling steady and sanguine. (Which we both know is likely a calm before the storm: the probable move of Frank and Lucie to a retirement home here, an unlovely predicament on all sides, which I'll try explore sometime when I'm less tired.) Walked Green Lake on Sat., were ready on Sunday to go to Dungeness but found weather iffy.

Not much else to note except that 2 Sea Runners reviews that came last week, from Philly Inquirer and San Diego magazine, were maybe the most praising of the entire bunch so far. Something else to explore in these pages, in future unweariness, is how much stronger the reviews have been getting, out-of-town vs. the local stuff. Have talked once with Jean Walkinshaw--rather, she broached it to me--about this, and comparing experiences, it seemed to both of us that the locals sometimes are afraid to like our stuff overmuch. I don't have a lot of complaint on that score, but there does seem to be a point, anti-hometown-rooterism, somewhere there.

Rain today, regular winter reborn after the passive last few weeks.

27 Jan.--Have been wishing for more energy, a more whetted feeling, these past few days. Semi-mopey. Yet today's work I think was pretty good, particularly in that it launched some reasonable opening pp. for ch. 2. And I've just come back from the track and written about 1 p. fresh. Take it and shut up, 'oig.

After quite a phone famine, people are being heard from. I have an invite to Dillon to some sort of conference in mid-April, and C just took a message asking me to talk at the UMontana library dinner April 22. Doubt that I'd better do either of them. And a friend of Carol Hill's, Mary Robertson, a novelist teaching at B'ham this quarter, is coming down to do a reading on Feb. 1.

31 Jan.--Am in a mild (I hope) funk just now. Found it tough to face what is necessary next, marching thru sets of pp. of ch. 2, kicking them into reasonable continuity. Have tried to set up tomorrow's work so that I can get underway on this. Today's writing was pretty negligible, although I did think through to a few necessary sequences of the storyline.

Unclear why I should be in anything but high humor. Friday's work shaped up reasonably well, we spent another sane pleasant weekend--walked Shilshole Sat. morn, the waterfront from Ivar's to the grain terminal on Sunday--and I simply should have a lot more zip than I do. There were two discombobulating phone calls, but late enough this afternoon that they don't really account for much. First was Father Reddy, wanting to get together with me--his mother has written a poem about Sea Runners. I was vague, but probably not effectually enough so; he is not a guy who takes a hint. Then C came home, at once walked the n'hood while the sun was out, and I fielded the weekly phone call from her folks.

Saturday night we went to Angells' for dinner; Bob and Dee Simmons, near neighbors of Tony and Noel, also there. More on that evening when I scrape up a little more energy.

1 Feb.--Immensely better day today, perhaps partly due to having brewed a pot of coffee and thus jump-starting myself with caffeine, first thing this morn. Whatever accounts for it, I aimed to line out the 1st 15 pp. of ch. 2, and ended up with 17 and a fraction.

Another bright, late spring-like day, temp in the 50s.

I also killed off some chores, banking, dumping newspapers, Safewaying, then walked the track, which I've been zealous about.

The prime note I wanted to enter from the other evening at the Angells'. As we were leaving, Tony was showing us the sculptures he currently has under way: a nice brooding owl I liked, a dramatic eagle, so on--and a rather slumped looking snowy owl with grease pencil marks all over him. Tony explained that here was a piece that hadn't worked, the pencil marks are where he will re-do. As he chiseled that piece he'd kept glancing over to his pet barred owl, Buttons, who sits around in a slumped, mopey-seeming way, and so the snowy owl came out that way. Tony said there's a rule in sculpture to exaggerate by 10%, in order to make creatures look "right", and he figures he underplayed the ~~xx~~ snowy owl by 10%--so the grease pencil marks signal a drastic, vibrant revision ahead.

Tonight, we go to the UW to hear Carol Hill's friend Mary Robertson do a reading.

4 Feb.--Another 100 pp. wrestled and pinned. It took some extravagant effort, especially y'day when I had a half-headache and 6 pp. to conjure from somewhere, but the 2nd chapter has its scheduled total-to-this-point.

Spring weather continues. C and I walked the n'hood as soon as she got home from school, and I'm just back from the track. Have walked 4-5+ miles every day this week, I think. We're pulling for the weather to hold for one more day, so we can head for D'nness tomorrow.

Phil is hosting us tonight at his favorite Italian restaurant, which should be pleasant and gorging.

8 Feb.--Bad Day at Black Rock. Spent a long difficult time trying to get underway on editing of ch. 1. Did some good this morn--I think--in smoothing the 1st family scene, but then after lunch began tinkering with the opening 3 pp. and did a revise which I think is worse than what I had. The one redeeming development is that I seem to realize when I muck up this ms.

10 Feb. --Work has mended considerably since last entry. Been a rugged week, though. C was buried under midterms all week until last night, and I've had a helluva time getting much done beyond the ms. In fact, barely have.

Did get to U Dist for lunch with Carstensen y'day, wanting to pump him about ideas for homesteader novel. He provided some good ones, now on file. Gave me a copy of McGregor's sheep ranching book, so I guess I actually made money on guesting ~~him~~ the lunch at the Eur'n. C'sen looked middling; I suppose he's like any of us, up and down in how he feels and seems. He was bright enough mentally. Asked him what he was up to and he said he'd been sidetracked--"I sidetrack easily." Turned out he's been reading mss, likely for UW Press, but also tinkering with something like the anthropology of land-claiming: ceremonies of embracing the land, so to say. Which is work toward his patterns on the land book, startlingly enough.

Monday afternoon and evening, Carelyn Heeburgh passed thru, on way home to F'banks. C met her at airport, took her to U Bk Store, then we had supper here before I took her to a 9:10 flight.

And not much else. Struggling to stay atop the waves of life.

~~Feb~~ 14 Feb.--Decent day of work, revise of ch. 1 beginning to produce a long consecutive stretch near the front of the ms. Hope to hit 125 pp. of readable stuff by Fri.

A good weekend, altho Sat. was mostly a ~~kank~~ banzai counterattack against household chores--I spent a couple of hrs on the bathroom, plus clearing a bunch of deskwork. Sunday though featured the Great Z--Zoretich piloting us and Linda on a downtown walk, which began above Freeway Park, wound down and then back up to Pill Hill, over to St. James--first time C and I had peeked in there, were

14 Feb. cont.--as surprised ~~as~~ as Linda predicted to find a turquoise interior--and then the Frye Museum; on down the hill to look into the Columbia Center excavation hole; into and thru the Alexis; on to the waterfront, along it to the Hill Climb, out thru Pike Pl Mkt, up Pike ~~St.~~ St., into and thru the Sheraton, and, having spent about 2 hrs footing it, back to the car. Then to their place for chili and chocolate ~~xx~~ cheesecake. O rare Frank and Linda.

Among the weekend's chores was the signing and mailing of contracts for Inside This House of Sky. Evidently, and mostly with me yawning in the background, there's going to be a book. Good news during the week, that Penguin plans 25,000 of Sea Runners. And we've been listening to the weekend morn reading of same. Dick Estell does fine on the expository chunks--which I'm thrilled to hear have the loony implacable 19th centuryish sound I wanted them to--but the dialogue is a woe, Melander coming out as a sort of Irishman and Braaf's insouciance entirely absent. I'd give a nickel ^{to know} if Estell still thinks it was a good idea to read the book.

21 Feb.--Last of a ~~the~~ 3-day weekend; very mendful for both of us. I worked like hell on revise of ch. 1 last week, achieving the goal of pp. and a reasonable, if not quite complete, run of narrative. By Friday night I felt battered, and when Fred Olsen came for supper, he was so blissed out--says he has all the money he needs; is moving in with a good-looking Japanese woman, who in fact seemed to be home doing the moving while Fred was dining with us; deep into Zen; strolling his way thru his Sh'line classes--that by the end of the evening I was saying to myself, wait a goddamn minute, where's the justice here? I have since simmered down and seen my ire as comical, but it was interesting how much my hackles rose. Worth seeing Fred for the phenomenal pics he took in Nepal; some of the best color photography I think I've ever seen.

Probably too Fred was getting some of my mental backlash from having had to cope one more time with Father Wm. Reddy, who evidently is starved for intellecto-literary companionship and regards me as

21 Feb. cont.--the nearest delicatessen. He called for the second time in a couple of weeks, about me coming by for coffee and talk, and when I said I was holed up here, he grandly suggested he could come here instead. It takes me a bit to realize I'm dealing with a priest who has a lifetime of experience at herding shaky souls around, and I suppose I haven't been blunt enough with him, although blunter than I feel comfortable being. Anyway, as C points out, I have had very little of being sought by adulation-seekers; ^{bestowers} my problem is that I don't particularly want any at all.

Saturday we hiked Dungeness with Ann and her new guy Bob, whom we both, finally after sundry misfires Ann has shared with us, liked quite a lot. May he wear well, for her.

Today we went to Green Lake with Rodens, John ran a circuit while we bird-watched with Jean; she's a recent convert, full of zeal. Then went to their place for brunch which turned out to be lunch. A good stint, pleasantest in a long time with them.

I've been catching up with letters this afternoon, am about to go to Sh'line track. Have had various chores piled up, a particularly unsatisfactory one a blurb HBJ asked for on TAMSEN, a novel about the Donner party. I finally did one today, half-hearted and maybe half-assed as well; should simply have turned that one down. So I have made a bit of progress; intend to take tomorrow off from writing, go around town a bit.

23 Feb.--A spring fever day, maybe because it is so freakishly spring. Weather in low 60's the past few days. I've had very low energy today, in fact the past 20 minutes--it's now 3:20--when I made some yellow pad jottings into notecards has been the day's most useful stint. The sort of dull mull I've been in is also due to weight of decision--which chapter, 1 or 2, to work on the weeks between now and Montana. I've chosen 2, despite the discontent that I'll then have two incomplete chs. at about the same stage of work and will need, after Missoula, to concentrate at least for a while on ch. 3, the forest fire section. So I'm letting the ms

23 Feb. cont.--strew more than a part of me likes, yet I feel I need to pile up pages so the revising can get underway, I hope by mid-May. Some lovely parts to this ms so far, but it needs a lot of corralling.

C and I went last night to Walker-Ames lecture by Bernard Bailyn of Harvard, on History and the Creative Imagination. Pretty good, though I thought a little classroomy (C didn't). Bailyn's examples were Perry Miller, Charles Andrews, Namier and Roy Symmes as historians who've had the capacity of surprise--looked at historical periods without the clouds of preconception and thus remade the historical view of those periods. Hearteningly, Bailyn thinks they had in common something like literary imagination, akin to Faulkner's. I got to talk to Bailyn for a minute at the reception after, and he said he's now doing research on Mississippi and finding that Faulkner's *Suppen* stuff is accurate history; thinks Absalom is first-rate history.

At the reception also talked a bit with Otis Pease, a favorite of both of us; Dorothy Bestor; Joan Ullman and husband Don; and met Carol Thomas and Bill Rorabaugh of history faculty.

Y'day turned out to be mostly chores, which wasn't as I intended but did clear a lot of slag out of my life. Spent a total of an hour waiting to get my glasses adjusted and to do some banking; then went to U Dist for lunch.

March 1--All right, Mammon, did I type \$12,500 worth today? This is the date of the middle installment money for Eng Crk, and I anticipate Athenaeum is going to be tardy with it to Liz. If so, and if the royalty sum at the end of this month is also late, I'm going to have to consider seriously whether to find a reader banker for subsequent books. I don't make such a rip-snorting ~~xxx~~ income out of writing that I don't notice missing dollars.

Am making heavy-footed progress on ch. 2 this week, but progress, 4 pp/day. Each of the past 2 days, about $\frac{1}{2}$ a page was really good and the rest just ingredients. Had 2 fortunate--if fortune is hours of brain-busting work--days at the end of last week, adding 4 good pp.

March 1 cont.--each day to vital ch. 1 spots.

Think I'll go tonight to 2nd lecture by Bernard Bailyn. Last Thursday we went to the Linda Bierds/Carolyn Forché reading in the women writers' festival at UW. Bierds' poems were good work, I thought; she almost held her own in the unwinnable situation of preceding Forché. Only almost, though. Forché is 1st-rate as a talker and reader, and while some of her lines are a little too literal for me--though it may be that they ~~read~~ are stronger on the page than in the air--she's a considerable performance. Heartening to see so political a poet operating, and making it. About an hour before we went down, the phone rang, Sheila Nickerson in Juneau asking us to pass a message to Forché. Evidently Forché's appearance at the Alaska state pen, at Sheila's behest, resulted in Sheila and maybe others being banned from the prison system, where they'd been teaching, and Sheila at last had got her case to the state ombudsman. Forché was thronged after her reading, but I did persist long enough to pass her a note with Sheila's info, and say hello and congrats. Then on Sat. afternoon we went back down to hear Colleen McElroy and Toni Cade Bambara--McE's novel segment funny and full of fine one-liners, such as her mother "carrying the ultimate weapon, a baby on her hip," but also with some technical problems, such as her 21-yr-old narrator being the only sibling of that baby; Bambara read from a work about the Atlanta murders, excruciating stuff, much of it, and with the machinery clanking too loud in the piece--a "you are the mother" device which lumbered into action too frequently--but she too is a fine reader.

