

2 Jan. '93--How auspicious a start to the year y'day, when C and I walked the waterfront, headed into Ivar's for lunch, and were awarded free beers as the first customers of the new year.

That's the quintessential us, early and prompt on top of that. I wake up between 4 and 4:30 these mornings, and C gets up as soon as I have b'fast ready, which gives our days a big forepart such as this one--C has been out already for a couple of hours looking for a new car, I've been thinking out onto filecards some plot and technique ideas for Bucking the Sun (and have done a couple of loads of washing between filecard stints).

Chilly weather still, which conked out our holiday hopes of getting to Dungeness or the Skagit wildfowl refuge for days of hiking, but there's been such vicious winter on all sides of Seattle that we have to count ourselves damn lucky. In particular, our decision that we'd had enough travel for the year and so would hang on here at home kept us from, say, driving to Monterey and getting caught in the I-5 closure from Redding to over the Siskiyou's. I've felt some cabin fever these holiday weeks, but we have gone out and done things about as much as we could, so that's got to be good enough.

An enormous bonus of finishing Heart Earth a couple of months early has been the chance to clear away desk chores, and start even on the future, aka Bucking the Sun. I'm possibly being deluded by the availability of Ft Peck research material so far, but the novel feels more welcoming than any of my first four. That'll complicate itself, as I try to push the edges of my imagination and language, but it makes for an interesting mood to begin in. I keep forgetting, for instance, that Heart Earth hasn't yet come onto the planet as a book; it simply seems a done fact, and Bucking the Sun has the nextness, the imminence, that I'm taking up residence within.

8 Jan.--A good week, though a hectic one, too. Another half inch of snow, atop the black-ice residue from the last storm. C walked to the college today, and I'm hunkered in, wanting to keep tinkering w/ Bucking the Sun but having to turn my mind instead to promo plans for Heart Earth--am awaiting a call from Sharon Dynak, after trying fruitlessly to call her the past hour or more.

8 Jan. cont.--My lack of enthusiasm for the bookstore trail one more time notwithstanding, things have been clicking nicely on Heart Earth--Liz vows to me that she's mailing the \$56,250 check today, and a couple of nights ago Zoe Kharpertian called to say (a) she's finished copy-editing the ms and (b) she thinks it's a terrific read. Immediately ahead for me now will be my final look-over of the ms with the copy-editing on it, a stint at the UW library for final checking of stray facts, doing what I can w/ a version of flap copy, and providing Lee the G. w/ cover ideas--besides talking to Sharon abt this fall's publicity schedule. I'm hoping I can divide my head and keep at Bucking the Sun while doing the Heart Earth tasks on automatic pilot--for the first time I don't really have incentive to help with ~~the~~ selling the book because I probably have all possible income from it already in hand--but I don't know.

As she got ready this morning to go out into this 5th straight week of cold and/or snow, C joked(?) that if I ever wanted her to give Tucson another try, now's the time.

14 Jan.--A note of how well things stand: the contract delivery date for the Heart Earth manuscript is tomorrow, the 15th, and two days ago, the 12th, I FedExed to NY the checked-over copy-edited version of the ms (i.e., ready to be set into type) and the final chunk of advance for the book, \$62,500-less-Liz's-10%, also arrived.

And I was pleased as can be in my re-read of Heart Earth, first time of looking at it since sending in the ms a couple of months ago. It is even more deft than I'd hoped I was doing--that is, the tricky, difficult parts I think don't look tricky in the reading.

Even the weather of this coldest winter finally is moderating, after 5½ weeks steady of low temperatures and black ice and periodic snow. I intend to go to the UW library first thing this morning--well, actually about third thing, as I got up about 3:30 this morn and have already done some mulling and sorting on Bucking the Sun material--and clean up a couple of items to be checked for Heart Earth and begin feeling my way into Fort Peck material. C has a three-day weekend coming, and tonight we're going out to dinner with Linda Biers

14 Jan. cont.--and Sydney Kaplan, so we feel life is loosening up a little. I'm in remarkably good shape at the moment to get underway on Bucking the Sun, although as ever I have to constantly watch out to keep my time from being sucked away into the ephemera that people ask of me. The first two "would you be interested" calls of the year y'day--Sarah Ferrill at the NY Times Soph'd Traveler (whom I may try do something for, actually, later in the year, if I can figure out a piece of writing that might enhance Heart Earth's entry into the world), and the Nature Conservancy, by way of Tony Angell, asking if I'd contribute a piece to a Last Great Places booklet they're doing to reward major contributors. I pronto turned that one down, because while the intentions are doubtless noble I do feel such collections-for-an-occasion are always phony in artistic terms, arising as they do out of the event rather than the writer's own inspiration; and beyond that, as Tony soldiered along, passing along what the Conservancy had asked him to pass along, I got miffed at him being dragged in as an intermediary every time the Conservancy wants me to do something of this sort--it's unfair to Tony, and as actually the very worst way to get me to do anything is to try to maneuver me rather than just calling me up directly, it just takes up time and energy none of us should have to squander like that. So, with Tony's agreement, I did put in on Fayette Krause, when I phoned him to turn down the request, to do me a favor and not ring in Tony in the future, that I never like having to deal with a translator amid a writing transaction. I also blithely asked Fayette if the Conservancy had asked Tony to write one of the Last Great Places pieces, as they hadn't and ought to've.

15 Jan.--10:10, w/ Bill Reeburgh somewhere on his way to stow a car here with us the next few weeks, I've done a couple pp. on Bucking the Sun this morn, the weather looks at least mildly promising for C's 3-day weekend coming up, and so I'm pretty sanguine. Hilarious meal w/ Linda and Syd last night, some distraction both couples needed--they arrived down in the dumps over the ills of Syd's car, C and I have felt cooped up by this winter--and so the good food at the Provinces in Edmonds,

15 Jan. cont.--which we hope is going to be our Chinese meal lode now that Jemmy has sold the Wok near N'gate, put us in improved mood. Linda had a marvelous tale of Donn Fry of the Seattle Times inveigling her into providing an "inaugural" poem, local version of Maya Angelou, for this Sunday's paper, and she and Syd are beginning to fret their way to their spring quarter in England, by way of a poetry reading by Linda in NY and maybe one in Boston.

