

3 Jan '87--A week it was. Saturday the 27th, I woke up early, about 4:30, and was tinkering away at some desk-clearing when the phone rang at 6:45. It was Frank, in considerable pain; a steady stab in his abdomen, he said. C got out of bed when the phone rang, so with one of us on each line ~~went~~ worked it out that we'd call the Polyclinic where Frank's doctor Jim Lane is and check back with Frank from that. Result was, we soon were taking him down to Providence Hospital's emergency room. Things were quite quiet and measured there, that holiday Saturday, and when a doctor came around after the nurse and medic had done preliminaries on Frank, he asked C if she was related to me. She said she pointed to the admitting room, where I was with Frank as he tried to eke out a urine sample they desperately needed, and she said with great relief--the anonymous feeling when dealing with a hospital vitiates us both--"Ivan's in there right now." The doc proved to be Bob Seale, a calm competent whip-lean guy from northern Idaho who'd worked in Glacier Park during summers and knew Dupuyer and the Reservation. Across the course of the morning, Seale and the Polyclinic surgeon on Providence duty that day, King, eliminated diagnoses which would have meant surgery and came around to, basically, admitting him and keeping an eye on him. The trouble seems to have been an intestinal blockage brought on by flu; a complication was that Frank got pneumonia from lying in the hospital bed. It all added up to him being in until the 1st, Thurs., and y'day afternoon C had to take him down to see a urologist as well. But he called her this morn to say he's much perkier--he was (understandably) grumpy as hell when he called me to report on himself y'day--so we at least seem to be out of the semi-emergency that had us on the freeway between here and the hospital much of the week.

Greatly better news: it must have been the 29th when the phone rang about 8 p.m., it was Liz who'd just finished reading DANCING and called to tell me it's "wonderful." She was in fact quite moved, saying she still had tears in her eyes from the ending. And she said words that have never before passed her lips toward my ears--"And I think it ~~might~~ could be a big commercial success." Then in true gently and New Yorkly style, she added: "But what do I know."

cont.

Jan. 3 cont.--Then it must have been the morn of the 31st, New Yr's Eve, when Tom called to say he'd read about the first 300 pp. the night before--~~idxx~~ the ms only got to him that afternoon--and again, "wonderful." So far he had only minor editing suggestions--thinning the Burns quotes by about 20%, which I'd pretty much expected, and indeed ~~thinned~~ I'd made a list of them just for that contingency; thinning some Scottishisms which he'll give me examples of; and a point that smarts a bit, he didn't think the 1st king's remembrancer ~~xxx~~ segment works, though I'm going to see if I can't feather it in more smoothly elsewhere in ch. 3. So far, so good. On the other hand, the Harvard MBAs who are running Macmillan Inc. have now taken over direct administration of the trade books div. with the departure of Jeremiah Kaplan, so I'll have to try find out from Tom how much they're leaving him alone. All in all, having had to cancel, or maybe just delay, our intended New Year's trip to Vancouver, I managed to do the apparatus for the book--map, acknmts, etc.--this week and so am considerably ahead of schedule on that. If Tom has pressed ahead with his reading, I'm likely to hear from him on Monday, and if so, I'd immediately plunge into the final reading and revise of the ms. I'm feeling good about all this book augury, though there've been so many chores and desk piles that I still haven't had utterly free time to bask. In a couple of weeks, maybe?

Jan. '7--With Tom so prompt in his reading of Dancing, I decided over the weekend to go right into my own re-read of the ms; at pace of 100 pp/day, I'll reach halfway today and so far the flow is really pretty good. Quite a list of little changes--what'd Flannery O'Connor call them, getting ticks off a dog?--but nothing big yet, thank christ. Called Liz about an hr ago to see if she agrees with my notion of submitting the bumboat women section as a short story in the PEN competition; she said she had one foot out the door on her way to lunch and will call me back about that; but she also imparted that when she called Tom to see what he thinks of the ms (she reports that convstn this way: "So?" Tom: "I already called Ivan." She: "That isn't good enough."), she discovered that not only had he called me, there at the halfway point of his reading on New Year's Eve, he also called ~~Tom~~ Evans of the Bk of the Month Club. And so we shall see. *Nancy*

Jan. 7 cont.--I'll likely never manage to catch up on the diary gap created by my concentration on finishing Dancing, the last months of '86, but a couple of things I wanted to get down, from when Jim Welch was out here in Nov. on behalf of FOOLS CROW. It was spiffy to see Jim and Lois again--been maybe a year and a half--and they spent most of the Saturday(of Jim's 4 or 5 days here) with us, lunch here and then down to Pike Place Market, then we dropped them back at the Meany Hotel for a couple of hours before we all proceeded to the dinner shindig they'd invited us to, a gathering at McCormick's paid for by Viking. The gang was the 4 of us, the Viking sales rep David Brewster and his wife Mary Kay of Pac Pipeline, Tom Orton, Rick Simonson of Elliot Bay bkstore and his lady Barbara of the county arts council, and poets Sharon Benson and Madeline DeFrees. Part of Jim's being here was on behalf of a Richard Hugo celebration, marking the acquisition of his papers by the UW library etc., and so after dinner, the round table of us got to telling Hugo stories. Jim told of the worst would-be poet Hugo ever encountered ~~in~~ at an writers conference, the woman whose opening lines ~~were~~ were "I sit beside Lake Samamish/eating a ham sandwich." I urged Madeline to tell her Hugo tale that C and I heard from her when we first met Hugo, her, the Welchses and the rest of the Missoula gang in the fall of '78; she did, with even better details than that first time. A Gov's Writers Day, she and Dick both were being honored for new books of poetry. It was during Madeline's time of growing doubt about remaining a nun--Sister Mary Gilbert, she still was--and so she took that frame of mind with her to the ceremony in Olympia, by bus, and still was very much in it afterward when she faced the problem of getting home. Dick said, why don't you ride with me?--She (a) wasn't supposed to ride with a man or (b) be out after dark, but she decided to ride with him anyway. Up the freeway from Olympia they came, in Dick's gunboat Buick convertible, with her beginning to muse aloud to him about her disenchantment with the nun's life and Dick in turn telling her his blues about having broken up with his latest woman, indeed the famous LuAnn (that's not quite right; Lu or Lou something) he imagined into The Lady in Kicking Horse Reservoir. As

Jan. 7 cont.--they traded complaints back and forth, Madeline got around to saying, well, one improvement about being a nun at least was on the way, they soon weren't going to have to wear the habit any more, just ordinary clothes. She says Dick turned his head to her--I can just see that slow bearlike swing of the head--and uttered the most magnificent piece of self-absorption I've ever heard: "You mean, if a woman wanted to break up with you, now she can just tell you she's a nun?"

And from Sharon Benson, whom I got to sit next to--C got between Jim and Lois, so we both had lively useful table sites: When Dick was in the hospital out here for his lung surgery, Ripley for a time was also in, for a knee problem, a floor or two below him. Sharon stopped by to see them, Dick first, and after some visiting she said, well, she'd better go upstairs and see Ripley. Downstairs, Dick corrected her; oh yes, she said. But further talk ensued, and at length she said again it was time for her to head upstairs to see Ripley. You mean downstairs, Dick corrected her again. She was embarrassed at making the mistake twice, but as she finally got around to leaving the room, she said upstairs yet again--and this time, she said in consternation, "I don't know why I keep saying that." Dick looked at her and said: "I know why. Because you think Ripley is a superior person to me." Which, Sharon says, was exactly the case.

Jan. 26--Have spent the first 3 weeks of this year fine-tuning the Dancing ms; one more week of it and that's it, finis, as I've agreed with Tom's deadline of getting the revised version to the copy editor by the 1st week of Feb. The total of revisions will be about a dozen pp. of crx and small changes, an improved transition leading into the 1st "king's remembrancer" passage, a less historicized and more localized view of the '18 flu epidemic, a bit more view of Judith, a slightly lengthened ending for the sake of pace--these were all Tom's suggestions--while my discernments have been to strengthen a few scenes such as Rob's refusal to sell the sheep, often by trimming, and generally to try see that the ms has no careless sentences whatsoever. Some, too much, of this has been absolute ~~dogwork~~ dogwork; Tom pointed out, all too correctly, that

Jan. 25 cont.--the word "Montana" was used so often in the last half of the ~~book~~ book it became intrusive--something Carol nor I nor Linda Bierds had picked up on, because we all have read the ms a chunk at a time, ~~was~~ the overall reiteration of Montana not ~~summing montana~~ registering in those smaller pieces. I spent a full day going through the ms for the word "Montana," eventually finding a couple dozen to take out. There's no way to commercially justify a chore of this sort, but in terms of the book it fixes something I now see I wanted to have happen--that in the 1st half of the book, the newcomers are excited about Montana and mention it all the time, that as they grow more accustomed to it they talk ~~x~~ instead about "the Two country" or "this country" or Scotch Heaven.

We at ~~last~~ last took a small break for ourselves, on C's ML King holiday, by going to Vancouver. Snow showers and a Sylvia Hotel that is teetering from dowdy to worse greeted us there, but after the first day--water began dripping from the ceiling of our room from a radiator pipe in the room above; when the commotion of getting that fixed was over and we still hadn't given up on the Sylvia, I suppose I either relaxed or resolved myself into the rest of our stay--everything perked up a bit. We went again to the UBC Museum of Anthro to see the carved columns and especially Bill Reid's matchless Raven Discovering Mankind in a Clamshell; to the V'ever Symphony, a good performance which I nonetheless had a desperate time staying awake for; to the Art Museum to see pics of mtns by early photogs--astounding, or maybe not, that those early photographs were instant art, instant classics, as if the first words humankind spoke after grunts were Shakespearean lines--and did a quick browse of Duthie's bookstore. Glorious eating, too, lunch at Oreste's and both dinners at Christopher's, a quietly nice place on Nelson~~2~~ St. not far from the symphony's Orpheum where the food was terrific. And Sun. afternoon, the sun came out for a couple of hours and a throng of Vancouverites, dowagers to leather-jacketed gay couples and trios, promenaded the Sea Wall of Stanley Park. Mon. morn we did a third and final walk of the Sea Wall, came home by way of lunch at the Black Swan in Lacornor. Other social stuff was an open house at the Sopers on Jan. 11 for their daughter Ann, before she headed back to London with her New Zealand beau Nigel, and last

Jan. 25 cont.--Wed. night, the 21st, opening party at the new Bellevue U Bk Store. Big handsome place, 60,000 vols.; it looks to me as if the UBS is going to eat everybody's lunch, there in the dim world of Eastside bookselling.

What else. On the 9th I had my right eyelid reamed out, to get rid of the big irreducible bump of chelayzion near the inmost corner of the lid; it may or may not have worked, as there's now a lesser bump still stubbornly there. And I got new reading glasses this past Wed. I hope I'm starting to get used to the ~~reading~~ change in the reading glasses, as it played hell with my eyes the first few days; I've been going to bed with played-out eyes soon after 8, most nights recently. This past year and a half of eyelid/eye woe has been the shits; I've got to hope a more measured reasonable schedule will help, when I can begin one in Feb.

Jan. 28--On this book that is never done, I am done. At least momentarily. Tom called y'day and is to send me his reviewed 1st half of the ms, and on Fri. he may send me the rest, but there should only be mild nits in any of that. Monday I beefed up the blizzard scene, longest in the book, in one of the strongest days of work I've done in ages. Y'day I got Rob's body out of the reservoir, as Tom wanted, and with that rewriting and and sundry small bits of editing, I felt bedraggled by late afternoon and said I'd have to let the last hurrah, lengthening the final pp. a little, wait until today. But on the exercise machine some of the lines I wanted to do came to me, ~~and~~ I dashed them onto paper, then more came in the shower, and I came back to the typewriter about a quarter to five and in ten minutes roughed those final revised pp. for C to read after supper. They looked good to her--and she had been skeptical of Tom's advice that the ending needed any lengthening--and this morning I refined them and that, by the christ, is the job done. I think I began on this revising on Jan. 5; it took about twice as long as I'd hoped, but it's sharpened the book greatly.

Wild whooping weather today; even so I may go walk in the wind and rain, and then take myself to lunch in Edmonds.

6 Feb.--Another week, another completion of Dancing, another victory lunch in Edmonds.

Tom's second reading of the ms arrived in 3 installments by overnight mail, the last one on Tues. the 3rd. I was a bit apprehensive about that one, the last big chance for major mishap along the lines of "you know, this 50-page blizzard scene just doesn't work." But nothing of the sort; Tom's suggestions continued to be of the "can we do without this line?" sort, and a little before noon on Wed. the 4th I was at the Edmonds post office, mailing off the 9 pounds (\$22+, by express mail) of his ms-with-flags that I'd responded to and my own packet of revised pages and about a 15-pp. list of lesser changes. I'm keen to see it all in galleys, where the ms surgery won't be visible; as I told Tom, I think we improved the book about 10% in this revising, about twice as good as we usually do. In effect, Dancing has benefited from having 4 editors; whatever it says about the art, craft or hunchwork of editing, any two

of us saw the same problem only about a quarter of the time. Linda Bierds's particular strength is seeing when a scene needs to be tougher, more potent--I suppose, a poet's eye for the striking image. Tom excels at seeing the-sentence-too-much that shows up in my style of thinking out loud, trying things out, on paper. C is maybe the best of any of us on characters, plot logic--she has a knack for gauging fictional flow. My particular best is probably in the proportioning and pacing. All in all, it seems to have worked niftily on this book; now watch Dancing get slaughtered in the reviews for the plot or something else all of us thought was just fine.

Should note a couple of things I hung onto despite Tom's doubts, the king's remembrancer material and "Say you are a stone that blinks just once". He saw them as unnecessary embellishments, I see them as the imagination singing on the paper.

So, I have been throttling down since Wed. noon--this morn at 7:15, I went up to walk the park at sunrise. (The Olympics were stunning; when I first went up, base of the mtns was the same shade of hazy blue as the sky, so that the snow skyline stood by itself in the air, a wild streak of white all across the sky. We're having one of the blessed Feb. previews of spring we get every 3-4 years.)

6 Feb. cont.--And y'day C and I did a unique commemoration of finishing up a book: we spent \$4,000 for a painting.

It was her day to visit Frank, so I said I'd go along and we'd visit Tom and Carrie Jones first and see about buying one of Tom's pictures. He still had a striking painting of a single leaf catching light, that both of us had liked when he first showed it to us. So we spent an hour, and four grand, at the Joneses.

Some less expensive entertainment on Tues. The Skyhawk was acting balky (sparkplug wire, it proved to be) and so we'd taken it to the Roosevelt mechanics, and now were on our way to pick it up. At the N'gate Way intersection of 15th, C was in the right-hand lane, pair of teenagers in a car with flames painted on its side were in the left, and the left-hand lane across the intersection was blocked off while workmen did sewer stuff or something. As the light changed, the teen shot out to try cut in ahead of C--this in the space of a street width, mind you--and when she

blithely charged ahead in our gunboat Buick, he had to jam on his brakes, wait and fit in behind us. The long hill of 15th southward was ahead, and C again blithely zoomed along while the teen this time had to try cut around her on the right-hand side--and this time had to jam on the brakes when he confronted a parked car in that lane. I suppose he simply couldn't believe he couldn't outgun a woman in a cable-knit sweater. When we pulled in at Roosevelt Auto Repair, he turned down the adjacent side street to stop and call out, "Good driving, there"--I'd like to credit ~~it~~ him with genuine admiration for ~~the~~ how C turned him every way but loose, but I suppose it was just lame sarcasm.

13 Feb.--Back from Portland, and my first throng. Standing room only for my reading Wed. night, I would think 4-600 people. The crowd revved me up and I gave what I think was my best reading, maybe a performance next only to my WHA speech in Phoenix in the feel of doing it right, doing it up. Best question from the audience, after, was why I didn't become Louis Lamour instead of myself? After some joking I tried to address it seriously, saying the gunfighter myths of the West didn't mean a damn to me,

13 Feb. cont.--the actualities did; I cited Stegner's remark about Jim Hill the empire builder having built the lives of an awful lot of people into his empire. I think it helped the evening that I began by dedicating it to Kim Williams--this was my first time in public since she died--and I was glad too that the material, the bumboat and storm scenes, held the audience; at one point, maybe amid my recital of what cholera had done to Angus's family and parents, you could have heard the famous pin drop.

All of the Portland day clicked. The reading at Reed went well, though as usual with college audiences they can't entirely believe they ought to be having a good time out of a writer's performance. Met Elinor Langer and liked her; in her intro she compared me to Ring Lardner (in liveliness of language), which I'd never heard before. And to my astonishment, Bill Stafford showed up for the reading--indeed, had been expressing his remorse to Elinor that I wasn't going to be in town long enough to come out for dinner. At her urging, I urged him and his wife (Dorothy, I think) to join the Friends of the Library dinner before my library reading that night; I got him half talked into that, but then he decided to demur, evidently feeling he would be horning in. It continues to confound me that Bill goes out of his way to pay me respect; maybe he sees that we are language-lovers together, or something. Writing this reminds me of an entry I forgot to make, after Jim Welch was out here for the Hugo conference last fall. I don't know what Bill actually said, in his panel session or whatever, but from Jim's remarks to us he must have been the exception, somehow, to the hagiographic occasion--possibly it was something he said about Dick's letter poems, I don't recall. Anyway, Jim repeated Raymond Carver's grump that Bill was self-serving in his comments there, and seemed to thoroughly agree; which boggled Carol and me, as Bill has ~~been~~ only shown us exceeding generosity, and we know from Dick's fond comments about him how close friends they were. My guess is that Bill thought the occasion could stand a little frank opinion, and nobody else wanted any. It also confirms me that I'm right to stay home at the keyboard as much as I do.

13 Feb. cont.--More Portland: after Reed, the p.r. person delivering me through the day's schedule, Jeannie Dodson-Edgars, ~~missy~~ deposited me unto the Oregonian and Pinterich, always a warily fascinating event, like Russian roulette that you know won't kill you but maybe will gong you upside the head. Paul did get to asking me about Dancing at the Rascal Fair, although to my startlement (somehow you expect to be startled by what Pinterich is going to ask) he was most interested in what I'm going to do after the trilogy, i.e. 3 or 4 years from now. Anyway I expect it'll all parse out okay, and Paul remains the best friend Northwest writing has, bless his mysterious Croatian soul. From there, on to KBOO radio, evidently Portland's equivalent of KRAB, funky programming, with Bruce Hamilton of the OHS for a half-hour interview. C and I like and enjoy Bruce, as a guy with a brain behind ~~know~~ his knack for b.s., and I think he and I did about as well as we could under the kind of combat conditions KBOO put us in--a room little larger than a closet, just room for us to sit knee to knee, the mike in front of me fastened to the arm of my chair which I didn't dare touch because it all would wobble wildly. Bruce described me by something I wrote in WBros, about a guy who has a sheen--hastening to add he didn't mean I was in polyester.

16 Feb.--Pres's Day, and rainy and dank. I offered to take C out to lunch to mark this holiday of hers, but we've decided to hunker in. This is my first day free from the accumulated chores after Dancing; a bunch of tasks still wait in their piles, but I'm putting them off until next week, to try this as a week of rumination, scattershot reading etc. A fine auspice began it all, y'day: thanks to the orders by the Portland bookstores for my day there, Sky showed up as #5 on the S. Times p'back bestseller list (i.e., Pacific Pipeline's weekly list) and Winter Bros as #9.

Damborgs invited us to supper last night, along with their lawyer friends Steve and Kay Frank. Pleasant evening, in Mark and Lou's stylish way, though as ever it's hard to get a social conversation that counts for anything--what people are doing in their lives, for ex.

Feb. 16 cont.--

--Short stuff from the Portland trip:

--Cindy Burdell of immortal Arbur now works in Powell's bookstore, and when I asked her how Portland was, she said Peter Miller's definition is the best she's heard: it's like a minimum security prison--they let you do anything, drink in the parks, wade in the fountains, but they never let you out of the place.

--Bruce Hamilton told of being in Port Townsend the day Nixon resigned. He said he was walking along the street, across from an old bar that later showed up in the movie An Officer and a Gentleman, when abruptly about 30 guys poured out into the street; they gave a helluva whoop, simultaneously hurled their beer-filled glasses and schooners high into the air, out into the intersection, and then went back inside.

--WBros is the book that continues to strike the strangest enthusiasms in my readers, and they not unnaturally assume I share them. The Portland night, a dealer in rare books fastened onto me to tell me he was handling an unknown Swan trove (held by the family of Seavey, Swan's executor) and that what he badly wanted from me was a testimonial to the UW archives of its value, to help inspire the UW to buy it. I demurred by telling him anything I'd say would be superfluous, Karyl Winn well knows the value of Swaniana, and I fended off his polite persistence that way. Later it occurred to me the real pitfall of something like that, attesting on this guy's behalf so he can try make a financial killing. Then the night after I got home, after supper came a phone call from a guy who'd read WBros and now is interested in yacht design, and wanted me to steer him to any sources on coastal Indian canoes, which he's decided are the ideal yacht prototype.

17 Feb.--Karl Krueger called y'day to tell me Ainsley Roseen is dead and buried. With him goes our long friendship in letters, begun when C and I left Evanston 20 years ago. Ainsley never got a leading role in life; Karl once told me he thought Leland Case killed Ainsley's confidence as a writer, in their early days together on the Rotarian, and at home Ainsley had the astounding burden of his mother-in-law living with them for 50+ years...and in the past few years he's had to be the keeper of Louise,

18 Feb. cont.--stricken with Alzheimer's. His last letter to me, with his Xmas card, said his doctor had just told him his blood pressure and heart indicated he had several years left, but a stroke was what took him.

I'm midway in a week of deliberately dinking around, recuperating from Dancing. Have resumed the habit that the eye problem made me quit several months or more ago, of reading 10 or 20 pp. of the Dictionary of American Regional English first thing when I come to the desk in the morning, to get myself mulling the language. Have done a few letters, transplanted strawbs and done other gardening whenever any good blink of the weather allowed, done some reading. Today I've decided to head down to walk the waterfront and then have lunch and shop at Pike Place market.

9 March--Last week was all rain, then a clear weekend, and now after a clement morning it's drizzling. My mood and doings correspond pretty closely to all that. In the almost-monsoon days at the start of last week, the low pressure made me terrifically logey, filled me with a lassitude to the extent that I didn't even want to muster energy for this diary. C felt it too, and given the problem we both have with any heavy or humid weather, it makes me think we'd better get a barometer and do some tracking of how and when we're affected; part of the dim feeling of last Mon. and Tues. was that it took me about half a day to rouse myself into savvy'ing what was wrong with me.

Right now a driver from the UW archives is lugging out my files of freelance magazine articles--3½ file drawers full. This has come about because my first (& last?) dissertation writer has surfaced, Elizabeth Simpson. She wrote to ask if there is a biblio of my work, as she was having difficulty accumulating it through whatever reference there are at the UW, and it seemed simplest to me to let her handle the material through the archives and gain myself some intended and needed ~~extra~~ storage space here. I had lunch with Karyl Winn last Wed. to arrange all this, and talked with her as well about her photocopying my diaries, probably up through end of '78, Sky's year, later this year.

9 March cont.--It must have been Feb. 24 when I did one of the better occasions of my past 4 weeks of nonwriting; at dawn I was on a dike at the Skagit wildfowl refuge, watching the snowgeese on the tideflat. Noticed that small batches were flying up and off to the north, to feed in fields, and so I went on out onto the dike leading west toward Whidbey Island and found that if I crouched and was still, the geese would fly right over me, 100-150' away. So close I could hear not only the sound of their flight, but the noises of their bodies working, creak of wings, murmurs they made to each other. They fly with necks greatly extended, as if stretching themselves to where they're going, and in the morning light their color was slightly yellowish, ivoryish. A sensational sight, the 45 min. or so as I watched them go over me in bunches of up to a dozen, often just 3 or 4 in a line flight. The dawn was a crammed, exhilarating space of time: as I was walking out from the car, Mt. Baker was emerging clearer and clearer, and at the westward bend of the dike I stopped to watch the first pink light of sunrise tint its eastern face, but as I did the snowgeese were making a terrific irresistible racket as they chose a site on the tideflats--and chickadees and redwing blackbirds were in song, and three herons had flown up a minute before: I kept having the urge to cry out to the morning, now wait a minute, let's slow this down and do it in some order, so I can take all this in. Another mark of that excursion was that, time after time, I'd be treading along a dike and to the side and a little ahead of me there'd explode a KSHHSHHH whupwhupwhup of mallards taking off.

We entertained tooth and nail this weekend, Tom and Carrie Jones here Sat. night--bringing with them the framed painting "November Maple" that we'd bought from Tom for \$4,000--and Linda Bierds and Sydney Kaplan here last night. Good evenings, both. When the Joneses arrived, their first time here, and saw our track lighting in the living room, they exclaimed about it, and we told them the Dalys had wallsful of painting too, including a Horiuchi with a Koolaid stain one of the ineffable Daly kids had put on it. As Tom was hanging "November Maple" I asked him what he wanted to drink, and he blithely said, "Koolaid."