March 2--Best day of writing in a while. 2 pp of reasonable dialogue, from the rodeo scenes, came promptly this morning, and I felt confident enough about the day to break it with a trip to the UW, to look up some dust storm material. In the newspaper/microforms domain I found myself crosswise with technology, as I seem to be fairly often these days: I intended to make copies of the NYT and any other dust storm stories I could find, but no, the printer is only for microfiche and the newspaper stuff is only on microfilm. Not wanting to take the time and fuss to order microfilm printing done on the 4th floor, I decided the hell with it, I'll take notes--and in so doing, browsed across an item about the head of the Iowa weather bureau denying the growing belief that radio was causing the drought of '34 by messing about with the air. Again and again, browsing produces some of my very best stuff, and I need be wary of machinery walling me off from that in the name of efficiency.

Should have noted y'day, when I was dour enough to do it justice, that Sea Runners didn't make the ABA first novel nominees. Haven't had a chance to check the list against the NYTBR 1st novels I was mulling as probable competition, at yr's end.

Last night I went, solo, to the 2nd lecture by Bernard Bailyn, a nice one which used the Domesday Book device to describe the American colonies at the turn of the 17th century (abt 1700, that is), and walking in I encountered Dick Brown, who'd been in town 3 days but hadn't brought our phone # and couldn't find it in the book and so figured it was unlisted. One more time, one of our academic friends overthinks the situation; journalist friends and Montanans spontaneously dial the operator and get the number. Got a little chance to talk with Dick; he'd been here to give a talk on regionalism to UW history dept., evidently cited me--or at least Sky and Winter Bros--as good example of something or other.

And today, an out-of-the-blue call from a woman who'd just been given Winter Bros, by the Texas writer John Graves, who told her it's "beautifully written." Wondrous to think of the books having a life of their own, out there in the world.

3 March--Steady unspectacular day on Eng Crk; 6th workday in a row I've done precisely 4 pp. 6 more in a row and the winter's quota of work is done.

4 March--Tough day, have had half a headache and tiredness from a restless night; a number of dreams which woke me, including once when I called out loud. Can't really account for it, unless having a couple of late drinks at Phil's did me in; felt okay when we got home, read for a while. Well, anyhow, I can ease off a bit, take some of Monday to plan where to fill in ch. 2.

7 March--2 pp., as scheduled, today. Think I can go at this pace, and try squeeze out 3 days of 3 pp., for this week and next, and so hit the goal total by March 18. Am pretty weary to try 4 pp. workdays now.

The only real complaint in life is no dough from Athenaeum. A week overdue tomorrow; will hold off until Wed. or so before asking Liz what's up.

Calm weekend. Did household chores on Sat., & readying the guest room while I stashed books, posters, etc. that'd piled up in there. Sunday we went to Shilshole to walk, lucking into a big sailing race, sail and sails all across the Sound.

As noted, I've had some creaky health recently, but feel better today. Have walked the n'hood and will go to the track after a bit; my leg pain comes and goes, which I suppose means it can be forced back into its cage again by exercise.

2:30: No sooner had I written the above and yanked it out of the typewriter than Liz called, to say:

--She has \$\$ from Ath'm, both for Eng Crk and Inside This House.

--Her foreign agents are enth'c about Sea Runners, she hopes there may be sales within a few months.

--Duncan has sent her prints and text to try on mags, Nancy will start sending them out.

--Carol Lazare called to say they're about to sign the papers on the House of Sky tv deal.

One of the newsier, more financially packed, calls I ever expect to get.

14 March--A shakey morning of work, in a week when not much shakiness can be afforded. Managed one page this morn, will need to grind out another this afternoon. I have 11 pp. to do this week; and the income tax; and some banking; and the getting ready for the Missoula trip.

The banking at least ought to buoy my mood. Sat. a check for \$13,500 arrived--middle advance on English Creek, and my half of the Inside THOS advance. In the same mail, an offer from U. of Idaho to teach writing there next spring semester. I've promptly turned that down, saying I won't foreclose it entirely for the future.

All in all, C and I are trying ^{to} shove shut the lid of the winter's work. We're not helped at all by the prospect that the power will be off all day Friday, as one more of the interminable tinkerings--likely due to the increasing load of Sinclair's goddamn subdivisions on the hill--is done by a City Light crew.

Last week was mostly trudge. Marsh talked to C's class on Tuesday, came down for lunch. Wed. I went to UW for lunch with Hal Simonson, to get his advice about St. Andrews as possible Scottish site for us a year from now. He enthused me pretty well about the place. Phil came by to borrow the iron to prep for a job interview with Grp Health, came back Sat. with dispirited news that he didn't get the job. We are watching, and trying to help tug him along, as he tries to pull out of morass of splitting up with Ann, some winter sickness, stress of his current job.

Y'day noon we met Mary Robertson at LaConnor Inn for lunch, then took her to the game range to see snow geese and, as it turned out, the bonus of a bald eagle passing overhead. Mary is finishing up her stint of teaching fiction at B'ham--the job Annie Dillard has had off and on. C and I enjoy her, and Mary and I got to exchange grumbles about Atheneum, which is bringing out her novel *Speak, Angel*.

17 March--Grueling schedule these days, C and I both trying to get usual work done and turn an eye toward Missoula. She's done now with 3 exams, I have 1 more day of writing--2 pp.--to achieve; but tomorrow the power is off all day, and I at least will bail out to the UW.

Invite today to U of Wyoming Am Studies conference in Oct.; somewhat interesting, and \$1200, but I don't think I'll do it. A bad point on the calendar, amid ms work.

18 March--8:40, of what shapes up as a combat day. I'll leave the house in 10 minutes, just before the power goes off, and head for UW, by way of Grp Health to get my new glasses straightened. Will try get 2 pp. done at UW, which may be a considerable trick given how dry and weary I am. Then to get new tires on the Ford and, possibly worse, ~~check~~ check a noise which may be the water pump going out.

But if I can just come out at the end of the day with the damn Ford fit to take to Missoula, I guess there'll be no honest complaint. This has seemed a more grueling end of quarter/exam week than usual; C is pretty well locked in to what she has to do, but I maybe have tried to shoulder too much writing.

19 March--12:40; tussled with the desktop accumulation for a couple of hrs before lunch, am getting it whipped. Or rather, in abeyance. Formidable stack of unanswered letters still looms.

But much has been done. Finished the ~~income~~ tax a day or so ago. Did get the Ford chores done y'day, the noise luckily turning out to be the fan belt. Did some skimming in NWC, and managed to write one more-or-less ms page. I came up one short on the pp. goal of this writing period, but tough as the schedule has been am glad enough to settle.

A couple of things I do want to enter before the Missoula trip intervenes. One is that we've listened--though occasionally forgot--to Dick Estell reading Sea Runners over KUOW on Sat. and Sun. morns at 8. The narrative chunks sound just fine to me; nice semi-loony

19 March cont.--19th century ring to them. Haven't been as pleased with E's way with the dialogue, although this morn's sounded better than the earlier portions. Anyway, what I wanted to get down is the sensation of listening to the last book while I write the next; I've had this before, tuning in Sky each morn at 9 as I was underway on Winter Bros. Will I be doing the same for English Creek when I'm at work on Scotch Heaven 2 years from now? Not impossible.

The other reportable matter is lunch with Tony Angell on Wed. He seems to enjoy me as I do him; a promising friendship, in that we're not at all rivals in our work. Tony talked over 3 books he has in mind: a study of how artists have seen nature, scholarly piece of work he might like to pursue at the Huntington; pic book on woodpeckers; and a book about edges, about boundaries, transition zones, of things and people. All good stuff. Turns out the UW Press holds an option clause on him, and I told him some about how to tone that down in future contracts. Also on his mind was that Foster-White is talking of upping its fee from 40% to 50%, which Tony thinks he can't stand still for. Says he already considers they're getting ~~from 60%~~ 60-70% of the money from a piece of art, by the time he ~~pay~~ pays expenses on his end: \$2 a lb. for rock, files at \$15 each, etc. Then beyond that, he's on the arts commission, and his visual arts committee is turning down the jury's choice for the \$100,000 sculpture at the new county jail. Mucho energy in him. He gave me at lunch, inscribed to C and M, one of the 35 hardbacks of the Marine Birds books he had specially done; a real helluva gift, I guess in appreciation of our buying his art. It's notable, as we've mulled the framing and hanging of Tony's stuff, how strong it is: it takes over wherever it's put, needs a wall to itself and no company.

And that's about it, kaput for winter. My mood is okay, though I'm tired--bone-weary, parts of y'day, and with a half-headache--and have some trouble making much conversation with Scott Reeburgh, ~~which~~ my mind other places. Missoula should be an energy boost.

28 March--Cold rain has headed me off from intention of walking the n'hood to begin the afternoon; will go to the track later despite the weather. Spent the morn sorting the trove from the Missoula trip. Some decent stuff, I think. Lord knows I plowed diligently in the UMont archives for it. Spent a total of $3\frac{1}{2}$ -4 of the 5 workdays there, and another half-day doing similar at USFS regional office. Brought home abt 120 photocoppied pp., about that many more are to be mailed to me. The Gisborne papers in the archives did yield what I'd hoped for, some forest fire material, including some case histories. Also hit a bonus of rodeo notes in papers of Ed Christopherson, late free-lance of western Montana, and another in the diaries of Dell Stark, Roundup sheepman. The Stark diaries are intriguing and perplexing. If the skim I did is an indicative sample, every day for 50+ years he wrote at least a full composition notebook page of entry, plus occ'l stabs at fiction and poetry. There likely is a gettable book somewhere in all that; but the "all" is perhaps 8-10 million words.

The Missoula week was good. It began with a brilliant day, weather of lovely clarity, the easiest day's drive ever on that route. Then that night became harrowing. We were asleep in the Bevis' upstairs bedroom when the phone began ringing downstairs about 11:30. I didn't even know where the phone was and anyway figured that MC or Sarah would answer it, and after it rang many times and quit, that seemed to be the case. But no, 10 or so minutes later it began again, and so I got up to make a stab for it, having to take care with the tricky funnel stairs so I didn't break my neck. Halfway down them, and the ringing quit. Back to bed, before long phone was at it again, this time C was awake and gave it a try; just reached the phone when it ceased. Again to bed, again ringing, and this time she made it. It was her father, reporting that her mother is in the hospital. Sounded grim, possibly as if C was going to have to head for NJ the next day. But Lucie rallied--she's still in, although maybe only until Tues. or so--and while there were daily phone calls from Frank to be fielded, C coped wonderfully, very steady and determined to ~~for~~ face what's necessary when she can be of any help.

28 March cont.--The house swap worked quite well, after the phone labyrinth episode; MC and Sarah were fine to be around, and the one sticking point I'd seen--Sarah's piano practice--wasn't bothersome, in fact was far enough away in the house to be almost pleasant. Both C and I plunged back into work today, and both of us were a bit frayed by the drive back from Montana, but I think the Missoula trip was that contradiction in terms, a working vacation. We laid off on the partying, I did a couple of strategic snubs--Norie at the Little Prof and Krauzer's invite to a celebrating tableload of folks at Clark Fork Station--which saved much aggravation, and all in all we fended well, got a lot done and still enjoyed ourselves.

Damn near everyone I talked to has a book about half-born: Max Crawford, on Llano Estacado; Kittredge is redoing 60 Million Buffalo and proclaims it seems really right, at last; Kittredge and Annick awaiting word from Marc Jaffe about a Narcissa Whitman trade B'back; Krauzer is ghosting and cranking various paperbacks; Bob Reid has a novel making the rounds, is writing one about a cop whose partner saves his life, good premise; Harry Fritz is putting together festschrift for Ross Toole; Bill Farr was going over copy-edited ms of his Blackfeet pic book; Bevis is on his Montana writers book, Lois Welch is far along on her Becket/Proust work, Jim Welch is probably 2/3 or 3/4 along the way on his Blackfeet novel. Watch out, world, the west is coming.

Main socializing was at Annick's, as it often is. It was us, Annick and Kittredge, Max Crawford and Jyl Hoyt, Richard and Kristina Ford--well over half a ton of wordsmiths, as John Jackson would measure us. C and I hadn't met the other two couples, and of them we most enjoyed Max Crawford; later ran into him in the library on Friday and had lunch at the Silvertip. He's a year older than I am, has a famous book--Waltz Across Texas--but according to Kittredge has put in 5 years or so on a big novel of the Chinese revolution and Tom Stewart tells him it hasn't worked. Max is now on what I guess is a historical novel about his home area, Llano Estacado, and says he'll be done by August.

28 March cont.--Max isn't as talkative as most writers we encounter in Missoula, at least at parties, but is funny and trenchant.

4 April--So much for diary diligence. Last week went to the Inside THOS intro, more sorting and mulling, and I don't just know what all. C tells me, though, that it's likely the only time I'll do a book in a week. The Inside intro I think is surprisingly deft, or glib or something, given my wan interest in the project. I did haul out the family pics, gandered through them, and the resulting piece is stronger and more heartfelt than I expected to do. I suspect, though, that precisely because it is keyed to my use of the family albums for Sky, it won't translate to magazine use. Scott Forslund of Pac NW is coming by tomorrow night to pick up the piece and some pics for a look, but that may be all it'll be.