C remarked y'day that it had been one of those days making this household impossible to summarize, and I've indeed lost track of about half of what went on; but in late afternoon I was on the phone to Missoula first with Bill Farr, about the version of a session he'd like me to do in connection with my U.of Montana speech there, then w/ his colleague Richard Drake, who ostensibly is in charge of that appearance of mine but will be out of town at the time; meanwhile there'd been phone calls back and forth to the Reeburgh's about Bill's schedule today; after supper when Linda and Syd were here, Tony Angell called and I gave him the brief version of my Conservancy conversation; no sooner had I come back in the living room than the phone rang again, C answered it and it was Tony's wife, Lee, passing along word that Robert Fulghum is going to be hiring a new assistant, do we know any candidates--which set Carol and Sydney to cogitating about prized students who might fit the job.

And either amid all that's been diaried the past few days, or since, the audio cassette of A River Runs through It was chosen one of the best 20 of the year by Publishers Weekly, and was #5 on PW's monthly bestseller list.

This morn, I've talked to Farr again on the phone, firming up that I'll do a Ft. Peck work-in-progress session for the Missoula date, and Lee Goerner called to assure me of the p. lineup of all the apparatus at the front of Heart Earth, and to say there should be galleys in 4-5 weeks. He pooch-pooched this morning's NY Times report that Macmillan may be bought by Simon & Schuster, which doesn't dissuade me at all from believing it.

19 Jan.--9:15 a.m., it's raining heavily, and wafting down amid it are sporadic snowflakes the size of goose feathers.

Later, 3:45: the rain kept on for some hours, but did not turn into the whopping snow those flakes hinted at. I had a pretty decent day of writing on Bucking, coming out with 3 pp. Also did the laundry and dealt with the women of the NY Times:

--Eden Ross Lipson had in mind my doing the Gary Paulson memoir or whatever it is, and when I told her huh uh, I hadn't liked the galley HBJ sent me, she confided/confessed she didn't trust the book and what was she going to do with it? Get Donald Westlake, who took apart the Ken Kesey book for you, say I. Just used him, says Eden. Get Jane Smiley, I say next, she's flying high enough she can say whatever she wants in a review. Well, maybe, says Eden. She did have a good line when I asked her how life was beyond Gary Paulson: said she's been quoting Roy Blount the past week, that she still believes in a town called Hope, Arkansas, but only because there's no place on the map called Fingers Crossed.

--Sarah Ferrill of the ^Sophisticated Traveler, wanting me to write about Bozeman as an American Classic. No way, I told her, I have to live with those people every so often, get one of those famous Bozemanites, David Quammen or Tom McGuane. Admitted to her the NZ/Oz trip, she said she'd really like to have something on NZ, but I think I'm reluctant to do that until we go back there for a less hectic visit; may try do a Perth piece for her to coincide with Heart Earth publication this fall, will talk to her again on Fri.

20 Jan.--Clinton, Marilyn Horne and Maya Angelou all did fine, but what we'll really remember is the muscular windstorm. I hauled our antedeluvian black-and-white tv out of the closet and began more or less watching at 7 this morning, cleaning out a supply closet when the PBS talking heads got too much for me; C had given her classes the morning to watch the inauguration, but she had to put in the class time on campus, so off she went before 8. By the time Marilyn Horne was wonderfully singing "Tis a Gift to be Simple," I was foraying into the hallway to watch the trees on the horizon, so I could dive under a desk if I saw ~~such~~ a wholesale toppling gust coming.

20 Jan. cont.--The wind was really hitting by the time C got home about 10, and at a quarter to 11 the power, which must have flickered 50 times during the morning, went off. The radio has been reporting traffic chaos, both floating bridges closed and the ferry system shut down and traffic lights out, as well as power outages to about 750,000 besides us. So for the 3rd time this winter, we'll fall back on our emergency battery system to nurse us along with the furnace and lights in the study. We're not quite as cleverly prepared as we thought; ransacked the house and could not come up with a simple old socket plug-in which we could have screwed into a light in the study and powered the tv inaugural parade with.

The driveway is carpeted with evergreen branches, and one about as thick as my wrist is hung up in the vine maples in front of the kitchen window, and the ancient fence between us and the Joymers finally has tilted over in what looks like terminal sag; but we're grateful one more time that none of the big trees in front of the house came down on us.

Clinton: looked good, in fact at his best yet, in his inaugural speech. Blessedly and shrewdly short. But then JFK was probably at his best-sounding on this day 32 years ago, and what a helluva lot of woe followed. We have to hope Clinton has some knack for appointing good people--Babbitt at Interior and Browner at EPA would help plenty--and for getting big-ticket items done; the danger is he'll be ~~the~~ duckpecked to death by overseas crises and his penchant for studywonking a topic too long.

28 Jan.--Whew, this is feeling like work. Have put in steady writing days this week on Bucking the Sun--rough drafts, of what may turn out to be only small scenes; but editable pages nonetheless--and plugged away at some finances as well. Begin to wonder if diligence simply begets more chores, as this afternoon has a dispiriting cluster of stuff--trying to find new shoes, testdriving the cars C has singled out for us eventually, some photocopying--I don't look ahead to at all. The weather at least has moderated; raining now, but y'day I actually was able to peel back the tarp over my garden and let a little wan sun on the ground.

Clinton is off to a rocky start, apparently having forgotten that governing is politics, just as campaigning

28 Jan.--is. Warren Christopher apparently sold him on Zoe Baird for Atty General on the basis of her smarts, but nobody there had the political smarts to see the problem with I-had-an-alien-nanny, as Carville and Co. might have. Clinton still isn't out of that, but already into uproar over homosexual rights in the military. For a bunch that was very quick-hitting in the campaign, this Administration hasn't been able to get on track with major issues, and the instantaneous rational apparatus of talkshows etc. is giving it a bad time. The Clintonistas ought to be able to find their balance, but they ain't yet. At least the general trend of the next 4 years, even if it turns out to be wallow, ought not to turn the Supreme Court and the legislative tendency worse, as Reagan and Bush perpetually did.