31 March--Spring, California, the cover of Dancing, Bill Lang, and the German reviews of Das Haus des Himmels all arrived in a bunch, the past couple of weeks. After lunch today, when Tom Stewart should be out of his start-of-the-week meetings (he's not in the office on Mondays, probably reading mss at home), I'll call him to say Paul Bacon's cover looks just dandy. Five covers in a row now from that guy who may be the best bookjacket craftsman of this generation, and I lined ~~them up in~~ the books up in sequence against the back of the couch last night to look at Dancing's in comparison. Bacon has taken astounding care of me; it's like having a fairy godfather, ~~in charge~~ Andrew Wyeth say, in charge of the family portraits. He's not only done a noble cover each time, but he's done them in ~~rich, warm, non-fiction~~ lineages--the coastal cousins, WBros and Sea Runners with my name in giant block letters, Sky and the two Montana novels in fancy upper-and-lower case and with horses on hand one way or another. (Kittredge once said he'd been told by someone, I think Wm Eastlake, that it's death to let them put a horse on your cover. I beg to differ.) The Dancing cover in fact will have my byline in identical type and color to the Eng Crk version, and the scene of Angus and Rob on horseback above Scotch Heaven is deliberately evocative of Jick aboard his horse under the Eng Crk skyline. Bacon has done a playful job with the lettering again; I'd wondered if he might somehow feature dancing on this cover--in the portrayed scene, that is--but he chose to do it in the title by linking the D and R of Dancing and Rascal, and the final G and R of Dancing and Fair, as if they are paired in a dance, while the cap Rs of Rascal and the end of Fair have elegant extended legs and the a of at and e of the have exuberant little swirly kicks at the end of their "legs". It seems to me an astounding work of lettering, which may be Bacon's particular flair as a cover artist. So, one more time, salud, Paul--I think it's a spiffy piece of work.

The words under Bacon's elegance got themselves done on Wed. the 18th, when I mailed the copy-edited ms back to Tom about 9:15 that morning; I'd begun going through it I believe on Friday the 13th, read through the weekend, overworking for what I hope is the last time on this

31 March cont.--remorseless book. The ms got its fifth strong going-over--from copy editor Elaine Phillips, after Linda Bierds-Tom-C-and-me had all done our damndest to ~~fix~~ it. Even when I rejected her questions or suggestions, I at least felt a candid serious mind was at work on my words. I added at a couple of points she suggested--a bit of explanation how Angus was going to handle the school atop his already full life of homesteading, which I'd cut in an earlier draft but now restored; and a line or so about Adair's reaction to Beth's arrival into the family--and otherwise did more than I'd expected I would to the ms, filling out the blizzard and reservoir scenes a bit more, finding an occasional line to cut, freshening dialogue in the 'Steaders ch. in particular. The proofs will tell, but it may be that this book fits together from line to line, graf to graf, better than Sea Runners ~~and~~ or Eng Crk. Now if it'll only carry its story... Good response on that, so far, from the classy booksellers Tom's been asking for ABA blurbs; Henry Berliner in New Haven and Barbara Morrow at Manchester Center, Vt., have both come through with what Tom properly calls encomiums.

Half an hour after the Dancing ms went to NY for the final time, Bill Lang arrived on Amtrak. He'd come out to borrow our house while we'd be in Calif. and get some writing done, a welcome chance for us to repay him for the stints we've had at their place at Clancy. As ever, much lively talk with Bill, plus a major glitch which I can now grin at. Thurs. the 19th, about 4 that afternoon, I was weary as hell from the week of re-reading ms and trying to get ready to go to Calif., and just as I'd told C I was going to read the paper a few min. and then exercise to see if I could revive myself, Lang called. He said, "You always want an adventure when I come to town, don't you?" I said, "Bill, where is this leading?" To the towed-car pound, was where. I had lent him the Skyhawk because C, amid the swirl of exam week, ~~hadn't~~ hadn't had time to show him quirks of the old Buick, and he'd left it in a ~~zone~~ parking spot that turned into a bus zone at 3. Out he came from Osborn & Ulland, to an empty street; luckily a guy working on a nearby building cd tell him what happened. I wearily dragged myself down toward Seattle Center in the old Buick--a main reason I'd given him the Skyhawk was so none of us would have to horse

31 March cont.--the loose old car through freeway traffic--and presented the Skyhawk's title and freed the car and Bill.

April 1--A little after noon y'day I called Tom Stewart to tell him, on the basis of the photocopied sketch and mockup of the Dancing cover, that it looked dandy to me. An hour later, as C came home from the college, the mail was here, and we pulled out a color proof of the cover, which I hadn't known was coming. It is dazzling, bright and alive in off-white and dress blue and artful washes of earth colors. Because I'd understood from Tom that the over-all tone beneath the lettering and art wd be a tan to match Eng Crk's, I at once went to the phone and left word with his ass't Margaret Talcott that I think it's perfect as is, in the off-white. One other new detail, which C at last noticed--we were both so taken with the artwork--and brought out to me in the garden when I'd resumed planting onions: the tagline under the title now reads "a novel by the author of This House of Sky," where the mockup had read "of English Creek". So, I had 24 hours of referential fame as a novelist instead of Sky's man. Maybe it's a point I ought to kick on, but I don't think so; if the notion is that invoking Sky will help sell the novels, they can invoke it infinitely as far as I'm concerned.

California, by way of Tacoma. Phil Phibbs of the U. of Puget Sound had asked me to repeat my Vail performance of the House of Sky speech at a March 20 gathering of his biggest donors, C and I deciding we'd use the night as our launching step toward spring break at Monterey. It meant some real hustling--she had to get all her grades calculated and turned in by early that same Friday afternoon, despite giving an 11-1 exam, and I'd been trying to pack etc. around conversation with Bill Lang--but we made it to Tacoma in good time, Gwen Phibbs restored us with tea and cookies, and we headed downstairs for what turned out to be an evening with about half the money in the state of Washington. Gwen gave me a crib list--provided me a chance on meeting Kim Kaiser, who flies for Alaska Airlines, to tell him, "you know, you look to me kind of like an airline pilot"--which is with

April 1 cont.--the UPS correspondence in this yr's letters file, but among the 3 dozen or so were the Clapps, the Kaisers, the Wollenbergs of Longview Fibre, the Englands (Safecom), the Mangels (Rainier Bank) etc. I still don't like rich people or being around them--C always assures me it's sociology and while she's right, I can still perform the sociology and not have to like it--but we mingled more or less successfully. During dinner we were at the table with Phil and Gwen, the Mangels and the Watts (Seattle Trust), and I spent some time talking with Mary Ann Mangels. C remarked later about the edge, the implacable quality, that people of so much money have. Certainly Mary Ann takes no prisoners; midway through dinner, opera became the topic, and when it turned out that both Phil and Kay Watt are on the Seattle Opera board, Mary Ann forthrightly asked them how they could justify the Opera going into debt. I didn't catch Phil's diplomatic but firm reply, but Gwen on my other side said low enough for ~~me~~ just me to hear, "By the difference between bankers and artists." In talking with me, Mary Ann made some comparatively innocent remark about how much money I must have made out of my fame, and in my own edge probably started showing as I recited ~~back~~ to her my average \$17,000 gross income before the NEA/Eng Crk windfall of the past 2 years. (I later heard John Mangels had just made \$3 million on the recent buyout of Rainier Bank by the Californians.) C pointed out to me, after, that probably Mary Ann had to forge pretty hard against the guys of her husband's business world--she's still a goodlooking woman, and must have been a beauty ~~when~~ who was often mistaken for a mannequin by the financiers, before women were anywhere where in the banking world (if they are yet)--and so she's bound to have an arsenal.

Next incident of sociology was from Norton Clapp as I was giving my talk, an occasional snorty snore. Not quite a thunderClapp, but reverbatory enough. The Phibbses later told me he nods off, or at least makes it seem he does, at all such occasions. Phil remembered a board meeting where he was presenting a blackboard full of vital funding arithmetic, looked out and saw (more likely, heard) Norton asleep and thought, My God, what am I going to do, he's got to ~~me~~ know this stuff. But after a minute, here

April 1 cont.--came Norton out of his self-induced coma to say, That second column of figures doesn't add up right. And damned if he wasn't correct. So Norton's catnaps may be pretty kittenish. In any case, his effect on me--plus what I thought was another guy nodding off at my right elbow (I was wrong about that one; he proved to be leaning over to get more comfortable in a long stint of sitting)--was to make me speak more forcefully, and particularly to hammer on the part of the talk that thumbs its nose at Nixon and the Watergate authors. Now that I think about it, given that Norton's son-in-law guy is a Democrat, there's at least a chance he was the only guy in the room who maybe didn't vote for Nixon. Anyway, the talk went well enough, Phil Phibbs was much pleased, and afterward Norton came up to me and told me of his ~~father's~~ father's Evanston past--he had a NU medical degree, and by Norton's telling was the one who advised Evanston hospital to buy the entire block it sits on, back in the days when it was just a corner building. I was trying to dope out how he knew of my NU/Evanston years and later said to C that he'd have to have read Sky to know that; she said yeah, when she introduced herself to him he said, I know who you are, I've read about you!

The Phibbses and their student boarders/helpers Wendy and Phil saw us off with a mighty breakfast the next morn, and we headed south. Ashland that night, the day and both of us ~~beginning~~ improving steadily from just north of ~~Spring~~ Eugene, where the hills and mountains began standing out in lovely fashion. Dinner at ChateauLin--in that Shakespeare-gear'd ~~at~~ town, the hostess and waitress give you menu recitations and smiles with a lot of semesters of drama school behind them--but no play, the night sold out. By early afternoon the next day we were in Berkeley, having begun California acclimation with lunch at the Nut Tree in Vacaville, a cross between a gift store, a pretty good ~~ex~~ restaurant and Disneyland (we were seated next to the aviary, for instance). Went immediately to walk the campus in the sunshine, and coincided with an hr-long carillon concert from the Campanile; part of the time we sat on the C'le steps, looking out at the Golden Gate bridge. What a campus; Olympus of the American West.

April 1 cont.--I naively thought we ought to eat at Spenger's for auld lang syne, but the place turned out to be even more teeming than usual, an hr and a half wait, so we promptly forgot that and went back up to Telegraph Ave. and beer and sandwiches at a mock Germanish place, maybe called the Hofbrau Haus. On down to Pacific Grove the next morning; we'd hoped we could meet Wallace Stegner and his wife on that day, but his postcard just before we left Seattle brought regrets and the fact that they'd be in Italy. In PG we'd intended to shop at least 3 motels before choosing, but the first one, a cabiny oldfangled place called the Sunset, was run by a young Swiss or German woman who after we'd looked at the room and told her we were interested in 4 days' worth, asked us how much we were willing to pay. We--mostly C--struck \$50/night with her, down from standard \$65, and we had a place we found we liked a lot, a large light room with good matched furniture. Two mornings of the PG stay we went to Point Lobos, great, great views of the coast, the gray whales spouting as they migrated past. Spent 3 hours of our last morning in the Monterey aquarium; its huge fish tank with a giant kelp forest growing in it is so good it's entrancing, damn near hypnotic. Ate a couple of good meals at Consuelos's, as ever, a more standard one of squid on the Monterey wharf, and a fancy one at Gernot's in PG. Weather was sunny, with some wind in afternoons; but I was so relieved that the ripping wind, probably 30-35 mph, of ~~the~~ our 1st afternoon and night let up that I winced as little as I could in the otherwhiffs.

Forgot, and how could I: we came to Monterey by way of lunch in San Juan Batista, really excellent grub at Dona Esther's, and then the back road over the hills to the Salinas Valley. Those big California hills, rounded yet steep-sided, fascinate me; exaggerated, like everything else about the state, but Jesus, how forceful. I can see how that area won Jeffers to it, and what dismay he was bound to have about the tendrils of roads and houses growing across it.

3 April--What a week this is. Just called Alaska Airlines to make a seat reservation for my Portland trip at end of the month, and the clerk said, "Oh, glad to meet you, even though I haven't read your books." Every day so far, something has come in by mail or phone, offers that are kernels of voracious commitments of time. So I keep sorting: just wrote architect Joy Wulke that I can't do an essay for her book on abandoned houses in Montana, but she's free to seek permission quotes from my books; will tell Lewis & Clark this afternoon that I indeed will give their commencement address in exchange for an honorary degree; told Dick Wertime of Beaver College in Pa. that I'll mull his speaking offer there, and have just written Tom Stewart to try ferret an early pub date for Dancing, so I could do some bookselling if I go east; and told Cynthia Hamlett in Gt. Falls that I'll see if her invite to talk to the Mont. Preservation Alliance coincides with our Mont. trip this Sept. Pretty quick, particularly to protect the summer, I'm going to have to start saying outright nos.

California again: Wright and Jo Morris, on March 27. By postcard they'd invited us to tea at 2--and by god it turned out to be tea, brewed and poured by Wright with divine disregard for floating tea leaves, and apple turnovers Jo heated up and pressed ~~me~~ us to indulge in--and although my phone call the previous day had led to a set of directions from each of them (which, as I told them, even coincided occasionally) we found without trouble their place up the base of a sidehill in what Jo says is not Mill Valley proper, but Mill Valley improper. The mailman arrived with us, so I gathered the batch from him--Wright assured me no future guest could ever come up to the high mark I'd established with Jo thereby--and we went up a sharp driveway to the back of a Calif. ~~wood~~ shed-roof ranch house, somewhat like our own, past a Beware of Dog sign: no dog, just the sign. Wright has an aureole of white hair, from about the middle of his head back, quite thick and distinctive; clear blue eyes, in a face a bit longer and thinner than I expected from his photo; in fact, all of him is thinner, trimmer, than I had expected--carrying himself as erect as he does, with the trimness and the mane of hair, he looks taller than he is: actually about an inch shorter than I am, making him about 5'8", I found when we ~~w~~ were standing close and talking.

3 April cont.--He was wearing a turquoise ring, I think on the wedding finger; the infamous Birkenstock sandals which just before Xmas caused him a helluva fall onto his back--the exact reverse of a bellyflop, it sounded like--the day after his cataract operation ~~which~~ and his doctor's warning to for christ sake not jar himself in anyway; a tannish chamois-like shirt, cut somewhat the style of an Ike jacket, and beneath ~~it~~ it what appeared to be a thermal undertop and a short blue scarf. He told us that ever since he hit 70, his circulation has made him cold all the time; says that the fog pouring down over the Bay hills, I think his exact words were "like ^{Victoria Falls,}" which he used to revel in, now brings him chill. For her part, Jo looks 5 or so years younger than Wright, and either from his influence or familial competition with him, is a deliberately vivid talker, in an East Coast style; talking of Wright's eye operation, for instance, she said of her dislike for hospitals, "they stick you with needles, they come at you with knives," and while she occasionally swore, feelingly, I don't think Wright ever did. While Jo was in the kitchen, or the conversation veered from the travel stories they were retelling to us, C and I both noticed how fine a talker Wright is; a rare guy who can speak in complete paragraphs. Indeed, he's the first person I've ever heard use "fructifying" in conversation and make it sound like a reasonable choice of words--he was talking about how he and Jo misadventured on a train trip across Canada, misled into it by "the fructifying travel posters." We didn't manage to talk about much of substance, on either side--almost nothing about writing--but at one point Wright asked about our trip to Scotland, whether the isolation we saw there chimed with that of Montana places, and he said that images of isolation, people living in tiny remote places as they must in Scotland, Montana etc., always make him think not of human despair but of human possibility (not precisely his word); power to cope, I think his gist was. At another point he said The Bomb isn't necessary to finish us off, continuing overpopulation will do it. And amid their travel stories--they once went by ship NY to Venice, a dozen or so stops along the way--when I asked if they intended anything again soon, he said no, they'd been in Europe at such a good time in their lives that now

3 April cont.--there'd be the inevitable comparisons of how things had changed. This was said without bitterness or rue, just common-sensically.

I'd hesitated, before letting them know we were coming through the Bay area, on the basis that maybe they get callers all the time. As it turned out, they seemed to appreciate the visit; their situation is somewhat sedentary--Jo doesn't drive, and Wright doesn't really want to any more--and we maybe brought a change of verbal scenery for them. As to books and such, early on I asked Wright what was forthcoming, he instead switched the topic to my having finished Dancing, and not until we were about to leave did I manage to ask again. Jo said, Jesus Christ, the man has written 30 books. I quickly said, we just can't get enough of them. Wright then said, well, he'd tell us--began talking in terms of a "masterstroke," a kind of new fiction, in a faluting way that neither C nor I could decide was on the level or not. (She told me after that I have a good knack for maintaining an interested ~~neutral~~ neutral face, just letting happen whatever does. I hope to Christ so, at least then.) As we tried to sort it out afterward, I thought he likely was serious about having something in the works--he mentioned reading it to Jo, and she nodded evidently spontaneously, while C figured out, in his remarks about not having all that many readers and the time it might take to gain acceptance of this new form, that he maybe is having trouble interesting his publisher in the work. Half-beguiling and half-baffling as the couple of hours' visit was, we both came away glad we'd done it.

Raining steadily today, after 4 or 5 days of almost eerie summer weather--sun, mid-70's. Y'day I didn't feel like facing desk chores, and as I'd done virtually everything feasible to the garden in the digging stints of the past 4 days, I ended up doing not much at all. Have been nagged by an odd headache, maybe sinus, much of the week; makes everything a bit out of sync, to feel semi-crummy in a week when everything is going so well. Where's your gratitude, body?

6 April--Sample pp. of Dancing came today, and to ~~my~~ my relief, my (semi-mild) kicking to Tom about how small the typeface of Eng Crk was has produced a decent 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ pt face this time. (Mystifyingly--I now remember it was one reason why I mistakenly thought the Eng Crk typeface was going to be okay--in digging out the Eng Crk sample pp. I find that was described as 11 pt., even though it's plainly smaller than this 10 $\frac{1}{2}$; which raises the question, did they simply set the whole goddamn book in the wrong size and none of us caught it? More likely simply an error in listing the type size there in the specs, but--) Unexpected problem is that the length of Dancing's title makes long running heads atop the pp., so I'll talk with Tom about that tomorrow. Also came today the full list of booksellers' comments on Dancing, great stuff.

Quick finish to our Calif. trip: After leaving the Morrisises we headed up Highway 1, remembering how glorious that coast was, wanting to see the Mendocino area again, etc. Some 2 hrs and thousands of curves and hills later, we'd hardly advanced up the map at all, and weren't convinced we were doing any better on the actual road. (Noticed, while doping out our progress or lack of it, that though we'd passed Bolinas we'd seen no sign; the Peoples Republic of Bolinas evidently is still managing to enforce its privacy.) By that time I was saying to hell with Mendocino--we also agreed that we'd already had a good swatch of the coastal scenery--and at the town of Reyes we headed east through the hills toward 101 and Santa Rosa for the night. C had remembered SR as a place of fetching motels, and after considerable scouting we came up with a semi-fetching place, Best Western Hillside or some such, on east edge of town and called it good. She had the good idea of heading us through the Napa to the freeway the next morning, and we were on our way before dawn, through more hilly backroads. Made it to Mt. Shasta City by lunch--the Best Western there has a glittering head-on view of Mt. Shasta--and deciding we'd make it to Eugene for night, we called Dick and Dee Brown to invite them out for dinner. Instead we ended up at their place for the meal, and a ~~x~~ chance to catch up with Dick and the world of western history a bit.

13 April--Have been at the first day of scheduled page production, lpp. worth, of the centennial novel which is known at the moment as Ride With Me, ^{Maria} Montana. Mostly I'm trying to refine rough draft today, with mixed success; am tinkering with an opening scene of Jick and Maria at Gros Ventre rodeo, July 4 1989, but it's tricky to get all the elements in and still make the scene flow. The usual perpetual new problem.

We spent a quiet weekend, mostly reading, after Sat. morn of laundry and other chores, and both seem decently rested. I'm a little restless about this next novel and its schedule, not wanting again to have to do too much work in too short a time as I did on Dancing. Did some organizing of file cards last week and jotting of possible schedules, but it has to begin to have some pages piling up, this spring ~~and~~ summer--the fall is utterly lost, to Montana and the selling of Dancing. Speaking of which, Dancing got ~~it~~ its first pan last week, from Kevin McCaffrey of U. of New Orleans bookstore, one of the Lee Soper-suggested booksealers Tom hit up for a blurb. McCaffrey didn't take to the ms at all, apparently couldn't finish it--thought I didn't ~~have~~ have any feel for nuance or dialect in it. In his letter to Tom, among touches he cited that I could've--ought've--done in the steerage section, for instance, was the smell of sweat from the humidity, and someone to wipe it away from someone else's temple "in a gesture of optimism." This on a ship in the cold North Atlantic in late October, among a bunch of young Scots trying to prove their manliness. So, it's a useful warning that some readers and reviewers are going to find what they want to find, whatever the pages' intent.

I finally took most of a couple of days and caught up on all stray correspondence, 12-15 items' worth, and feel better for not having the damn stuff hanging around.

22 April--Life settled down today, after Monday morning of talking to C's spring superclass and y'day talking to two groups of students, at Ann Nelson's unrefusable behest, for Bush School's career day. Last week, we went over and had lunch with Frank on the 14th, Lucie's birthday, and then took flowers to her grave; went out for dinner ~~xx~~ with Ann and Marsh the next night at Hiram's--a place too yuppieish for C and me to like, but we always have a hilarious time with the Nelsons; I had felt awful all day and still had a good time; ¹hurs. afternoon we finished up a health evaluation done by Group Health for the Sh'line faculty, and found ourselves in really pretty good shape.

I've managed to peck out the scheduled pp. on the centennial novel so far this month, though I feel that I can't really get rolling on it until after I read the galleys of Rascal Fair. I need the re-read of that book, to watch for things I shouldn't repeat in the next one, but I can't dip into the ms at this point because I greatly want to see Rascal Fair with a fresh eye, when it arrives here in print. So, I tinker and diddle along, hoping it's going to add up to something worthwhile.

29 April--Three years have gone into these words: Dancing is on its way into print. Mailed the corrected page proofs to NY y'day morn at 10:30, after pacing myself thru the reading of them since they came on the 23rd. Maybe because of the tight schedule to get the pre-pub p'back done for the ABA convention, Ath'm this time skipped galley proofs and simply sent me done pages; it added a bit of Russian roulette into the stolid game of proofreading, for what if ^{they'd} dropped a helluva bunch of lines somewhere? Not nearly so fixable as in galleys, not nearly. There were in fact 3 instances of a line space between text chunks ~~having~~ having been dropped; in 2 I was able to kill a widow line somewhere on the p. and make room for the space to be put back in, but the 3rd one, the start of the Two Med chapter, the typesetter simply will have to cope with somehow, probably by moving the ch. heading and Gleaner excerpt higher onto the page than it is on the other ch. openings.

29 April-cont.--Not only is the book done, the season of selling it will begin any minute this afternoon, when Jon Rantala calls me to talk about my touring of Mont. this fall--our phonings of each other have just missed, all day until now.

The proofreading was dogwork as ever, but I still did manage to improve the book in a number of places, not to mention the necessary crx of errors. I read, roughly, 25-30 pp. of the proofs the afternoon they arrived, 75-80 pp. the next couple of days, 100 pp/day the next two; a heavy sustained piece of work, given that my eyes are still not as strong in reading as I think they ought to be. Proofing is mainly peering at details, in fact at the very letters of the words, so at best I come away with a kind of half-sense of how the book is sheerly ~~too~~ as something to be read. That half-sense is satisfied, I think, to the extent that the book ~~seems~~ seems to be intrinsically and ineluctably what it is--if I'm going to write about sheepmen and homesteaders, I probably can't do it much better than this. The question is how much of the world is willing to read about that world, of decades ago and another way of life. Michael Benidt of Waldenbooks maybe said it when he wrote Tom that he'd enjoyed and admired the ms but we shouldn't anticipate a bestseller (hell, I never do) because my story is as out of place in indulgent yuppie America as one of my homesteaders would be in Bloomingdale's. Well, between here and Christmas, we'll put some numbers on such speculations.

Warm, actually summerlike, weather again today, 3rd day out of the last 4. In fact I came back from lunch in Edmonds with Archie, glanced out at the garden and there were the red oakleaf lettuce plants I'd put into the soil the night before last, after nurturing them in a big pot until they seemed utterly robust--disintegrating in heat collapse. Poured some water on them and put pails and cardboard up to shade them, and now they're looking as if they may make it.

Archie was in a pretty good modd, I think from having finished his NW remembrance book for Harper & Row--although he told me he won't have a final verdict, i.e. money, on it until Buzz Wyeth comes back from vacation in 3 weeks and adds his reading to the approving one of

29 April, cont.--Archie's editor on the book, Van Dusen. That'd make me nervous, having to get two okays on a book. Archie says if this one goes okay, he'd then like to write an Ozarks remembrance.

I go to Portland early in the morning, for speaking gigs at Catlin Gabel school and Craig Wesley's writers series at Clackamas CC. After that I have to try get in 10 or 12 writing days in May before the ABA, plus some thinking time if I can.

5 May--Frabjous days. The Iranamok hearings began on tv this morning, Gary Hart has been caught at not being able to keep it in his pants, and the phone has caught fire this morning. First, Liz, saying she'd be at ABA, and we made a date for lunch on Sun. the 24th. Next, Carlos Schwantes at U. of Idaho wanting me to speak in Aug. '88. Then someone from Washington Magazine, inviting C and X to their table at SDX--I said no, we've already made plans to come with Nalders. Then Tom, saying he wants to take C and me to dinner the night of the 24th. This blitz continues from last night, when a guy from the Nat'l Park Service wanted me to come to Harpers Ferry WV on June 9 and talk to N Park interpretive staff (told him no); abt 5:30 Linda Bierds called to tell of responses from the batch of cover letters I did for her poetry ms--most vital of which, she's ~~back~~ halfway home at Holt, where Marion Wood, with admitted reluctance, saw how good the stuff was and passed it to her editor-in-chief, who with admitted etc. has passed it to publisher Dick Seaver. After a long talk with Linda, about what she should put into the bio info requested by Wood, I was heading for the supper table when Yvonne Kothert of the Oregonian called to say she had the Dancing excerpt on her VDT screen and was contemplating "sonofabitch," ~~which~~ which the Oregonian cannot use but which is in the excerpt 3 times, what should she do? I asked if she could use "bugger", she said she guessed she could; "Okay, Yvonne, use 'bugger'--supper's on, g'bye."