Oh yeah, I also whipped a bunch of mail on Friday. Probably 10 or a dozen pieces, total. And flung into some house chores--laundry, banking, etc.--so we wouldn't have to slog all damn weekend at those. C had a big, tiring first week of teaching. The Commons Process course always devours her. Also has the situation of her parents looming, although she's been remarkable about keeping level-headed over that.

I set to work this morn on Ch. 3 of Eng Crk, and have the 4 pp. achieved, largely due to some tinkering I did toward a lead on Friday and the bonanza of some 'hopper plague pp. I'd put in that file and forgot about. I much wish this section was in full rough form, but at least the words continue to come fairly decently.

More about Missoula. MC Crump mentioned to us how fine and joyous, in a sense, Dick Hugo's memorial service was. Various people spoke, including the woman who bartended at the Milltown. MC recounted the story she told, of Hugo on a binge, showing up daily in a filthier and filthier shirt, food spilled down the front, until the bar lady told him she wouldn't stand for it any more, refused to look at that goddamn shirt-front of his. Whereupon Hugo lurched to the john and came back wearing the shirt inside out.

4 April cont.--That tale chimes oddly well with my own experience of Dick and his frontal expanse. At the Mont. His 'l Soc shindig in Billings, he and I were side by side at the banquet table for Norman Maclean's speech. Dick spilled gravy or something on his tie, looked down, swore, then launched off into self-recrimination--"Why am I such a goddamn slo~~o~~? Why can I never eat anything without getting it all~~aw~~ over my goddamn self?" I finally made some half-joke--I didn't know Dick well enough to really jolly him out of it--and Ripley on the other side of him cued in to what was happening and got his attention off the stain. But it was a remarkable, abrupt plunge of mood.

Ripley came over for a couple of hours our last evening in Bevis's house, and she seemed steady and okay. Partly, she's so ticked off at having to go through student teaching and observation--says she's been off and on in classroom for 26 yrs--to try get a job at the vo-tech school that it keeps her mind off other things. She told us of Dick Blessing's death, which though expected is still sorrowful and unnerving. (Sat. night here at our place, when Jim and Lois Welch were here for the supper Bill and Juliette fixed for us all, Jim spotted the S. Times headline about Rainer Meidel's death and asked who he was. I explained and said, because Meidel was even younger than Jim and I, "I wish to hell they'd cut it out." Yeah, Jim said.) We rode over to her house with her to see her half-Arabian colt, then got from her a signed copy of her chapbook of poems, a beautiful little publication job.

5 April--Middling day of work, the 4 pp. accomplished but mostly by robbing from rough-draft capital. I'm hoping tomorrow, when I need to write only a page, will yield some notions about this 3d chapter. I have the beginning and end, and major material in between, but need mucho plot ideas to porter it all around.

Fine spring day, into 60's. May have given me a touch of spring fever.

6 April--Inexplicably, a hugely better day than y'day. Needed to write only lp., did 3--pretty good ones. They're off on a tangent I hadn't known~~ed~~ about, Jick and his scatter rake to the WW, but it feels like reasonable material and provides the needed interim view of Alec.

Went to Cont'l for lunch, getting to be a mainstay of my life. Have also done a rough outline of ch. 3 which, tho simplistic as chalk, makes me feel better about the looming mass of pp. (Have recently had the feeling that this ms might swell to 600 pp.--150,000 words. Hope to combat that, back to the direction of 125-130,000, but I dunno.) Also today called FS regional office to try find out ranger's salary during Depression, was given name of 2 retired rangers, whom I've just written to. Now to see where that leads.

Am doing a middling job of keeping up with corspdce and chores; I need a really demon day to whip a bunch of them, and haven't had it this week. One nice bonus I will try to respond to pronto, John Graves' signed copy of Goodbye to a River. An odd unsought unplanned mutual admiration flowering there, and not many writers I'd rather have it happen with.

Last night while we were being stood up by Scott Forslund of Pac NW mag--not essentially his fault, I guess; he was to come by and pick up my INside THOS intro after memorial service for Dick Blessing and the service ran late; what does it say about me that I think I would have left the service rather than break an appointment?--C commented what a loss Blessing is, and both of us got to thinking about how much he physically resembled Tony Angell. She said she could imagine the 3 of us, Dick, Tony, me, growing old into great careers together. May she at least be right about Tony and me.

11 April--5:15; am trying to work an extra hour while G is at Margaret Svec's birthday party. Dispiriting day; called Liz to find out the situation on Sea Runners royalties, for sake of filing estimated tax, and learned there's no dough this time around. If I understood it aright, the book earned \$24,000-some, ~~x~~ which is \$4,000 over advance, but Atheneum reserves royalties on 3000 copies against returns, then there was the map fee, and the Penguin p'back advance doesn't show up until the Sept. statement. Holy Christ, it's hard to make a nickel, especially out of Pat Knopf. Will check with Liz whether holding back that much for returns is about average these days; if it ~~is~~ ain't, it's one more point Atheneum is going to have to overcome to hold onto me after English Creek.

Day's ms work went okay, although I moped too much about the no-royalties news. Then when I came back from the track there was a ~~xxxx~~ gibberish message on the phone machine, evidently someone playing some shrieking tape at high speed. That did not improve my nerves, for it poses the possibility that some nut has our phone #; can only hope it was somebody random-dialing.

15 April--The week has improved since the foregoing; have just finished the day's ms pp., and I'm one page ahead of schedule. This despite a half-headache all day, whether from wine when we took Phil to an Italian restaurant last night or from allergy, I dunno. But it's been a crude head to have on my shoulders all day.

Anyway: good news y'day, PNBA award for Sea Runners, just as I'd been resigned that this was a book that might go awardless. And today, two phone calls, each a tribute of its sort. Tom Stewart, saying he liked the Inside intro--"terrific." Jud Moore of USFS in Missoula, saying he'd gathered some stuff about 1934 fire season and he'd just put it into the mail to me without going thru his boss for a cover letter--"you know how bur'cy is, that'd slow things down for three days." Which may be his actual reason, but more likely, he's passing me stuff about the devastation of the Selway Nat'l Forest that doesn't put the USFS in the greatest light.

18 April--A groggy day, which I'm having trouble pulling out of; and given that it's nearly 3 p.m., I guess I won't. Warm and humid today, which likely combines with allergy to do me in. Luckily I have a reasonable week--13 pp. to write, because I've managed to get 4 or 5 ahead of schedule these past two weeks.

A social spate at the end of last week. Took Phil to dinner on Thursday; he's leaving his job at the end of this week, burned out by the work. ~~Saturday~~ Friday night we went ~~to~~ with Frank Z and Linda and John and Jackie Savo to a lecture by J.B. Jackson on vernacular of the American landscape; which was good in itself, but also was cover for a surprise party for Frank's 38th b'day. ~~A~~ Ten or a dozen people hidden in the house when we got there--Schusters, Nalders, others--but because Jackie had said something about yearning for ice cream, Frank had wandered down to the Darn Good Grocery to get some, so the hiding contingent had to gear up again. Sat. at 4, I picked up Bob Boynton at the Sheraton, tooled him around Seattle a bit and then brought him home to supper. C and I hadn't seen him for 10 years, when we had lunch with him in NJ just before driving cross-country on our way home from the British sab'cal. His daughter Sandra has since become a virtual national fad with her greeting cards, etc.; Bob says her contract with Recycled Paper calls for 200 new ideas a year.

Y'day was anniversary: #18. A fine bright warm day, so we walked the arboretum and then lazed around home.

20 April--8 am, waiting to go talk to C's com theory class. No writing today, which I hope will be a kind of therapy. I have 6-7 more pp. to reach this first complement of ch. 3, then can do a couple weeks of editing on ch. 1. Graf by graf, the stuff still seems to go well; as a storyline, it has a long way to go.

Given the fairly steady ms progress and lack of big problems in life right now, my mood should be better than it generally is. Lassitude seems to be physical--allergy, I suppose, ~~and~~ plus not being in good enough shape and thus low on energy.

22 April--4 pm Friday, I'd rather be walking but am hanging on here in case a purported cord of wood finally shows up. Day's work was decent; epilogue seems to shape up well, though I must watch out for making it too rich. Today reached the 50 pp. goal on ch. 3/epilogue, total of past 3 wks' work. Also skimmed thru the Selway Nat'l Forest files smuggled to me by Jud Moore of Regional Office in Missoula; I want simply a passing reference to it in Eng Crk, but it's pretty plain that forest was the migraine headache, administratively and geographically, of the Region.

Last night, to Rodens to meet Lisa's man Jerry. He seemed fine, John was fairly mellow--all smooth on the surface so far.

Night before, Eugene Smith of UW English Dept. called to say he has a contract with Boise State to write the short book on me in their 5-a-year western writer series. I have mixed feelings; academic attention is unnervingly like an autopsy. Professionally, the idea is fine, more attention to my books. Personally, being interviewed about my writing is not a favorite pastime. I think Eugene

25 April--An epicly foul mood, which I hope will dry up as I write this. About mid-morn, when I went ~~x~~ to the john, I noticed a few spots on my side, then looked further and found I'm ~~broken~~ broken out all along my left side from armpit to hip. Couldn't get a Gp Health apptmt until after 2; upshot of spending more than hr down there, most of it in prescription line, is that I have a hive-like reaction to something, probably picked up when I spent the weekend piling firewood and gardening. Add in that I feel logey and haven't accomplished a damn bit of intended editing today; that I fought a record battle with the goddamn gas cap of the Ford; that the gas pump worked at about 1/5th as rapidly as it's supposed to--it has not been a day to remember.

The weekend, on the other hand, was very fine. Got firewood delivered from Denny Hill by Sat. noon when the Fall City guy I'd called didn't show up on Fri., worked at piling it in woodhouse, then that night we went to PNBA awards dinner ^{where} ~~when~~ Sea Runners was one of 5 winners --McGuane, Mountain in the Clouds, Women of the West,

25 April cont.--and a Portland author whose name I think is Sherril Milnes. The Flame restaurant in Kirkland turned out to be a cross between suburban sleaze and Montana supper ~~club~~ club, and Athenaeum sales rep John Rantala turned out to be alternately overbearing and interesting. Rantala's chief virtue, and maybe his only one, is that he evidently seals books like hell, particularly priding himself on canvassing remote stores in Montana and Wyoming, and that's enough for me. As to the award itself, what I liked better than the framed gizmo was that when I was called, the last of the 5 announced, there was big applause and ~~the~~ some by-god cheers--some of it from the rowdies from Arbur, but quite a lot not, too.

Afterward we were invited to the Sopers' for a drink, along with ~~some~~ sundry bookselling Michaels--Coy, Persky, Carley, and one of Lee's UBS clerks; also the UBS clerk named Rob, for variety.

Y'day was woodpiling again until mid-afternoon, when we went to the UW, walked the perimeter of the campus and then went to Meany for the Holly Near/Ronnie Gilbert concert. Wonderful show, not only for the two of them, but the sign language interpreter Susan Freundlich; F'lich was immensely alluring to watch, performing a kind of artistry--moving in a kind of dance as well as signaling the language--it had never occurred to me exists. Near and Gilbert gave a beautifully crafted show, much of it a celebration of women; Near I take it is properly a heroine of gay women, and her great line in one of her songs--a guy in a bar asks three women if they're alone: "no, we're together"--brought an avalanche of applause. And of course, much political music. Good bracing stuff, when it's done that well.

Afterward Ann McC, Dixie Canfield and Peter Rokas came on home from the ~~concert~~ concert with us, for stew supper. It's odd to C and me, but there they were, 3 intelligent handsome people, none of them having managed a workable marriage; Ann is withstanding a hell of a time, the guy she much wanted to marry has caught cold feet.

26 April--It's been not too bad a day of editing, but the existing has been a dubious proposition. The rash truly has become like hives; I'm just back from walking at the track, and had to give up after 6 laps because of the itch. The lotion prescribed by Gp Health does help, lasting about 4 or so hrs, and I didn't put on a fresh slather because I'd be showering as soon as I walked. Never again; slather and be damned. Am also taking a prescribed antihistamine capsule, which makes me about half-drunk for awhile; it apparently does work on the allergy, given how much my nose and sinuses have cleared up today. Anyway, what this comes down to is something I've been noticing in recent years, that I'm not a very good sick person.

2 May--New week, new skin. The rash did its worst on Thursday and has been waning ever since; virtually gone now, and I think I'll try wean myself from the allergy pills and their wooziness.

So-so day of editing, after last week's work turned out to be a considerable accumulation--total of about 45 pp. worked over. Can't really account for why today's slowed down. Anyway, last wk's rework advanced that opening chunk from seeming like decent ms to seeming like decent book; the click that at last happens in fashioning the storyline.

Thurs. night, pill-drugged and all I gave the Blue as the Odyssey speech to the Book Club of ~~Wash DC~~ Washington, Bob Monroe's brainchild. 40 or so people, all of them rabid collectors, at the College Club dinner. The food luckily brought me out the pill wooze, which I didn't really notice until I was being introduced to people and trying to inscribe books to them, and the talk I think went well.