Feb. 5--Felt like a scrambling week, trying to maintain pp/per day progress on Bucking while dealing w/ Heart Earth sample pages (the text pages were elegant, but the title page had a misguided yin-yang artistic gimmick ~~xx~~ that put Heart in decent straightforward type and Earth in fancypantsy exotic italic; Lee the ^G and I both balked, hard), phone calls and correspondence abt the Utah and Colo. speechmakings later this year, and general desk chores. Bucking the Sun hasn't quite lined itself out down the road yet--I'm still trying to find a way to get the Duff women into the story early--but it maybe turned a corner this week w/ a second scene, after the bodies in the river, of Hugh Duff crazy-gaiting toward the govt. land negotiator, tromping on a grasshopper every step he takes. Then y'day and today, the scene of the Duffs taking on the ~~swarm~~ overnight floor-laying in the Blue Eagle Saloon began going together promisingly.

The weather of this tough winter not only let up, it went springlike. I managed a couple of warm afternoons of garden work, laying soaking hoses into the vegetable-rows-to-be (as I told Carol, I'm finally ready for last summer) and transplanting enough strawb plants to make a border around the rest of the garden and, upon finding a leftover pack of Walla Walla onion seeds, planting them and the twelve or fifteen wintered-over onions from last year's onion bed by the fence.

Feb. 8--Glorious weekend behind us, and I even took a spring feverish bit of time to myself this morning, walking around Green Lake at dawn. This finally is becoming the time of year when my internal clock and the year's get in sync, enough daylight these mornings so that I'm not up 3 or 4 hours before I can get outside. And on the writing, I took today to think, maybe too idly, about character development for *Bucking the Sun*; even slowed myself back into the old routine of reading 10 pp. of the Dictionary of American Regional English daily to tune myself up into how the lingo works.

Sunday was a fine warm day, in which I went giddy and planted the rows of lettuce and spinach while C pitched in on cleaning up the strawb patch; we also walked Green Lake, first thing. Saturday, though, was nothing short of sensational. It dawned bright but still cool, and so while we waited until mid-morning before going up to the Skagit wildfowl refuge, I did the monthly check-over of our finances and found that with my Heart Earth final chunk of advance and the week's stock market runup, January had been a \$100,000 month for us. We two kids of the Thirties think this snowballing accumulation of capital is pretty keen, so we set off in a good mood and found the Skagit in exquisite weather, the Olympics out, the summit of Mt. Baker showing over a scarf of cloud, and the Skagit snowgeese in white profusion at waterline. Then when we went down the finger dike paralleling the South Fork of the river, a golden eagle was perched on a driftwood stump near the river's mouth. Onward from there to lunch at the Rhodendron, probably our favorite food anywhere--Don himself was cooking, as he usually is, and so we had delicious clam bisque, Samish Bay oysters (me) and Cajun chicken (Carol), a couple glasses of Pinot Gris, and, the pair of us at our wildest, splitting a banana split for dessert.

And while I was writing that last sentence, DeWitt Daggett called and answered my (semi-) good-natured nag on his phone machine this morning as to when he's going to pay royalties on the *A River*...audio tape; end of Feb. or early March, says he, which didn't enthuse me (contract says Jan.), but he then said he could tell me the figure, which downright enthralls me: \$20,708. Nothing like having an unintentional national bestseller (# 3 on the PW list today).

9 Feb.--Odd start to the day. I'd just gotten up at 4:35, put the bathroom light on and turned to close the bedroom door so C could sleep until 5, when the light went out. At first figured the closing of the door jostled the quirky bathroom switch, but no, it was a general power outage. I switched over to our emergency system, time #4 this winter, to start the furnace and have lights in the study, then made breakfast by camping lantern, using the emergency plug by the stove to brew coffee, and we ate at our desks. I'd just gone back into the kitchen for our cups of coffee when the power came back on, half an hour outage total; except for our rig of lights at the back of the house, the n'hood had been pitch-black.

Did today's intended 3 pp. on Bucking with no great strain. Mid-morning, Lee G. called to say Macmillan'd not been able to get me a breakfast speaker's slot at the ABA, and he and I about simultaneously suggested there's no real sense of my going to Miami, that being the case. I'm relieved not to have to make that trip, actually. But this leads me to wonder if Macmillan really does get it, that they have to push Heart Earth like crazy to keep me signed on.

Weather has gone showery, but still mild.

11 Feb.--C is determinedly grading her way through this week's blizzard of papers, to clear things for the 3-day weekend coming up, and so I've been pitching in wherever possible, fetching us a tub of Kentucky Fried ^Uchicken to get us through a couple of suppers, doing the laundry in a couple of shifts today, and about to make a recycling run and do some food shopping.

In the midst of the above graf, phone rang with the next chapter of what I instigated y'day, when I out of the blue called Jan Mason on the staff of LIFE magazine and asked her what she knew about getting to Margaret Bourke-White's pics of Fort Peck which starred in the very first issue of the mag. Right away it became about half an intrigue--maybe because, as Jan reported, "about a third of the staff got cut last week" or maybe that's always the way it is around Time/Life/Warnerland--as she dug up for me the phone numbers of the retired head of the LIFE pic collection, Doris O'Neil, and then decided she ought to be my go-between. Today's report from Jan is that Doris called her to say

11 Feb. cont.--she found the Bourke-White negs "in the 9th Avenue warehouse" and she's having a set of contacts made for me, ready next week. Are these wily old Madame DeFarges of T-L really going to bootleg those historic pics to me? So far, so good.

Which probably ought to give me remorse (but doesn't, much) that I spent y'day and today roughing out a sardonic section on that LIFE coverage of Ft. Peck, sometimes called the first photo essay. As essays go, it wasn't much; full of mistakes and skew and cuteness. As best I can tell from B-White's biog, she did her job reasonably well, although amid her career adjustment from shooting machines to shooting people, but the LIFE editors and Macleish slapped the story together.

Anyway, a week of feelable progress on Bucking the Sun, the allotted pp. done thus far this week and only tomorrow 2 to go, and I managed to have y'day afternoon off as well--shopped the U Book Store for diverting paperbacks--and have walked Green Lake a couple of mornings.

16 Feb.--Cold and clear. Not just the weather, but the economic mood. Clinton made it plain on TV last night that ~~he~~ he's going to have to raise taxes; no surprise there that I can see, but the stock market was taking a hammering in the aftermath this morning.