So, busy, hectic, distracting. I came back from Portland and the lucrative 2 days at Catlin Gabel private school quite weary, having read thru the previous weekend to finish the Dancing page proofs, and simply sat around kind of numb

5 May cont.--on Saturday. Sunday we roused ourselves to a ^Dungeress hike. Y'day I tinkered around the desk a bit, but the weather turned beautiful and I did some garden work. Today I feel good, but want to watch Secord's testimony when it begins in 15 min.; C over the weekend asked me to get out my master's thesis on the Kefauver hearings for her, and indeed 25 years ago I maybe knew as much about the history of televised hearings as anybody.

Well, anyway: at some soon point I'm going to have to get back into starting the next book.

May 11--Maybe, by god, Dancing will turn out to have been worth the past 3 years. The p'back reading copy done for the ABA came today, and in the lower left corner of the back cover is the glorious little line: 50,000-copy first printing. At the wildest, I'd dreamt maybe 30-35,000.

Moreover: a royalty check came from Frankfurt, by way of Zurich, by way of London, showing Das Haus has earned beyond its advance. And Sat. night at the SDX Western Washington awards banquet, my article on Tony Angell won 1st prize. And C, sampling the crockpot beef supper I'm doing for tonight, proclaims it delicious--"When you're hot, you're hot," she says.

May 13--Life stayed pretty ~~seething~~ y'day, too. Tom Stewart called, about the list of writers he's going to send reading copies of Dancing to: Dan Jenkins, Robert Caro, Richard Yates, Carol Hill, Pat Conroy, Larry Woiwode, Richard Ford, Sue Miller, Fay Godwin, Mary Gordon, Russell Banks, Elizabeth Hardwick, Alice Munro, Robert Crichton, Mark Strand, and some I missed in there. Then came Publishers Weekly, with the Athenaeum ad on the front cover and my name there in bright colors with four others. Late afternoon, phone call from Sigrid Hecht at Books on Tape, saying 3 of my books are now recorded and English Creek is in the studio. Another call was what has lately been the daily type, asking me to speak somewhere--this time to the WAMI med students/doctors at Moscow/Pullman in June.

May 16--We're heading out to a Dungeness hike this morn, but while waiting for ferry time, quick notes on the last of this panting week; y'day I luckily managed a pretty good couple of pp. early, the Toothless Ferries stopping to help Jick etc. fix a flat, then the phone began. Elliot McCleary, calling from Consumers Digest, to say he'd seen the Pub Wkly cover; Susan Richman and me, back and forth 3-4 times as we sorted thru the logistics of my ABA gig; Susan's ass't Lois, one of those times, saying she'd just finished reading Dancing, had to put it down occasionally because of the suspense during the blizzard scene; Donn Fry of S. Times, whom I called abt logistics of his Indianapolis News buddy John Krull wanting to interview me late next wk; the doc from WAMI; the geezer I've been trying to get a load of firewood from at last showed up with it just before 3; while he was unloading, here came Bruce the kitchen carpenter with estimates etc. on a re-do, C and I both having lost track that he was ~~was~~ coming; amid that, Ben Groff called about interviewing me for cover piece for S. Times Pacific Mag; sometime a little before the wood-carpenter-Groff, Tom Stewart called with the flap copy for Dancing; oh yes, and I called Liz 1st thing in the morning to tell her the sample of Maria Montana, opening scene and synopsis, was on its way to her--she said, you're kidding. Main news from her, "Liv Blumer and I have been beating up on the BOMC all week"; said she'd called Al Silverman, told him here she'd been expecting to hear from him about Dancing being a BOMC selection and she hadn't even ~~known~~ got word about it being an alternate, S'man said he hadn't seen it himself, would take a look; Liz tells me, "I don't know what's wrong with them, it's perfect for them."

18 May, 9:30 a.m.--Starting to have fun now. The phone ~~rang~~ just rang, I picked it up and heard the whooshes and whishes of great distance, and a hard-to-decipher voice said, "This is Tessa Sayle in London." Said she had to tell me she thinks Dancing is "beautiful, wonderful," the culmination my other books have been working up toward. She looked up from her reading of it and the time was midnight; she says the book has such breadth, she still finds herself worrying about the characters, and has

18 May cont.--talked about them and the book to everyone she's dealt with all day long. "I will do my damndest" to get not only a publisher but a good deal--ideally "a hard and soft publisher"--and will try the other books "that have been leading up to this one" on publishers at the same time. I thanked her profusely for calling, then asked if she's still agenting Tom Keneally. She is indeed, and is having dinner with him tonight--"I suppose I'll talk to him about your book all evening too." I told her of his blurb for the Sea Runners, asked her to give him my regards and admiration.

So: shearing away the British layers of understatement and understatement, this seems a terrific response--particularly her straightforward remark that Dancing seems to her what the others books have been building up to--on a front where my work has been looked on as "peculiarly American."

21 May--Feeling good this morning, as why the hell wouldn't I. Liz called y'day afternoon, a bright blue day I'd decided to take off as r&r for the DC trip this weekend, and so I came in from a lounge chair on the patio to her news that Penguin made a floor bid of \$35,000 for Dancing.

Weather is clear and crisp again today, I've just come back from half a dozen rounds of the park as I'm trying to do each morning now, plus other walking later in the day & 15-20 min. on the X-country machine. Both C and I have lost weight recently, not a bad idea before the ABA binge ahead. It feels as if I did the right thing to junk the intended writing schedule these past 2 days and do some thinking and gathering towards ABA interviews etc.; today can be mostly a tinkering day, although the Dancing map and a proof of the McCoy excerpt that'll be in the Oregonian on June 7 are both supposed to come in the mail; I'm mulling whether I may try do some creation of the Riley character for Maria Montana.

28 May '87--Our trip to the ABA was a gala. The one bum aspect is that C has come down with flu from the plane trip; she assured me this morning it was worth it; but, damn it...

The ABA is going to be hard to summarize--I mostly was too busy to take notes, and here at midafternoon I'm tiring, having handled C's 8:30 class for her and written thanks letters all day long--but I'll try peck away at it over the next few days. The main news was that, by the time we arrived at the convention at 1 on Sunday, the Macmillan sale staff was impressed with how the reading copies of Dancing were being snatched up. This ABA was the most upbeat anyone could remember--also the biggest ever--and within that general mood Macmillan had its own bubble of luck and optimism, because the lottery for ~~book~~ sites put the M'n booth smack in front of the main entrance, on the ground floor; there was a constant flood of people past, and sometimes a crush. I knew things were okay when I saw the usually worried-looking sales director, Mort Berke, smiling.

29 May--C and I arrived at the convention a little before 1, after overnighting in Potomac with Linda and Eli and being squired by them to the Great Falls of the Potomac, and as I walked up to the Macmillan booth Tom and Liz were talking, me peering to make sure it was them after 5 or 6 years of not seeing each other, the two of them doing a little of the same to me. Tom mentioned later, in another context, that he has a forgettable face and on some occasions, maybe Frankfurt, has resorted to wearing the same vivid tie time after time, so that people will at least register, "He's the guy with the tie." Indeed, after spending lunch and dinner with Tom on Sunday, on Monday morn C and I were walking thru the hotel lobby when we heard "Good morning, Doigs" and both had to look twice to recognize Tom, now bowtied, at the ~~cashier/checkout~~ checkout desk. As for Liz, she looked great, thinner than the other time we met her, and like Tom she seemed younger than 5 years ago. Liz was taking us to lunch, along with her husband Tony Schulte, ex-Random House, and Carol Hill had come down from NY for the lunch too; then Tom decided he could come, so we were six--two cabfuls, which produced the scene of our cabbies stopped side by side in the middle of the street, backing up the traffic behind them, as they talked over where we ought to go for lunch when Tony's recommended reference proved to be closed.

cabbies

29 May cont.--A memorable element of this trip was these Washington cabbies, veering fluidly thru the traffic as if their big old clunker autos were kayaks in a fast current, and these initial cabbies were just as wizardly in delivering us to The American restaurant on Capitol Hill, which proved to be crammed, which led us to The Brasserie next door and a private upstairs room. And thus we had what Tom dubbed "the founders' lunch"--Carol Hill the editor and angel of Sky, Tom and Liz who are my pillars now, C and I from the trenches of the wordwork.

1 June--After lunch, Liz and I did some buzzing of the convention aisles; as C was leaving us to go back to the hotel I was fishing money out of my wallet for her when Chuck Robinson of the Bellingham bookstore popped up and asked if this is where they give the green stuff away. So Liz got to meet Chuck and the world of NW bookselling. On we went to the Viking booth, where I intro'd her to Michael Jacobs and she intro'd me to Gerry Howard. Gerry was not what I expected, a lanky guy with black mop of hair and slightly prominent front teeth, not NY intense at all--but yea verily, he is the editor of Wm Kennedy and Wm Burroughs; and of Josephine Humphreys, who was with him when Liz and I came up. (We were awarded brd galleys of her new novel Rich in Love, which sad to say I didn't much go for when I read it on the plane home.) The main news in talking with Gerry (and later Michael) is the Penguin plan to try Dancing in mass market: rack-size p'backs distributed by a newsstand distributor; and to re-issue Eng Crk in the same format. Worth a try. ~~Worth a try.~~ I think Penguin has soldiered hard for me with both Sea Runners and Eng Crk, but managed to sell only 20,000 of each in trade p'back.

After the Viking visit Liz and I found places to sit in the lobby and talked for 25 min. or so. She feels we ought to wait for autumn before signing with Tom again--not because of him, ~~because~~ we're agreed he's done an ideal job so far with Dancing, but as she says, "Macmillan is a weird place." Also it's now a takeover target, Maxwell not having managed to swallow HBJ. I told her a bit about my intentions beyond this trilogy, such as the possible novella-length essays on my mother's letters, Del Stark etc Good agent that she is, she pointed out that it'd be nice

June 1 cont.--to have another book in 2 years. I don't think it's in the cards, though, given how much distraction the feel of Dancing's success is bringing into my life.

(Example: the phone just rang, Bruce the kitchen carpenter asking to bring by carpet and flooring samples on Thurs. C and I consulted, said okay; I jotted it on the calendar, then noticed that makes a straight run of: Wed., interview by Ben Groff for S. Times; Thurs., kitchen talk; Fri., Michael Dorris reading at Elliott Bay. I said so out loud, and learned C is tied up all of Sat. at the GLASS party at Mt. Rainier.) I'm toughening what I thought was already a fairly strict policy of saying no to dribs and drabs--came home from DC and forthwith turned down Sierra Club request to do preface for their John Muir re-issue that I'd said I'd consider, and tomorrow I'll turn down, though I dislike to, Carlos Schwantes for a talk he wants at his U. of Idaho exploration conference in Aug. '88. But even so, I'd like to do an ~~occasional~~ occasional Wash. Post bk review, do maybe half a dozen blurbs a year that'd actually help writers who need it, make an occasional speech or reading. These last few weeks of the school year are particularly fraught, always--and worse than ever because of C's flu--but I can't imagine life calming down enough for me to write both a novel and a set of ambitious essays. We'll see.

Back to the convention and Liz; she's always discreet about what other writers she reps, but we did learn this time she has Nicole Hollander of the Sylvia cartoon, Lynda Barry, still has Wm Kennedy (finishing up a novel), has had 4 writers in the past 3 PEN/Faulkner awards finals (I've forgotten the name of hers this yr and can't find the list), and has Jonathan Yardley of the Wash. Post. When Liz went off to another appointment, I hung on a while at the Macmillan booth, meeting the sales staff, eyeballing the aisles, and before long was ~~xxx~~ rewarded with Carol O'Brien, an edit'l director of the British publisher Collins, 50 pp. into Dancing and proclaiming she likes it greatly, if the rest of the book was as good she'd talk to Tessa Sayle abt it. We talked for 15-20 min., she was quite interested in how I'd researched the book in Scotland etc.; a pleasant time, a nice augury.

June 2--Managed 2 fresh of Maria this morning. Difficult gearing up to day-by-day writing again, tired as I am and as choppy as life has been this past week.

Book biz news y'day, good and bad. A death knell in Great Falls, Jo Horst closing her store, one of the handsomest in the NW. Done in, she says, by discounters and the Montana economy. And Peter Soper called to say he liked the ms of Dancing a lot, and figures Pacific Pipeline will order 5,000.

ABA again: Sun. night, Tom Stewart hosted the dinner at the Jockey Club--C and I, Liz, Liv Blumer and Peter Carson of British Penguin. An illuminating moment when Steve Kirshbaum(?) of Warner Books passed a few aisles away and waved to Liv, causing her to ask Tom, have you told them yet? can I tell them? Her news was that she's leaving Athenaeum to become rights director at Warner; great loss to me and my books, as I've been told time and again how Liv has championed them. It just now occurs to me, from Tom's I'll-mention-no-names answer ~~was~~ when one of us asked what he was going to do to fill the job, that his description, someone with some editorial skills and some rights skills, might mean Irene Skolnick. Other moments of the dinner: Liv asking Liz if she'd read Tom's coup, Memoirs of an Invisible Man; Liz saying yes, she'd turned it down; Liv exclaiming What?; Liz repeating, I turned it down; Liv saying, And you have the nerve to repeat it. All in good humor. Tom chimed in that he turned down Ironweed when Liz offered it to him; he was the 6th of the dozen before that book hit its lucky 13th--Liz was reminded of that when I was reciting at lunch how we'd placed Sky with Carol Hill. I sat at far end, with Tom between me and Peter Carson, so I didn't get to talk to Peter much, but he seemed elegant without being stuffy about it. Tom said when he gave him a Dancing copy and told him Carol O'Brien also had one, Peter proclaimed, We shall have to see whether I can read faster than Miss O'Brien. (I also gleaned, from Tom's mention that he was an NU ~~man~~ speech cherub in 1965, that he's probably not quite 40 yet. Carol Hill was praising him to his face--and maybe for my benefit--as we stalked a taxi after lunch that day, saying few editors manage to do as much for their books as he does, any more; Tom saying in turn, nonetheless he feels he neglects some.

June 2 cont.--At some point Sun. or Mon., Tom and I talked a bit at the booth, and I asked him if he had any ideas about what I should write after the trilogy. He said no, not for him to say. No Svengali instincts, evidently. When I told him how much I appreciated the editing he did this time, he said he's three times had the experience of seeing a book take on richness and rightness with each word that's worked on, and I've provided two of those, Eng Crk and Dancing. (The other was William Wiser's Disappearances.)

Monday, C and I walked around the White House, as much excursion as we wanted in the mucky Wash'n climate, then did some more hanging around the Mac'n booth until Susan Richman and Wendy Sherman took us to lunch--Le Pavillon, nouvelle to the nth, and an eyeblinking \$215 for the 4 of us. Susan and Wendy were hilarious, both of them turning out to be originally from C's old NJ stomping grounds, both of them small and dark and intense--~~Susan~~ Wendy at one point saying, So here we are, two paranoid Jewish women. Susan had a Gary

Hart joke: why is GH like a Chinese dinner? Because he comes with Rice. (The Hart jokes and general conversation around them indicate to me that a lot of people feel what I do, relief that we're rid of that intellectual mannequin who'd have made a damn spooky President.) While the four of us were in the middle of the dining room being hovered at by sundry waiters, at a near table was the Random House ~~xxx~~ publicity person and the producer of Good Morning, America, while at the glassed-in end room R House was throwing a gala lunch for chainstore top execs, I think it was; Susan visited over and found that the pub person wanted to keep an eye on the gala without actually being in it. Back to the convention center, Wendy having our cabbie take us back to the exact door we'd left from, to confirm her suspicion that the cabbie who'd taken us to lunch had overcharged (he had). At 3 I did a reading in the EBA's daylong schedule of them; podium light

was dim, air-conditioning was whipping curtains along the wall, sound seeped in from the reading room next door, and other than that things weren't bad. Tom and Gerry Howard and the New Haven bookseller Henry Berliner and Norman and Patti of Oak Harbor and a handful of others soldiered bravely in the audience, then after it was all over and I was thanking folks on their way out, here came a not young woman in a kind of khaki jumpsuit, arms wide and saying, Oh, it was

June 2 cont.--wonderful, it just sounds so right. As she got closer I could read her name tag: Mary Lee Settle. I did my flabbergasted best to thank her for coming, and next thing she was demanding to know, Where's my copy of this book? I swung us around, the next open mouth and dropped jaw after my own, Tom Stewart, and he managed to assure her it was in the mail, fishing out his notebook to make sure a book got to her.

Later: this afternoon in a space of about 15 min., between stints of piling wood in the woodhouse, I turned down Carlos Schwantes on his exploration conference at U. of Idaho in Aug. '88 and Rick (Richard) Robbins at Mankato State when he sounded me out about being one of their 2-day writers in residence next school year.

3 June--The turndown list cont'd: bnd galley of Peter Bowen's 1st novel, Yellowstone Kelly, came today, I'm firing it right back. Save my ammo for somebody worth a welcoming salvo.

The ABA again. After the reading C and I headed back to the J.W. Marriott, where I had a 4:30-5 interview scheduled with Steve Paul of KC Star. Pronto at 4:30 he called, and because C was getting dressed for the night's shindig I met him down in the bar, where he had ice tea and I had ice water--probably a local record. Short, dark-bearded, friendly guy. As our talking ran past 5, I invited him up to the room while I got dressed, then he and C and I set off for the big Macmillan party, which Susan and Wendy had debated over lunch: have it outside on a nice balcony, in the face of uncertain weather, or safely inside in a boxy suite? This being publishing, neither: we went to the 7th floor suite and found Susan's assistants steering people to the basement, a sizable ballroom. So sizable that when we arrived it looked cavernous with just a few dozen people rattling around, and I figured that was that, nice try but a misfire. But as we talked with people--Michael Farfit of Last Stand at Rosebud Creek, now living in St. Ignatius, was there; book critics, thru the evening, from Detroit, Cincinnati, Dallas, Pittsburgh, Orlando, and yea, the Asbury Park Press--C recognized Myrna Gray from C's days

3 June cont.--on the Press; sundry booksellers--the room filled and filled, until I realized at one point it was downright crowded; Wendy later estimated maybe 4-500 people. Main incidents were a highly welcome reprise of Mary Lee Settle, with her husband Wm Tazewell, whom I clicked as having written one of Eng Creek's niftiest reviews. As he went off to get her a vodka gibbon, she assured me again that the two of us are the only ones who know what we're up to, in using history and detail and getting it right. I asked her what was going on with her at the ABA, she said she has a new novel coming from Farrar, H & Row are bringing out last year's in Perennial p'back, and Macmillan is bringing out boxed version of the Beulah Quintet. Yeah, well, pretty good, Mary Lee. Then she asked if I'd heard the latest Gary Hart joke--"Annie Dillard and I always trade the latest jokes," she said--~~it~~ and it was this one: Jim Bakker and Gary Hart have found new careers together, they've moved to Utah to a new education institution, where Bakker will be chaplain and Hart will be president: it's called Frig 'em Young University.

Isn't that awful? said Mary Lee, merrily nudging me in the ribs. Long may she wave. Next memorable moment was in the dumb category rather than the spiffy one. A photog for Publishers Weekly, slight bespectacled woman in her late 50s, was working the convention, earlier had snapped me signing at the Macmillan booth, and now wanted the Mac'n authors-- Barbara Michaels, Judith Martin, George Plimpton and me--to line up in front of the table with our books. As she was gathering us, she had Plimpton, who must be damn near 6'4", sit on the ~~table~~ edge of the table so that something besides his necktie would show in the pic. As that was going on, Plimpton reached back and got a book--thank god, it wasn't mine; I think Barbara Michaels'--and ~~it~~ what he must have thought was a playful way bopped the photog on the head with it. Trouble was, beside it being a bad idea to play playful patrician among the minions in the first place, was that he hit her harder than probably intended, a bonk ~~about~~ that that made her blink and flinch. He proclaimed, "I had a reason for that," which was the panning review PW gave his novel Sidd Finch (and which sounds entirely worth the panning). I may be imagining in retrospect, but I believe I was aware of Judith Martin, Miss Manners her very self, beside me giving off an almost audible hmmm of disapproval as we both thought, you uppercrust klutz.

5 June--This humid day, my head feels like a ball of mud. Didn't manage to do any real progress, even any ~~any~~ thinking, toward the Maria ms, either. It's beginning to look as if I'm going to straggle along until after Portland and Montana, although it's a bad idea--June will be damn near gone by then. Maybe I can get respectable at the writing next week, but this one sure as hell was scuzzy with chores, distraction, lassitude.

The ABA: After the Mac'n party Monday night, there was a private dinner for selected reviewers and booksellers at the Hay-Adams; 8 or 10 people per table, parsed out among the attractions (?) of Plimpton, Miss Manners, myself and George Will, whom I never knowingly laid eyes on this whole evening--The Case of the Invisible Tory. At our table, clockwise from me, were Mona who runs a bookstore in Ft. Myers, Fla.; Greg Hamlin, Mac'n's director of sales; C; Clarus Backes of Denver Post, his wife Earlene; Judy Litchfield of Mac'n sales staff; and next to me on other side, Reid Beddow of the Wash. Post Book World. Was greatly glad of the chance to meet Reid, for whom I've done a couple of reviews and would do more if I can find time; he's about 50, from Dubuque and Yale, and walked into the Post and asked for--and got--a job as a copy aide 25 or so years ago, at the same time Judith Martin was starting out as a copy aide too. Reid had been to Oxford, to see Faulkner's place, thought they're doing a good job of showing it to the public. We talked about what I might do for Bk World, inasmuch as I owe them a Rediscovery review; I suggested to Reid I could do either that, or try a review of some fall book if he'd prefer; told him I'd like to get out of ghetto of being asked to do western books, he said he takes that point, he hears the same from black writers perpetually asked to review black writers. Talk turned ~~in~~ at one point to the press and its coverage of Gary Hart, Reid feeling there's been considerable holier-than-thou attitude shown by the press; on the other hand, he said Post reporters had talked to ~~neighbors~~ Hart's G-town neighbors and found that Donna Rice had not left, the great night in question, as Hart proclaimed--the neighbors could hear the two of them thru the townhouse walls. I wondered at the time of Hart's pullout from the race, whether the Post or somebody else had something further on him he was retreating from.

5 June cont.--Reid further invited us to see the Post newsroom the next day, a spiffy chance for C and her media course. Indeed there was Ben Bradlee in his glass office, covey of editors outside waiting for the daily 11 a.m. meeting; and at other side of the newsroom, Bob Woodward in his glass bowl as well. The place had the feel of seriousness, of job-doing; the VDTs of the city and metro staff were notably unpopulated, which meant people were out actually covering things. In the Book World corner, we met acting editor Alice Digilio and art editor Ken Tanabe--they said they were all just decompressing from the ABA, talking it over, and Jack Miles of the LA Times book section had earlier come by to say hello. A side room handles the actual torrent of books, a copy aide does or at least helps with the opening of the packages--pile of a few dozen on the floor right then. Reid eventually took us down to meet the Post's "Dickensian" proof editor, and indeed he was exactly that--Brian, slender hipless gent from the Isle of Wight, with a terrific upswept coiff, who's been an actor and sundry other things, before now overseeing the pages just before printing; Reid says they get learned phone calls from him, Thus-and-such is misspelled.

After the Post tour, we went to lunch as Reid advised, at roof garden of the Hotel Washington, a view of all Washington from the White House to Nat'l Airport and good not overpriced food as well. With still an hour or so to kill before the plane, we went to the Philips Gallery, blinked at the really dismal art collection Wm Clark of Butte left to the Gallery, ran into Norman and Patti of Oak Harbor bookstore, talked a bit about their future plans, of selling and moving to northern California. And then a \$25 cab ride to Dulles and the plane home.

Forgot to note: I did a signing at the ABA 9-10 Tues. morning, a time that coincided with big hear-the-authors breakfasts and that Susan Richman had been dubious about, but in fact I had a steady line the whole hour. On the other hand Susan and I the day before, going to look over the readings room, found Sue Miller, her pub person and literally no one else on hand for her 10 a.m. reading. In short, signings work okay in those early ABA hours, readings don't at all, for future reference.

8 June--Rainy afternoon, after a weekend of fine weather. Fine weather or no, I did virtually nothing y'day, Sunday; the body recuperating, I hope. Today I managed a full lpp of ms, especially good for a Monday, and this afternoon have had enough zip left to deal with some fall booksigning scheduling; Oregon stores are being heard from, way ahead of my hometown buddies.

Fri. night, while C took care of her flu, I went to Elliott Bay bkstore and heard Michael Dorris read, got to visit with him a bit fore and aft. He's pretty good as a reader, a bit professorial, and of course the logical comparison puts anybody at a hopeless disadvantage--Louise is a dynamite reader. It's interesting to watch the skyrocket career of the two of them, for besides their enormous talent they so far seem to have a kind of charmed writing life. I found out from Michael, for ex, abt Anatole Broyard's NYTBR praise for Yellow Raft, even though Broyard in the past utterly panned Jim Welch for writing about the bleakness of reservation life. Then when Michael after his reading asked for questions, I thought this could be interesting--his audience was about 3/4 female, several of them Indian women, and the how-come-you-treat-us-that-way? possibilities aside, there are quite a number of possible questions about how he arrived at the 3 female points of view in the book, did his anthro career help, how did Louise contribute, etc. But nothing; not a hand went up. Craig Lesley, who forever gets are-you-an-Indian questions, and I are going to have to have a Gold Dust Twins skull session about what Michael and Louise have that we ain't--besides looks, ~~what~~ extreme talent, etc.

A last (maybe) tremor from the ABA. Tom, Liz and Liv all have pounded on Al Silverman and the BOMC in various ways about their ignoring of Dancing, and Tom, after cornering S'man at ABA and getting him to agree to pass the book to a second judge, wondered to Liz and me whether our problem there is John Hutchens, and a belief that One Man's Montana is the only Montana book there ever need be. That flashed me onto the silent treatment I got, yrs ago, when I wrote H's to see if he'd sign my copy of OMM; and it'd be interesting to dope out whether any Mont. books have been picked up by BOMC--I don't think Maclean's was, and I don't think Jim Welch has had any either.