Royalties came last week, about \$1200 on Sky p'backs and about \$1800 on WBros, and today \$1400 income tax refund. A decent pace of income, could we but sustain it.

Phone call of the day: Tom Watkins, who so pissed me off by losing my Metlakatla pic story at Am Heritage and then avoiding telling me until he'd fortified himself with a bunch of booze at lunch, wanting me to write 5000 words on Alaska wilderness for \$2000. Told him sorry, no time, try James Houston. (Ted Hoagland had told TW similarly to try me.)

4 May--Enormous day of phone and corspdce chores. If a person simply would tend the chores and let the writing of books go, life would be more or less manageable.

On a very longstanding invite, went dntown for lunch with Fay Krause and Elliott Marks of Nature Consvcy. Main gossip is that Seafirst pled poverty this yr, droppe its \$1000 corporate membership in Consvcy--ie., the very sum C and I provided the Consvcy last year. The sonsa-goddambitches.

Called Tom Stewart, x to make sure he's been in touch with Charles Johnson before Howard Sandum of HBJ comes up here wanting to meet writers; stressed to him that the title of INSIDE THOS disastrously falls thru on the page proof, he says they all know it, will fix; asked him the book's price, he said \$27.50.

Got on the phone y'day to folks about Sandum's annced meet-the-rising-writers trip; Frank Zoretich and Irene Wanner both said sure, like to meet him. Ditto Archie, who I also called; and discovered he and Joyce are divorcing, he's living away somewhere. Archie is a survivor, but he may need to be in months ahead--divorce after probably 25 or more yrs, change of ownership at Alaska NW.

Zoretich had the line of the day, said he'd seen the lineup of Bellevue Tn Hall speakers with me among them, it looks like one of those quizzes--what is wrong with this list?

Bright lovely day; I hope I've gained enough on nec'y tasks today to lean back and enjoy life a bit now. There's an almost laughable pileup of stuff looming over us between now and Montana--C's negotiating included, and a wild element I started off dreading but simply will handle when the time comes, visit of Paul and Joyce from Australia-by-way-of-Wally's-in-Montana.

Pretty fair day of work on ms y'day; hope for 2 more good days of editing on ch. 1 this week, then will free lance around in later portions of the chapter next week. I think the progress is good, but holy christ, how much there is to this book.

May 10--The Australian uncle. Thursday morn came a message on the phone machine, Wally Ringer not saying where he was but that he'd call back. I tried to find his Montana number, and in calling Dan's wife Charlene for that, learned that Wally and company were on their way here. Indeed, that night they lit in the Everett Holiday Inn. Told them I'd be available after 4 on Friday, and that we'd have dinner for them and Dave's family. And so we did, 10 of us total: C and I, Dave, Nellie, son John, new daughter (and hit with the visitors) Shaney, Wally, new wife Delores, Paul, Joyce and Vivian.

Paul turned out to be somewhat shy, I think shy of the situation. He told me he'd had misgivings about the trip, seeing Bud in his crippled condition, and so on; but said he was glad they'd come. I may be fancying the scenario too much, but Paul struck me as someone who'd had a vast turn in his life--the decision to marry Joyce and live in Queensland--that he could never be sure was the exactly right one. I told C, think of those three sons of Grandma's, growing up in the sagebrush of the Moss Agate place: ~~xxx~~Bud with most of his life in a wheelchair ahead, Paul with an Australian future, Wally with wife #3 now on his arm--none of them could have had the wildest hint of any of that. Paul I think would have ended up as a high school music teacher, except for the earthquake-shake that WWII sent through his life; instead he became a milk deliverer in Rockhampton, and then a meat cutter, and now is retired on probably not much. My hunch is that he is reasonably content with the Australian life, three kids and all; yet is bright enough, aware enough, to wonder about it all.

Paul is the image of his father, and thin, wiry like him, too. But with long gray sideburns, a nice dapper detail. Joyce shows her age considerably; both she and Vivian are broad, bulky women. Didn't get much out of Joyce, she seemed pleasant enough but would take some knowing before conversation came easy, I think. She and the others of course were at considerable cultural disadvantage. C noted that when we put out vegetables and dip to tide us over until Dave and family could get

May 10 cont--here, Delores took some, dipped only the cauliflower; Vivian, who's had to compensate for her mental slowness by learning to watch people, did the exact same; Joyce, next along the couch, then followed Vivian's cauliflower-only example. So, unthinkingly, we promptly had presented them with a strange American suburban custom.

Vivian seemed a good soul; easy to see why Grandma liked her, maybe better than her ~~new~~ "normal" brother and sister. Her slowness comes across mostly as a shyness. A bonus of this trip, which I hope comes off as planned, is that a pen pal of hers from Missouri City, Texas, is to fly to Helena to meet her.

C and I on Sat. went to Dungeness Spit as planned--the visitors were going to spend the day with Dave--but I told Wally I'd show them around town and take them to lunch on Monday. When I called on Monday morn, though, they'd left for Montana the day before. The weather--rainy, blustery--likely discouraged them, and they seemed to feel they'd had a trip, managed to see all of us out here. So I regret not having had a second session with them, but that's the way it went.

I can't say that Wally and I are nearly as close as we used to be, but I was relieved that there's no evident tension between us. Most of the discontent likely has been on my side anyway, after my miff at him when he seemed to think I ought to pay Grandma's funeral expenses. I dumbly had thought I was doing him a major favor by suggesting we split the cost 50-50.

4 June--An unhinged week. Began the revise of ch. 2, and evidently was flummoxed by the amount of work looming. Picked and pecked until y'day, when I finally got 6 or so consecutive pp. (start of rodeo scene) to mesh. My blithe notion that I'd come back from Montana with ch. 2 essentially done was essentially dumb. Likely it'll be end of August, maybe even into Sept., before I master it. I think it's going to be a doozy, but christ is it long and involved.

Tuesday, day after Mem'l Day, brought a signal batch of mail and news:

--note from Stegner, saying he'd be glad to sign

4 June cont.--book(s) for me, and that he's admired all 3 of mine.

--Pub Wkly with ad for Sea Runners, and reviews of books by Mary Daheim and Mary Robertson, and pic and quotes of Tom Stewart's wife, Amanda Vaill.

--letter from Sheila Nickerson, asking me to be on her Union Theo'l doctoral committee.

--letter from Harvey Manning, another in strange, loony line of correspondence we've had the past some months.

--letter from HBJ Harvest, saying yes, they made an error in April royalties, will correct in on Oct.(!) royalties.

--letter from Sam Vaughan of Doubleday, praising Sea Runners, saying he'd still like to get me in on Hilary book.

--phone machine message from Jean Walkinshaw that Winter Bros was chosen as a "best," to be shown at NW Film and Video Seminar. (We went last night; it also got the award for cinematography, for Sourbeer.)

Somewhere along the way since I last managed to get to this diary, the Penguin Sea Runners cover came; kind of skewed and cliched--chartreuse stripes on the canoe, ice floating in water, my Swedes looking polar--but the title is big enough to read from the moon. The Pub Wkly edition with Sea Runners ad and others is heartening; the Olivier book only gets a 50,000 printing, and I think Kenneally ~~150,000~~ 150,000, while they told me Sea Runners will have 25,000. And they're offering bookstores a dump--only a counter size, 10-copy, but my first.

6 June--Long but fruitful day, revamped 7 pp. of ch. 2. Before going to the track to walk myself back to humanness, wanted to get down that in the past 2 or so weeks, I've been lunched by UW English chairman and UW history chairman. Told C I wasn't clear why, she assures me I'm being scouted. Well, maybe. Carstensen said he'd heard at Pac NW history conference in Boise that I'm to be writer-in-residence at Bozeman; told him it was interesting news to me.

Among other stuff I haven't managed to note in these past few weeks: read galleys of INSIDE THOS, and am satisfied with my Eye of Time piece.

9 June--11:15, have finally made progress on opening pp. of the 4th of July picnic. Radical surgery, by cutting almost a full page on the naming of the park, but the scene is greatly crisper. Also, out of nowhere, what seems to me one of the better lines of the book so far: reference to Sen. Burton K. Wheeler, "who some people thought might become President if Roosevelt ever stopped being."

Also had a sharp energy dive about 10 min. ago, not uncommon these days. Walked the n'hod just before that, jotted several ideas as I did so, had a suc'ful $\frac{1}{2}$ page or so after I sat back down to work--then, blotto. All I know to do is pace myself, recuperate--often by eating--and get back at the writing.

C has come home from lunch, between having given her 2nd final and going to this afternoon's salary negot'g session. It's likely to be a marathon session, and maybe a gauntlet as well.

Finally beginning to feel as if I'm creeping toward an ambush of this week's writing problem, the portrait of Toussaint and ~~his~~ history of the Two country he carries in his head. One of those kinks that happens: he was one of the very first characters ~~mf~~ I thought up for this book, and is proving to be one of the toughest to write.

Not much going on except C closing down the school year and me trying to ~~whip~~ whip the 4th of July, 1939. Full-time jobs, both of them.

22 June, Choteau--Or as I said to C during lunch at the Log Cabin, puzzling my way thru this week on the wall calendar, "my god, is this only our fourth day away from home?"

We're holed up in the Hensley Motel, which is working out pretty well; I've just done a semi-passable day of writing on the Gros Ventre section of the book, and any words definitely accomplished while on the road are not to be sneezed at. I know I'm being damn ambitious in trying to eke a couple of weeks of actual writing out of this month or so in Montana, but the stint at Langs' house in July may save me. Anyway, I do feel more sanguine than at noon y'day, when we discovered that there's no hope of renting a place for a week or ten days here in Choteau and so I'd have to do this first spell of writing catch-as-catch-can. This motel room offers a decent enough swatch of desk space, the gooseneck lamp I brought along boosts the ~~lighting~~ lighting sufficiently, and the weather is good--dry livable air today. So we're coping.

Spent the 1st night of the trip at Welches. Jim and Lois restored us with drinks and dinner then Bevis and Juliette came over, and then Ripley, and we finally just pooped off to bed about midnight. Ripley has a teaching job at Havre--freshman comp at Northern--for the fall. Lois is going to learn word-processing this summer. Jim has his novel, and a mid-July trip to Chicago.

Went on to Helena, the Historical Society, ~~xx~~ and Langs. Did some odds-and-ends of research, then spent the night at Langs, where considerable catching-up on Montana news was necessary: Bill alerted us that Mike Malone and Gail are divorced, and Mike is remarried; and that in his own bailiwick, Bill probably is going to sack Barbara Fifer before he and the family go on their Seattle hegira.

24 June, Choteau--8:40 a.m., winding down the Hensley Motel chapter of Eng Crk work. Past 2 days, I coaxed a reasonable rough draft of the Gros Ventre description. Some soft spots in it, but given that the GV material obstinately has been all bits and pieces, with no real feel of the town I'm trying to create, I think I've made a considerable gain.

This motel has worked out really pretty well; no hassle, we both slept well 2 of the 3 nights (teenage girls in nearby room last night, which meant back-and-forth decision of putting up with them or ~~we~~ drowning them out with airplane roar of air-conditioner), and the work space isn't bad. Also, as I pointed out to C, when an overhead light bulb blew and I turned it in, my honest demeanor gained us 40 ~~watts~~ watts--a 100 bulb instead of the defunct 60.

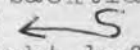
Our regimen has been: Get up a little before 6, walk up to the Log Cabin for breakfast. Walk the length of main st., then veer back to the motel. Write (C has been reading E.T. Hall's Beyond Culture; y'day morn, she made a photo recon'ce drive toward Dupuyer) until 9:30 or so, then go uptown for coffee (y'day) or walk the track of the high school a block away (day before y'day). Write till noon, then either lunch at the Log Cabin or, as y'day, eat in the park. Come back, lie down for awhile, go back to writing for an hour or two, go up to the museum village at n. end of town abt 3:30 for ice cream and coffee. Come back, work again until 5, have a drink before going to Log Cabin for supper. Last night the library was open, so I went there and browsed ~~some~~ issues of the Acantha for 1942.

Next, terra incognita. Haven't been able to get Tom Chad in our phone tries, so about noon we simply head ~~off~~ for Dupuyer and see what the prospects are. With this writing stint under my belt, I at least don't feel the vague outlook for the next week is too dire.

25 June, Dupuyer--7:35, and I have been up for 3 hrs; went to the knob above DenBoer's to watch sunrise, for scene in Eng Crk when Jick rides across to his haying job on Noon Crk each morn. A colossally beautiful morning; fat full moon over the end of Walling Reef, like some of Ansel Adams' scenes; as I approached Agee's place, the change of angle sent the moon down past the southern prow of the reef, the moon becoming a half (against the rock) and then a quarter and then gone. Meanwhile the Sweetgrass Hills stood incredibly outlined on the eastern horizon, like great dunes. To top it all off, the sun rose between the south-most pair of the Sw'grass Hills, like molten iron in a cauldron.