We put in Saturday of C's 3-day weekend (Prez's Day holiday) at Dungeness, in cloudy bright weather, and then Seattle was sunny by the time we got home in late afternoon. Walked Green Lake both other mornings. On Sunday, C helped me look over the couple of different opening sections of Bucking the Sun--we both think the original one, with greater sense of momentum, is the better idea--and I've freshly retyped it, using half a dozen of the best phrases or lines from the other version. Am trying to use this week to sort and organize Bucking material well enough that next week I can try to jerk maybe 20 pp. into being. Suppose I actually got quite a lot done this morning, though this afternoon an energy crash coincided with the SOB at the top of the hill revving up his chainsaw again.

19 Feb.--Friday afternoon, whew. Gray February now, and cold; possible snow, after a ~~night~~ week of real chill and nights s'times into the 20s.

Spent most of the week sorting filecards and organizing *Bucking the Sun*, in the calculated gamble that I can jerk together a whole bunch of pp. next week. I'm apprehensive about what will descend from the outer world--phone was blessedly quiet this week--but will try shut out all I can.

One good call, though. Jan Mason about an hour ago, saying she has the contact sheets of *Bourke-White's Ft. Peck* pics. Said too she's not gone thru the LIFE bureaucracy on this because they'll say either (a) no or (b) send megabucks. Sooo, innocently in the mail...

23 Feb.--May have dodged a bullet that threatened the the planned pp. total of this week: Liz calling y'day to report that Penguin offered Macmillan \$100,000 for the p'back rights on *Heart Earth* and 10-yr relicenses of *Sea Runners* and *English Creek* and a five-year extension of their *Mariah* license. Not clear what the relicensing on this basis would bring us, as Penguin would get to do the divvyng of what they considered they were paying for what, I'm sure with Macmillan having yelping rights in the process; but Liz and I are agreed that our main concern isn't the HE p'back sum, pretty much lost to Macmillan in reserve-against-returns anyway, but the relicensing sums, so she's going to tell Macmillan to separate HE from the process--maybe they can ask a \$75,000 floor bid from Penguin--and let's relicense the other books a little later on, maybe just for a year or so. Within all this is the question of whether I want to stay with Macmillan for the next book, and as I told her that it feels (a) as if Mac'n and I are falling out of love and (b) this will be the book to ask for big \$\$ on or move on, we figured I'd better fax her the lead and synopsis for *Bucking the Sun*. Sooo, after a hard morning's writing, I revised the synopsis and crafted a cover letter with my thinking about why we need to ask big on the next book--in essence, my negotiation with Liz, for her to negotiate with the publishers--and

23 Feb. cont.--at damn near \$30 for 11 pp., I commercially faxed it to her office late y'day afternoon. Figured she and I might have another phone session of pondering, this morning, but no, her call was tranquil; said Bucking the Sun sounds wonderful, the book I was meant to write, etc.--no quibble at all (so far) with my suggestion that we try \$475,000 as the asking price at Mac'n--and she'll go ahead with the separate-Heart-Earth strategy and see what can be done in terms of shorter relicenses. Then this fall, about as Heart Earth comes out, she'll try Bucking the Sun on Mac'n.

24 Feb.--By God, they really, actually came: the contact sheets of Bourke-White's 1936 photographing of Fort Peck and its work and nightlife. Carol is agog with delight, and I'm pretty gogged up myself; it's probably only hemidemisemilegit to have this quietus set of the pics, but they're irreplaceable research and gettable no other way--LIFE would charge a fortune, if the bureaucracy there would even let go of a set of contacts. I have a hunch that Margaret Bourke-White, known for her own gaudy guts, would approve of this quiet packet in the mail today.

Managed to write 4 pp. this morning, 1st unhassled morning of the week thus far, and over the noon hour I had a new radio installed in the '85 Skyhawk, to replace years of aggravation of the old one conking out whenever the car hit a bump a certain way. Had lunch at the vegetarian Sunlight Cafe near the radio instal'n--tried a nutburger; not bad; sure as hell better than it sounds--and walked Green Lake while the car was being worked on. Brilliant clear day; still cold, freezing just about every night the past 10 days or so.

25 Feb.--Another chill clear day, although not as crystalline as y'day. I managed to meet this week's daily average of 4 pp. rough of Bucking, and, another day in the fax lane, sent off to U. of Montana a recommend needed by Bill Kittredge for a research grant; plus doing a couple loads of lanudry, and making a run to the fish store. Walked the loop of the n'hood when I got back from Edmonds, not wanting to squander this weather.

2 March--Back on track today, after a dismally groggy, slow, change-of-weather Monday. Tried to beat the day, by heading at Green Lake for dawn to walk as I'd managed to do several days in the ~~past~~ past few weeks, but by the time I reached about 85th the windshield showed spits of rain. Had a cup of coffee at the reliably mediocre Urban Bakery, but the weather wouldn't be outwaited and so I headed home. Roughed away at the day until I got 2 semi-decent pp.--sketch of the kid, Red from Red Lodge, who I think is going to be the last person to see the pair in the pickup alive--and today I shaped up that and did a rough of the closing off of the river, so that I'm maintaining the 3 pp./day average ^{annual} I want for this week.

Doorbell just rang, it was ~~a~~ black kid with some kind of scam about backing him in a course in public relations. When ~~she~~ told him to come up to the college during office hours and see her about taking a course there, he huffed that it was really rude of us not to have a No Soliciting sign.

Saturday we made another trip to the Skagit wildfowl refuge and then lunch at the Rhododendron, another fine, fine outing. What we think must have been a red-tailed hawk--it was all hunched up and ruffy--was dozing on a low branch not sixty feet from us at the start of the Skagit finger dike, so we had wonderful binocular viewing of that. And there were three sizable flocks of snowgeese along the bay edge. And the Rhododendron was as tasty as ever.

Next day we kicked the house into shape a bit, and C fixed a turkey and green beans and broiled tomatoes and so on for Linda and Syd here for supper. They leave for their spring teaching stint in London in just 3 weeks, so they are hilariously frenzied in their preparations. I told Syd she's going to have to ~~tie~~ tether Linda down, like a balloon on a string, during the actual trip. Linda brought show-and-tell of letters from ~~Lark~~ Alice Quinn at the New Yorker--mumble-mumble about why she hasn't given Linda any decision on the 4 poems she's been holding since October, and still not giving any decision--and from Peter Davison at The Atlantic, asking Linda if she will please submit some poems to him. (She's done so, sent

2 March cont.--him 5, of which she says the best is about Toulouse-Lautrec but Davison won't be able to handle it: "he had a recent poem about tomato soup..." Linda is at work on another of her astonishing mind-leap poems, in which Polish miners--who if I understood her right, work in salt mines where intricate sculptures have been done in salt--come off-shift at night, "a robe of bats" ~~fi~~ flies over them, and their headlamps turn and flash into the sky as they look, which Linda will compare to the flashing turns of a flock of sanderlings. Also out of the evening, we volunteered to take them to the airport for their trip and they snapped the offer right up, so we'll reel on with the Linda-and-Syd-go-to-NY-Boston-London-and-beyond show.