24th June--We got home around noon on Monday the 22nd from our 10-day Oregon-Idaho-Montana trip. We both spent y'day recuperating, and C seems to have succeeded--she's made a dump run, last one for the '69 Buick before Ginny Bennett buys it tomorrow--though I'm flagging a bit after a couple of hours of thinking and tinkering. Main topic: how and when I can get myself underway on Maria again.

Sat. the 13th we headed for Portland after lunch at Madison House with C's dad and Aline; dinner that night at the Heathman with the Lewis & Clark provost Jackie Mattfeld, 2 of her friends in what turns out to be Portland's female equivalent of an old boys' network, L&C poet Vern Rutsala and wife Joan, and Craig and Cathy Lesley. Sunday morning, Jackie picked us up at the hotel, we met L&C pres Jim Gardner, and Jackie, Jim and I got robed for the commencement ceremony. Both of them had some concern whether there might be student protests, over S. African divestment, but there was little, only a few balloons sent aloft with Divest Now banners. Myself, I had a surprisingly uproarious welcome. As Gardner was getting the ceremony underway, a champagne bottle popped and the cork mortared onto the platform, narrowly missed him and lit not far in front of my feet. I picked it up and when I went to the mike said, "The first keepsake of the day, but probably not the last," drew a laugh, and set it on the corner of the lectern while I spoke. My talk was about 10 min., deliberately mostly light--the line that brought down the house, with an immediate laugh and then a swelling, louder response as it sunk in to more people, was "You can't have everything. Where would you put it?" Afterwards there was a lunch--the other honorary degree recipient was the potter Toshiko Takaezu, who stylishly bestowed a Hawaiian lei on me, and we then drank an arms-entwined toast to L&C--and some wandering the lawns to meet the new grads. A pleasant day for me, but less so for the L&C administration, who later that afternoon were to have a budget session to figure out what the hell to do about a \$1.8 million shortfall in a budget of I think \$28 million.

That night we went to Craig and Kathy's for supper, did some gossiping about writing; Craig had bowed his neck and rewritten the 40 pp. of ms that ~~we~~ left the house with the thieves and the briefcase they'd dumped stuff in, bless him

24 June cont.--Monday the 15th we went to Cannon Beach, under gray chilly weather and with too much wind--I was apprehensive about my eyes, because my eyelid problems came on after similar hiking a couple of years ago--and so gave up on our camping intention and took a motel room. We did get in good stints of walking the beach, and on Tues. drove to Pendleton along the Columbia Gorge route. Big classy Red Lion motel on e. side of Pendleton, and after a good meal and stout Happy Hour doubles at Cimmityotti's, we both conked out. Next day we went by way of LaGrande and Enterprise, through the Blue Mtns and the Wallawas, to Moscow; new terrain to us, impressive. Spoke that night to WAMI group of about 125, good audience. Weather in Moscow was perfect, bright, humidity 18% and shirtsleeve cool. The only flummox was that I was told the wrong banquet room as my speaking site, and after mildly hectoring the staff into setting up the lectern and mike so I could try it all, we later had to go through it all again in the real room. Lectern proved to have no reading light, but we hit on turning on the fluorescent bank over the head table when the time came.

On to Missoula over Lolo Pass the next day. Called on Barbara Theroux at her new Fact & Fiction bookstore, set up plans for a signing this fall with her, then on to Jim & Lois Welch's. Jim and Lo seem thriving, Fools Crow having been a nice success last fall. They invited Kittredge and Annick, Bevis and Juliette, and Rick and Carol DeMarinis for supper, so some visiting and catching up got done. Main news was that Rick's been taken on by Gerry Howard at Viking, a great break, and that Norman Maclean sent Kittredge a starchy letter after someone in Billings told N'man Bill had said N'man made some mistakes in writing A River; Bill's version is that he said he'd made some mistakes himself in writing the screenplay. Ah, Norman, ah, Missoula.

Did a morning of research the next day, C taking pics of Buttreys and "Montanian" office for me, and I dug into old UMont yearbooks for a version of Jick's 1st wife as a coed. Then we headed for Helena and Bangs'.

26 June--Summer is thoroughly here, the window thermometer at the end of my desk reading 87 as ~~the sun~~ the afternoon sun seeks it around to it. Few minutes after 2 and I still feel fairly vigorous, can go on with a few chores until I begin some housecleaning--the dreaded bathroom--at 3. This is the 4th full day home from the trip, and the first one where I've felt fully capable; is it going to take that much recuperation after any stint of travel? I'm in for a be-draggled autumn if so. Y'day I organized the Maria ms binder with scene-by-scene tabs, which helped greatly in today's ^{three} doping out which portions to write next week. Also have gone/some file cards, and as heartening as anything else, I maybe have found the extra zip the opening of Maria needs, Jick now doing his ocular best to outstare Maria's camera instead of his dammedest.

At Lang's a week ago, we got Sue's report on her MSU college year, and C briefed Becky abt Chicago summer as she heads for the blessed J'm Institute. How does it happen that 2 daughters of friends, Nancy Reeburgh and now Becky, have become j'm cherubs without our ever trying to foist it onto them? Do C and I carry Institute emanations with us?

As for Bill, he seemed pretty sanguine, maybe with the end of his museum project in sight. He told of bringing in a medicine man (I think) from one of the tribes, northern Cheyenne maybe, to advise on how to display a handsome warrior's shield the His'l Society has, and the m man said, with a glance around at the mostly female staff of curators etc., "Now you know this shield can't be touched by a woman, or it loses its power." Lang said there were some obvious internal tussles among the women, some of them feminists, all of them professionals in their craft. Good citizen of history that he is, Bill is trying to honor the Indian concerns (I don't know specifically how the no-woman-touch issue is to be resolved, but he is going to display the gorgeous shield with a sun cover draped over it as the m man said was the custom), but I do believe if I was one of the women I'd be tempted to tell the medicine man, "You macho prick, if your warrior stuff was so hot, how come we ended up having your shield?" It's likely a blind spot of mine, but I've never savvied why tribal ~~ex~~ peoples--Indians, Eskimoes, whoever--never have to pay any respect to anybody else's history while we're supposed to grant them theirs.

26 June cont.--Bill is one of the most beneficial people I'm around, able to talk ideas, cite evidence and yet be entertaining about it. As we gossiped back and forth about the Montana writers' essays he's been having done for his magazine, he said that what he liked about mine was that I would simply slip in my main points and go on; Kittredge's style he says is to almost literally say, Here's where all this has been leading to; David Long's, he says, is to begin anew, transitionless, making his point announce itself by showing up in contrast to what's been before. I know I ~~x~~ was being flattered because I was standing there in his kitchen, but even so. What I was trying to find out was ~~x~~ how much he had minded the take-it-or-leave-it attitude I had toward the piece I did for him, and I couldn't really get out of him any sign that it'd bothered him, at least as the piece turned out. My news for him, which set him to thinking as our writing conversations often do, was that his favorite part of my essay, about the trains of Ringling and me, I approached through the language of it rather than through the idea--the tracks as a trellis, the royalness of having the train stop just for me, etc.

About 9 on the 20th we left Langs' and headed for Bowman's Corners and across Rogers Pass, me note-taking and C pic-taking for second scene of Maria, Jick driving to Missoula to begin the centennial tour. That excursion went well enough until late afternoon, when Polson, which I'd cleverly chosen for the night because it'd have a plenitude of motels, eating places etc., proved to be jammed with an antique car convention; got one of the utterly last rooms in town (not counting our original intended haven, the Best Western, where the clerk wouldn't deign to let me look at the room), ate a dismal supper at the Driftwood, and settled in for the night about 100 feet from the busy main highway thru town. I'd developed a considerable headache and bleariness, maybe left over from trying to sleep on too thin a pillow at Langs' (I'd woke up at 3 a.m. with a headache and a tortured neck, out of that), and so I was zombielike company for C that evening, I'm sure. Went to bed early with earplugs in, actually slept pretty well, and the next morning we had a terrific few hours doing the Red Sleep Mtn tour of the Bison Range. I still had the headache, so after a ~~x~~ fine huge lunch at the Old Timer Cafe in St. Ignatius, we decided to head for Spokane and recuperation. Which

26 June cont.--worked; pulled into the Red Lion at mid-afternoon, sacked out a bit, showered, drank, ate, went to bed; and while the R Lion is several hundred percent too gaudy for our taste, the advantage of getting home by noon the next day, in good shape, was well worth it.

29 June--It's raggedy, but I've managed to resume on the Maria ms this morning, 4 pp. as per schedule. Some decent ideas came to me over the weekend, so that I didn't have the usual dual dread of gearing up again and on a Monday too; this second scene of the book, of Jick driving over Rogers Pass to Missoula, will have to be a virtuoso symphonic piece in order to work, but I think I've seen how it can be that. Anyway, a decent day of craft, in a household C and I agree has become much more sane and settled in the past week of labors on it.

And now I am 48, which seems to have been a harmless enough birthday. For it, C asked what I wanted to do, and I said let's have a few people over on Sat. night; as it turned out, Tony Angell (Noel and girls in Calif.), Tom and Carrie Jones, Jean and Walt Walkinshaw, and Frank. All pleasant, as it certainly ought to be for Tony and Tom and me: Tony has just finished his big pair of marble swans for the Wausau museum, Tom just won the gold medal at the NAWA show, and I've got Dancing coming.

Y'day, C and I simply sat (after early walk of Arboretum marsh trail) and read the Sunday NY Times and other stuff. I'm currently on a discovery binge of Nadine Gordimer, having found in A Sport of Nature that she makes the rest of us (except maybe Wm Kennedy) look like kids with crayons in our hands; immediately read the Conservationist, am now on Burger's Daughter, so to speak.

The weather is, and has been, hot without being daunting; temps in the 80s but not much humidity. This afternoon, promising to be the hottest yet--76 now, at 5 min. to 11--

I may set up card table and typewriter on the patio and try to catch up on filecards of notebook ~~and~~ entries.

2 July--11, and I've just finished the day's 4 pp., on the Moiese buffalo range. Decent morning's work, after a hell of a tough day y'day: hardest day of work of the week, and I still came up a page short. Luckily the first 2 days were today's variety, so I've hit 3 out of 4, and can use tomorrow for some dabbling and editing.

~~At~~ Bill Kittredge read at Elliott Bay Tues. night, so C and I were there, and later joined Bill and Annick and all the family and friends for a beer at Michelli's. Oddly, or maybe not, Bill doesn't let himself be nearly as good a reader as he ought to be; he does a rapid cadence which overemphasizes the hurlyburly of his words. Valuable gifted guy, he so often ~~does~~ self-sabotages that way. When I mentioned approvingly his interview with Hugo that ends The Real West Marginal Way, he said yeah, god, I was ~~so~~ hungover when I did that. ~~Amidst~~ The hungover excuse, or at least remark, is one I've heard from him in a lot of contexts, more often than I think could be so even from somebody who's been such a drinker as Bill. What I hope could be beneficial from that night--we'll have to see--is that I told Bill his short piece "Leaving" in his new book of essays, Owning It All, seems to me the kernel of the book we all want him to write, the story of the Kittredges and their million Oregon acres; as I told him, actually it was C's discernment that that was the closest-to-the-heart and best-written chunk in the whole book, and when she asked me about it (I'd only scanned around in the book, having seen so many of the pieces in original magazine form) I saw she was utterly right. Bill, who was sober and bright-eyed and even had a fresh haircut, said really? and that the idea might apply, because he's been trying to think what to do next, and m'while Bob Asahina of Simon & Schuster has been telling him they've got to find a book idea where he can show himself on the page. Bill also said, as I was telling him the grafts about his mother seemed to me real heart stuff, "That's the only time I've ever touched that," and until his parents die it may be that he can never give the story of that family barony and how it all came apart. C and I got to talking later: Bill's own marriage split up, his folks split up, his grandfather was evidently ~~was~~ a double-dyed SOB of a patriarch--good god, what happened on that ranch?

2 July cont.--More Montana, this from our Missoula trip. During the dinner party at the Welches, I wandered out into the kitchen for another drink and coincided with Jim, who asked me if I'd seen a tv bit--I dunno, maybe done by Annick--with Tom McGuane in it. I hadn't, so Jim, who has a fine malicious eye for cant, relished telling me: it seems that McG is shown with his small son, who asks, "Daddy, why do deer have to die?" and is answered some way. Then the boy asks (and I don't understand if the context is, to get a deer or to save a deer), "Daddy, would you die for a deer?" And McG says, "If it came to that." Jim and I looked at each other and laughed and laughed, two guys in hornrim glasses who ~~had~~ survived the Reservation and a lot of other odds against our ever amounting to anything, at the thought of that. I think "If it came to that" will become a watchword between us, thanks to McG. Ah, the hard men of the Paradise Valley.

27 July--Where to start, with the accumulating good news.

Let me try to be seemly and begin with Linda Biersd's: the phone is still warm from her exultant report that Holt is taking her poetry ms, The Stillness, The Dancing. Terrible money--\$500--but a place on the '88 fall list, which is just dandy. She and Syd are coming here for a celebratory drink in a couple of hours, and Carol is on her way out now to buy champagne for this launch of a new national poet.

And with me, the end of Friday brought a going-home phone call from Tom Stewart with the Publishers Weekly review of Rascal Fair--"rich insight," "beautifully evoked," "strong savory prose," "absorbing," and such as that. Auspicious, as was Friday's other publishing call, from HBJ Harvest editor John Radziewicz, that in answer to my query/nudge they do indeed have copies of Sky on hand, 20,000 of them, and I shd, in his phrase, "push, push, push" those babies along ~~with~~ with the Rascals. Oh, yea, and to back up to Tom's call again: a discount chain called AMS has taken 1400 copies of RFair, mine and Gary Jennings' the only Mac'n books they're taking; and Tom had just heard ~~by~~ from the Texas sales rep Patricia Kelly that one of her Houston stores went thru her list taking 2 of this, 2 of that, then abruptly 30 of Rascal Fair, saying 3 of their clerks had read and loved the reading copies and were prepared to cite RFair to customers when they ask for ~~something~~ as good a read as Lonesome Dove.

27 July cont.--And today, Louise Erdrich in the starring role around here: letter from her saying she's "loving, loving, loving" Rascal Fair and wants to chip in a blurb, but doesn't have my editor's name and #. I took care of that, pronto, on the Erdrich/Dorris phone machine, saying that publishing being publishing, of course they wouldn't provide her information of that sort. Problem is, we're so close to printing date that ~~the~~ any sparkling words from Louise maybe can't be squeezed onto the back cover--although I'm sure as hell tackling Tom tomorrow to see if it can be done. Even for an ad, words from Louise are golden these days; and I'm of course pleasantly flummoxed that she likes the book, as I think my work isn't much like hers.

Well, what else. The dim side was a couple of weeks back now, when I had a recurrence of the eyelid problem--although this time it was a sty, and therefore a treatable staph infection (Mike Stuart put me on Dicloxacillin 4 times a day, plus soaking the eye 4-7 times a day), and not the big bopper, a chelazyzion. It made for a tough week, including a dismal weekend when the eye hurt whenever it wasn't out of focus from being soaked, and one very depressed night when I feared what another siege of months of that would be like.

Good spirits have been predominating again, starting with Carol's birthday party, gathering of the Rodens, the Maloofs, Frank and us. Katharina translated the German reviews of Sky--rather, Himmel--for me, which were ~~lovely~~ at once ponderously hilarious and very praising; we also all got a kick out of K's chiding habit when she disagrees with John, giving out a Dietrich-husky reproof, "Maloof!" Then C and I had a gratefully quiet weekend, mostly reading. She read the 1st two scenes of Maria for me at the end of last week, though they were fine except for 4 or 5 word choices or usual cases of pushing the slang or emotion too hard; I think I agreed with them all. Now I've put the ms aside at least for this week, when I'm reading Thomas Keneally's The Playmaker to review it for the Wash'n Post; so far, 65 pp. into it, I think it's a marvelous read.

29 July--7:05, and a morning when we'll head for Dungeness. Weather has been terrific this week, after blotto humid days of last week; not much in between, this summer.

Just called Tom Stewart, to say ~~am~~ revoir before he heads off to his customary Saratoga August; asked him abt squeezing a Louise Erdrich quote onto back cover, he said it could be done in any further printings. Now all we need is some.

Good news of y'day was Susan Richman has arranged a Publishers Weekly interview--she's flying Wendy Smith out here to do it, Aug. 19. Many a slip and all that, but this cd be an excellent shot; WS knows my work and did one of the best reviews of English Creek, in Newsday.

I'm reading Keneally's The Playmaker, a terrific piece of work, and spent part of y'day at UW library taking a look at some of his sources on the first years of the Sydney penal colony.

This household continues in a bright mood, both of us coping and not too hectored at the moment; and as C wrote on the bottom of her phone note reporting the PW interview prospect, "This is Fun!"

5 Aug.--This big summer goes on. Spent last week writing the Keneally review, and today I've shouldered the Billings speech, which will ~~be~~ also take tomorrow and possibly Friday to finish. Meanwhile, Rascal Fair is leading its own life: since the last diary entry, a good Kirkus review--"moving, graceful story" and "gripping saga"--has happened, and I've been "penciled in" for Noah Adams' Nat'l Public Radio show (except it's in the preview stage where it'll go out only over Minnesota Public Radio) for Oct. 17. Congrats came from Ann Rittenberg for the PW review, and today a letter of praise from Dan Frank at Viking. And an actual book is on its way, mailed by Margaret Talcott y'day. Susan Richman, in doing her routine nagging of bk review editors, asked the Chi Trib, was told their review is already written; she also told C and me on the phone last night that she's giving a copy of the book to "Herb" Mitgang of the NY Times, to try interest him in interviewing me.

We seized advantage of lovely weather to go to the Skagit on Sat. and again on Monday. Y'day was terrific weather too, which made me kick myself for having agreed to the Billings speech--the pace at which things are going, it has to be worked on this week or it never will be, and so here I was,

5 Aug.--in the bright blue heart of Seattle summer, wading through clippings files and wondering how the hell to come up with 35 minutes of words. Amid that came the galleys of Wallace Stegner's new novel, which I very much owe a blurb.

For the third and last time, Frank failed to pass his driving test today. He has until Nov. on his NJ license, then he figures he'll simply give it all up. As he says he feels not as crisp as he should be behind the wheel, it's probably time he did; considerably will complicate our logistics of seeing him, though.

Another note I didn't like to hear today: wanting to cite Norman Maclean's liking of Browning for this speech I'm writing, I phoned to his Seeley Lake cabin: number out of service. I then tried his Chicago number and there he was, sounding in tougher shape than I've ever heard him; from what he said, it seems as if he may have had a small stroke; as game as ever, he said he might make more sense to talk to in a week. But it seemed an effort for him to be on the phone and so I'm not going to try, merely will drop him a letter to be in touch; he did manage to tell me he always "favored the realistic poets" like Browning and Frost, and I can expand the point from there.

9 Aug.--This never really works--even as I say it, a breeze is coming up, rainlike murmur in the birches over me and the higher trees of the hill--but this Sunday morning I've set up shop on the patio in commemoration of this bright warm weather. Have just written a blurb for Wallace Stegner's new novel, *Crossing to Safety*, not as exultant a blurb as I'd wish, because the book seemed to me flat; the eternal problem of how to write about academia without everybody sounding stuffy is there (nobody is ever shown in a classroom, for instance, and students aren't even around as wallpaper) and, though who am I to say as an inveterate first-person narrator, it seemed to me the book needed the third-person voice, to get rid of all the exposition that had to be pocketed into the dialogue and to give a broader, maybe deeper, view of half the cast, the narrator and his wife. But for all that, even if Stegner were to merely clear his throat in print for several hundred pp. he deserves to be bought and read, and so I've tried to soldier for him in the blurb, as

9 Aug. cont.--he soldiered for me so many times.

Too, he'd be the first to savvy that one book in the world is really on my mind, and it is the initial copy of Rascal Fair that came in the mail late Friday afternoon. Beautiful job of production, with Paul Bacon's fine cover art wrapping around to the back. I haven't embarked on a cover-to-cover read yet--too bedraggled and frazzled from the week's work and ^{his} eye problem--but wherever I've dipped into the pp. the language seems lithe enough. Good reports continue from The World Out There; y'day came a letter from Tom announcing, that under whatever waterwitching process Macmillan uses to produce books, the print run is 30,000 with an immediate, i.e. virtually simultaneous, 2nd of 10,000. Big numbers, the kind we like to see.

I hope this isn't an omen, but minutes before the book arrived, the first problem came: phone call from bkseller Sharon Waite in Billings, saying her Walden's regional buyer had been told the book ~~wasn't~~ couldn't possible be ~~able~~ available before Sept. 30~~x,x~~ and so much for trying to sell a couple of hundred copies when I'm in Billings to give the Humanities speech on Sept. 12. My overtendency to want everything I'm connected with to go efficiently kicked in, and I spent too much time re-thinking the obvious, that I need to make whatever phone calls to Macmillan to resolve it on Monday morning. Y'day came a letter from Wendy Sherman, really in response to my letter of 10 days or so ago saying we had to watch out for this problem, assuring me she'll pitch in, and so maybe this will all play out as it ought~~xxx~~ to.

And by god, I was frazzled by week's end. My left eyelid flared again on Tuesday, red and lumpy and tender, despite my diligent month of hotpacking the sonofabitch. The way life has been popping, I figured I had to chug on and get the Billings speech written and out of the way, so for the second straight week--the W. Post Keneally review last week--I forced myself toward a deadline on work I don't particularly want to do. This weekend, which we're spending in mild gardening and yard work and patio reading, thankful for our shade in this valley, has been a recuperation. I'm not sure what the 4 weeks before we go to Montana hold--I'd like them to

9 Aug. cont--provide some Maria ms work, but not at the cost of too much bedragglements--but I'm more sanguine now that I have the review and the speech, both useful career pieces but not bundles of fun to do, out of the way.

Later: the event of the day came just after lunch, when the phone rang and it proved to be Michael Dorris, calling from New Hampshire to say he was halfway thru Rascal Fair and had to let me know how much he likes it. He's particularly enamored of my Scotch dialogue without resorting to contractions, phonetic spellings etc.; also said Angus has a wonderful sweetness as narrator, not saccharine but optimistic and good-humored. After the praise came the really good news: I'm not supposed to know it, but he'd doing the review for the Seattle Times--"you've got one in the bag," he assured me. Just this morning, as C and I were walking our rounds of the park, I told her I'd noticed a review by Jack Brenner in today's S. Times and supposed I was doomed to a

professory review by him (Brenner's review of Winter Bros for Pac Search wasn't really bad, just with an undertone of why didn't I write House of Sky again) or some other academic who's never committed fiction in his life. So, a real gain today. Asked Michael how things are going for him and Louise, and he said fine, as indeed they sound like: (a) they've finished Tracks, to be published fall of '88; (b) Yellow Raft may actually get made into a movie--screenplay is done and whoever's honchoing the movie idea had the notion of casting Cher as Christine, the middle-aged ~~Indian~~ Indian woman, but "Cher's had so much plastic surgery she looks about 18"; (c) they're co-writing a NYTBR piece on post-apocalyptic fiction such as Fiskadoro, Carolyn See's novel I can't recall the title of, etc. ~~Michael~~ Michael said the one pan of Yellow Raft was by Wm Robertson of the Miami Herald--another guy who didn't like Winter Bros!--who sniped that altho it's said Michael and Louise

collaborate on their books, there was no sign she'd given him any help on this one. Not as bad, Michael laughed, as the review Robb Forman Dew told him she got from the aptly named Susan Vigilante of the Wall St Jnl; it began, "Who taught this woman how to read and write?!"

11 Aug.--Patio scribbling again. After the brilliant weekend the weather turned murky y'day, but today is lovely again. C had been burning dry branches in the driveway--after Michael Dorris's call on Sunday, we went on about life by pruning a bunch of dead limbs--while I've been on the phone considerably: Susan Richman, to confirm that indeed I ought to go to the Walden's bookstore managers meeting in Colorado in Sept., an event which neither Waldens nor anybody at Macmillan had told either of us about until y'day; bookstore in Butte, to set up a signing after Rantala's report that they'd take a couple hundred books if I come; Mary Jane in Bozeman bookstore, to change date of her signing so I can fly to Colorado; Shirley Tuell of Walden's, to tell her Greg Hamlin of Mac'n assures me he can straighten out the problem of getting books to Billings by Sept. 12; and so it goes. (Oh yes, and Judy Flanders in Helena, to set time--3 hrs!--for her signing; she's plumped for 400 books.) C updated my bio sheet on the Wang this morning and then ran 50 copies at Sh'line. I suppose I'm still handmaking more of my so-called career than about anybody else does; doing much of my own bkstore scheduling, my own bio sheets and pics etc. But I still don't see how to get it done as effectively otherwise. My ~~peasant~~ peasant mentality, I suppose. Which reminds me of an entry I haven't managed to make. Over a month ago, I guess, I was interviewed by a freelance named Ben Groff--he actually works as a nurse, but is an English major from Oberlin and wants to write--on assignment for the Seattle Times Sunday mag. Well, okay, the timing is great for the forthcoming book, and out of my own freelance wilderness years I try to be as obliging as possible to interview requests. C and I have noticed, though, that the interviewers I get tend to be the dewy ones who want to write the great American book, in their heart of hearts. Ben was no exception, and in fact because he's had no actual journalism job or training he was the greenest pea yet. The first session with him I was vaguely discomfited,

--but not as discomfited as I am now, Perris (normally a perfectly good neighbor) just having started up his fucking power saw to launch into his porch demolition project; I guess this adjourns to the study.