So, the Dupuyer stay is ~~shaping~~ shaping up. I think I am going to be able to write by setting up a card table in our bedroom here; the country is captivating, and we're coming into the comfortable mood we often have here. When Engman opens the service station about 8, we'll fill Tom's pickup and head up the S. Fork of Dupuyer Creek; I mustered myself last night and phoned Tom Salansky to ask his permission--he's known to be a bit reclusive, another of the extraordinary clan of ranch people living almost within touch of the mtns--but he was agreeable. C meanwhile is washing the kitchen window that looks out on the mtns, Tom is thumbing thru a Nat Geo*c, of which he has a 2-foot pile. When I came back from my dawn patrol I made a pot of stout coffee and started the bacon frying, C got up and fried eggs while I moved on to do the toast, and we had a hell of a fine breakfast--the eggs fresh from the Hutterite colony at Birch Creek, the bacon solid and sidepork-like--in the tradition of our stays here. For supper last night we ate chicken fried steaks at the cafe, also good grub.

26 June, Dupuyer--just before 9 a.m., and I've been up just short of 5 hrs. 2nd morn in a row of dawn patrol, going out towards the mtns to see pre-dawn and sunrise for sake of ~~the~~ scene of Jick riding to his haying job. C went with me this morn; I got up at 4:15, looked out and saw bright full moon, so the expedition was on; I made toast while she got dressed, then we drove to 1st turnoff w. of Rappolds' road, for the sake of that benchland. These sunrises are tremendous scenes of beauty, much the best part of the day. Slight breeze this morn, which chilled me enough to stiffen my fingers; today's notecard is plainly more awkwardly penned than y'day's.

A full day, and then some, y'day. In the morn Tom drove us in his pickup to base of foothills w. of Parocais' cabin, C shooting about 2/3 roll of film; then we backtracked and looped s. to Salansky's Arrow S() ranch. I mustered myself the night before and called S., knowing he has a reputation for reticence and ~~a~~ keeping hunters out; he was civil enough on the phone, and then we met him and his mother, on their way to town for Swather parts, as we started on that road. Again, he was civil, and his mother positively said "go on up" (to the ranch); found he has No Trespassing signs everywhere once we got there. The ranch site is beyond anticipation: a foothills valley, with hay meadows, and the mtns looming practically overhead. All this, 13 mi. from Dupuyer. We drove on past the bldgs and 2-3 mi. up the S. Fork of Dupuyer Creek, until the country ahead looked like more than I cared to fight, even in Tom's 4-wheel drive; also, I've seen up that canyon from the other side, during Cow Creek hunting trip with Wayne Arnst.

Back to town, lunch at the Home Cafe. Gary Engman, who bought out the Chadwicks, was eating, and had the line of our trip so far. Said he told Harold, when asked how business was, that he guessed it was okay, he'd bought

26 June cont.--4 new cars in 3 years--"three of them for your family" (i.e., Gary's payments on the station/cafe to Harold, and the new Buick and pickup H has and the pickup Tom has bought) Also told of taking items in trade for gas-- a brand new weed-eater worth \$125 or so for a tank of gas from one broke passer-thru, a stereo from a college girl who ran out of gas at Dupuyer outskirts and coasted into the station.

After lunch we bought food for today--this is Augusta rodeo day, which ought to be either adventure or fiasco--and then C came home with it while Tom and I walked to the schoolhouse where the Old Settlers annual gathering was underway. Got there just as the program and business meeting began. Bill Rappold was running things; he's by 25 years the youngest on the scene, but serves as president, arranges the program and picnic, sings solos, probably sweeps up afterward. About 50 people on hand; oldest woman was Golden Angell, 91, and oldest man was 92. John Rappold the oldest Pondera County dweller, 85 years; incredibly, he is up out of the wheelchair he was in for a couple of years. Others I saw or met: Tom Howe's brother Al, spry tiny geezer who lives in the Conrad retirement home; Nonie Mozer, remarried after Tony's death; Lawrence and Esta Nelson of Valier, parents of Hardin teacher Laurie Nelson whom C and I met at Boise NCTE conference; Pansy Rappold; Minnie Thomas; Edna Thomas Parocai, of the high school gang of us who used to joyride in Tom's '39 Chevy; her brother Mearlin, ditto; Art and Ethel Lindseth.

On our way home Tom stopped at Don Dodge's repair shop, picked up new gas-powered weed eater he's buying from Don. Then home, drinks on the lawn, supper, and about 9:30, call from Morrisises next door, so over C and I went to say hello to Rita and Joe Christaens, and Patty Jo's daughter Jody; all of them coming home from having a mare bred in Jackpot, Nevada. So it goes.

28 June--3:10, have been struggling through a rewriting day on the rodeo segment. Will tough it out until 4, then walk up to the cemetery for exercise. The weather has turned--an hr or two of rain y'day, low overcast and heavy feel to the air today.

So now I am 44 years and one day old. Y'day morn C and Tom made me b'fast--she did the fried eggs, he did the hotcakes--and C had accumulated gifts in Choteau: a tea caddy, handkerchiefs, and new day pack we've needed for about 5 years. I more or less took the day off. We all slept in, then Tom and I wandered downtown for some lunch fixings and for him to get his mail, and in front of the post office we encountered Margaret Agee, which produced about half an hour of visiting. The amazing faces of the Salois family: Margaret now looks like a tiny amalgam of an Indian chief and a gnome. Told me details of Gyp's death, then of Ilah's, and a little later she stopped by to ask Tom where he sells his beer cans and in the course of that told us the tale of the '64 flood on the Two Medicine--all of which I had better take as kismet instructing me to get a tape recorder going in front of her, which I'll try to do tomorrow afternoon. About 11, we got ourselves under way and headed for the Two Medicine and our former sheep range; drove along the prairie ridge about $2/3$ the length of our allotment. Strange to think of having spent one summer and parts of 2 others there, like prairie Bedouins. Then we went back to the river and headed east along newly-oiled road we'd noticed, the one to Holy Family Mission. A 1937 church there, and two big abandoned stone buildings evidently from boarding school days; a family who're apparently farming or haying there are living in a few front rooms of the biggest building, like squatters in a WWII ruin. The three of us ate lunch there, then followed the road east.

28 June cont.--It comes out onto the Valier-Cut Bank road, about .5 miles s. of Cut Bank, and we aimed on to Valier. Coffee in the Panther there; Bob Kincaid, the Conoco bulk supplier who's dealt with the Chadwicks and now Gary Engman all these years and who knew me in high school--he honchoed the Am Legion speech contest I entered a time or two--came in for coffee and told us Harold and Maxine had just arrived back from west of the mtns. Up to see them, and invited to a prompt test drive of Harold's new front-wheel drive Buick; he had a fender-bender with the old one and was damned if he was going to pay a couple of hundred dollars to fix a dent. Stopped by Bonnets but nobody home. Headed back to Dupuyer by way of Kingsbury Hutterite colony with intention of buying a fryer chicken for supper. Were told no, they didn't have any, so we settled for 2 dozen eggs, got for us by a boy named Jerry, about nine yrs old. Supper, then all 3 of us lapsing into Tom's habit of evening tv, last night a Yankees-Orioles game which at least was a quantum improvement over the 1st night here, Love Boat and Fantasy Island back-to-back. Kind of a yearly ritual, alighting here and getting an instant curative dose of tv.

This morn I set up Tom's card table here in the bedroom--with his strewn stuff and ours added in, it's a bit like being in the bedroom of a Collier brother--and have hacked away. Went down for coffee at 10, cashed a sizable check with Gary Engman, who's becoming one of our favorite people here, and in the cafe got into a conversation with Fred Paul and Jack Hayne. I've been trying to attune myself to local behavior again, and I think fare okay in most conversations, but my sense of time is still a bit too abrupt. Fred was drawling "You know..." in the direction of Jack Hayne beside him and I said to Tom I'd better get back to work and began to get up, only to have Fred look at me and say, "here, I'm telling you something." Which indeed he was: that non-dairy creamer burns with a pretty flame.

29 June, Dupuyer--We continue to contend more or less successfully with the logistics of this stay. Neither of us slept well last night, I in fact woke up with an aching neck and a half-headache, much like a colossal hangover. And I had hoped to interview Margaret Agee this afternoon; she was ubiquitous until now, but is nowhere to be located today. So we've switched to going to Choteau for lunch with Dorothy Perkins. I meanwhile have recuperated, and done a couple of half-decent pages. C has done the laundry, and encouraged Tom into some tree trimming, which is being performed with an axe because there's nothing else on hand. As Stegner presciently inscribed C's copy of Gathering of Zion: Persevere. Endure.

We were invited to supper at Haynes last night, a good meal and interesting visit. Jack is the local guru of Dupuyer history; knows a lot of stories and likes to tell them. The Haynes' life in Dupuyer began about when mine did, 30 years ago. Jack related another classic Ira Perkins story. One year Ira and two other sheepmen sheared on the Reservation, and the first sheepman to finish got 46¢ for his wool. When Ira and the other guy got done they approached the buyer, and he told them the price had gone down to 44¢. They told him they'd just hang onto it, in that case, and left it piled on the prairie. About a week later the weather turned rainy, and Ira drove up to Browning, bought tarps, covered the wool; meanwhile the price of wool kept going down, so Ira loaded it onto trucks and put the truckloads in a shed at Bynum. Came time for harvest, the trucks were needed, the wool still unsold. Ira called the wool buyer, asked if he was taking any; the guy said yeah, he was--at 28¢, delivered at Blackfoot. Which Ira had to take, completing the circle route ~~and~~ the wool made that summer, with the cost of tarps and having the trucks tied up all those months, thrown in.

29 June cont.--While spending time before we head for Choteau at noon, should put down Margaret Agee's tale of the death of her sister Ilah. Ilah and Roy had unloaded grain, and laid down for a nap after. When Roy got up Ilah didn't stir, and he went to the phone and dialed Wayne in Conrad; since cancer took his vocal cords, Roy had a system of tapping on the phone to let them know it was him. But this time Wayne was not there but somewhere along Dupuyer Creek messing with horses, and Ilah's dog had followed him. He and Ilah were on the outs at the moment--she had told him not to show his face around the place--so Wayne sent his wife Denise to take the dog home. Denise arrived to find Roy, no Ilah, and the lights blazing in the sheepshed. She asked Roy about Ilah, and he put his hands beside his ear in a sleeping sign. Denise went back to Wayne and reported the sheepshed lights, which didn't sound right, so Wayne came down to see if Ilah was having trouble in the shed; couldn't find her, went to the house and finally deduced the situation, Ilah dead beneath the blanket she had pulled over herself. Margaret's capper of the story is the scene of Roy, unable to utter a sound, feeling for a pulse on Ilah at every possible place, when the situation dawned on him. Consistently, actuality outdoes fiction.

Am not sure I'll produce as much writing as hoped here in Dupuyer, but the two dawn sojourns were more useful than I'd expected, and I've had some bonuses of ~~language~~ lingo just in visiting with people. Also felt a thrill in chatting with Margaret and hearing the rhythms I'd invented for the Toussaint character; maybe I do know what the hell I'm doing, now and again. On those exquisite dawn sojourns, I definitely hit it right by doing them promptly as possible; the weather has descended, there hasn't been a dawn since.

30 June, Dupuyer--The month is closing down with fresh weather: rain much of last night, today bright and breezy and with clouds banked behind the mountains, the low overcast and mugginess of past few days blown away. C is on her way up the road on foot right now--10:15--having hiked about $3\frac{1}{2}$ mi. from the san foin alfalfa field s. of town. I've just been down to the cafe for coffee, met up with Tom, we returned to Harriet Hayne the cassette of the centennial interview of Ila Agee. That loan was a bonus--some cadences and lingo in the talk of both Ila and ancient Mabel Pepion Salois which will help me get Toussaint to sound okay. Although again, I'm pleased in hearing the Mabel Salois cadences and word choices, how close I was on first try.

We are about at a pivot point of this trip; in fact are spending time waiting, maneuvering, before the Helena stint. At noon I'll call again to the Nature Conservancy caretaker at Pine Butte, to see if he's avbl (this morn he was moving cattle) to show us the Pine Butte swamp as he offered. If that comes thru, then I'll call Guthries and tell them we'll be in the area. If it doesn't, the afternoon will have to be invented. In any case, I think in the morning we will start toward Gt Falls and an overnight there en route to Helena.

Y'day, after I was unable to get hold of Margaret Agee, we instead went to Choteau for lunch with Dorothy Perkins. The bonus of that was drying at the laundromat the clothes C had washed, and which had been showered on just before we left. Came back, Tom made his semi-weekly collection of garbage from the two stores, then did his laundry and took a nap while C and I walked the outskirts of town. Long leisurely drinks on the lawn before supper watching the weather back and fill. During supper Ann McCartney called from Seattle, confirming her plan to visit us in Helena. Tom and I went to Haynes, borrowed the Ila tape, were all listening to it when Denis Bonnet called

30 June cont--and we arranged to visit him and his folks in Valier after supper tonight.

And that is pretty much the way of the world here in Dupuyer. This hasn't been a visit in which I've gained quantum leaps of material, as last summer. And I'm at the point of the trip--though less hassled about it than y'day--where the schedule juggling is wearying. But even if we have overstayed here a few days, I think this has been a valuable enough stint.