4 March--Good day at the writing. Did 4 fresh pp., and smoothed 3 more, of Neil and Kate's 1st date; considerable swatches of dialogue, which I'm particularly glad to have happen.

So far, March has been rain, wind, humidity. C and I did manage to walk the park between blusters.

Met Tony and Lee at Scotts restaurant last night, first time we've seen them since I think Thanksgiving. They seem thriving, Tony grousing that Lee's got him scheduled--his first eye exam since junior high, for example--and me saying good, good, keep at him, Lee. The food at Scotts--the former old dumb serving-wenchy Clinkerdaggers--was surprisingly good. Gavia, now 8 months, kept the staff charmed at our end of the restaurant, and an image I hope I'll remember is her poised high in mid-air, Tony's big hand under her tummy in a one-handed lift, as high as he could reach over his head, calmly looking around at the dining crowd from up there.

10 March--The kind of week it's been:

Monday: the Audio Press "A River Runs through It" royalty check of nearly \$21,000 came.

Y'day: Liz called about Viking Penguin's new offer on combined Heart Earth & back rights and relicenses of the 3 novels they already have; we're going to see if they'll knock down the relicenses from 10 yrs to 7, but the good news about the deal is that there's a

4 March cont.--possible \$26,500 for us in the relicense portion of the deal.

Today: Sharon Dynak of Mac'n publicity called, to say the Rocky Mountain Book Fair wd like me to participate on Sept. 30, they're paying participants \$1,000.

In between, I'm trying^{to} --so far, am-- maintain pp. progress on Bucking the Sun. This week so far is raggedy as hell, bits and pieces of the Plentywood radical political scene, but on the other hand I may have made an interesting advance this morning in deciding to portray the Bolshevik sheriff, Mott, as an immense half-blind figure.

17 March--Incredible gap in the diary, in the face of all best intentions this spring. I did spend last week churning out the requisite pp. on Bucking--not great stuff, but something editable--and have taken this week to put together the speech for the 3 Utah gigs, read Heart Earth galleys, and if I can, make a start on writing the Missoula speech. Today the HE galleys came, at about 10:29 $\frac{1}{2}$ on Fed Ex's 10:30 deadline, and at virtually the same time I finished recording the practice version of the Utah speech. Tomorrow, when I'm fresh, I'll read galleys; then if there's time and energy on Friday, try to gear into the Missoula speech. I'll lose the last couple of days of next week to the visit of Ben and Jeanne Baldwin, so timeliness is of the essence.

Had lunch with Linda Bierds today, our last before she goes off to teach in London this spring, and as ever, she's a singular joy. Asked me about my writing on Bucking, was it consecutive, and I told her no, it's on attractive or significant scenes, "lighted fuses," as Tony Angell calls his several simultaneous projects. Linda said in contrast she conceives of a poem, I think almost senses or visualizes it, in its form (and I think approximate length) on the page, with the ending mostly in mind, as that's where the message of a poem is.

20 March--Galley's of Heart Earth are read and corrected, back they go to NY on Monday. I spent Th-Fri. on them, C read them y'day and this morning. They're quite clean, except for a few insensate computer dumb line breaks and snafu on small cap typography. As to the book, well, C and I both think it keeps accelerating as it goes, with the final ch. a real hummer.

27 March--Saturday morning, 8:15, a couple of hours of regrouping before we take Ben and Jeanne up to the Skagit, the Rhododendron for lunch, maybe onward to Deception Pass. The Lake Quinault overnight trip worked out well, a remarkably peaceful night in 3rd-floor rooms in the Lodge's new motel unit, up amid cedar boughs. Ben and Jeanne did the nature trail walk with us when we arrived Thurs. afternoon, and at least to my surprise, the next morning went up the Fall Creek trail with us as far as the bridge. Even the seafood they ordered for dinner--Ben had jumbo prawns, from god knows where: Peru?--was good, while Carol and I, trying to stick to local fare which we figured had the best chance of being decent, ordered salmon which came overcooked. The weather has been cooperating miraculously, blue skies for the trip to Quinault and then y'day on the drive along the west side of Hood Canal. We even lucked into a good lunch spot, the Timber House in Quilcene, where Carol and Jeanne had terrific hamburgers and Ben and I good barbecue sandwiches. So far, so good.

And, I think to everybody's entertainment, last night Hollywood called. Richard Green called to convey the status of Jim Sadwith's interest in Sky for a tv mini-series (the phone machine had a message from Liz asking me to call her on Mon., probably about the same thing), so C and I parsed through for Ben and Jeanne the dubious aspects of such offers. Will need to talk more with Richard and Liz, but right now my inclination is simply to turn down the mini-series overture unless there's some prospect of realizing \$150,000 out of it, which I suspect is about four times what will be offered.

To my surprise, I managed to bang out the Missoula

27 March cont.--speech by the time the Baldwins got here Wed. afternoon. That old verity, meet the damn deadline because something else (like tv mini-series offers) will press in on you before you know it, holds again. So, while both the Utah and Montana speeches may need fine-tuning, I pretty much have the dreaded chore of speechwriting behind me now, and can move back into working on Bucking the Sun.

2 April--This is greatly more like it. Y'day was sloggy, first day back at making ms pages, and it took some doing to turn out 2 pp. Today, I've done 3 by 10:30--pretty decent dialogue between Darius and Easter, I think--and will have some time this afternoon to plan toward next week's writing.

C just came back in from chores, saying the gray Skyhawk probably is still leaking oil; smoke poured out from under the hood as she went down to walk Green Lake this morning, consequence of having had the car worked on by the mechanic we thought we'd been lucky to find. Hard to gain.