Aug. 11 cont.--Back to Ben Groff: by the highfaluting tendency of his questions--what did I see as my place in American lit? what good did I think writing does?--and by a kind of accusatory undertone, very politely done but there. Next week he asked for a second session, which I did, and after he handed in his piece and his editor told him it was too bookish he asked for a third, could we have lunch. Okay, up to the Cafe de Paris I go, and there he sits, gives me an engaging grin and tells me, no tape recorder this time. That's up to him, if he just wants to take notes, so I just nod and uh-huh. Then as he begins, he does not take notes, at all, at all. Instead at some point he gives me the engaging grin again and tells me he has a good memory. The fact is, nobody's memory is that good; and if he thought I'd be looser without a tape recorder around, he had the situation assbackwards--now I was really chary of how I phrased things to him. Anyway, peasantry and so forth. About his 2nd or 3rd question, he asked me how did I see my future, "just keep on turning out books?" I looked at him and asked, "why do you say 'just'?" Well, that dissolved him; he reddened and said he knew he had a lot of sloppy verbal habits, he figured they maybe came from his job--which took me aback; you'd hope nurses were as precise as possible in their communication, though I suppose there's an argot of the profession that he meant--and he knew it was something he had to work on. Pretty soon he asked me something, about work habits or whatever, which caused me to comment that I guessed I still went about some of life like a peasant, because that was my background. He asked, you mean intellectually? I blinked and said no, I meant economically, and the more I thought about his notion of what "peasants" are the more pissed I got: told him I was from undereducated people, but who prized education, in fact more so than anybody else I've ever been around, and who were sophisticated and clever in their own work. It dawned on me amid all this that I was not up against any kind of malice, but simply an innocent arrogance; he simply assumed anybody not of his background--automatically, below it--couldn't have the prized intellectuality. In fact, I guess that was his flummox with me, even more so than the dewy interviewers generally get, looking at this whiskery baldish geezer who doesn't seem to have any excitement in his life: how in christ's name do those books come out of

Aug. 11 cont.--him? Anyway, we both got thru it--his piece may actually be pretty good, because he is a bright handler of written language--but I was on edge for a couple of days about the utter unprofessionalism of that interview. Ben also annoyed me when he mentioned that his father worked on copy desk of the NY Times, and deprecated the fact that his dad had written the headline for landing on the moon; what the hell, those words are more famous than any Ben or I will ever write.

14 Aug.--End of a week when we found some daylight in the summer chores. I did some final arranging with bookstores--incredibly, this fall's schedule was pretty much made final by Aug. 12--and made a final edit and taping of my Billings speech. Today I photocopied the last of the '74-'78 diary pp. that will go to the UW archives, and I also dropped Carstensen's copy of Rascal Fair on him, unannounced, at home--he was doing the laundry.

Am not sure if I noted after Rantala called me, but after his Montana selling trip we have about 3,000 copies of the book going into the state.

The only thing not going well is my left eyelid, which after a week of utterly diligent regimen of soaking and salving with Erythromycin doesn't seem to be improving. I'm to see Gorman the specialist again a week from Monday, and I suppose after all this he's going to end up cutting on me.

17 Aug.--The war of the eye, battle #5 or 6. Gorman put me on tetracycline, and the inflammation and hot graininess of the eyelid already seems better. There's still the prospect he'll have to cut the bump out of there next Mon.

Wonderful weather again, restorative to both C and me. I felt ~~absolutely~~ absolutely putrid much of the weekend, particularly Sunday, combination of the aggravating eye and gray humid weather; one of the consequences of depression of that sort is that it makes me dithery, hard to get anything done or thought out or even started. Both of us realize how attuned we are to the weather,

17 Aug.--though we haven't figured out how to counteract the problem of low pressure and humidity. Anyway, today I'm feeling sharp enough, and have cleaned my desk and the rest of the study in preparation for Wendy Smith's PW visit tomorrow.

And, Tom Holden just called from Ann Arbor, our annual telephone visit. We agree we have one of the strangest friendships going, never seeing one another, nor writing, really, as you have to drag a letter out of Tom with tongs, yet staying close and concerned about each other. He sounds good and steady, though he's just been through something: he saw the crash of the NW airliner at Detroit the other night, a slow motion ball of flame in his rearview mirror that made him wonder if a bomb had been dropped.

20 Aug.--A red-letter day y'day, I think. Wendy Smith came and did the Publishers Weekly interview of me, talking to me for an hr and 45 min., though she apologetically said afterward she always figures an hour is enough. She was very good, which is to say very professional; tall, 31-yr-old, Harvard grad, a descendant of Dorothy Canfield Fisher and Wolcott and Angie Gibbs; more to the point, an Elisabeth Sifton author, bk she's doing on the Group Theatre. C meanwhile fixed ~~some~~ salmon lunch, new spuds, beans from our garden, we had a couple glasses of wine, then about 2--she'd come at 10, with her husband Joe in hilariously huge Lincoln the rental car firm had provided them--and away she went to a friend's borrowed typewriter to begin the story, which she's to Fed Express to PW on Monday.

Otherwise, I've been doing little but coping with logistics. Am a little worried about my stamina, as I do feel as if I'm working plenty, and the autumn of travel hasn't even started yet. I'm hoping it's going to be enough fun to stimulate me through the season. With C's help I made a sane scaling-down decision today, junking plans to get to northern Montana in the Sept. trip and instead simply use the booksigning at Jackson, Wyo., ~~and~~ as a decently paced vacation trip.

26 Aug.--I'm now at the point where I'd hoped to be about 3 weeks ago, able to actually look at the Maria ms. Is this an annual August entry, how even a modest summer writing schedule gets pillaged by events? Y'day was a pure case in point, when I started on what I hoped would be a couple of hours of red-pencil editing to get a 10-min. Rascal Fair segment for Noah Adams' radio show in Oct., and it turned into a full day's work, among the hardest of the summer, with C using the Wang to print out revises for me; finally managed to mail the sample 8 pp. and a taped reading of them to Neenah Ellis at 9 this morning.

Amid y'day's frazzle came the great good news of books arriving at the Denver distributor, Gordon's, and an hour later at our own doorstep. I wish it had not been so frazzling a day, that I could have enjoyed the triumphal delivery better; but as C said, there's nothing like a new book arriving in its batch of glory.

Sept. 3--Today and three more, until we head for Montana, and I've been on the phone trying to arrange plane tix to Denver, St. Paul, Philadelphia. Sizable round of chores by car this afternoon, and likely another tomorrow afternoon as well. C and I did some emptying of kitchen closets this morning, toward the rehab that's to occur while we're away. Both of us had biennial physicals on Tues., and while the good news was that we both seem to be in fine health, the bad is that a tetanus booster shot has laid C low today; she's on the couch taking it easy.

First big newspaper review of Rascal Fair is in, and it's terrific--~~Radiation~~ Pamela Gullard in SF Chron saying "I find myself filled with such high praise for this book that instead of relating paltry bits of it, I want to quote the whole glorious thing." Tom Stewart called just as we were sitting down to lunch on Tues., saying "have you heard what happened in San Francisco?" and proceeding to read it to me with full flourishes. Tom also said he figured he'd call Gerry Howard at Penguin and ask him if he'd like to re-do his numbers upward (on p'back bid), given how well the book is going. C remarked what an advantage it is to have an agent and an editor who relish ~~trying to~~ doing that.

Sept. 3 cont.--Meanwhile the book is known to be in Lacomor, Mount Vernon, Billings, Denver, at Elliott Bay bookstore; Tom and I had a mutually shared moment of cussing as we wondered whether there are books in San Francisco to coincide with that review. At the moment, anyway, everything with Rascal Fair is going super.

I lack the time and calm to do this justice, but basically: late last week, C decided to call Margaret Svec and Pat Armstrong to see if they could come for Frank's ~~bx~~ b'day dinner on the 31st, and thus got the news that Pat has cancer in a lung and the lymph system. We wanted to see her and Margaret, and they us, before we headed to Montana, so we went over at 9 Tues. morn. I had a lot of foreboding; Pat I've always liked immensely, inexplicable as she in many ways is. It turned out she was not gloomy, rather was feeling better than she had in some time; she's sorted thru the possibilities, rejecting ~~the~~ chemotherapy but will try radiation when the time comes, and seems strong and accepted about it. As C said, you never know how people will react.

Sept. 5--Patio weather, the typewriter under the birches for probably the last time this summer. We're accumulating toward the Montana trip on Monday, Labor Day, the packing this time magnified by having to clear out the kitchen for rehab while we're gone. Both of us whaled through a bunch of tasks y'day, and this weather is perfectly glorious, so we're both reasonably perky today. Main news is the print total so far for Rascal Fair, reported by Margaret Talcott y'day: 48,250. The book reached Elliott Bay and I hope other bookstores, early this week or late last. Donn Fry wrote a note saying the Pacific profile piece of me looks good good, which would be a pleasant surprise given how antsy I was about how Ben Groff flailed thru the interviewing. Pintarich called from the Oregonian for a few details about my other books; I was out, so C provided him the stuff, but she said he seemed to like Rascal Fair okay. So, here at the edge of the maelstrom that the rest of this year will be, it's fair horizons.

8 Sept., Moiese--It's 3:20, in the Allentown Motel, bright blue day with puffs of clouds over the Mission Range. Both of us are recuperating from a delicious deep napp, consequence of y'day's drive from Seattle and getting up at 5:30 this morning to go to the Bison Range. This motel is a bit worn around the edges, but out the east-facing window where I have the Olivetti set up is the entire blue-green horizon of the Mission mountains with their reddish pyramid peaks, a duck pond, and a grove of trees which includes a weeping willow constantly alive with peeping and chittering sounds. I've just done a few notecards on the dawn drive of Red Sleep Mtn--which included a view of abt 40 buffalo grazing past us so close we could hear their tongues when they licked their own backs--and looked over the ms scene I'm setting at Moiese; as pleasantly unlively as I am just now, I think the material is in hand, particularly in C's pics. We are going to make a dusk drive of Red Sleep, though, to see what else presents itself, and because both of us seem to be infatuated with the place.

Y'day's drive from Seattle, deliberately done on Labor Day, was maybe the easiest ever in our 20 or so years of such drives. We left home at 6, were here a bit after 4; this brilliant weather, the absolute example of Indian summer--or maybe simply late summer--has both of us feeling good, and we pretty well sailed along the Interstate, though the Montana state route from St. Regis to here was worrisome because of possibility of holiday-drunk drivers. I keep expecting that a customary Montana early-September storm will hit, but today was the one day of the trip when good weather was important, and we had exquisite weather; so far, so good.

9 Sept--6 a.m., just about to gather ourselves and leave the Allentown Motel for b'fast at the Old Timers Cafe in St. Ignatius. Another bright moonlit night, enough so to cast shadows, and Canada geese honked through the night. There's also the roaring whoosh of trucks going past, the quacking ducks of the motel pond--all in all, periodic commotion that interrupted sleep but I feel pretty good even so. C has noted that I am definitely relaxed. At supper here last night it took me 4 tries to get the meal--ordered veal marsala, supposedly a specialty of this place, nope, they don't have that any more; ordered short ribs as I'd had the night before, waitress came back from kitchen to announce nonex until tomorrow; ordered a small filet mignon, medium, it arrived bloody in the middle, beyond rare to raw; waitress took it back, cook seared it some more and sent word she was sorry. All of which I thought was funny rather than exasperating; told C it must improve my spirits to have 48,000 books in the world. And now on to Helena.

10 Sept.--In Bill Lang's office at home, near Clancy. I've spent the last couple of hours going thru Danish homesteaders' reminiscences I ph'copied y'day at the His'l Society, picking out turns of phrase to use in Isaac's letter about Angus's death in Maria, and have produced a couple of decent grafs, not bad for a trip like this. Prize from the reminiscences so far is "his hands were full of work".

We hit Helena about 10 y'day, found the front window of the Little Prof'r filled with copies of Rascal Fair. I signed up a hundred, plus 6 or 8 special inscriptions that'd already been requested. Then on to the His'l Society library and lingo of the Danes. Bill is in St. Paul researching at the Hill Library, but Sue met us for lunch, we three went to the Windbag. C helped me with ph'copying after lunch, then did some useful shopping uptown for our being-reborn kitchen while I flipped on thru the Dane stuff. Got to visit a bit with Dave Walter, the ref'ce librarian, he said his wife is curious where I got the name & Marcella for Jick's wife--it's her name! And on our way out C and I stopped to talk with Bob Clark, who

10 Sept.--recited some of the museum rehab trouble the MHS has gone thru; said one problem is that people haven't wanted the museum they've been used to all their lives to change in any way, "except maybe to scoop the dead flies out of the display cases." About 4:15 we alit here, talked ~~in~~ with Sue about her summer's research into the Helena cathedral, then after supper ~~Bekky~~ Becky told us about her Institute experience.

The good weather goes on, remarkable to me--surely it's building up to a blizzard in Billings or Jackson? Mild turbulence on the bookstore front: Rantala called here last night, to get straight with me what he can tell a grievously affronted Jean Wilson in Boise, who somehow has proceeded on the notion that I was coming there for a signing; also, the second bookstore owner in Butte, awakening to the fact that Mindy Quivik set up a signing with me while she's been sojourning in Europe, told Rantala I could at least come around the corner and put my name in some books for her, and I guess I can.

11 Sept.--Ah, Butte, which has come to mean the M&M to us. Had supper there and b'fast this morning, amid the usual lineup of geezers etc along the counter. Even this motel, the Copper King, which was seeping sound in from every wall when we arrived, proved to be okay for sleeping. Now just past 8 a.m., I'll try call Margaret at Atheneum to generally check in, then the two Butte booksellers, and we'll aim ourselves to Billings, 5 hrs east.

September 18. Jackson, Wyoming. Ivan is off being interviewed at a local FM station, and here I sit in our room at the Show King resort, looking beyond our balcony toward the top of the Tetons. The weather is purely and simply perfect: I(d guess just grazing 70, bright and dry. For the second morning in a row we roused ourselves in the dark and repaired to the 24-hour Elkhorn Cafe, amid locals and hunters and anyone else up at that hour, just around 6. They offer a \$1.98 breakfast complete with coffee, up to 3 eggs, toast, and a bunch of other options, which for me has been superb bacon. Once stoked, we drive out along the Tetons and into String Lake, where yesterday, with mist rising, we heard loons calling and elk bugling. Today, more bugling, which we followed a bit on a circular route around the lake which climbs to alpine meadow. En route in we saw two groups of elk, including a bugling bull, and five deer. And, oh yes, the elusive Peugeot, being made into a commercial with yonder Tetons as background. Takes a park permit, a sheriff's car at each end to hold traffic, and care to see that no one is delayed more than 5 minutes. Sheriff's deputy says they get quite a lot of film work done here. Believable w/ the incomparable background of the unlikely Tetons.

The local bookstore and library have done a grand job of advertising his reading tonight and signing tomorrow. Steve Ashley of Valley Bookstore said he's sold 80 to 100 copies of Dancing before Ivan arrived in town. Every tour bus heading in or out of the Teton/Yellowstone run passes his store, which he keeps open 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. with the help of five other people during the busy (summer) season. Ivan called Macmillan from Jenny Lake visitor center this morning, staring out at lake and mts while learning that he's already on the SF Chronicle's bestseller list, #14.

We're turning Jackson into a grand week's vacation, thanks to lack of accommodations in Yellowstone and nonstop gorgeous fall weather. We were a bit weary

by the time we arrived, but Ivan remembered the quiet end of town and we found our way to the 11-unit Buckrail Lodge, built in 1965 by Ralph and Meta Sternberg, and run by them ever since. With the PanAbode room comes a fistful of helpful hints, including places to eat: the Sweetwater and its Greek lamb chops my favorite thus far. Also a tiptop, inexpensive Bubba's Bar-B-Q, with the stuff honestly smoked. We doggy-bagged enough for lunch in the park next day.

Ivan's back with a smash review sent along by Jean from the Sunday Seattle Times. Michael Dorris did an out-an-out rave -- and did it deftly. 000wee.

18 Sept.--To capture some of this day: at daybreak we were driving to the north end of Jenny Lake when a bull elk going up a nearby benchland stopped atop, and in silhouette against the Tetons threw back his head and bugled. We went on and hiked the $3\frac{1}{2}$ or so miles to circle String Lake, bugling echoing through the forest all the while. At a parking lot phone I answered y'day's call message from Sharon Dynak at Macmillan p.r., learned Rascal Fair is #14 on the San Francisco bestseller list.

20 Sept., 5:05 a.m., which in itself says something about this Jackson Hole week. C is dressing, then we'll go downtown to the shaggy but hearty Elk Horn cafe for breakfast amid hunters and early-rising local bachelors, then at first light head toward String Lake. Y'day we saw a herd of thirty-some elk just after dawn on that drive, then a few minutes later another herd of 15. This morning, who knows, but it's likely to be terrific whatever waits out there under the Tetons.

Done with the business end of this Jackson stay; sold 50-some Rascal Fairs at Valley Bookstore y'day afternoon (2-5), ~~9~~ 6 or 8 the night before at my reading here at the Americana Snow King, and the store owner Steve Ashley had sold about 100 before I hit town. He proclaims himself pleased, as I am, though y'day's signing hit an hour-long dead spot, 3:30-4:30, almost as if there was a curfew in the streets.

10:45 now, and ~~we~~ we're back from a grand slam of animal-watching at dawn and after: elk, moose, deer and antelope. We walked String Lake in reverse direction--clockwise--from what we'd done other mornings, it having occurred to me after only a week here (my woodsmanship is fairly rusty) that we'd thus be on the uphill side of the elk as they feed back up from the flats to the foot of the Tetons. And so we saw a small herd on the slope not far above us, and heard others crashing thru the trees not far from us on the trail. A terrific morning, fitting finale to what has been one of the golden weeks of our life.

20 Sept. cont.--Before we get in the car and head north to Ennis and the Montana book tour, quick notes on y'days signing at Valley Bookstore. In sum, I was handed a sackful of apples from Old Jules Sandoz's homestead, met the daughter of the former Harcourt president (Scott) who made the mistake (her words) of hiring Jovanovich, signed up a book to Aldo Leopold's son Luna to the effect that I'm trying to think like a mountain, was gabbed at by a rancher-come-to-town-on-Saturday looking guy who eventually proved to be artist Jim Bama, wrote postcards to Stegner and Maclean and half a dozen friends during the signing's dead spot, and otherwise, more or less just sold books.

--The night before, at the reading, as the audience of 55 or so was ~~gathering~~ gathering, a guy with wavy gray hair came up to me with a couple of books to sign, one of them proving to be the pre-pub p'back of Rascal Fair. I asked him where he got it, he answered by handing me 3 printout pp. and saying, "Here's the LA Times review of your book." Good review, too. He was Winfred Blevins, whom I'd heard of but whose work I didn't know. C and I had a drink at the Wort Hotel bar, the best or ~~what~~ anyway least preposterous bar in this town, with Win after the signing, and we agree he seems a nice guy who happens to have a motor mouth. The bookstore owner Steve Ashbey rolled his eyes a bit at lunch when I asked him about Blevins, who evidently eats up a lot of Steve's time.

--Maybe they store it up for people passing through town, but Bama was nearly as talkative as Win, though in abrupt stints instead of marathon. Among items he told me as he roved back and forth thru the bookstore were that he used to make \$20,000 in NY as a Bantam cover illustrator and now can make that in a day, that he's 61 and became a father at (I think) 50½, that he came out here (lives in Cody) with \$50,000 and he's now worth \$3½ million (prices of his pics and prints, I'm surprised it's not more). None of this was in a boasting way, really, just kind of a revved-up mood.

21 Sept., Ennis--8:15 a.m., and we have filled up with pancakes and geezer conversation at Bettie's Cafe, the sun now blazing in thru the motel cabin window from over the Madison Range. Country and weather continue spectacular. The Madison Valley is new ~~country~~ territory for us and we did it maximally y'day, coming in ~~by~~ from Idaho by cutoff just w. of Quake Lake; the Madison River is a handsome wide rippling flow, often white water where it bumps over rocks, and a fisherman's dream, fly-caster after fly-caster out in it up to his knees. Ennis seems to be a town which very much knows what it is about, which is to cater to the fishing and hunting aficionados; last night we had the best meal of this entire trip--C had great veal, I had a wonderful 2" thick tenderloin steak--at the Cont'l Divide, and this motel, the El Western, is nicely put together of logs and ranchy motifs and fairly sparkles. Also the motel owners are no little bit alert; when we checked in about 4 y'day, the mrs. presented me with a page from the Butte Sunday paper with a headline I find uproarious: "Ivan Doig in Butte Friday." Hard up for news in Butte, they must be.

In half an hour or so we'll head for Virginia City and what may be some tepid research toward a scene in Maria. In the meantime I have a call in to Susan Richman, who's in a meeting, to talk with her about Pac Pipeline wanting me for, I guess, their open house. Certainly we owe Pipeline one. When C and I talked to Frank on the phone y'day before we left Jackson, he gave us the news that Rascal Fair is #1 on the Seattle Times, thanks of course to ~~Pipe~~ Pipeline flooding the stores from their stock of 4500 copies or whatever. Didn't find time to put this down while in Jackson, but with Win Blevins' favorable LA Times review upcoming and the rave reviews already in from San Francisco and Seattle, Rascal Fair is bidding fair to ~~be~~ sweep the main West Coast papers--Pintarich yet to be heard from at the Oregonian.

We left Jackson around noon y'day, in a rattlesome moment that was the only jangle in an otherwise heavenly week. We were putting the last few items and ourselves in the car, having left the room key in the room to avoid the Americana's sometimes aggravating

21 Sept. cont.--front desk, when I glanced ~~behind~~ behind the driver's seat and asked C, "Where's my briefcase?" She knew no more of it than I did, but it came to me it must be back in the room, behind the chair I'd been typing in. I went back in, found a maid who professed not to have a key (maybe she didn't; she was on 3rd floor, we were ~~on~~ on 4th), so off I went to the front desk in some dread. Which got worse when the clerk handed me the key we'd already traded in to the desk because it didn't work well in the door; I had visions of not being able to get the goddamn door open, the door having to be drilled or whatever. (

--interruption, most welcome: Susan Richman's call, which brought news of Henry Kisor's terrific review in Chicago Sun-Times: only Hoagland and Stegner my equals in writing about the West, says he, would it were so.

23 Sept. - Aboard Con'l /light #882, taxiing on Boyeman runway, heading for Denver & a ton of Waldenbrook people. Ticket agent recognized my name, asked if I'd mind being up-graded to 1st class. So here I am in 1st seat of 1st class, with plane's only empty seat next to me. Auspicious start!

Airborne over the Gallatin Valley now, heading out along the Bridgers - a moment worth noting, aloft over the country where House of Sky begins. All continues to go well with this golden September trip; sold 75-100 Rural Fair at Country Bookshelf y'day, pleasant enough dinner at the Malones' along with Jan & Bob Swenson, ~~and~~ parents of bi-athlete

23 Sept. cont. - Kari who was kidnapped by "mountain men."

- My god, plane is flying smack over
• Alvarados, • geysers plumes of steam
rising like cottony flowers in Y'stone
Park to • south. Incredible to see
at this distance - 50 miles or more?
And Y'stone Lake is off to our side now,
with giant peak beyond which, it occurs
to me, is none other than Grand Teton.
Haze in • Teton Valley, • Tetons seem to
be floating. Between • plane & • mtns,
ripple after ripple of smaller peaks with
tan patterns like leather showing •
grassy parts of the high Y'stone plateau.
Beyond to • southeast, some mtns with
snow, catching • early light - the main
line of the Rockies. My god, I wish C
was along - what a shy ride over beloved
land.

24 Sept. - Denver airport, 5 p.m., a bit weary
but satisfied. The interruption to yesterday's
aloft writing was the guy across the aisle,
who proved to be Bill Hjortsberg. More on
him later. The Estes Park stuff for Walden
went well, and I had • added advantage
of Richard Ford getting hung up in airports
on his way from Toronto or somewhere, so that
he didn't arrive until about 8 - i.e., a

24 Sept. cont. - good 8 hours after I'd begun consorting with 100+ Walden store managers. More on Richard later too, except to note my reaction that he seems to me something of a jerk - a guy with a nasty, actually a venomous, tongue, and a dark prince's impatience that the rest of the world isn't as elegant as he thinks he is. As far as I know, he and I got along OK - we do respect each other's work & have mutual recognition of trouper capabilities that brought both of us to City Park - by exchanging a good deal of devout insincerity with each other.

5:50, on plane, 5 min. late so far -
but moving even as I write. Or are
we? - stopped now that we're away from
gate; engines ~~now~~ revving enough to
shake plane. Taking now. Boyeman-
bound, & as I savvy it, C & I are to
space, on Mike Malone's behalf, dinner with
Burton K. Wheeler's daughter, biggo MSU
donor.

Stopped on runway - 6 o'clock now -
~~nicking~~ nicking away at how impressed
 I've been with Cont'l this trip. Who could
 not be given my gratis 1st class treat-
 ment to Denver; the freebie Rascal Fair
 & got in my Waldens foot bag, I've
 inscribed to leave at Boneman airport

Sept. 24 cont. - for ticket agent Lori Mass.

Takeoff, at 6:05. A storm of storm & smog over. Rides to Denver. Weather was sensational at Estes Park; stars came out last night as we were finishing up barbecue supper on lawn of Stanley Hotel. I was up a little after 5, had to wait until McDonalds opened at 6 to get any break/ast - my first McMuffin (sausage)! - and it was pleasant walking even though a temp. sign said 29.

The Stanley Hotel was a rambling loony old place that, preservationist though I usually am, I thought ought to be mercy-killed. If the hotel was a horse, they'd have had to shoot it long ago. The unabashed policy of the management is, "We're dancing as fast as we can," & indeed the staff is good enough. But my room, probably not untypical, ailed in at least three ways: - heat couldn't be shut off, & west-facing, the place was all but ablaze in late afternoon; I threw open all windows - no screens, ergo flies; 1 lamp didn't work, I diddled with the bulb, moved lamp etc until it dawned on me its plug-in didn't work. "working" lamp had a push-through switch broken - jagged - on one end - after mayhem on my thumb a few times, I put it on & off by plugging & unplugging; clanking air - condition

Sept. 24 cont. - unit outside my window; and so on, & on.