6 July, Lang's house near Clancy--Hot, hot, hot by our standards: 90-91 the past few hours (now 4:30), thundershowers building up south and west. Have done a decent day's writing on the rodeo sequence, which is taking longer than I wanted but maybe is getting better than I expected, too. The diary has been sacrificed to the manuscript, but maybe I can catch up slightly this weekend. For now, just wanted to note that as I was about to get up from a nap at 1:30, phone rang and it was Nancy and Liz; only agents can catch you asleep up a Montana coulee, with a once-a-month phone call. Nancy's news was that there's no decision from Audubon on the haying piece yet, but that Montana Map wants to run my Eye of Time piece and pics. ⁸Opportune to hear that; we'll likely be in Helena Fri. afternoon anyway, and I can check in directly with that editor.

10 July--3 pm, winding down our stay here at Langs'. They're due home this evening. Our trip now goes elastic, very damn much so; I haven't been able to reach by phone the pioneer lady I intended to interview in Bozeman tomorrow, nor get hold of Mike Malone who could likely put me in touch with her. C and I just walked to the Pinecrest mailboxes for exercise, an 8/10 mile walk each way that we've been doing for a mite of exercise, and she said she feels contentedly flexible about the fact that there are 4 places we may end up tomorrow--Bozeman, or here if Bill wants

10 July cont.--a day or so of office help from us at the magazine, or Annick Smith's, or Welches', both those by way of Seeley Lake and Norman Maclean if he's available. I said that much flexibility half-terrifies me. Actually I think I can get in the mood for it, once I wind down from the writing. I calculated last night, and seem to have gained about 30 pp. of ms on this trip, not to mention the continuity achieved in the rodeo scene and a decently continuous draft of the description of Gros Ventre. Couple of bonuses amid that writing are the dawn scene, which I revised y'day morn from the rough draft done in Dupuyer, and the description of the Medicine Lodge saloon, 1 p. worked out y'day afternoon and the second one this morn. C could find nothing to suggest on the saloon descptn, even though it's 1st draft. So, the stay here has produced pretty well; I've had only a couple of days when I was aware that the writing was going well, and the grueling one--last Thursday--when I muscled the rodeo scene into one continuous narrative and read it into the tape recorder so C and I could hear it that evening. Otherwise it has been the old story: don't wait for inspiration, sit down and type, the stuff will be just as good.

22 July--I am staying sat, so the foregoing theory had better be right. We came home a week ago, and amid fending the house back into shape--C has done much of that--I've tackled the accumulated two armloads of mail and made myself revise 30 pp. of ch. 2. I hope that gives me the necessary jump on getting this mammoth chapter done by the end of August; Monday I intend a big attack on the rodeo scene, to see if I can revamp it into close-to-final shape.

Meanwhile the diary simply lacks time. Maybe next week, but likely not.

26 July--Weary. 4 pm, I've just walked the track and now will try nick into the correspondence. But these first 2 days of the week I've bulldozed thru about 45 pp. of the rodeo scene. Too tough a pace, and I don't intend to keep it up, but felt I had to conquer a bunch of pp. as rapidly as I could. Think the rodeo stuff is shaping up--I seem to have solved a tactical problem of the Velma Simms figure this mid-afternoon, amid a work blear; confirmation again that it doesn't much matter how I feel, the work doesn't vary much--and I may be out of it by noon tomorrow. But then there're a couple of days' work on the outset of ch. 2, the outhouse notion.

Except for wear and tear of this writing pace, which actually isn't the harshest kind of weariness, I'm pretty good. C's birthday on Sunday--#50, and she seemed to take it with flying colors; we hiked to the end of D'ness Spit in commemoration.

1 Aug.--A real dinge of a day, I think the most uncomfortable of the summer. Muggy, deadening. I had better not believe in portents, this key month of ms work beginning this way.

This morn I managed semi-satisfactory revision of about 5 pp. of the Gros Ventre description, the humid lassitude not helped by the fact that the GV draft material doesn't look as good to me as I thought it was in Montana. Felt so beat I quit early for lunch, then after lunch took a nap which stretched to over 2 hrs, a real konk-out. Went to the track after that, will now try transfer notes out of notebooks for half an ~~hour~~ hr or so and call it good. I did manage to bull thru a great number of pp. last week--75 or so--and the rodeo material is tantalizingly close to ready for a typist, some bits of description to be fitted in.

14 Aug.--Now begins a set of 3 weeks I would like to be over: final push on ch. 2 of Eng Crk, and Frank and Lucie's arrival and resettlement--both of which I hope to god are achieved by Labor Day. C remains upbeat, or maybe determinedly sanguine is the description, and I know she's right that we will get the family situation squared into some kind of order. But Jesus, I do dread the details.

I think I've been making the necessary progress on the ms, altho that's not going to be clear until Labor Day; can't count on a single unbroken week between now and then, and it's been by using each week as a solid club that I've made the recent ch. 2 gains. Grit and do it, I guess. The mammoth week of editing at the end of July more and more looks like a skin-saver. I've had distinct gains each week since then--this last week, I got the 1st 40 pp. of ch. 2 far toward respectability--but have also had to fight the ~~next~~ stubborn section of Gros Ventre description much more than anticipated. (It's now ~~semi~~ semi-okay, after a couple further days on it this week, and I'll leave it for awhile.)

Otherwise, we've been trying to have a reasonable summer. Damborgs came for supper Fri. night, ~~first~~ time we've seen them for a ~~time~~ spell (we're on some kind of semi-annual camaraderie with them). Nancy Reeburgh is here now, after having been at the Northwestern ~~in~~ journalism institute; shades of ancient times when C and I were counselors, Nancy says she misses the Institute greatly.

Weather has been good the past few days, after some mugginess earlier last week which played hell with both of us.

All in all, I simply want to sleepwalk thru the rest of August; then get us re-oriented, as we've always been able to do, and begin looking toward next year.

15 Aug.--4:10, quitting the ms for the day. C won't be home for couple of hrs--she and Nancy went to have a look at Panorama City retirement homes near Olympia, and she'll drop Nancy at airport for her 5 o'clock flight home. Linda S comes for supper at 7, and I guess with details of split-up of her and Frank.

15 Aug. cont.--News like that, and the comings and goings, and the in-law stint ahead, all conspired with the latest aggravation of trying to get electrical repairs done (an hr after I called to insure that he'd be here tomorrow, scheduler called back to say no way) to send me into a considerable funk this early afternoon. Finally went up to the track and more or less walked myself out of it.

Nancy was a good guest, impressively mature the way Scott was when he was here last fall. She may be the droll one of that high-energy family; told of arriving at O'Haire, being asked by sweetie-pie theatre Cherubs why she didn't have plastic shoes like theirs, she told them when you step outside at 50 below they shatter. We drove around town a bit with her y'day--past Shilshole to the locks, then to Pioneer Square for lunch--and last night C went with her to call on a student of Bill's who's in therapy at UW hospital for broken back in motorcycle accident.

Not much new, except the mood of fret for C and me (which is to say the ms work) these next few weeks.

17 Aug.--5:40, so far so good. Lucie is sleeping, conked out from the trip. ~~Frank~~ Frail as she is, ~~the~~ she seems fairly placid these days. Frank told me twice in the first 20 minutes they have no intention of living with us. He's counting pretty heavily on them getting into Wesley Gardens, but it's certainly no cinch, with Lucie having to pass a physical. In any event, a week from today will tell that tale, and something will begin to happen.

Not too bad a day of work--explanation of Gros Ventre's name and description of the Heaney family both achieved (I think). Good weather, bright, fine unhumid air.

Linda came for supper Mon. night, and was considerably unstrung about her situation with Frank; obviously dreaded talking with us, the supposed last living exemplars of marriage, about it.

Last night, Phil DiMeco and his folks came by briefly. Interested in his father, an Italian from Visalia who has an almost southwestern accent.

22 Aug.--2:35, I've just finished (and C has just read, without finding a single crs to make) one of the most fluent days of writing--final portion, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ pp. of ms, of evening scene of Jick and Bet. I came into this morning having no idea how to continue that scene, and the first half hr or so was beads-of-blood time. But then it began, with the device I've been using in this book--a dash, to indicate conversation has been going on while Jick has been thinking, and Bet's ire at the question, "Why did you marry Dad?" So ends, I think, what I'd been fretting might take me all this week to write. C asked if I wasn't finally pleased. I told her I guess I am, but a stint like this also wires a person up like a power line.

The home front: ~~a~~ not bad, tho not really good as long as there are 4 of us in this paper-walled house. Lucie's health is quimsy--at the end of supper Sat. night when John and Jean were here, she threw up--to the point where C and I can't see how she can pass the physical to get into the Des Moines retirement home Frank is aiming for. The physical is Wed., the verdict next Mon., so waiting is all there is to be done.

Not much else new. Y'day C edited the interview by John Dally which will run in the Elliott Bay bookstore's fall newsletter, and I went over it from there and mailed it this morn. We think it's a decent enough interview. I've begun re-reading The Hentys, for the 1st time in a few years; engrossing yet undisturbing, which I decided I needed y'day after starting first on Madame Bovary and then Janet Frame's Faces in the Water, set in an insane asylum--both definitely too fraught.

29 Aug.--The 99% inevitable catastrophe happened just after lunch: Wesley Garden turned down C's folks, on basis of Lucie's frail health. C and I were braced for it; Lucie is so obviously ~~w~~ unsteady. Further complication is that the dr's exam of her showed an enlarged liver, which means a Mason Clinic exam on Wed.

This'll all get resolved somehow, but at the moment it's a gray prospect.

Figuring today might be one of uproar, I began review of ch. 1 instead of trying to finish off the dance scene and with it ch. 2. Made some cuts of stuff I labored long over, but they were flab; the fat that makes material read like ms instead of book. Did get quite a lot done today, at considerable skin off the nerves.

1 Sept.--As C just said, what do I mean, I'm in a cottage industry? The 200 Bk Club of Wn broadsheets, quote from Winter Bros, were delivered by printer Scott Freutel's wife, and I've signed about half of them by now. My own cut is 25 copies.

The situation of C's folks is beginning to be resolved. Monday of this week, the above entry, C says was literally shitty: her mother had a bowel accident during the night, C stepped in dog crap while doing yard work, then the retirement home turndown. Considerable agitation among Frank and Lucie, though not entirely as much as I expected. The next day C and Frank went for a look at ^MMadison House at Totem Lake, liked it, and miracle of all, there was 1 studio apt. avbl. They took it, and Frank's enthusiasm abt Wesley Gardens turned right around to Madison House. Phone call today from the furniture guy, now in Omaha but saying he'll be here noon Tues. So a definite remainder of stay now is in prospect, and I can tough it out on those terms.

Frank's birthday y'day, John and Jean came last night with cake. They have been utterly golden about pitching in this way.

Amid all this, Tues., I completed the 2nd chapter of Eng. Crk, on schedule.

9 Sept.--We're out the far end of the family gauntlet, at least at the moment. Tues. the 6th, Frank and Lucie moved into Madison House at Kirkland. It has been hectic even since, particularly for Carol who is bearing about 80% of all this, but at least we have space and silence for ourselves again. It's been a helluva logistical burden on everybody; the Mullers having to squat with us, without any of their possessions or sense of familiar surroundings, for nearly 3 weeks, C doggedly learning her way through the area's retirement homes; a double move into Madison House involved, C and I and John to go over tomorrow to relocate them into a larger room than the one they got into on Tues.; this morn C and I and Frank went to south Seattle to pick up his car, an expedition of about 2½ hrs for me and more for C by the time she drove Frank and his car back to Kirkland. When we first got over there this morn, Lucie was in a chair looking wan and glum, ~~From~~ Frank had had a bloody outbreak from a ~~hemorrhoid~~ hem'oid during the night. Dicey, pretty damn dicey, all of it. Lucie is not far from needing nursing home care, which may be the next great sobering fact.

I guess C and I have persevered. Still on speaking terms. Enormously wearing to both of us to have the 3 weeks of people in this house. I hunkered in and wrote here in the study from about 7 to 5, day after day including Labor Day. C spent great portion of time dealing with her folks, sometimes managing to retreat in here to read her new texts for this fall.

This may sound sourer than I am just now; simply weary, ready for the week we intend on the Oregon coast and hoping like hell the health at Madison House holds together long enough for us to do it. I'm about to take the picnic scene to Marilyn to be typed next week; it's not as polished, and probably not as good, as I'd like, but it is typable, and that's one more landmark on English Creek, ch. 2 all in typescript.

21 Sept.--The date of my 5th futile try for a G'heim. May it not be futile, but most likely so.

Terrific weather these past 3 days, bright and crisp. C meanwhile has been through one of the damndest Shoreline episodes ever--y'day's contract negotiations which began early morning and ended about 11 p.m. So she's been caught up in that and the prelim stuff for the school year; I spent a day and a half on the G'heim application, then answered an inordinate amt of letters y'day afternoon, and today have done chores such as a dump run, getting the last of the Muller boxes out of the Buick, etc. I've meanwhile been having a hell of an allergy siege, sinus drip and lack of sleep at night and droopiness during the day. I guess, though, we'll make it through.