Until my side of the worklife seems to have steadied today, the week was full of business phone calls:

--Idz, reporting that because the "basketing" of the 3 paperback renewals and the Heart Earth advance puts it in the financial category of a "major" deal, Penguin sub. rights dept. won't pay us the \$26,500-for-renewals upon signing, but will cut it up into \$10,500 on signing and two subsequent payments next year when they pay Mac'n the HE installments. On the other hand, she did get the deal limited to 7-yr renewals, with one-year increments for Penguin if the books don't earn out, to limit of 10-yr total.

--After telephone tag much of the week with the movie agent Richard Green, during a few days when I was too groggy with allergy to want to deal with Hollywood, last night I told Richard that C and I have counted our \$ and decided it'd take \$200,000--or \$150,000 in a pinch--to really interest us in a House of Sky deal, and further that I'm not game to indemnify Sadwith or anybody else for portrayals of the characters--which, natch, they TV- or moviemaker gets to do the portraying of and I'm

2 April--supposed to stand good for. Also asked him to pass along Heart Earth to Catherine Wyler, etc. So he'll take the \$200,000 terms to Sadwith, putative mini-series maker, and see what happens; Richard heartily agreed when I told him my experience has been that Sadwith is a tightwad with expensive doberman pinscher lawyers. He also said he doesn't think "the chubby lady is going to sing," on this one.

--Then some dickering with DeWitt Daggett on the audio taping of Heart Earth, and then dickering with Leigh Feldman of Liz's office who ostensibly handles the contract; the result likely will be DeWitt and me taping HE here in June, with that \$1,000 advance the only semi-firm imminent money of the whole week.

We took Tues. and went to Dungeness, through unpromising weather, and had a good dry hike. Plan to go again Sat. after tomorrow.

5 April--Bastardly tough day. Began well enough, when C and I walked Green Lake first thing this morning and were treated to the sights of a pintail duck and an eagle, both at close range. But I knew it was going to hard to gear up the writing today, as I don't have the submersion into the material to make the final 15 pp. needed before our trip come easily. Also, the gray car was leaking oil--consequence of our good intentions of last week, when we had it worked on--and so C had to take it back to the mechanic, and I put the phone machine off in case she needed to call for a ride. Instead when the phone rang it was Nancy Scott of the San Francisco Examiner, working on an obituary of Wallace Stegner; it may not be needed, as he's survived the weekend after being in a car wreck in Santa Fe, but.. That was a kick in the heart, then the phone rang again, not Carol again but the Missoula prof in charge of my speech there, pretty much starting from scratch on logistics I thought we'd resolved months ago. And to my own detriment, I'd misremembered the due date on royalties from Harcourt Brace, and so the House of Sky money I'd been brooding about isn't due until the 25th of this month. All in all, I managed to get only one page written today, and will have to see if I can get underway better the rest of this week.

11 April--Easter Sunday of rain, and C and I are glad we chose y'day to hike Dungeness Spit. Drove through showers to get there and the Olympic Mtns stayed cloud-shrouded and broody all day, but the Spit itself was wonderful, sunny, springlike; with the dark clouded-in outlines of shore along Vancouver Island and our own side of the Strait, the water was a brilliant silver. Saw sea lions and seals, and among the usual welcome diving birds, some ^{AG}hatched grebes with their wonderful vivid pompadours. On the bay side of the spit, tiny flowers not much bigger around than a toothpick were breaking into blossom.

And on Friday I reached 100 pp. of draft on Bucking the Sun; scattered and uneven as usual at this point of the process, but some of it I think unusually good for 1st-2nd draft.

C. meanwhile has been perfecting our big western trip plans, finding place after place that offers bargain rates; the motel-chains must have overbuilt like hell in the Rocky Mtn. states. I'm beginning to get matters in hand for the trip--major things, like the pair of speeches, are already done, but tomorrow or maybe even today I'm trying to whip the couple of other appearances in Missoula, the faculty seminar and the Eng. Dept. reading. Have decided to go for broke in both.

The only nag at the moment is at the hinge of my jaw, or anyway somewhere back there in jaw-ear-wisdom tooth territory; am having some discomfort in chewing with those back molars on the left side when I eat, and so will need to vie my way into Group Health tomorrow or the next day.

What else, from the week: seems long ago, but actually was only about mid-week when Lee Goerner called, sounding remarkably happy for him, to say the Penguin paperback purchases have been resolved, I'll be getting about \$13,000 for the Eng. Creek/Mariah/Sea Runners end of things on signing and \$6,000+, each, on HE Punguin publication a year from this fall and 6 mos. after that. Richard Green called w/ latest on Sadwith Seeks House of Sky, saying S's people say why no, a tv mini-series is not what they have in mind at all but a feature film; as this may be just one more ploy in their effort to

11 April-cont.--get hold of the property, I sighed and told Richard to put them off until fall, I want to see how Heart Earth does and whether anybody grown-up comes along for Sky.

Wed. night, Ann and Marsh drove us out to Jenmy's Wok in deepest Mill Creek, a helluva trek but the food was as sensational as ever and the Nelsons as hilarious. Ann had been a bit down about the quartet of rejections as Marsh tries to place her mystery novel, but she came by the next day with New Mexico material for us and sunnily reported that the Ladies Home Journal, which had bollixed her year-ago piece for them on long-time marriages by shoehorning in a sex angle, called offering her another assignment; without thinking, Ann stormed into the phone: "Not if it's got anything to do with sex!" She said there was a great pause at the other end, then the LHJ editor warily saying, well, she thought Ann might find this a more acceptable topic.

19 April--Yow, what a week last one was. Where to begin: Wallace Stegner died, Bud Ringer died. Stegner was in an intersection crash in ~~Santa Fe~~ Santa Fe late last month and the afteraffects--pneumonia, I was told--finally took him, on April 13. I was called early the next morning by Donn Fry at the Seattle Times, wanting me to write a memorial piece, and I put in all that day on it, a 1200-worder done by a few min. before 5 that night. Jesus, Stegner leaves an empty place in the western skyline; in the piece, I called him a one-man Mount Rushmore.

And Bud, last of my mother's family, caged in body-crippling multiple sclerosis for, what, 38 years? Carol took Dave Ringer's phone report on the funeral; Alma was there, as Joyce was for Wally's--that reverse etiquette dumfounds us, the wives who walked out ~~when~~ coming back for the funerals. Bud's long crippling was a heartbreaking thing; Paul was the only one of that family granted a fairly swift death, with Wally and Bud and my mother all in their long afflictions.