& tomorrow, MSU bookstore & Butte Book-sellers. & hope MSU might be a 100+ book-signing; haven't yet had one of the monster signings that accounted for so many copies of Eng. Crk on the '84 Montana tour. A good gleanings from Ford: while he was hung up trying to get a plane out of O'Hare he checked airport bookstores & by good, they had both Rock Springs & Rascal Fair. Michael Benoit told me he thinks a wholesaler called Levy's runs those stores. Also during Estes Park was good/bad news from Margaret at Ath'm that while just under 49,000 Rascal Fair are in print, only 3700-some are in stock. & noticed that freebies at Walden shindig were Rascal Fair 2nd editions, first of those I've seen.

Will try tomorrow, when I have some free morning time, to make notes on Walden experience. For now, I ~~felt~~ feel I learned considerable, lobbied diligently for my book, had some fun, collected a few writing bits - a pretty good sum for a 36 hr trip.

5 Oct.--Home, as of Friday afternoon about 3, having driven from Libby. Took it easy over the weekend to recuperate from road weariness, and this morning I've tackled mail and fielded a couple of phone calls for the St. Paul trip. Y'day's Seattle Times had Ben Groff's article about me, saying in essence that I'm a hard guy to interview. The way he went about it, I sure am; with my thanks note this morn I sent him a copy of the PW interview and the bland line that since he's interested in craft he might like to see ~~xxxx~~ what a different angle and tone of questioning produced. His piece was nicely written, and ultimately highly favorable; I'll always be roiled, though, about arrogant disregard of small facts--Blake and the minute particulars--such as Groff's considerably misremembered version of ~~x~~ the words on my Doig Bros Grain Merc cap; his telling that I was flummoxed at being introduced to a class as "the man behind the words" rather than the actuality that I was asked who was the man etc., far different; and his grand final line that my desk faces west. Nope, south, kiddo.

The weather continues sunny, after a cloudy Fri. and Sat., one more extension of summer. The Summer That Would Not End. I pottered around ~~at~~ y'day picking ripe tomatoes and enjoying the hell out of the weather. C has the kitchen rehab almost soldiered into final shape by now; our gambit of having it done while we were away in Montana worked to about 90% satisfaction, and she tore into the contractor about the 10% remainder of dumb or undone stuff as soon as she got home.

Will try to catch up on the Montana trip when I empty my pocket notebook etc., but allx in all it was a good one, bolstered immeasurably by the wonderful Indian summer of the entire 4 weeks. I'm sure the state has had a weather transplant since I lived there.

7 Oct.--7:15 a.m. of my third full day back at my desk, and I'm beginning to get a sense of restored order. The tidal level of mail, clippings and other paper grew astounding during the weeks we were away. And really, none of it was essential, as I've sorted thru; simply the small stuff of civility, which I find myself being as dutiful about as if it were earthshaking.

The book biz resumes today. I go down to Pac Pipeline to sign 300 books for them, and tomorrow afternoon is the U Book Store, opening game of the Puget Sound signing season. Reports continue good; Susan Richman called last night to read a highly favorable Newsday review; Gail See says she's already sold 100 Rascal Fairs in her Wayzata, Minn. store; a dozen sold already at the little Wind and Tide store in Oak Harbor. C and I have what should be a nifty weekend coming up, at least the part of it after I sign at the Bellevue U Book ~~Store~~ Store, where Lee Soper blithely has me conflicting with a UW football game; a reading/signing at Skagit ~~Box~~ Books in Laconnor, dinner at the Black Swan and overnight at the Inn, on to Bellingham the next afternoon for signing/reading at Chuck & Dee Robinson's store.

The notebook I had with me in Montana is chockablock with odd and (sometimes) wondrous stuff, which it'll take me a while to sort through. To start, though, with the list from the Helena signing, most successful of the trip. Among those who came in the Little ~~Box~~ Professor: a woman who was Walt Doig's wife for a little more than a month--she found she couldn't cope with his Alzheimer's, a story I've heard more than once, Anna Doig's tale too, for instance; a bearded guy who gave me an amethyst; Ken Erickson, who stacked hay for my dad on, I think, the Burt Ranch--went on to be a Forest Service worker; someone who told me of being caught in the Mt. St. Helens ashfall with a group of people, maybe at a truck stop in eastern Washington, whose ~~House~~ copy of House of Sky was the only thing on hand to read and it got passed around until tattered; Ed Eschler, Tony

Angell's counterpart in envtl ed in Montana; a woman whose maiden name was Withrow, wondering where I got that from for Dode of English Creek; Audrey Plymale, who knew my folks so well, and said she thought she had letters from my mother but hadn't been able to find them yet--I gave her my address, asking her to please send them if she comes across them.

7 Oct. cont.--One of the flabbergasting moments of the trip, which I can now be bemused about, ~~xx~~ happened in Billings.

After my speech, when Jyl Hoyt ~~xxx~~ and I were rushing off to squeeze in the interview she wanted for KUFM, before I had to be at Hart-Albin to do the booksigning there, folklorist Mike Korn caught us and told me there was a student who badly wanted to interview me for ~~xxxxx~~ a school assignment, could I possibly find a few minutes after Jyl? I said okay, and came down with just those few minutes to spare before the signing, to be ~~xxxx~~ met by Mike and a woman in her late 20s, who I figured must be a college student at Eastern or Rocky. Ah, but no; the woman instead was the mother of a tiny girl in a huge lobby chair next to us: the little one was the student, not possibly more than a second grader, and with prompting from mama, she shyly and slowly began on ~~xxx~~ her assigned list of questions, the first one something like "How did you get your first job as a writer?" I answered in short numb fashion, "By studying for it in college," and watched in baffled dismay as the girl begin writing down my answer by ~~xxx~~ s-l-o-w-l-y making the long downstroke of the B, s-l-o-w-l-y beginning the top half-circle of the B...my panic must have come out in my face, as her mama said at this point, Honey, I'll help you write out the answers later, just ask the man the questions. A few more cosmic questions, out of the tiniest interviewer I'll probably ever have, and I was able to go, to the gratitude of the mother. I'll never be loose enough to deal with the wildly unexpected truly well, but I guess I'm getting by.

10 Oct.--Minutes from hitting the bookstore trail again, now the weekend of Bellevue UBS-Laeonnor-Bellingham. Could be grim in B'vue this afternoon, Lee Soper having scheduled me in on a Sat. without thinking about concurrence of UW football game. But we're having lunch with Lee and Joie beforehand, always nifty people.

My week was crammed with chores, answering mail, being on the phone etc. High note was the U Book Store signing, continually busy for the first hr of hr& $\frac{1}{2}$, and even some sales toward the end. Sundry Montanans, past and present; somebody came in and said the parking lot was full of Montana license plates--I told C and she doped it out at once: they're not about to give up cheap MT plates for our pricey ones.

10 Oct. cont.--Other good news was that Susan Richman somehow ferreted out that the NYTBR is a "good" one; who or how I don't know, but she got somebody to take a look for her.

As she said, "You can only tell Carol. We have our sources, and as a fellow old hack"--I'd just told her, when she was surprised to look at my resume and see my J school degrees, that yeah, sure, not everybody had English degrees, I was an old hack--"you know that we lose our sources if we tell." Hilarious woman. Also, from C's former student Jim Sawyer something called Rave Reviews drifted into the house, with review by Sunny ~~Ex~~ Tiedemann, who also did rave Tulsa World review, saying she's asked that Rascal Fair be put on prelim list for NBCC prize.

15 Oct.--About to begin the East. C and I have a 7 a.m. flight to St. Paul tomorrow, for the Noah Adams show, and I go on to Phila~~a~~NY-DC-Chicago. Much to be done, those places, but I'm coming into the mood to just go and do it and see how it all comes out.

Good signings last weekend at Bellevue UBS--50 or so Rascal Fairs--and Skagit Bay Books, 37 sold; so-so at B'ham, and I'm now convinced Chuck Robinson and I have tried everything and that's just the way it's going to be at signings for him. C was with me this time, and likely analyzed what's at base: there isn't that much money flowing in Bellingham, a student and workers town, and so \$18.95 books don't just walk out of the store.

Oct. 16 - Airborne, to St. Paul. Over eastern Wash'n now, C in window seat: we started off disgruntled with NW for not being able to seat us together because the tickets were bought at different times, but nobody showed up in assigned seat next to her - & now that I'm here, my seat back in 32C has been filled by someone else. Musical air chairs.

Y'day I managed to settle down from a hectic start to week - Monday went to the installation of the new bedroom window; Tues. & Wed. were phone calls & chores - & with phone cooperatively staying quiet & mail all good enough news, I've begun to look forward to this big week. Will meet a lot of people - Noah Adams & maybe Roger Kennedy among them - & see NY publishing gang on their own turf. This is turning out to be a radio trip - Noah's show & 3 interviews, so far in Susan's schedule for me - & how I'll be on-air, I don't know; I recognize that I'll have to be quicker than I am in n'paper interviews.

Reviews, or at least reports of them, continue to be remarkably good. Steve Paul of KC Star did a "huge" interview/review, says Susan. Wash. Post review will run this Sun. - I'm a bit apprehensive about that one, feeling overdue for my extraordinary run of luck

Oct. 16 cont. - there to snap; & in words of Susan, if we're really lucky. NYTSR review will coincide this Sun. with p. 8 ad.

-10:30 & we've just had in-flight break/pt, in tradition of someone we knew who described his plane meal as something white & something green. 1/2 hr or so ago, fresh snow on Rockies. plain & farmland very brown.

To try catch details of last Saturday's signing in La Conner: among those who showed up were Marshall's secretary, Elizabeth; Stan Stapp, who as a printer & publisher of ~~the~~ Outlook god/othered Seattle's gippie journalists of '60's; & Edna Berg's family from Boyeman, all here for funeral of ~~her~~ her son.

Oct. 15 - Minneapolis airport; feeling as Heathrow or Kennedy used to. 40 min. to take-off, though plane I'm to go to Phila. on is still unloading. New stewardesses for our flight are showing each other their Homer Hankies, in celebration of Twins in World Series.

Last night was big leagues for me, too, as 1st writer to appear on Noah Adams' Good Evening radio show. studio audience stayed attentive to my 10-min. reading of Rascal Fair square dance scene, and producer Neenah Ellis - Noah's wife - and

Oct. 18 cont. - sundry of show's staff were ecstatic, no doubt with relief, about how well my reading voice & Karen Jones' fiddle background for the 2 times turned out. C, watching from balcony, said afterward how pleased & proud she was. She asked if I don't get a bang out of holding my own with professional performers; I said, you bet.

And actually I do get a great charge out of being around stage people; the ACLU anti-censorship night where I read from *Catcher in the Rye*, and now this - spiffy times indeed. Fascinating to be around Noah Adams - past 2 days. That mesmerizing timber-full air voice is how he sounds all time, speaking in full sentences, full thoughts, sometimes full paragraphs. He's short - maybe 5'4" - & blocky, wide-bodied, with a sizable head & aureole of hair around a bald spot; a small lion's head, in effect.

He was often very funny in rehearsal. With his sport jacket off, big suspenders were somehow accented, like harness on a horse, on his wide body, & one point he came over and proclaimed to the Real World trio and some silent watchers that we were, "The answer to your question is, it's the second time in his life" - Good Evening's 2nd show - "he's worn suspenders."

Oct. 18 cont. - At another point, when the Dallas Brass sextet was being trooped onto stage & off to figure how to handle them & their sizable instruments with least commotion, Noah turned to me & said, "As Bergman said, before we can improvise, we must rehearse."

1:10, aboard / 1st 354 now, & NW remains faithful to seating screwup tradition that began when they wouldn't, or couldn't, assign C & me seats together to St. Paul. I'm in 17E, middle of 3 seats, & pondering why I didn't specify 1st-class to Beaver College. 1st goes against every democratic instinct in me, but wear-&-tear of this cramped air travel is really formidable. We're undoubtedly going to be late taking off - hell, we're already late - & dehydrated stacked-in feeling is beginning to be felt.

Back to last night's glory. Much of y'day was waiting, as show got paced through in various ways. At 1:20 I did a practice reading, full-mike rehearsal, & actually did a smoother, though less winsome, job than actual performance last night.

Every act went through rehearsal that way, then at 3 began walk-through of the entire show, everybody doing. 1st 20 seconds or so of their act, final decisions made on where we'd be on stage, mike

Oct. 18 cont. - levels for music, etc. Then
production staff meeting at 4:20, which
C & I asked if we could liberty. Bewildering
array of folks, C thought 1/ of them, only
about half of whose duties were clear to us.
Neenah Ellis as producer had no comments,
then Andy, a tall teenaged-looking guy
who proved to be director & who, indeed,
proved to have final say when he & other
staffers disagreed - consensus - order of day,
though. Stage manager, short bearded guy
named Steve, Noah told us is a carpenter
during week. Sally, Kate Gustafson, Helen
Edinger & Debby Dain were production
assistants who seem to function as a
collective ~~now~~ swirl; individual responsi-
bilities were hard to spot, but things got
done. Music director was also named
Steve; Dan Rowles, writer as well as
performer - cries of, "is he talent or staff? We're
not paying him twice, are we?" - was on
hand; a couple of sound men, a couple of
stage crew henchmen; & Noah, standing &
fielding ideas & problems - "I'm comfortable
with that." "No, I don't want to do that."
Hilarious line of meeting came when
Neenah misspoke & called some bit of
business a "stick," meaning "shtick," and one
of staff guys whooped, "Yeah, in Minnesota
it's a stick!"

C it. 15 cent. - Earlier somebody told what must be a hoary old radio joke, but it cracked C & me up, & rest of meeting as well. Someone asks a Minn. Public Radio performer, "Do they get your show in Iowa?" Answer: "Well, it's broadcast there, but whether they get it or not..." (Kevin Kling ~~had~~ had a similar good line in his show stint - that this St. Louis-Twin Cities World Series is "trans-Iowa Series.")

Noah called us in our hotel room about 10:30 this morn - C & I agreed it was a mark of class - & thanked us for coming. & he mentioned to her that my reading had allayed "what misgivings there were" among production staff about giving a writer a 10-min. chunk - far biggest of show. Actually we probably all owe Garrison Keillor, ~~book~~ though he turned into in. desiccated last year of Prairie Home Companion, a thanks for habituating Minn. audiences to listening to a story.

Oct. 19--Jenkintown, PA., finally nearing the business end of what has been a day on the dark side of the American moon. Not that bad, actually, but I am in the shabby attic space bedroom of an incredibly ramshackle house. Dick Wertime of Beaver College and his wife Marcia have chosen, or unconsciously slid or something, into living in what they must consider shabby academic gentility (but which is really a couple of steps of disarray and helter-skelter below that) for the sake of getting to Italy and Cape Cod each summer. You pays your money and takes your choices, but the peeling paint and cracked plaster etc., I simply could not--or no long would--put up with. They're not bad folks in and of themselves, although Dick started off with me with the ultimate absent-minded professor performance, forgetting not simply where he parked but which of the airport terminal garages he parked it in; then jumping the gun at a 4-way stop situation, inexplicably not getting ticketed by the cop who was parked there but damn well making me wonder if I was in the hands of a ~~harm~~ boob who was about to bring a crash on us; then missing the Central Phil'a exit he wanted off the freeway. I've had a hunch, which I should have acted on, that was going to be a snare-some-time-with-the-writer situation; Dick originally said, told me actually, that I'd be staying with him and his wife, they have plenty of room in a big old house; true, but as he mentioned on the way in from the airport, there's also the two boys, 8 and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$, and the new half-grown dog. So, although I've holed up as much as I could like the madman of the attic, last night and this morning I was at the edge of tidal swashes of getting-the-kids-fed, getting-the-kids-off-to-school, dealing-with-the dog, and so on. Managed to do my laundry, and took a walk this midafternoon--oh, yes, what has really dismayed me about being here ~~xxxx~~ instead of a bloodless motel is that all 4 of the Wertimes are in some stage of a cold; my walk was mostly to go ~~by~~ ^{buy} a bottle of vitamin C, and beyond that it's simply pray--and then Dick did a very nice thing, driving me out to see the Swedenborgian cathedral in Bryn Athern, truly a nifty sight. So I am coping, at a time when I'd a lot rather just be in neutral; Dick, who talks well if overmuch, says he figures each kid you have lops 25 points off your IQ, and I see his point here.

Oct. 19 cont.--Well, on to the good news, which truly is good. Richard Critchfield's review in the Washington Post y'day, which looked not only at Rascal Fair but back across my 5 books in 9 years. And top billing on the 1st page besides. With that review coinciding with the NYTBR full-page ad for Rascal Fair, I imagine y'day is about as good as the rewards of writing get.

Ahead, NY, and I wish I was in better fettle than I'm going to be after this Jenkintown stint--the ~~Wok~~ ^{Wok} Wertimes are throwing a party for 35 or 40 here after my reading tonight, enforced socializing I dread a lot--but I guess will power and nerve ends will get me through. And, hell, what did St. Paul teach me if not, so far, so good?

Oct. 23 - Dived from the pages of USA Today, here I am - aboard United 14603 waiting to go from D.C. to Chicago - & home. Much good coincidence on this trip. Such as: y'day I was at - mother ship of all - nation's little blue- & - white newspaper boxes, the USA Today bldg, where - the editor Bob Wilson took me to lunch, & he told me - review would be in today's USAT unless news of Brodsky's Nobel somehow forced him to take - space. And such as: I hadn't remembered, but Wilson came to USAT ~~for~~ from - Wm Port Book World - indeed, he said a bit apologetically, he was - guy who assigned Sea Runners to Evan Connell - "that didn't quite work out." Wilson not only ~~inst~~ asked me to review for him, but invited me to suggest books I'd like to do. I may hit him with Thos Flanagan's next novel, one of - few big novels I'm likely to read as soon as it comes out.

With my mug, & a good - enough review, in - jillion pages of McPaper this morning, I'm obviously doing OK. Even got a reasonable, which is not to say long, night's sleep. So I'm not as weary yet as I was at times y'day; probably the Denver airport, where I change planes on my last leg home, will be the pit of despair.

Oct. 23 cont. - Airborne. The plane took off along Potomac & hung a right turn at the first bridge. The wooded Virginia countryside is below now, with implants of suburbs all through it; like scar patterns some African tribes create as decoration on their skin.

Maybe I'm hopelessly blue-skyish, but the interviewers I've hit on this trip seemed pretty damn good. Casper Citron on WJLA was hilarious in a way; although he announces his show in swooping dulcet tones as "COMING to you from the TULIP SUITE of the HOTEL Barbizon," the venue is about like any other hotel room; Casper sits at a small table right next to bed, with a ~~table~~ wind-up timer lying there on bedspread - he sets it to 23 minutes - & every Tues. he sits there & does 5 interviews in a row, his week's work which is then played one per night. I slid into chair that was still warm from movie director Bob Rafelson, who'd been extolling his new Bayly, & a young writer named Randall who'd written a NY & B guidebook was on tap right after me. Casper has a hound dog face, with a look that says nothing can surprise him, & that's likely the ~~case~~ case - as Lij said, "My God, is he still around?" - he's done show for 20 or so

Oct. 23 cont. - years, originally from the Algonquin. I imagine Susan called in some chit that he owed her, to get me on what is probably a "personality" show, but old Casper surprised both me & the Macmillan p.r. staff by knowing quite a bit about the plot of the book. A couple of details, of the I-do-this-on-automatic-pilot-any-more ambience of show: I unthinkingly emphasized something I was saying by tapping my fingers on table, & Casper with barest little gesture of his fingers indicated to me to quit it.

The other interviewers were notable for all being authors in some hopeful stage, a number of steps behind where I currently am - Don Swaim of CBS has a mystery coming out from St. Martin's, Mike Korman of Wash. Post has a fiction/non-fiction mix of a book about the battle of Tarawa being looked at by Morrow, & Bob Wilson of USAT just had a novel, something he's worked on in any spare time of the past several years, rejected by Harvey Ginsberg - can't recall which house. So, with 5 books to my credit, I got unexpectedly respectful treatment from these old media hands.

& now, breakfast - in tradition of "something white, something yellow"?

Oct. 23 - Last leg, at last. 5:10 p.m., we just took off from Denver. Significant day, this one. The USA Today review, in the boxes this morning; at O'Hare, after the Chi Trib interview, I called Susan Richman & learned that LA Times review will run on Sunday; at Denver airport I called for her to read NY TBR review to me, also to run Sunday. So, in a day I've been called the heir to Stegner (himself, L.A.), been book-paged & pictured in the country's biggest (at least second-) daily, & been unsavaged by the dread NY TBR. The NY TBR is an English professor's review, mildly chiding me for not inventing some new form of literature but admitting Kascadair is well written. It's notable, & pleasing, that this book's best reviews are from other writers - Michael Dorris, Win & Levin, Richard Critchfield. The NY TBR was on p. 20 - "in back forty," as Susan says - & so I suppose it didn't do anything to help the p'back rights auction. One more time, thank God for the Wash'n Post.

A large week, & still a lot of miles from home. I truly am going to have to think about making a 1st-class rule for travel to speaking gigs - if I had done so this time, I could've flown direct from Chicago.

26 Oct.--Now that I'm home from the East Coast tour for Rascal Fair, I must record the experience of famous Oct. 19, 1987. I was at the Wertimes' house in Jenkintown, PA, killing and time and choring until my Beaver College appearance that night, and when the time came, off I went with Dick Wertime, went thru the reception and dinner with selected students, did my reading to audience of a couple hundred, then back to the Wertimes' and the party they threw for 30-40 people. All in all, I must have been around 250-300 people that day. Yet I didn't hear one word about what met me in the headlines of the Philadelphia Inquirers all around me on the commuter train the next morning, the stock market crash of 508 points. I'd say the Beaver day was parochial, except that isn't nearly enough word for it.

As to the Doigs and Crash Monday, I brilliantly sold all our stocks (except Nordstrom's, clumsily tucked away in my Wells Fargo SRA account) at a good profit, and I stupidly hung onto mutual funds which have alit at some loss. Most likely we're going to end up pretty much even on this year's excursion into the bull market, with about as much profit as if we'd kept the money in a savings account. So it goes. We felt we had to try and keep pace a bit more with the bull economy, and so we did--rise and fall both. I do indeed feel dumb as hell for trying to nurse along those mutual funds, which have limped all fall but kept hovering and rebounding so that they always stayed just above the bail-out level I had ~~in~~ chosen--until the day they plummeted right ~~thru~~ through it with me oblivious in Beaverland.

On the other hand, I feel good about the prospect thus far for Rascal Fair, and for the Maria novel beyond. Liz thinks there's a good shot at a firm 40,000 sold copies of Rascal Fair, in which case she would ask for \$100,000 for the next book. And she might ask for p'back \$\$ up front as well, having toyed with that idea for Rascal Fair and then deciding we might do better if the hardback prospered and brought an improved p'back bid. That's about to be tested; with the last big reviews, NYTBR and LA Times now known, Liz told me this morning she'll talk to Debbie Engel, the Macmillan ~~xx~~ sub rights person, about when they will sell the p'back rights now.

3 Nov.--last day of the hiatus between the NY trip and the resumption of signings and travel. Oddly, y'day and Sunday I felt more tired and logey than I did anytime earlier in the supposedly recuperative week. Humid weather, I think did it. I also got dispirited about the chores, details, lists I've been dealing with; the feeling that I'm putting greatly too much time and energy into niggling stuff. Along with all the desk stuff there's been a kind of besieged aspect of this house, what with the shop~~x~~ clogged with boxes from the kitchen remodel, the guest room clogged with heaven knows what, the inner room with unframed pieces of art laying around, the study at damn near full storage (and 50 or so Rascal Fairs in the shop getting damp during this weather). C made a great advance ~~xxx~~ for us by painting the new bedroom window sash on Sunday, getting me to grean into action and take apart the new window's shade system etc. I've got to attack some of this--intend to try ~~at~~ start today by taking the art for the dining room wall down to Pioneer Square for framing.

On the front that really counts just now, Rascal Fair seems to continue well. No help from the NYTER last Sun., though, with a review tucked back onto p. 20 and the reviewer who seemed to like the language of the book etc. chiding me for not reinventing literature. That, the BOMC refusal to take the book and the newsmagazines' silence are the kind of strokes that'll keep the book from cracking any national bestseller lists, in all likelihood. What I've got to hope is that the bookstores will manage to sell 40,000 or so of the 50,000 copies out there in the world; I dunno, I dunno. The p'back rights are to be sold by Nov. 10, and that's going to be a strong indicator of whether there's some real advance money, in the ~~xxx~~ n'hood of \$100,000, ahead for Maria.

A bit ago Jon Rantala called, fresh from his European trip--which was launched by his winning a trip to Paris for getting more new Asterix Comics accounts than any other Macmillan sales rep--and in talking over the NYTER result, ~~H~~ Jon suggested I send the reviewer a black spot, a la Treasure Island.

MT. Vernon, Nov. 8 - S-I-O-W here at this Scott's signing; after 40 min. now, still haven't had a real live buyer, only 4-5 people bringing earlier purchases back for signing. Sigh. With this also. Sunday that R Fair plunged entirely off the Seattle Times best seller list (returns to Pipeline are the only reason C & I can figure), it makes for an inauspicious weekend. Friday mail was a whole hell of a lot better: big good Boston Globe review, word from Lily that Dick Estell will read the book on NPR.

1:50: 1st sale! Young couple, her father lives in Tenney Bay, near Red Lodge.

Nov. 10 - S-I-O-W a-g-a-i-n, last night at this Eugene Book Bazaar. Preview night, which I should have tumbled to and avoided; doctors showed up with their wives because they had to, gossiped with each other and would buy a hardback book only at gunpoint, if then. Sold maybe 6 Rascals in 3 dreary hours. Today is better, 8-10 sold in this first half hour.

Ann (Kaye) Gruber, who was in high school with me, was just here with her husband Jerry. She runs a kitchen shop - where was it this past week as we tried to find a teakettle!