26 Sept.--What seemed like a reasonable day of work. Finished the campfire scene of Jick and Mac, did some other touching-up of ch. 1. Now, at 2:30, am deliberately quitting ms work, to see if I can pace myself thru this week. I feel much better than I did most of last week; on Sat. the allergy daze left, I in fact put in a decent half-day of ms and other desk work. C went and got her folks, to show them a shorter route between here and Kirkland, and they had lunch here. I went back with the 3 of them, so C and I could do some final furniture moving in their room. All untroublesome enough, except for it consuming most of C's day. Asked her on the way back what she generally intends, she said she hopes to see them about once a week "so they don't feel abandoned." Told her if the frequency of visit is going up from twice a year to 52 times a year, there's no grounds for them feeling so. We talked a bit about the inevitable tug between me and her folks, and I put in my nickel's worth that I didn't see how anything like the pace of her past week--which included 2 negotiating sessions until close onto midnight--could go on. She pointed out that all of this is out of the ordinary, both negotiations and getting the Mullers resettled. And said, when I told her this direct concern, that her energy of the past week has

26 Sept.--been just that, energy, rather than a recurrence of the menopausal high tension of a couple of years ago. She in turn pointed out to me that I'm sometimes like a hummingbird--I'd told her this past wk was like living with a hummingbird--myself. I said that was news to me, because I feel like I spend almost all my time in the house. A fairly frank session, for us. Might have been a good idea, as y'day both of us were in a good mood and today we've both gone about our work in efficient unhassled style.

Friday afternoon, express mail brought the first copy of INSIDE THOS. The design job is good, C and I agree that my Eye of Time piece is damn deft, some of Duncan's pics are fine; I still feel there are too many broody cloud scenes, nor do I automatically think "yeah, he's shot just what I was aiming at," as I so often did with Sourbeer's pics for the tv Winter Bros. So it remains a project I'm fairly coldblooded toward. May it sell all 6000 copies and make us each a few thousand \$\$\$. But I'd about bet it won't.

Bad news among friends. Things are going to keep on until we won't have any married friends younger than us. Which I guess isn't automatically bad, but they're the ones I've found most interesting in recent years. And of course the loss is in seeing them after a split-up, as the ground shifts inevitably after that. Anyway, Frank and Linda are the current concern, and while C has had some hope they'll patch up, I don't have much. Frank's free-lance bind just looks unfixable. Makes me wonder how I could have been so dumb as to fight that magazine situation all those years.

3 Oct.--Again, no real energy to put into this, but for sake of record:

If the mix is possible I suppose I'm elated and apprehensive. Ch. 1 is revised, C read it over the weekend and liked it hugely, and today I dropped it and unrevised ch. 2 with Irene Wann~~er~~ for evaluation. Two giant strides, with those chapters. The 3rd one is the cause for apprehension; I've got to write most of the damn thing between about now and Armistice Day.

Busy weekend. Bill Lang came to town for Oral History convention, spent Th-Fr-Sat nites with us. We invited Tony and Noel Angell for supper on Friday, much good storytelling by Bill and Tony. Tony told various ones in dialect, from Russian to Texan, and is damn good at it. Sat. while Bill was at convention, C and I went to Kirkland, had lunch with her folks and then put up a windowshade for them. Sunday morn, took Bill ~~h~~ for b'fast to Surragate Hostess, where we ran across Peter Rockas~~x~~, who in turn told his friend Louise Wasson who I was and she came over and told us hilarious tale of visiting Ringling after reading Sky. Dropped Bill at the Edgewater, came home, phone fairly promptly rang, it was Paul Pintarich, Oregonian book editor. He'd visited Graywolf Press, interviewed Frank Herbert and Tom Robbins, I was next. He and new wife ~~M~~ Carla were here about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hr, so about 4 p.m. C and I sat down, looked at each other and said we felt the weekend shd start about then.

12 Oct.--Breakthrough, I hope, I hope. Last week and a half, one grindstone day after another, but today was lively, much revision done and some desperately needed ideas appearing. Maybe I will finish this SOB yet. Likely the day's progress springs from last night's decision, in consultation with C, about dropping the intended start of ch. 3--death of Dode Withrow. It was a very severe yank on the reader, after the 4th of July mood, and I was bothered by repeating a Melander-like death in this book. I think Dode lives, haying gets done, maybe even some of the plot gets resolved.

26 Oct.--Autumn in the blood. Leaves coming down by the dumpsterful, ferns out my window going to brown. Otherwise, though, life is a little more promising at the moment than a week or so ago. This wk's ms work has gone reasonably well, though I likely face 2 days of desperate contriving to get the 10 further pp. needed. Ch. 3 is beginning to take on some shape and sense, although there's a lot of tricky pacing and detail yet to be solved in the forest fire scenes. I'm simultaneously trying to tinker with ch. 1 a little each afternoon, to solve its remaining small glitches and get it ready for final typing.

C too has had a saner start to this week than any other since mid-August, though things began now to pile up on her: tonight we meet Jerry Ackerman for dinner downtown, tomorrow night she's in 1st aid, and she does a car chore for her dad on Th. or Fri. The situation with her parents still isn't too bad, although I have to simmer myself down to that realization about once a week--most recently on Sat., when C asked them to lunch "about noon" and at 5 to 11, when we were amid laundry and desk chores we frantically were trying to catch up on, here the Mullers were. Natural enough from their point of view now, of not having anything else to do so they come on over, but I couldn't get away from the thought of what an epic tilt of manners it'd have been for somebody to arrive that early on the Mullers in yrs past. Anyway, I've been carping too much--the form it takes is my thinking out loud to C, trying to dope out what her father is up to with one or another comment or maneuver; there really is a cultural schism between Frank and me, he has his own agenda and points to be won while I moon around in live-and-let-live--and will try clamp down on myself. The good news of the Muller move is that the place they're in, ^Madison House, is exceptionally well kept.

C and I went to Dungeness on Sunday, fine weather, a restorative hike despite the tide taking the beach from us too soon. While we were there we made New Yr's Eve resvtns at the Juan de Fuca motel, determined to have an unhassled holiday for ourselves.

30 Oct. --Quiet Sunday, recuperation. I worked ~~Y~~ y'day, going over 1st half of ch. 1 so it can get final typing by Marilyn. One of the tough tasks at this stage of the ms is finding time to smoothen the early chapters at the same time I finish the last one. Two distinct jobs, they should be, but are running together on this ms.

Went to the Surrogate Hostess for b'fast, encountered Peter Rockas, evidently a regular; in a minute the table had filled up with other social workers, Joyce, Jackie, another woman whose name we didn't get. The last time we were there, on Bill Lang's last day in town, a friend of Peter's named Louise Wasson came over, told us a long hilarious story of reading Sky while she was at an education conference in Missoula, bumming a ride ~~to~~ with WSS principal to see the country, ending up in Ringling where she met Jay in the bar, he showed her the alcohol plant and the bartender showed her the house where G'ma and I lived.

After b'fast with the social workers we walked Green Lake, came home and read NY Times. I haven't done much else until right now--2:30--except scan back into the diary to see how my current mood compares with other make-or-break stages of the book. I think I'm feeling steady enough, if I can just muster the stamina for about 6 more diligent weeks. A good milestone y'day, when mail brought a letter from oldtime fire boss Hank Viche in Missoula saying my forest fire scenario sounds sane to him.

Had lunch with Duncan on Friday, to mark pub'n of INSIDE THOS. We made conversation somewhat more easily, but still aren't at ease with one another, at least from my point of view. He said again he'd sure like to do a Sea Runners photo book next, I told him I'd have to wait and appraise the economics of this one, specifically whether people are going to buy INSIDE THOS this year and forego ENGLISH CREEK next yr; also said I'd vaguely talked with Sourbeer about a coastal book sometime. After lunch I went to DeGrass and Fix-Madore bkstores, both have rec'd INSIDE copies with bad covers, as Duncan and I also have.

4 Nov.-- Friday, 2:45, end of a major week, as they all are now. 6 fresh pp. written today, after 4 days of revising abt 50 others into shape. The haying section is getting done; may be so, by this time next week, when I'd give it to Marilyn for typing if I can persuade myself to.

Have felt middling all day, but that's a quantum improvement over y'day when a headache grew worse all day long. Ultimately went to bed at 7--I had taken aspirin, Alka-Seltzer, food, fresh air, all damn day--and read for a bit, then lay with a cold cloth over my eyes, and probably by about 8, was ready to sleep. Slept thru till 5, then dozed until time to get up at 6. Likely my body telling me to be careful with this work pace--ironically, on a day when I scrupulously took time off to go to U District and try to relax. Also, the phone chose y'day to go crazy: John Waldner of the New Rockport Hutterite colony calling the answer'g machine various times--with my head, my workload, and my general weariness, I couldn't face a night of cultural warp like that--and Mike Hardy from Missoula with fire info I'd asked for, and Murray Bloom of ASJA asking me to call him tonight about something unknown, and kids dialing randomly to shout "fuck you" and a guy named Mark Strawn who says he wants to film Sea Runners. May ~~xxx~~ the last be first.

Also a real storm y'day, a winter douser. Today is beautiful, a sailboat race on the Sound and fresh snow in Olympics when I walked the n'hood after lunch.

11 Nov.--Vet's Day, 3:45, and a day of necessary gain. C on Wed. morn--about 1:30 a.m., in fact--came down with a sore throat, which is gradually making itself into a cold. That and the weather, storms swashing through, changed our minds about going away for this 3-day week-end. Instead she got some shopping done this morn and now is reading Winter in the Blood for use in her English class, and I began surgery on ch. 2; in a strong morning of work I cut 7 or so pp. from the Gros Ventre descptn. Some of it smarts, but I guess I better do it.

12 Nov.--Weekend is still weathered in, C is still cold-ridden, it looks as if we'll hunker in again. 8:25, I'm about to start the laundry and simultaneously try clean out my pocket notebook and some of the guff all over my desk; will try note here as I go along events that've gotten away in these past weeks.

--election: I didn't see it, but Jean Walkinshaw called to ask if our names could be put on a S. Times ad for Mike Lowry, along with those of Sol Katz, Paul Kirk, Cornelius Peck, Cabell Tennis, George Tsutakawa, Jim Whittaker. We said yes.

--Wk or so ago, Murray Blum of ASJA called, asked if I'd be on panel about "reality into fiction"--he'd read Sea Runners--next May. Told him I'm flattered, but I'd rather be in Scotland.

--Ann Nelson came by with Sky royalty check, C and I enlisted Laird and Sarah to help with presentation of Inside THOS, Ann not having known it's dedicated to her and Marsh and CHill.

--Jean Walkinshaw's call also brought info, which Chan 9 is somewhat less than great about providing, that WBros won \$500 in Oregon St. Fair film competition and was "one of the best of the NW" in Bumbershoot competition.

--Jerry Ackerman was thru this area in late Oct., writing about the EPA public hearings on Tacoma ASARCO stack. Had dinner with him at Asuka, which was incredibly late and slow--with food as good as ever, when it at last came--and visited for couple of hrs. Jer lost weight 2-3 yrs ago, after a phlebitis scare, and looks immensely better. He also is a good competent intelligent guy, and I much enjoyed seeing him again; 26 years since we shared that freshman room at Latham House.

18 Nov.--Now I'm the cold-ridden one. Ridden barely says it; saddled, bridled, circingled. Tremendous sneezes, even for a sneezer like me, and the runny nose, and the sinus pains choosing sites in my skull. I suppose this is something to take into account in future book schedules: at this stage of the quarter C is played out enough that she picks up a cold or flu from school, I'm so played out I pick it up from her; it adds up to about 3 weeks of the dismal, going through one or the other of us. In spite of this cold, and perversely a little

18 Nov. cont.--bit because of it, I've had a good day of writing and revising; have simply felt so weird I couldn't do anything else but work. The first 2 days of this week were grim, the cold coming on and I was beleaguered about getting to the forest fire material; past 3 days have been productive, the section of Jick visiting the Double W now all but done and I think done pretty well and pretty rapidly, and while I'm still not whipping the forest fire--that begins on Monday--I feel better about the pace of the ms.

Langs were supposed to show up this weekend on their way to a Portland Th'giving, but Bill's letter today canceled them out. Reeburghs may be in town on Mon., but at least we've gained a weekend of breathing--and nose-blowing--space.

C visited her folks early in the week, and they'll be here for noon in our doubleheader Th'giving. I don't know how ominous this will turn out to be, but a call from Frank to C last weekend brought the 1st instance of: "I think your mother wants to go back to NJ." C told him they ought to think of this as a year's tryout, out here; she's been bolstering him against Lucie, but we'll see. At this point I honestly don't know if I prefer to have them back there--if they found a good retirement place which Frank at least would like, that would have some advantage--or right where they are, now that ~~the~~ all the uproar and effort has been invested in settling them here. I do know Lucie's damaged mind shouldn't be guiding their choice of place, but then I don't have to live with her and Frank does.

19 Nov.--After Y y'day's nose flood, I'm considerably recovered today. Also heartened; C read the Double W ms chunk last night, suggested I take out "quite" from "quite a hurry", and said that was all she saw to improve it. I've read it over this morn, patched in 6 or 8 dinky elaborations, and I too feel it's ready to go.

Dark rainy day. After the mellow autumn we're getting a lot of rain; don't mind except for problem of getting out to walk.