Amid the news of life and death, the phone kept going off, to an extent I can't even reproduce: 2 photogs (one of them the eminent Wayne Sourbeer of W Bros tv-ing)

19 April cont.--wanting to do books of some kind with me (no way, guys), long contumacious call w/ Sharon Dynak of Macmillan publicity over the Denver booktour situation this fall--i.e., I'm probably not going to get to read and sign at The Tattered Cover because everybody is yielding to the Denver Book Fair, ~~xxx~~ a species which in my experience has always been a half-assed affair--and continuing delay on the Heart Earth cover, to the point where a version will now have to be Fed Exed to me at the Malones' in Bozeman next Mon.; and so on. Amid it all, I worked out an outline for the damned faculty seminar that goes with the UMontana speech, put together a reading from the last ch. of Heart Earth, and C and I ph'copied for safekeeping the 100 pp. of the Bucking the Sun ms. Oh yes, I also spent Mon. afternoon with the old Ft. Peck engineer Jerry Van Faasen, having him look over the Bourke-White pics with me; helped considerably, as the proof sheets don't have any caption material.

Well, away from it all, sort of, tomorrow when we head off to Missoula and the launch of the 5-week trip.

21 April, in the Village Red Lion in Missoula, looking out at the Clark Fork--Spectacular weather that we had y'day for the drive from Seattle is continuing this morning, clear and brisk. We have definitely alit into Missoulanness: a zigzag stream of hikers going up the path to the M on Mount Sentinel while a hang-glider soared over them, while down here on the river fly-fishermen tried out their fancy casts; and at night, a dinner replete w/ good friends, good food and stories. Margaret Kingsland gave the dinner, and besides Jim and Lois Welch and us, there was Annick and eventually Bill Kittredge, after he'd taught an evening class, Margaret's beau John from Fact & Fiction bookstore, and Nancy Cook, who's teaching Western Lit at UM and her mate Tom (Bowerman?), whose job is at Clark U. in Mass. but is out here on sabbatical. An uproarious session during dinner when Jim and Lois reported that Jim's editor, Gerry Howard, has not liked the title Killing Custer for Jim's next book, and amid our chorus that we thought it was a terrific title, Annick put in that it could be subtitled "And Then We Ate His Balls" (as the Indian women did). No, said Margaret, "The Testicle Festival at the Little Bighorn." And the evening ultimately produced another for the trove of Dick Hugo stories. I'd mentioned the constant fly-fishermen outside our motel window here, all that fishing and no catching, and Bill said Hugo once came down here to the confluence of Rattlesnake Creek and the Clark Fork, just about where our room is, to try the fishing and caught a nice one. Hugo chortled, went home, came down the next day to try it again, found about a dozen fishermen elbow to elbow on the spot. "What the hell's going on?" asked Hugo. One of the fishermen said, "Weren't you around when the fat guy caught one here?"

So far so good, on stamina for all this traveling and all else. Y'day's drive was likely the longest of the whole trip, and while my back did feel it, I came out of that and the usual difficulty of getting to sleep after an evening event feeling good this morning. We got off to a strong early start y'day, about 5:30, and never did hit much traffic; also listened to

21 April cont.--several cassettes of the Books On Tape Version of The Cruel Sea, greatly helping to pass the time.

22 April--Missou, Missou. On the rocky bar of the Clark Fork outside our motel room window, a pair of pheasants are nesting, letting out a proprietary squawk about every fifteen minutes.

Last night seems to have been a triumph. Good crowd, as C noted in her notepad diary, and I found a pace to the speech that seemed to work. Kittredge did a great introduction, which included a piece of lore I love to have him spread--his recollection, revisionist or not, of reading the bound galley of This House of Sky and saying to himself, This ~~is~~ is it; Winter in the Blood in '74, A River Runs through It in '76, and now this: we've got a western literature underway. Bill also read as part of his intro the rejection letters of Sky in the preface to the anniversary edition, and then the WSS bars scene; one more time, good-o, Bill K.

Fared better y'day in talking to people I really wanted to--Bill Farr before dinner at the UM pres's house, Annick and Bill K. and Juliette add Bill Bevis during dinner--or who turned out to be really okay--y'day's lunch crowd of profs Dave Emmons & Bob Lindsay and their history students Kim Davitt (doing a paper on Evelyn Cameron, Mary McClain of Butte and one other woman artist of late 19th-early 20th c. Montana), Fred Westereng (master's thesis on USFS in 1970's) and Ken Lockridge's grad student who he talked into following him here from U. of Michigan, Sara Salan (master's thesis on Sherburne Merc family papers, the Browning store where we shopped when we ran sheep on the Reservation; her family's related to Tom Salansky of the Dupuyer country, and she was thrilled when I told her the h'back cover of English Creek is based on Carol's pic of the Tom Salansky ranch). Indeed, y'day's making conversation went so well I figure the law of averages is going to doom me today.

25 April, Helena, in Dave and Marcella's TV room-- Sunday morning, after y'day's jaunt toward the Sixteen country (as far as crossroad to Ringling, before we decided that was enough mud) and Ringling with Marcella in the Walters' 4-wheel-drive rig. Dave meanwhile was moving his things from the MHS library to his new office downstairs, as senior historian for the Society. Now, at 7:10, I've been up a couple of hours, had breakfast and read the GF and Helena papers; laundry is roaring and C is upstairs having b'fast. We'll rejig the car and head on to Bozeman by late morning. Been a good recuperative visit, not chock-a-block with people as Missoula always is, and I've had a couple nights of pretty good sleep after Mazoo's overstimulation.