Nov. 10 cont., 7:13 p.m. aboard Alaska #115
to Seattle, abt to take off. In a word:
WAHOO! In several: Harper & Row
bid against Penguin today for the p'back
rights to Rascal Fair, and as of about
1:30 when I called Tom Stewart, H&R
had bid \$67,500 and Tom was guessing
Penguin would top that, and take it, with
10% on top of that. If so, C & I today
made \$33,750.

Craig Lesby was on hand at the Eugene
"Book Browse" where I was signing, and so,
except for the phone machine message I left
for C, he was first to hear the news, and
gave me a hearing of congratulations.

Great to share news with Craig, my best
writing buddy; I devoutly hope some of
what's happening with Rascal Fair will crack
the way open for writers like him, particularly
him.

Today is one more proof that I'm busy
fighting the last war, this fall. Signings
were vital to E Creek, but they're proving
not to be for this one; they're in fact spotty
and not nearly keeping pace with the
successes of Rascal Fair in all other ways.
This 2-day trip, for example, fairly rigorous,
sold 80-90 books in person and may account
for another similar total by Xmas. My
hope had been that this Eugene trip, with

Nov. 13 cont. - the medical aux'y women
marshalling their annual customers, would
produce the monster signing - 100 to 150
books sold - I've been searching for all / all,
to validate these bookstore efforts the way
some C & C signings did. But Eugene didn't
even come close - at best, 1/3 of a truly big
signing of 150 books - and it shows me I'm
going to have to rely more on my own
instincts and winners of considerable travel:
Peter Soper of Pipeline, Jon Kantala to a
lesser extent, & Karen West of B & M
store assuring me months ago that I'd
sell a ton at the "Book Bourse." The
greatly more useful signing was y'day at
hooking & lan in Portland - an hr 1/2 that
produced about the same as 6 hrs of sales
effort in Eugene, & I left L & G & lars another
signed 40-50 they'll handily get rid of.
Stick with the real pros.

Well, what else of this fabulous day. I
stayed, against my inclination but it worked
out okay, in a toney doctor's home along a
golf course, on Spyglass Dr. Arlene & Dick
Haugen's house must be 4 times size of ours,
which gave me great space & quiet to
myself; this morn I woke at 4:45, went
down & had cereal for b'fast, then back to
bedroom & dozed for another hour or so.
Arlene was a bit of a chatterbox, but on.

Nov. 10 cont. - mark about getting me
places on time etc. Dick is a big quiet
obstetrician - between them they're the
extremes of Norwegian types, I guess.

Descending to Seattle. Tomorrow night,
San Francisco.

Nov. 11 - Another day, another plane. Aboard a PSA flight, about to take off for San Francisco. Spent a partly recuperative, partly readying day. Talked with Tom Stewart, asking him, since he's a Saratoga man, to give me the horse race "call" of y'day's p'back auction. He said Faircliff & Dell were expected to bid, but Harper & Row blew them out with immediate bid of \$50,000, whereupon the Macmillan rights director Debbie Engel told them so far so good, but probably that bid wouldn't land the book, could they do any better? H & R guy, Van Dusen, said OK, she was authorized to go to \$60,000 and he hereby did. So far so good again, said Debbie, but she had to warn him that still probably wouldn't win. book, when Penguin exercised its topping right. Van D said he'd try for more; the H & R publisher was in a meeting, but at lunch he OKed another ~~\$60,000~~ \$7,500. So the bid went to Penguin, who'd made \$35,000 / low bid, at \$67,500. They mullied it for 2 hours, sweetening: royalty etc., and abt 3 o'clock pulled out.

From Tom, Liz, Susan et al. I've heard "shocked," "flabbergasted," etc. that Garry Howard wasn't allowed (apparently) to do a topping bid of 10% on the 67.5. Liz is more than perturbed, she's downright

Nov. 11 cont. - pained; this is the 2nd time in 2 weeks Penguin boiled out of the bidding on one of her writers (my guess is the other would be Barry Hannah). Greatly more than that, there's the fact that Wm Kennedy is her writer, withERRY as editor of K's next novel in May; it's got to be disquieting to have the great K at a publishing house that seems uncertain of itself. Lij said she'd hoped Penguin's buy of NAL would clarify what it is they want to do, but it hasn't helped - "nobody over there seems to want to make a decision."

Anyway, I now have my 4th publisher: about-to-be 5 p'backs spread across 3 of them, and Atheneum the mother ship, at least as long as Tom is there. Lij says she's happy to have Rascal Fair with H & R, as they're freshly aggressive under the new publisher - bought the p'back rights to Louise Erdrich's next (Tracks), for example, which must have cost a ton. She's given the Maria ms sample to Tom, and he told me as we ended today's phone talk, "it is wonderful." Said he'd told Lij she can put a gun to his head any time, and as I'd just urged her to proceed because I think there're going to be at least a minor flood of returns from overstocked Western sources such as Pac. Pipeline, I told Tom he can expect to hear

Nov. 11 cont. - a click any time.

Been airborne $\frac{1}{2}$ hr now, as I've worked on these notes. A truly sigable day awaits in SF tomorrow, major things to be made to work right - SF Chronicle & LA Times interviews, & readings at 2 premiere book-stores. The momentum of y'day's auction result will help, thank god. Also - I hope - the literary equivalent of "the long devotion of the muscles to the bones": Pat Holt at the Chron I've known since the Cinderella night of House of Sky, PNBA regional meeting in Seattle 9 autumns ago.

Thunderation! Good airline food! Smoked salmon! And cheese and a roll and grapes and a tasty oatmeal cookie. Along with a decent (J & B) scotch & water, it mellowes /lying just a lot.

Nov. 14 - Ah, the book biz - nothing like it.
12:15 p.m. now, and in the past hour I
called Clare Backes, ex-Denver Post books
editor, just to say hello and keep in touch.
Clare is on his way to Tucson for the sake
of some book he's doing, so I chatted
with his wife Earlene and found out she's in
the business of escorting authors on their
publicity stops here. Told her great, I'd
spread the word about her in N.W. After
I hung up, walked across the room to
begin packing & noticed a phone message
envelope had been slipped under the
door, this hotel's clapt ~~was~~ method of
passing along phone calls. The message,
to call the Macmillan sales rep Kellie
Kirkham who's been escorting me through
the signings etc here, was that she's
down with the flu. Pronto I'm back on
the phone with Earlene, does she want a
job, getting me to Boulder & then the
airport? She does, and so she'll fetch
me at 2 and onward we go.

5:40 p.m. now, airborne to home. Thank god
Earlene B. was able to pinch-hit for Kellie,
because a heavy rain, probably precursor to
Denver's 1st snowfall, began about 4 and I'd have
had a helluva time driving & navigating
myself in a rented car.

Nov. 14 cont. - For all the logistical rejiggering done today, the Boulder signing ~~that~~ didn't produce all that much - 22 Rascal Fair sold, & 26 p'backs; for whatever reason, Cover to Cover doesn't have much Sat. traffic, while all other bookstores would kill to have a Sat. signing. I suppose the Boulder day was worth it diplomatically, though, because C-to-C owner Tania Ertl told me they're one of the stores checked for the local bestseller lists - Rascal Fair is #5 on. Denver Post list tomorrow - and she said she'd been reporting R Fair as one of her best sellers even before it was; "I think it helps," she said in exculpation.

After the signing, a drink & quick supper at Laurie & Harriet Paddocks'. Friends of theirs - a judge whose 1st name is Field & wife Bobbie - & Claire Athearn & Paddocks' son Eric & d-in-law Laurie (yes, same as Laurence P's nickname) also on hand; a good low-key gathering, quick & helpful to my schedule.

& so I'm on my last airplane of the autumn - amid FFA kids on their way home from a nat'l convention in Denver, the blonde girl beside me just having been airside in John, a motermouth boy across aisle from me - ah youth, ah my own FFA days; ah, earth ahead in days to come.

18 Nov.--Time has been blazing past; one thing after another, to the point where it's taken me until today to get this diary intention of two days ago into the typewriter--and it's a very different entry than I intended then.

Y'day morning just before 9:30 I was pecking away at desk chores, intending a casual day to recoup from last week's traveling, when a phone call came from the physical therapist, Don Crumley, at Madison House. He was worried about Frank, who was confused and didn't know Don; Don figured it might be a stroke, and he felt he ought to call the medics. I told him to do it, get him into Evergreen Hospital, and I'd be right there. When I arrived to the emergency room, Frank's situation looked damned grim; at first he was able to talk, though ~~ix~~ his eyes were glazed and he phased back and forth in knowing who I was or not, but before long he was speaking gibberish, what seemed to be aphasia, the sentence rhythms right but meaningless words tumbling in instead of the ones he thought he was saying. Confusion of other sorts, too; I figured I was manfully bearing up, standing over him and being reassuring, telling him I was there and Carol would be there before long, when he looked at me as if trying to make sense of all this and desperately ventured, "I guess she's big now?" That wrenched all the way through me.

Anyway, a few minutes of being around him convinced me I had to get Carol there from Shoreline, despite an important pending meeting with Jean and Lloyd and Diane to set up their new course, because big medical decisions might have to be made. In the hour before she could get there, Frank was X-rayed and then put into a CAT Scan just after she came, which thank god gave me a little time to prepare her for how he was before she saw him.

18 Nov. cont.--After all the examining, the emergency room Doctor, Fine, said the results so far didn't really show a stroke or a seizure or whatever it was, although Jim Lane on the phone later explained to us that there can be spasms of the blood vessels which indeed are a small stroke without, as I ~~gunk~~ savvied it, blood clots hitting the brain and all that. In any case, once Frank had been put in a room and the floor doctor, Goldberger, was starting to see him, C and I went for lunch, and when we apprehensively came back, by Jesus Frank was a different person, his conversation okay except for an occasional slipped word and his memory was back, evidently keen as ever. So, there the situation stands; I'll go over in an hour and see him, C will go this afternoon, and we'll take it as it comes.

Now the gist of what I was going to write 2 days ago. It goes back to the handwritten entry of the night of Nov. 14, 10 min. after takeoff from Denver, when I was exceedingly grateful to be out of that black rainy night Earlene Backes drove me through from Boulder to the airport and to be airborne ahead of the first snowstorm of winter coming in. Little did I know how grateful. Eighteen hours after I took off, the Continental flight to Boise flipped onto its back while taking off in the blizzard, killing 27. Besides the unnerving example of what the Denver weather is capable of, there's the lurking detail that Boise is the one trip I've refused to make during this bookselling autumn, simply saying enough is enough; the bookseller in Boise, Jean Wilson, is terminally pissed off at me, having somehow gotten it into her head I'd agreed to come, and I've had to hold fast against her entreaties and eventual anger--a holdout that turns out to be one of the rightest things I've done, because the one logical spot in the autumn ~~xxx~~ schedule to squeeze Boise in would have been a flight onward to there from Denver.

Nov. 19--The full life. This morn I went down to the Columbia Center and 4th Ave. Walden stores and signed up the Rascal Fairs they had in stock; a reminder of how useful it is to tend to detail, as both of them had some signed copies from Pac Pipeline but without "autographed" stickers on them, which they now have after my visit. Onward to the Artform frame shop near Pioneer Square, where Tony Angell's blackbird pics and a couple of other long-languishing pieces were ready for us--lovely stuff, to go on the dining room wall. Onward to lunch with Fayette Krause, who was hobbled by an infected foot. Then to the main bout of the day, signing at Tower from 12-1:30, and by damn it turned out pretty good, likely 35-40 Rascal Fairs sold and quite a few p'backs as well. I'm now waiting for Kathleen Merryman of the Tacoma News Trib, who is nearing an egregious half hour late for her 2:30 interview appointment; either she forgot or she's drastically lost, probably the latter.

23 Nov.--Still blindingly busy. The main news is Susan Richman's, that the NYTBR "called for a book"--a preliminary to the possibility of Rascal Fair making their bestseller list, covering themselves if they need to do a capsule description, list the cover price, etc. Susan emphasizes this happens a lot, without the requested book necessarily hitting the list, but it at least means the NYTBR is getting some reports of Rascal Fair as it checks around to bookstores.

I just mailed to NY the local news of y'day: the #1 fiction bestseller on the Seattle Times list is Rascal Fair, plus English Creek as #2 on the literary trade p'backs list and House of Sky #4 there. And it's even further delicious: Fools Crow is the #1 trade p'back, Jim Loney is #8.

And last Friday night; a crowd that Rick Simonson estimated at toward 300 showed up for my Elliott Bay reading; and a lot of them stood in line for ~~xxx~~ more than an hour to have me sign a book afterward.

Back to today again: I called Margaret this morning to see how many Rascal Fairs are in print: 52,427, just 2,312 in the warehouse.

24 Nov.--10 a.m., I just walked the park during a sunbreak in the blustery and rainy day, and now it's already sheeting rain again. C and I are hoping this is the storm we won't get on Thanksgiving, when we're going to have the annual gathering.

I'm still struggling toward some hours on our finances; tax decisions to be made, next year's evident Rascal Fair bonanza of \$\$ to be estimated, investments to be pondered. Meanwhile this morning I've called Sarah Ferrill at the NYT and agreed to do a 400-word piece for a Sophisticated Traveler supplement--"have some fun with it," she says, which given the paltry pay is about the only reason to do it. Other than the Times's sumptuous readership, of course. And I got a break on next spring, in doing my annual dance of avoidance with the Friends of the Mansfield Library in Missoula; I'd understood Georgia Lomax, the librarian in Kalispell, to say she wanted me to speak at a big regional librarians' meeting in Billings next April, but in checking with her it's April of '89. So I was able to tell Dale

Johnson I could maybe combine that and the Missoula request that year. So far, then, I'm managing to keep the first three months of '88 free to resume work on Maria; might be amenable to something worthwhile a few days in April; then try keep May and the post-Montana end of summer to myself as well.

The way things are flowing through here, haven't had a chance to note a significant offer of last week, spring quarter teaching gig at SUNY Buffalo; something called the Butler Chair, and in gingerly turning it down for next year without foreclosing forever, I asked general parameters of salary and was told by Ann Haskell that her dept. chairman would have to negotiate that with me but that they'd been "able to please Anthony Burgess when he did it."

What else. C and I have begun listening to English Crk on Books on Tape, 45 min. each night. Nice Rascal Fair review in St. Louis P-D came y'day, done by Ben Baldwin's brother Carl, without his knowing of the long connection between Ben and me.

25 Nov.--\$140,000. Liz called y'day about 2:15 to say she and Tom have bargained to that figure as the advance \$\$ for Ride With Me, Maria Montana. As she tells it: "I started at \$200,000, Tom said \$100,000. I said \$150,000, he said \$140,000. I said \$150,000, he said \$140,000. I said \$150,000, he said \$140,000..." I assured her the figure is terrific; indeed I'd wondered whether she would get the \$100,000 or so she told me in NY she might ask for. What she can't seem to get is an editor's clause, giving us a way out of Macmillan if Tom leaves; even Tom says he sees why Bruno Quinson and the Macmillan heirarchy won't go for it. She's going to talk to Bruno, though, to see if there's a way to buy our way out if Tom ever leaves. Meanwhile she wanted to know how I'd like the advance pie sliced across the next 3 years, and ~~xxx~~ I told her I'll have to calculate, which my desk is now awash with. From quick figuring y'day, if the 50,000 Rascal Fairs stay in the stores until after New Years' (only a middling "if", at this point of good sales) there's about \$60,000 headed our way next year from its royalties and rights income and the royalties on the other books; top that with a chunk of Maria advance money and I've got some thinking to do. Other nice fillips in Liz's negotiation this time: 15% royalty on Maria from the first copy ever printed, and a 60-40 split of all p'back \$\$, in our favor.

I printed a sign reading ~~\$100,000~~ "\$140,000--brought to you by courtesy of Liz Darhansoff" and lodged it atop the holiday wreath on our front door to greet Carol when she came home from college. As we exulted and eventually sat down to supper, after the first few bites the phone rang, C answered, and it was Lynn Pleshette, the movie agent; she has a Chicago guy named Joe Daley (shades of Duke Mare of our own Chi days, Richard J. Daley!) who's done low-budget movies and is interested in doing a low-b of Sea Runners. Lynn asked about my \$10,000 option minimum, and I told her I'm a lot more flexible on that; she said she'd see what she can do with this guy, that on a low-b deal he could probably only pay \$50,000-\$100,000(!) for rights, and in her wondrous Lon Gisland accent signed off with what must be the latest Hollywood g'bye, "Keep low."

30 Nov.--12:45, within minutes of my drive to Oak Harbor to do the Wind & Tide booksigning, finale of 3 or 4 I've done for Norman and Patti (they're selling the store). But first the news of Saturday, phone ringing, Linda Miller to say the interview Mike Kernan did of me is on front page of Washington Post Style section--"a good serviceable job," says Linda, who'd know.

Dec. 7, Portland, Heathman Hotel--The last Rascal Fair road trip. A booming start ~~xs~~ y'day at the Oregon His'l Society. As much as I dislike and try to avoid writers' "cattle call" signings--about 65 of us there at the OHS Xmas book shindig--y'day's sold a real bunch of books, keeping me pretty much busy for the 5 hours. Also, thanks to a gripe I'd made to Bruce Hamilton of the OHS Press about the alphabetical lineup of authors 3 years ago that put me with a writer of some touchy-feely book, another one who'd written some sort of local history book, and so on, this year they put Craig Lesley and me at the same table, near the main route to the punch bowl etc. Craig in fact sold out of Winterkill, I sold out of Sky, Eng Crk and Sea Runners plus several dozen Rascal Fairs. So far so good, on the Great Willamette Valley tour. Although, as I may joke at the Powell's reading tonight, I may be overstaying my Oregon welcome: the Oregonian today says, "Portland writer Ivan Doig will read..."

Snippets from y'day. A lot of customers who particularly liked Winter Bros. Bill Lang and his dad, also Bill, showed up to say hello, before Bill headed to Seattle to overnight at our place. Sue Armitage of WSU was on hand as one of the authors; I bought her book and Bill Stafford's An Oregon Message; talked with Bill Stafford a bit, and his wife Dorothy came over later and visited. Bob Pyle on hand with W'green, looking vastly improved with his shaggy beard off; talking with Craig (Winterkill) and me (Winter Brothers), Bob (Wintergreen) said we'd have to form some kind of Winter club...we tried to think up further members, Jim Welch etc. Young woman from West Linn came by and told me she's named her farm there Rascal Fair. Sundry ex-Montanans came and visited; also an elderly guy who'd been with the Weather Bureau on Tatoosh Island off Cape Flattery on this day in 1941--drove out from Port Angeles to Neah Bay without car radio, a Makax friend put him in the basket that lofted him out to the island, and when he got there he learned about Pearl Harbor.

Dec. 7 cont.--Let's see, what else is to catch up on. An exceedingly fine review came from Ft. Worth Star-Telegram, with a headline something like This Is the Way We Are--i.e., a head and review that didn't treat Rascal Rair as a Montana book, just a book about people. Also got a slightly sniffish review in The Weekly, 4th or 5th s. sn'sh review in a row there. The final signings in Seattle were as wan as expected--slow goddamn two hours at Frederick & Nelson, not too bad a signing at Southcenter Waldens though I had horrific traffic to get there, then a slow hour at the Bellevue Waldens.

There's sun here in downtown Portland, but dark sky over the West Hills. Been a week of terrific rain, including some heavy stuff during my drive down here y'day morn ~~7-10:30~~ 7-10:30.

And now before my public day starts--I guess with coffee with Mary Arnstad, mgr of this hotel, at 9:30--I'll try scythe my way through accumulated letters.

Have been doing Xmas cards in dead spots during the booksignings and gotten quite a ~~whole~~ bunch done.

Dec. 8--Still at the Heathman, for a few more hours. Then Beaverton and Salem, the last hard day of this booksigning autumn.

And even this close to done, I still don't know what the hell is going to eventuate at any given store. Y'day included an hour of booksigning at a B. Dalton in some cosmic shopping mall east of Vancouver--the store manager Roger Sullivan joked that his staff calls themselves "Radio Free Orchards," so maybe Orchards is the actual name of the site--that I let be tacked into the schedule because I was going to be here anyway for Powell's, the local ~~big~~ big-deal bookseller. It turned out I sold 15 or 20 Rascal Fairs there at the Daltons, in a pleasant store with no fuss, and only 17 last night at Powell's after a bravura performance of reading/questions/etc. to a ~~new~~ packed audience in the Ann Wright Goffee House there. So go figure.

Not just because of the comparatively wan sales last night, Powell's isn't yet a place that's won my heart. I've only ever met Michael Powell over a handshake at

Dec. 8 cont.--some PNBA shindig a few years ago and so it's at best a guess that the store is a reflection of him, but it seems to me a place that's very full of itself. Item: it's been the last bookstore down here to pay any attention to my books, and the most casual, ~~lackadaisical~~ lackadaisical really, in firming up the schedule I needed in order to do this for them--yet last night I pulled a couple of hundred people into the store for them. Item: Cindy Burdell, that wonder of nature who now runs the remainder tables for Powells, said that when she was interviewed and hired, Miriam--who I think is the store manager, although since she's never communicated with me I dunno for sure--offhandedly said, "Of course you know your way around the store." Cindy, like me, had never been in the place before. Item: I'm not sure what the exact linkage is between the Ann Wright Coffee Shop--run by, yup, Ann Wright--and the bookstore, but in introducing me last night AW perhaps inadvertently was ~~apologizing~~ apologizing to the audience that this was a departure from their usual attraction of actors reading from written works, i.e. all we ~~have~~ have here is a guy reading from his own words; this while the place was jammed to the rafters, people ~~sitting~~ having filled a stairway at the back of the room as a final place to perch. I thought to myself hey, Annie baby, what are all these people doing here if not because of my books? Also I was underwhelmed with the ~~less-than~~ less-than-professional venue she provides; a lectern, without a mike, teeterily perched on a tiny table, with the reading level too low and acute for me to prop the book and look the audience in the eye at the same time, very amateurish compared to Black Oak or Elliott Bay. Interesting, interesting; I get fonder and fonder of Portland in all aspects except its legendary bookstore.

Also y'day, supper with Pinterich and Sharon Wood, tales of McMurtry, drinks with Cindy B. at a jazz spot--to be caught up with tomorrow.

Dec. 10, Corvallis, at Jan and Joyce's--The last promo day of the Rascal Fair road that began, when, on Sept. 12 in Billings? A Wagnerian finale here last night with a big coastal storm hitting--the thump of branches falling on the roof, and this morn the Skyhawk is plastered with pine needles.

Good productive booksigning y'day at OSU, particularly amid sheeting rain and the college's notorious dearth of parking space. Must have sold about 75 Rascal Fairs; all in all this fall, Cheryl Maze now has I think 45 copies left out of original 170. Sold out of p'backs as well. OSU turns out to be maybe my main campus hotbed; Sky is being used by Bill Robbins in his NW history class and by a prof named I think Wubler in an American Lives course--Margaret Mead, Jackie Robinson and me!--and y'day while I was in the store came the news that Winter Bros is going to be used by Eckard Toy next quarter in the Great Americans course, 300 copies (in place of Chief Joseph, the ass't textbook mgr informed me). And it was noticeable y'day how many students showed up to have books signed or buy a Rascal as a parental Xmas gift.

As to the booksigning, it went particularly pleasantly. A number of ex-Montanans, and some USFS or other forestry people, and the wife of the young sheep dog trainer Rob whom I met here 3 years ago. The only bozo of the day was Stanley Swanson, a kind of operatic figure who as I savvy it is the retired head of the OSU Library. The bookstore people seem genuinely fond of him, so I guess he'd improve the better a person knows him, but again this year as three years ago I got this great gust of anecdotes from him at a time when I'm road-weary and, damn it, trying to sign books for the folks piled up in line behind Stanley.

Spent about an hour afterward with Bill Robbins. He's about to embark on sabbatical, to do what I think can be a greatly valuable "plundered province" book and maybe an interpretive bio of Harry Bridges. Bill says he's found a "smoking gun" letter at the Hill Library in St. Paul--James J. Hill to E.H. Harriman,

Dec. 10 cont.--about how they'll divvy the railroad gravy of the West. Bill also said, as we did our usual head-shaking over the UW's chronic ineptness at ~~knowing~~ knowing what in hell to do with its western history position, that the U. of Oregon isn't much better at capitalizing on what ought to be a naturally strong field; according to Bill, Dick Brown does all the western work at UO and teaches the survey course as well--meanwhile the UO is hiring a 3rd guy in German history.

5 to 7, Jan and Joyce have just made their goodbyes and headed off to their respective Albany schools, leaving me with a couple of hours here at their place before I have to head on to Eugene. So, to catch up a bit. The signing in Salem was a surprisingly strong one, probably a good 50 or more Rascal Fairs in a steady lively stream of customers; I signed up what books Carol and Greg had left, and then that night after my reading, I looked at the bare table where they'd brought those signed copies and asked, "What, did you bozos run out of books?" and they glumly confessed that they ~~had~~ had--that bittersweet quandary of booksellers, doing so ~~well~~ well that they run out. As to my reading, it seemed to be a smash hit, but Jesus, this stuff is never easy. After Powell's was setup on Monday night, I hit Salem determined to be ~~able~~ able to do a better performance and so got the Salem librarian, George Happ, to show me the reading room as it was being set up. Indeed, the rostrum they'd intended was much too low for me to read from and have any eye contact with the audience, so George and his staff came up with a small dictionary stand to put on top of the rostrum. It was still ~~too low~~ below the reading level I was indicating by holding the book in place, so George assured me he'd somehow add another six inches of base under the dictionary stand. Four, I told him firmly, and realizing how serious I was about all this, he went off and ~~found~~ found a shallow box of, yes, four inches height to serve as base. So, we had the rostrum problem whipped, and the a-v librarian Linnea meanwhile had been rigging up the mike I told them I had to have, we tested it, all dandy. Comes the reading hour

Dec. 10 cont.—that night, I am waiting in the hallway to go on, the president of the friends of the library is making her grand introduction of me, and I cock my head and ask George beside me, "Is that mike on?" He's cocked pretty intently himself by this time, hies off to the back of the room to listen, and no, of course not, hell no, no way ~~is~~ is that mike on. OK, quick conference, George, Linnea and me: all I have to do, says L, is turn on the mike at its little red button when I get up there. OK, you bet; grand introduction ends, I go to the rostrum to huge applause, flick on the mike switch, and out comes one of those electronic howls like a cat being turned inside out. I tell the audience OK, OK, we're gonna work on this a minute, aren't we, Linnea? She's now at the control panel, gets the volume turned down, and you bet, the mike system now works perfectly, just like ~~we~~ we'd intended with all that preparation.