19 Nov. cont.--I likely don't have energy for much of this, but a few things to catch up on:

--Twice this past week I'd have happily had the head of Paul Pinterich on a platter. A phone call came on Monday, from a guy who proved to be a displaced Montanan, trying to find an agent for a ms he wants published, and P'ich had suggested he get in touch with me. Nothing dire, but it's one of those no-win conversations about the mysteries of agents. Then came, after my postcard nudge to him, P'ich's piece about me in the Oregonian mag; with the "quote" from me about English Creek--"I feel it will be the first novel about Montana to be colloquially and historically accurate." Neither C nor I can imagine what P'ich thought he was hearing, through ~~the~~ interview style of simultaneously asking questions, talking and looking around; but most likely I said something like, First of all I want this novel to be colloquially and historically accurate. Anyway, I'll just hope the quote doesn't find its way to Montana.

--Last weekend I was the reluctant passer-on of grim news to Carstensen, of death of one of his early PhDs, Oliver Knight of UTEP. I'd mailed Knight ~~a~~ my copy of Following the Indian Wars, asking him to sign it, and he never got around to it; his son found it while cleaning out O's office, wrote me, asked me to tell C'sen. Hell of it was, when C'sen came on the line and I asked him how things were, he said he'd had recent grim news, auto death of another of his PhDs, Alan Hynding.

22 Nov.--20 years ago, the day of Dallas. The Lindsay-Schaub gang in Rango's bar in Decatur, for coffee or lunch I can't remember. Ralph Johnson at outside end of the table, turned to where someone was watching the tv behind the bar, then told the rest of us, somebody was saying something about Kennedy being shot.

Cold dank day, today. I've had some energy lapses, but got the writing done.

23 Nov.--3:55, Thanksgiving Eve. Spent the day on the final short chapter of English Creek, and made strides. A considerable gamble, this epilogue-like ending; the reader is going to have to care like hell what happens to the people of the book, for this series of concluding views to work. So I'm betting the reader will.

Dark and rain set in at 3:30 again today, my usual walking time. Second day in a row, I didn't walk; will have to amend my schedule, go out earlier.

The Reeburghs were with us the past 2 nights, they left today at 1:20. Strange, strange example of life imitating art: they came from Corvallis, where Scott told them he wants to drop out of college, get his pilot's ratings--his yearnings and their parently reactions so akin to the case of Alec McCaskill in this novel of mine that I told them last night I've long since had my version written, there are no Reeburghs in English Creek. So the instance of Alec, I seem to have sensed ahead of a reality, and the lingo of Toussaint I similarly anticipated before hearing Margaret Agee confirmed the rhythms to me; I wonder if I am tuned to any other actualities, or whether two is about my quota.

Am largely over my cold by now; I came down with it about Monday of last week, it was in full spate last Friday. I'm a bit tired--the Reeburghs arrive with months of talk stored up, and I find that draining; also Bill is a word processing enthusiast, and I do a lot of unsatisfactory explaining of my primitivism--but don't feel ~~as~~ as weary as I've sometimes been recently. I am a bit edgy about how much of the forest fire section I still have to write; a good week next week will provide it, and then I can rework during the 1st full week in Dec., but that's all another 2 weeks of labor, when I'd hoped to be done writing and into the ms tinkering stage by right now. Grit and do it; and ~~now~~ check the diaries of other years, when I'm done, to see if this is chronic, that I write the final third or so of the book in the last eighth of the total time.

25 Nov.--The Thanksgiving that was. Y'day morn about 10:30 as C and I were stuffing the turkey, the wind came up, and I noticed an evergreen branch lash in toward the dining room window, something I'd never seen happen before. About 5 to 11, the power went off. We had a holiday doubleheader planned: Frank and Lucie for ham steak dinner at noon, our gang of regulars at 3:30. After about 20 minutes of the power off ~~xxx~~ and the wind increasing, we decided to tell the Mullers not to come, not wanting them on the road during this. We then took our turkey to the Rodens. There at their place at 12:30, the power went off. Jean soon got a coincidental call from her neighbor Virginia Koelsch, and asked her if she had a spare oven. Indeed she did, the Koelschs were going out for the holiday. Over we went, C and I having never met Virginia and Oliver Koelsch--Virginia said as we came in she'd read my books, and I said, Now I'd like you to meet my turkey. Put the bird in the Koelsch oven, they gave us a key, we went back to the Rodens to head home--the windstorm still whooping--and our Buick was dead, likely with a defunct starter. Borrowed the Rodens' Vega, came home carefully--we'd had to back out of Carlisle Hall Road on our way over there, because of a downed power line, and trees and lines still were bucking mightily. Got home, stoked up the fireplace--the day fortunately not cold--and monitored the radio. I managed to ~~x~~ write a few Xmas cards meanwhile. By about 2 the forecast was that the storm had gone north, the wind now would simmer down. And in checking around by phone, we'd found that Ann McC and Jack Gordon were without power in Seattle, as was Phil in his house up the hill from us, and Frank and Linda were game to come--Frank said it was exciting, he'd be much disappointed in us if we finked out; by about 2:30 our anxieties about people trying to get here under dangerous circumstances began to ebb, and we decided to to ahead as ~~xx~~ planned. People brought candles, a coal oil lamp, their dishes of food, and as it turned out, 3 bottles of champagne and a hell of a bunch of wine.

25 Nov. cont.--Dixie and Ann arrived first, at 3:40, and Phil and Jack immediately after, then Frank and Linda, bringing with them Katherine Koberg, a writer--she had an article in the current Weekly which none of us had read because of lack of lights--whom we'd never met. Got the food lined up in the kitchen, coats hung, amazing how much of life had to be done by flashlight; then popped the 1st bottle of champagne, drank a toast, as Frank said, to the survival spirit. Peter and his lady, Ruth ~~Forde~~ from U. of Idaho, then arrived, and we started on the 2 champagnes they'd brought. Life went right along, candles lit at about 4:30. At 6, C and I drove to the Koelsch house, ~~wasn't~~ much relieved to see lights on, evidence of power; pulled the turkey far enough ~~from~~ out to cut into it--it fairly gushed juice. Not only was it perfectly cooked, it was an ideal turkey; C speculates that its rather leathery skin kept the juice in. She drove us home while I held the turkey baster on the floor of the Ford, between my legs, with potholders; we had the baster propped into a paint-roller pan and it rode fine. Not long after 6:30 we ate, the conversation rolled on--this year's gamut was from the person-to-person ads in the Weekly, to genetic engineering--at one point Phil asked to see Inside THOS, I got him one and a flashlight to look at it with; we eventually had dessert, pumpkin pie and pumpkin cheesecake, put a kettle of water into the fireplace ~~for a while~~ to heat for coffee; and so it went, until everyone cleared out about 10:30. At 10:45 the power came on.

26 Nov.--A painful though probably beneficial episode just before lunch today. I'd spent the morning in looking over ch. 1 of English Creek, and when I quit, I remembered that I'd wanted C to look over the final brief chapter~~s~~ and so I unthinkingly grabbed it, took it out with me, and handed it over to her. The deaths of the characters in it made her more distraught than I've ever seen her; as she reddened and fought tears, I realized what a boob I'd been, not to think about the effects on her. Beth in the nursing home, the clouds settling on her mind, maybe was the worst; C said it offended her, that a fate like that would happen to Beth--she meant, I think, in actuality, not

26 Nov. cont.--just literarily. But the other deaths also upset her, although she agreed there's a kind of necessity that Alec and maybe Mac are dead by the end of the book. So: I wanted a reaction, I got one. In light of this devastation on C, who is not one of the world's weaknerved people, I'm going to reconsider the ms's conclusion, I suppose tone it down greatly. I'm always so busy concentrating on getting strength into my writing that it didn't occur to me I could make it too strong, there at the ending. After lunch I proposed to C that we walk around the n'hood, and the air got us settled down a bit, her from the upset over the characters, me from my chagrin at what I'd done to her.

1 Dec.--I'm writing like fury. And am a bit ticked off at myself that I have to write this hard, this late into the ms. Every day this week I've written, fresh, 5-7 pp. and rewritten 3-5 others. But I hope by about next Wed., English Creek will be in hand.

Life finally has settled down. On top of Th'giving weather and so on, our refrig died. C got out and shopped for one Mon. afternoon--after we'd taken our freezer meat to the Rodens, including some they'd brought over here because of their 36-or-so ~~hour~~ hour power outage--and I then went and had a look with her, and by early Tues. afternoon we had a new Amana in place.

14 Dec.--4:45, waiting for my turn at the shower, will grab enough time to characterize this day: I was quoted in P-I rundown of recommended books (Riddley Walker), finished revising ~~the~~ ch. 3, and the re-rerun of WBros is at 8:30.

21 Dec.--Yesterday English Creek left for New York. Not without some exertion. I took the ms to the Roosevelt-Grn Lake Copy Mart before 8, and was met with cold weather, slick streets and what looked like a sizable snowstorm coming in. Also the Copy Mart's assurance of the day before (on the phone) that 3 copies could be whizzed thru while I waited was news to y'day's staff. They said they'd strive to have it done by 11. I decided to wait it out in the UW library, not wanting to risk one more problem of getting a car out of our valley on these roads. I did a few pieces of checking for the ms, wrote some Xmas cards, browsed the U Book Store, and sure enough, by 11:30 I had the thrice-copied ms in hand. Well, not quite thrice, as C and I found in checking the pages; one page was missed in a couple of copies, and a run of 6 or 8 pp. in a couple. C volunteered to go to the Aurora Copy Mart to do the missing ones, while I readied the packaging to Liz and Tom. (Interim discovery was that the padded envelopes I'd bought wouldn't begin to swallow this 520-pp. ms.) Away she went, but spun out at the top of the Sh'line hill; back down, around by St. Luke's--Copy Mart had CLOSED sign in window. She then headed for the college, let herself in, ran the needed pp., came down the hill, and we got the full ms sets assembled. I was loathe to face the Bitter Lake post office crush and weird parking lot, so chose Edmonds. Out to Aurora, carefully, carefully, and by about 2:30 the stuff was mailed and if all goes well, by next fall will reappear a few blocks up the street, in the Morrows' bookshop.

Will try enter some notes, during the holidays, about finishing up the book. For now, my impression is that the first section is a bit windy but the rest moves right along, and the final section of haying and forest fire is surprisingly good--C agrees, says its the best final part of any of my g books yet.

Christmas--11:05, C has gone to Kirkland to pick up her parents and take them to church at U Methodist on their way here. I've had a thinking morning, damn pleasant; for whatever reason, have looked back into my poetry file and think I see how to make a few of those ancient ~~manom~~ poems fairly presentable. Maybe nothing will come of it, but it occupies me surprisingly.

The weather finally broke, after below-freezing the past 6 days. Worrisome, because this house is reliant on electricity--various blinks and breath-holding the past morns, about the time everybody was getting up and revving their houses up. Walked the n'hood this morn when it was about 35 and it felt tropical.

Spent much of y'day in putting together the acknowledgments for English Creek. Haven't counted how many people, but they're dozens. I don't quite have my desk cleaned off, and haven't tackled the dismantling of Eng Crk research; some of that awaits the ms checking I'll do in the New Year.

We stepped across the street to Lankfords' annual Xmas shindig, for about an hour. Talked with Blake a bit and found, to our hilarity, he and a biking buddy slept under the bridge in Dupuyer last summer, fearful that Hutterites would ambush them in the park. And visited with the Poths, first time in ages. Otherwise we've been hunkered in. Called Ann McC and finked out on her solstice party Wed. night; and we're both thankful we decided against our notion of a party here on Fri. night, which would have been in the ~~the~~ heart of the cold icy weather. Cindy Roden came for supper Thurs. night; she is singular, vibrant, artsy; as C said, seeing her in that family makes a person believe in the stork. (And John and Jean might be the 1st to agree.) We have a Xmas tree, the first in several years, and C has Xmased the house up considerably; she had about 45 ~~min~~ min. of snit last night about the exertion she was putting into meaningless ritual, and I had about the same this morn during final housecleaning. Now we'll see what mood Frank and Lucie are in.

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.

(acceptance speech at Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association awards, Ap 23 '83

This award is especially welcome because it is for a novel. ~~United~~ When I began on The Sea Runners about ^{ago} three years ~~I had~~ ^{done} ~~tried~~ about every conceivable kind of writing except advertisements on the back of matchbook covers, and fiction. Now, with this novel out in the world and another one trying to get out of my typewriter, I finally have a safe answer to that question writers sometimes get while signing books in your stores-- "Is what you write real, or do you make it up out of your head?" Now I can simply say, yes.

With the Academy Awards such a recent reminder, this wouldn't be ~~be~~ a proper acceptance without some lugubrious yet heartfelt expressions of thanks. To my wife Carol, for not flinching when she realized "for better or worse" ^{evidently} included the soppy weather and ^{the bush planes} small aircraft of southeastern Alaska. To Tom Stewart, my editor at Atheneum, for his hiring Paul Bacon for the jacket. faith in the book and for ~~making it look as it does~~. To John Rantala, ^{book} for managing to sell some copies of the ~~thing~~. And again, thanks to all of you of the PNBA, ^{both} and for this award.

for steering my
Candemen Melander,
Wannberg, Karlman
& Bacon into
your stores