At the Salem booksigning, a man came up, fished an old photo out of his breast pocket and asked me, Do you know who these people are? I told him they looked like the Badgetts. Indeed it was Kate and Walter, maybe their wedding pic, and he was Walt's nephew—rather, grand-nephew, I guess—Ed Badgett of Independence. Said he has one other picture, I think of his granddad and Walter, one of them at either end as guards on a chain gang, evidently at the Kansas State pen.

Also at the Salem booksigning—this in the category of why the hell didn't I think of it myself, long ago—was a dandy cheap promo idea: Carol and Greg and their staff were wearing campaign-style buttons which read "Ivan Doig, Dec. 8", I guess actually done by the public library. Next time around on this booksigning stuff I could fairly easily provide the whole damn schedule of bookstores with half a dozen buttons apiece, for not much cost—maybe the cheapest advertising there is.

Eugene

Dec. 14--My circumnavigation of the book world ended Friday, when I left Salem about 5:15 a.m. and drove in to our driveway a bit after 11. I was bushed the rest of that day and the first half of Sat., felt okay already y'day, today am a bit weary again--although some of today's mood is dread of what's coming at 3:30, the eyelid incision to rid me of the latest chelayzion and the healing in the days ahead; more on that after it happens. So far this morning I've mailed the "Dancing" broadsides (printed by Molly Cook at Skagit Bay Books for my signing there) to all Macmillan sales reps, phoned Dan Frank's assistant at Viking that I will do a blurb for Great Heart and Susan Leon at Ath'm that I won't do one for Richard Slotkin's new novel, and when I can get through to her I'll tell Diane Donovan of the Chi Trib I won't review Tom McNab's novel for her. Disposing, disposing.

All in all, I feel good about the season Rascal Fair has had and my bookstore/interview/reading performances amid it. Looking around this office, though, I'm aghast at how things have piled up. C has offered to pitch in on some sorting, and we'll need to do triage on this stuff pretty damn fast.

Oregon: unfittingly, my book season ended with something of a whimper at the U. of Oregon bookstore Thurs. night, with about 35 Rascal Fairs sold and 8-10 of them to the bookstore staff. Kim Stafford I think had even lesser luck, maybe a couple dozen h'backs of Having Everything Right. I dunno whether UO faculty folks don't like their titles to begin with verbs or what, but there Kim and I sat for a couple of hours, looking out into a moil of faculty buying gaily at the 20% discount offered in this annual shindig. I'd agreed to that booksigning because store mgr Cindy Heidemann had been able to cite me how many books Ken Kesey and Barry Lopez each sold in the same gig last year--150-200--and while I knew I wouldn't match that, I thought maybe I'd do half; turned out I did about half that. I didn't have near as bad a time as Cindy, though, who fell on her driveway and shattered her wrist the day before.

So, what I had been counting on as a sure-bet big signing turned out to be underwhelming, while my reading at the U. of Oregon, which had shown every sign of being haphazardly put together and ill-fated, proved to be a smash. It wasn't all smooth; goddamn little ever is. I purposely arrived

Dec. 14 cont.--about 20 min. early to look over the speaking setup, found there wasn't a mike but the room was likely small enough it didn't matter, the podium wasn't great but not fatal either; as the last reading of the season I could do it on my knees down a coal chute if necessary, so I said okay to all that. What wasn't okay was on the face of Glen Love, the prof supposedly and quite belatedly in charge of the reading; he said hello and immediately added he'd go see about some more chairs. Indeed, we had about a dozen; Nancy Reeburgh works in the Student Union office and told me later only 15 or 20 chairs had been ordered, which seemed to her strange. Anyway, Love got a maintenance man to begin carting in stacks of chairs, and so there was an odd stately choreography of seating as each dozen or so people would arrive, a dozen chairs would simultaneously get there, the people would instantly fill them, another dozen folks, another dozen chairs etc. That went on until the room was full, 125 or so in the audience, and one of the quickest, loosest audiences I've had; about half students, probably mostly from Dick Brown's Westward Movement class, and about half older people, Montanans etc., they right away were laughing in places where university audiences usually are too culture-intent to chuckle. That geared me up, I ~~gave~~ performed in a style probably second only to the all-but-perfect night at Black Oak, and the mood carried over into the question session, when somebody asked about the rumor that I was going to write an urban book and I told them the provincial transliteration of "Montana" into "Manhattan" in the Penguin office--they damn near fell out of their ~~xxx~~ chairs laughing at that.

That night Kim ~~and~~ Stafford and I had an elbow-to-elbow introduction of sharing a 4x4 table of books for a couple of hours; what talking we did get to do, I quite liked Kim but had to wonder if I'm not as rooted as a homesteader's stump, comparatively. Kim must be, what, 40, but seems to have spent some time searching. In telling me he intended to pass up spending the night with Glen Love and going on down to Florence instead in hope of encountering a Pacific storm, he remarked that that part of the coast had been vital, I think his word was, to his life after Ph.D. years at UO; he went down there on an oral history project, feeling "I wanted to be around people who had more wisdom about life than

Dec. 11 cont.--I'd met in grad school." I suppose I'm not the best to talk, my magazine freelance years maybe having been my own search-beyond-the-u., but the point to me is that Kim chose to look in other people's lives while I chose to look in the work of writing. At another point in the evening, after deep affectionate conversation with an elderly couple, he said he wanted me to meet them; the man, I think it was, had been Kim's weaving teacher. Whooee, wouldn't it be interesting to know, if Kim's forays of those sortx are his version of Bill's constant exploration by way of poetry, or are his where-is-life? reaction to having grown up in a poet's household? I don't mean to make Kim sound dewy, nor myself sage; main differences between us may be generational--I look a good 15 years older than him, despite probably being only half that--and suburban Lake Oswego upbringing vs. rural Montana. But it's been on my mind because I blinked hard at what Kim asked me as we were both signing up the remaining piles of our books as fast as we could move our pens: "So what should I do with my next book--send it East or stay with a regional publisher?" I instantly said East, because it would never even occur to me not to make that choice. I cited national distribution, better shot at major reviews, bigger press runs as the natural advantages I see in going with a major NY publisher. He asked, "I (meaning his book) won't get lost back there?" Told him I didn't think so, particularly with someone such as Dan Frank at Penguin, who picked up Having for p'back, aware of him. Then he said he did feel some loyalty to Confluence Press and its editor, who apparently argued Kim into letting go of poetry for awhile and doing the fine essays of Having. I said that was well and good, but the Confluence guy got a terrific book and p'back \$\$ out of the deal, and my view would be that Kim amply discharged the loyalty by doing the job of writing he did for Confluence; also told him I'm not as big a fan as I probably should be of regional publishing. Well, anyway, Kim seemed honestly to want my opinion and I frankly gave it to him; he has a good shot now at becoming a terrific essay writer and I hope it works out for him.

16 Dec.--Whew. Have pegged away at desk work most of past 3 days, and am finally beginning to feel it may be whippable. Doubtful I can get finances figured, though, until next week, which I'd dearly love to take entirely off.

I'm in aftermath of my chelayzion surgery, and my ~~tripple~~ triple-stitched left eyelid gets weary by this time of day. As expected, the worst part of the surgery was the novocaine needle, a shot into each corner of the eye; the second one brought my left knee up to my chest in pain.

The better news came y'day, Pete Gornér's deft piece on me in the Chicago Trib. Big play, and good stuff. In going through a pile on her desk, C found that Gornér won a Pulitzer last year for a genetics series he and another Trib reporter did.

17 Dec.--Whew again. 10:30, and I've just cleared the last of the autumn's accumulation off the financial affairs desk. There's now a pile of clippings on the floor to be sorted, but an illusion of progress counts, too. Yet to come: calculating my net income, to tell the accountant, for my def. ben. plan; more sorting, etc.

Grisp (40 above) clear weather, so we're going to walk the park and then go down to Pike Place for lunch, head onward to NW Crafts store for Xmas jewelry for Liz and for Jean Roden.

22 Dec.--Now to see if I have my eyelids back intact. Y'day the three stitches were taken out of my left one, where the chelayzion was taken out last week, and by god the stitch removal didn't hurt. I'm to stay on Tetracycline and general eye maintenance for 4-6 weeks, and then see how things go.

Fat snowflakes in the street light when I went into the kitchen at 5:30 this morn, but they soon dissolved to rain. I've done a couple of letters this morning, will try clean out the pocket notebook a bit, make more notes on the book season, etc. This finally is a point of some leisure--Xmas cards done, shopping too, and the desk manageable. We're both content to hunker in here at home, this holiday; Rodens are having us and Frank

22 Dec. cont.--over for Xmas brunch, then it's on to Ann McCartney's for dinner with her and her parents, and this is a year when C and I can gladly lean back and say, so okay, entertain us.

A nifty finale to the Rascal Fair pre-Xmas season, with the h'back still on the S. Times bestseller list and Sky, Eng Crk and W B.,os all on the trade p'back list; plus a really very deft piece about me by Kathleen Merryman in the Tacoma News Trib on Sunday. Merry, merry, merry.

23 Dec.--Great news last night. Just before supper, Linda Bierds called, down over the edge of cloud 9, to say she got an NEA poetry fellowship. \$20,000. A few weeks ago she got an Artists' Trust award of \$5,000. As I told her, my god, and the book isn't even out yet! It's truly been a helluva lot of fun watching her career soar this past year or so; as C says, I especially like it because she's doing it all without playing academic poetic network games. Indeed, it may be that I'll amount to the footnote in literary history that introduced her to Marian Wood at Holt.

Fiasco this morning, when I inspected the road under brilliant clear sky, decided the travel should be okay despite the chill and last night's frost and slight snow, and we set off at 9 for the Skagit wildfowl refuge. 2 hrs later we were looping home, having spent most of the time in a colossal traffic tie-up at Union Slough in Everett. The road in fact wasn't bad--not great, but not bad--but an accident involving at least one semi utterly shut down the northbound freeway. Got home, still in lovely bright weather, more than a little frustrated that we couldn't get anywhere out into it.

24 Dec.--Christmas Eve morn, a tangled phrase I've always liked. Have just written to Paul Ringer, passing along to him some of the encounters out of the Montana past from my booksigning autumn. Paul has proven to be an eloquent correspondent, ~~ix~~ across the world there in Queensland.

Good news y'day, when Kathleen Merryman of the Tacoma News Trib passed along the wire copy of Pete Gerner's Chicago Trib piece on me--i.e., the AP moved it, apparently in its lineup of timeless feature copy. Christ knows who if anybody will pick up that story, but it's certainly a bonus piece of ballyhoo.

27 Dec.--A tryout of this huge old clunker of a Royal that I bought from Rae-Ellen a year or so ago for \$25 or \$30; it's pea green and hunkers on a desk in the general outline of a 1950s Hudson, but the touch seems pretty good.

The last Sunday of '87, with Rascal Fair in the Seattle Times as one of 10 best of the year and, more to the point, the #3 bestseller of '87 in Pacific Pipeline totals.

Visitor from the mysterious East y'day evening, Mark Muro of the Boston Globe. Social call as Mark used to live in this n'hood, somewhere atop the hill from us, and he and I repeated a visiting jaunt we'd done before, the two of us walking the loop of the ~~the~~ n'hood while we talked. Mark, very bright, has what sounds to C and me, as old vets of journalism trenches, like a a dream job--writing features and editorials and doing a book review every other week. But after 6 years in a job he walked into the day after he left Harvard, he's thinking of taking a year to get a lit degree at Berkeley, and I guess generally yearning toward book writing. One more time, a comment from a greatly gifted person in his or her twenties or thirties about not feeling mature enough to try something--Mark's remark came in response to C's urging that he try become the Globe's Pacific Rim reporter--which leaves me mentally agape. I suppose the passage of time is coloring my memory, but honest to Christ I have no memory of that attitude ever in myself. I pretty often was in over my head in the jobs I had, from the first Caterpillar farming I did for Tony Mozer to that abrupt chrysalis of becoming a magazine editor at The Rotarian, but maybe I was so damn dumb I just went at the work anyway and figured I'd move on when I could. So what is going on here, with the when-I-get-mature type of remark I've heard in the past year from Ben Groff, Wendy Smith, Craig Fujii and now Mark, all of whom are probably smarter than I was at their age, or maybe am now--am I misremembering

27 Dec. cont.--a phase that I actually did pass through as they are, or am I different critter?

Xmas went okay, though as ever it didn't go real smooth. Just as we were about to leave for Xmas dinner with Ann McCartney and her parents, Frank's upset ~~stomach~~ stomach got him down, and we delivered him back to Madison House instead. A good enough day, I think for him as well as us, up to ~~then~~ then. We went to Rodens' at 11:30, had champagne and a snack and a playing of Haydn by Cindy, all festal enough. At Ann's, I came away wondering how her dad can be so old-shoe pleasant and her mother can be such a dragon. What a wilderness is the thicket of family, as somebody must have written. As to presents, we three made out nicely, Frank with a winter like jacket C found for him, C with a necklace and pin I got for her, me with a long-wanted barometer for this office and an elegant Chipping Camden scarf from Ann and Marsh. C and I spent some time y'day putting up the barometer, plus hanging the English Creek cover of Jick ahorseback in the inner room next to the big frame of Montana pics. In counter to my glumness about ever catching up on the projects of this house, there is the lovely unarguable progress we've made in getting pieces framed and hung this fall--Tony Angell's 3 prints from the blackbirds book now around the big Sitka KCAW poster on the dining room wall, with the nifty crab intaglio Jean gave us wonderfully "floated" in a frame between the bird grouping and the kitchen; and at the far end of the kitchen, the real blowaway--Tony's Caspian terns print in flight there against the white wall, dramatic and perfect.

30 Dec.--A bright day, and at just before 11 we're home from having walked Green Lake. Earlier, I managed to slog through a sorting of file cards that had accumulated since last summer; it's just short of 3 weeks since my travel season for Rascal Fair ended, and it seems to me I've done an appalling amount of sorting and general tucking and poking, in that time. Nor am I really caught up even yet, half a dozen pocket notebooks on the shelf with christ knows what in them, a pile of clippings at the end of my desk. Tried to do some mulling about how to get better control, or some help with the flow of stuff around here, but nothing logical yet.

--2:40 now, after a nap and then walking 6 rounds of the park. This is a day when I feel a lot better outside than in; woke up very heavy-headed, perplexing after a sound night of sleep--although it may indeed be that full nights of sleep, when I don't wake up and snuffle or otherwise change breathing rhythm, give me the worst sinus problems, like this morning's.

The inside of my head aside, if I can put it there, I'd better try to get down some strays from this autumn's events. A number of them, ~~from~~ from the booksignings, I put into a letter to Paul Ringer last week, but one I didn't: in the Little Prof in Helena, a little old lady (83 yrs old) in a wheelchair rolled firmly up to me at my signing table, identified herself as having been Janette Christisen, now Janette Eaton, and declared that I could have been her son--i.e., she was dated, and the implication was, more than that, by my dad before he met my mother. Interesting how set, convinced, she was; an "if" that inspires her last years, evidently.

--On my first Eugene trip, The former Ann Kay, now Ann Gruber who runs a Eugene cookware shop, came up with her husband. Ann was a year or two behind me in high school, a slightly ethereal-looking girl, a little too thin to be really pretty but fairly close by Valier standards; her father was the extremely dim-sighted typing teacher.

--In Portland, learned from Pintarich that Larry McMurtry, in town to make a talk in P'land's major speaking series, doesn't give interviews. Coincidentally or not, Paul proceeded to pan the talk (evidently on firm enough grounds: McM talked or read about film-making rather than his own work, his voice is soft and didn't carry, the auditorium was

30 Dec. cont.--superheated, etc). McM wouldn't even answer Paul, during booksigning at Powell's, when Paul asked him why he'd quit giving interviews. Which gives me pause: am I going to end up that way? I'd better try not. Other McM notes: he's now with Leslie Marmon Silko, and in one further proof of there-are-only-twelve-people-in-the-world-and-the-rest-is-done-with-mirrors thesis, Craig Lesley's roommate at Whitman was John Silko, L's ex-. And if I'm remembering, and heard, right, Pintarich thought McM got \$5,000 for his talk; the Powells' folks I was with later that night, Cindy and Joanna, said he spent \$3,000 on rare books at Powell's.

--Back toward the start of the book season, I made an entry about coinciding with Richard Ford at Estes Park and coming away convinced of his intrinsic jerkhood. What made me think so was the backbiting he did on Bill Kittredge and Annick Smith, while we had a drink or two. Maybe it was manner--Southern tart tongue, propensity to know how other people ought to behave--but I thought it overstepped, particularly since Bill and Annick seem to consider Richard a dear friend. Ford also managed to crack of a bookseller we both know, sheerly in the course of conversation about bookstores we've both been in, "He must take his vacations on Fire Island," and to denigrate the Walden store managers we were among--"Who are these people? Do they have any interests in life. Do they fuck each other?" Well, yeah, Richard, I think they probably do; he seemed to have no understanding, or maybe to care, that the Walden store people are young, have not been to Northwestern as I have or to wherever Richard went, and are having to cope damn hard in the chainstore meatgrinder life. My final view of Richard, literally, was on the highway down out of Estes Park. A creeping dilapidated truck loaded with scrap iron was holding up a long line of cars; I was about 4th back, and eventually another dozen or so behind me. I noticed a car about six behind me veer out every so often for a try at passing, and then hornblowing began from it. At last, on a stretch ~~which~~ which led into a curve, here came the carload of impatience, zooming, horn pressed down, swooping past us all and the truck and managing not to meet anything oncoming at the curve; yes, there behind the wheel was Richard, a long cigar in his mouth.

30 Dec. cont.--The other side of the Richard Ford scenario, as I've wandered into it, is his real professionalism on behalf of his books and evidently his writing life as well. He troopered around for Rock Springs as much as I did for Rascal Fair, and maybe more; and he, or his editor Gary Fisketjon, has a national knack that makes Jim Welch and me stare at each other and say, How does he do it?--almost automatic appearances in Esquire, Granta, and now The New Yorker. So, I ought not sell Richard short; just because life doesn't seem to come up to his expectations doesn't mean he ain't a big writer.

--C and I have seen a couple of memorable pieces of work this holiday season: tv hour of Dylan Thomas's "A Child's Christmas in Wales," with Denholm Elliott, was lovely. Brother Dylan weren't no minimalist, sure. And Sunday we went to a matinee of The Dead, John Huston's last film and what a way to go out, with a movie that looks as if it's existed forever. I re-read the original Joyce story, and Tony Huston's adaptation is truly deft--the movie is maybe better than the story.

31 Dec.--More of the year-end catching up. C and I have just finished listening to the English Creek reading on Books on Tape, a cassette of about 45 min. each night, and it sounded spiffy. Jick's voice is gabby and discursive, yes, but I still think the language and the ever-accumulating lore and history--Bill Robbins of OSU calls it a fictional Montaigne, which I like--justifies it.

--At Skagit Books signing in Laconnor, a guy who had me sign a couple of my earlier books in collectorly fashion--name only, no inscription, and with a hard-pointed pen--came back after a bit with something to show me: a first edition of Leaves of Grass, signed and dated (1881, I think) by Walt Whitman.

--In San Francisco, signs on back of buses read in big pink letters: USE CONDOMS.

--At Edmonds signing, met Bette Jensen whose ~~widow~~ family owned the Jensen ranch of my Dupuyer years. She told me that in contrast to my memory of it as a place down in a hole, her childhood memory was that it was such a relief to come there away from the wind-worn benchland out by Choteau. Also explained what I hadn't known or had

31 Dec. cont.--forgotten, that her grandmother put the place up for lease (to Snider and thru him to us) because she was so disgusted with the family situation, Bette's mother having left Henry Jensen for his brother Jens.

--At Looking Glass signing in Portland, Fredrika Spillman, who does ill'ns for the Sunday Oregonian book review page, exclaimed as she met me, "I didn't realize you were so blond!"

--At Kirkland, again out of the Dupuyer past, a well-groomed woman who came to the Parkplace booksigning proved to be Sandy Wall. Sandy, along with Edna Thomas, had the misfortune to be the female contingent of the Charlie-Trafelet-Tom Chadwick-Merlin Thomas--Larry Habets high schoolers who were a couple of years older than I was, and mostly thru the fevered imaginations of the boys were regarded as the best local representation of "loose" girls. Except for their willingness to occasionally pile into ~~x~~ the backseat of Tom's car when it was already full of a bunch of us--and their doughty willingness to cuss back at Charlie or Larry, who had real bad mouths and seemed to feel a need for a teasing feud with Edna and Sandy--I can't remember a bit of behavior to support the reputation. I have remembered Sandy, though--who was a fairly attractive girl battling her weight--as a pitfall I escaped in those teen years, indeed the one I gave Angus and Rob in Rascal Fair, early sex-pregnancy-marriage. Thank god she and I both turned out better than our circumstances then.

--Details from rehearsals for the Noah Adams show over Minnesota Public Radio in Oct.: producer Neenah Ellis, out front listening to Reel World string band, chewing an apple and bouncing in rhythm to their music. Reel World--

--Interruption for an unlikely announcement. Dave Ringer just called to say I'm in today's P-I in a "Who's Hot and Who's Not" article; I rate an H instead of an N and am nestled, he assures me, twixt Everett Koop and Donald Trump.

--Reel World made a real staircase on the stage, the fiddler Karen very tall, then an average-sized woman, then the very short woman who sang. I noticed how very close to the mike these professionals put their mouths when they sing.

31 Dec. cont.-- The real summing up of '87 is that Rascal Fair got into the world, on time, and took this household up with it from there. I knew there was a lot riding on meeting the deadline for the book--there always is--but I had no idea of how much: a possible \$40-50,000 in Rascal royalties beyond its advance, and \$35,000 in the p'back sale, and greatly beyond that, the \$140,000 contract for Maria. To think that none of this would have happened yet--and my view of the publishing world is that it's so underlain with tectonic plates of change that anything that doesn't happen now isn't likely to happen, i.e. isn't simply postponed, somewhere there a year ahead--to ~~think~~ mull where we'd be if Rascal Fair hadn't yet happened justifies the effort I put into wrestling it to completion a year ago. The old lesson: get the work done.

Doig
Montana trip, September 1987

- 7-8 Sept. MOIESE. Bison Range.
Allentown Motel, Charlo. (406) 644-2588.
--pics and notes, early morning and dusk.
--describe birdsong
--describe grass: kneeling in it, feel, smell
--~~Bill~~ Hoyt, 11:30 on 8th @ motel for interview (406)243-6666
- 9 Sept. HELENA. Montana Historical Society. (406) 449-2694. home:728-9470
Bill Lang, Clancy. (406) 933-5319.
--see if Little Prof has books, sign up a hundred?
--replicate Jick's foray into family (I. Reese) letters
--names of bars and cafes?
--describe MHS library
--Sue Lang: Montana's east-west differences?
--Bill Lang: social history I ought to put in?
--tour Bill's museum
--lunch with Rich Roeder on Sept. 10?
--sign MHS books if Little Prof has theirs
- lunch with Sue on 9th
- 10 Sept. BUTTE.
Best Western Copper King Inn. (406) 494-6666.
--check in with Margaret at Atheneum, morn of 11th
--find a cafe where Jick et al meet the Toothless
Ferries; make it M&M?
--describe Butte and surroundings
--check with Butte Bookseller (Mindy) and sign 50 prelim
books
- buy a writer cap
- 11-14 Sept. BILLINGS. Montana Humanities Cultural Congress. *Copperfields, sign who Sam?*
Billings Sheraton. (406) 252-7400. - *July 14 interview, Sat. morning*
13th and/or 14th:
--Custer Battlefield: describe, esp. the geography
--Hardin: find site for Roadkill Angels dance
--is Hardin a dry town?
- 17-19 Sept. JACKSON, Wyo. Americana Lodge. (307) 733-5200.
Reading, Jackson Public Library, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.
Signing, Valley Bookstore, Sept. 19 from 2 to 5 p.m.
--check in with Margaret at Atheneum, morn of 17th
- 21 Sept. ENNIS. El Western. (406) 682-4217.
Virginia City, 21st
--pics and description of town and surroundings
--site of vigilante hanging?
--dark gloomy bar; bartender etc. in Gay 90s getup
- 25 Sept. BOZEMAN. Mike Malone. (406) 587-2982.
--check in with Margaret at Atheneum, morn of 25th
- go to MSU library @ 11 of start signing ahead

reading series he presides over is giving the writers of this end of the country a tribal gathering place ^{here}... a place where our voices can be heard after our long silences of making the words. I believe it'll eventually dawn ^{on} ~~and~~ departments of English and history what an importance this Elliott Bay reading ~~series~~ series has in the literary life of this part of the world, and the dissertations and the articles about the glorious old days of these readings will appear (25 or 50 years from now). For now, though, the best I can do is to tell the impresario of all these readings what one of my Montana characters might say about ^{to} ~~his~~ Rick Simonson's ^{efforts that create this series} ~~job~~ about his ~~success~~ -- "You're doing good, Rick."

raise my hand for Italian
combined school - N. Fork & S. Fork
(Sch. Heaven)