C tells me I can put the broom on the mast to signify a clean sweep in Missoula, every event going well. The "seminar" Th. afternoon turned into ~~a~~ a crowd of about 140, who broke out in applause after I'd read the opening scene off Bucking the Sun. Next, that night's reading from Heart Earth drew a good big audience, exceedingly attentive. As ever here in Montana, a dizzying crisscross of people coming up to say hello--Butch Lauffer's daughter, a UM student who looked like the gamin reincarnation of Butch from our high school days; Ciddy Burdell's niece, also a UM ~~student~~ student; an elderly man named, I think, Fernond Tuttle who'd been the Liggett & Meyers cigarette sales rep who called on Mike Ryan's store in Ringling; Sue Talbot, who was such great company for us on Gov's ~~Wax~~ Award night here a couple of years ago; Bob Reid, still writing and copping; and dozens of others. (Nearly forgot one of the best augurings of Missoula, the booksigning in the student center wher~~e~~ I signed steadily for 1½ hrs, without even the new book.) Afterward, a couple of drinks at Bevis's with Lois, Annick and Ripley; earlier, we'd taken Lois to the Alley Cat for her birthday dinner; and at noon I'd had another lunch with faculty and grad students, again a good group working on good stuff--Todd on the formation of USFS wilderness policy, John on the reconsideration of USFS let-it-burn policy after '88

25 April cont.--fire season, and Sally on mission schools on Navajo reservation. Dave last night provided me with a senior paper a Carroll College student, one of Bob Swartout's, had done on Wellington D. Rankin; that and the UM students' topics seems to me greatly better stuff than my UW era of grad students did. At that second ~~lunch~~ lunch I also met Dan Flores, the new western historian in the UM endowed chair, and I think he'll be great in the job; Dave said Dan came to the Society a day this week and told them they will be seeing UM grad students using the MHS holdings next year, no more casual topics out of the UM basement archives.

Speaking of archives, C and I got in a greatly useful short-but-full day at the MHS on Friday, ph'copying Fort Peck pics and, in C's case, the mic¹film Gt. Falls and Glasgow n'paper stories on the dam slide. So far so good on this trip thus far; my only complaint is the old incurable one, that so much happens I can't keep mental track of it all.

26 April--In the MSU Special Collections, while it snows heavier and heavier outside. C will be here in 15 min. or so and I'll call it a day, having done pretty well on Bucking research (Owen Duff's MSU bgnd).

29 April, Fort Collins--Don't time fly when you're havin' fun. Hard to believe that the great Heart Earth ^{cover} contretemps has happened since I began to make that April 26 entry, but in Bozeman the Fed Ex package w/ the proposed cover was waiting for us at the Malones', and both C and I despised it--confusing lettering which made the title look like HEARTH EARTH, HEART HEARTH or HEARTH HEARTH, depending on how your eye flicked, and a photo of sky (on a book about a beloved piece of earth) which didn't look like Montana (the bit of foreground trees and ridge indeed proves to have been Arizona) and overlaying it all, a Phoenix postmark from the book, proving utterly that the designer didn't get the book. I called to tell Lee G. I was exercising my contract veto of the cover; he checked and said he couldn't find that clause in this contract, although he too thought it'd been in there (which would simplify his life by giving him an

29 April cont.—easy out w/ Barry Lippman, his boss, who liked the damnable cover); so I said okay, then consider this an official authorial snit. Lee began passing that up through to Barry, while I called Liz and she said she'd better intervene. We spent the past couple of days in Wyoming's open spaces, so the best chance to check in again on all this was this morning, and among the results are:

—Liz hated the cover version, once it was shown to her (and she had her own snit about not being shown it earlier), even more than I did, and told Lee she'd been through this cover situation with Barry before, the man has no taste in covers and should be told so. Lee, after a pause, said: "You want me to freshen up my resume, too?" (Which in turn made Liz marvel to me about Lee, "He does have a sense of humor!")

—Lee, after all this and maybe most effectively a letter from sales rep Jon Rantala, has the Macmillan bureaucracy supposedly turned toward the direction of a House of Sky-like cover, on the blinding insight on somebody's ~~part~~ part (which I've preached since the start) that offending Sky's constituency is not the way to launch this book. Lee doubted that a cover could be readied by the time of May 8-10 sales conference, but maybe.

This morning I've also put in calls to Sharon Dynak about the Colorado bookselling schedule, in which it looks as if my balkiness may have got us a Tattered Cover signing as well as the Book Fair stuff I'm skeptical of, and with Carol's inspiration that I likely can do a Ft. Collins or Colo. Springs signing the day I fly in to Denver, that's all looking better ~~than~~ than it did; and to Chuck Rankin, who wants (a) a Stegner memorial piece and (b) my ~~participa~~ participation in a Stegner symposium. Told him I'd send him a copy of my Seattle Times piece, and no on the symposium (although I'll now probably have to resist Kittredge on a Missoula symposium too, as Chuck's would have been at MSU in connection w/ the Stegner Chair endowment fund there).

Except(?) for this kind of stuff, the vacation part of the trip is supposed to have begun, and after a good drive on the 27th along the Yellowstone from

29 April cont.--Bozeman to Billings, a good lunch ~~at~~ at the bake shop there, and some more interesting country on into Sheridan, Wyoming, the Interstate afternoon on into Casper was dull. So the sidetrip we took yesterday, by way of Independence Rock to Rawlins, turned out to be a great idea--at the urging of the rest-area keeper, we climbed on top of Indpce Rock to see the carved signatures there and look ahead, as the Oregon Trail wagoners did, to Devil's gate and Split Rock. Looking out across that flat sparse-except-for-sage plain, something I wondered: how in the world did the wagon trains (which supposedly bore 350,000 people west in the 1841-69 span of the trail) manage to graze their draft stock, let alone any livestock?

At Devil's Gate the BLM has a good viewing area where you walk a circle of explanatory signs; strong sense there of what a change of country at last, of starting to get there, must have greeted the Oregon Trail people at Devil's Gate and its Sweetwater River and decent camping places.

Wyoming, with only about half as many people, is emptier than Montana ever thought of being, and y'day's drive, after lunch in Rawlins to Laramie, is amazing, the freeway arcing over horizons with constant snow-fences and their 4-foot remainder drifts and, C noted, perpetual "Strong winds possible next 5 Miles" signs--erected every 5 miles! She pointed out too, as we drove from Laramie (after looking over the UWyoming campus a little), that Wyoming had been given about 100 yards off pines, and then comes the Colorado state line and everything looks like, well, Colorado.

May 1--About to leave Ft. Collins, this morning, the next stop the Tattered Cover in Denver. We were having lunch downtown at Coopersmith's yesterday, chatting w/ Jacque Rieux of the Stone Lion bookstore, when here came Joyce Meskis of the Tattered Cover and Ann (whose last name I didn't catch) of Schwartz's bookstore in Milwaukee--ABA panjandrums everywhere. Jacque is moving his store across College St. to a big old dead Woolworth's on the corner, which will provide greatly more space and an upstairs area to share with a

May 1 cont.--restaurant; says he already has a legion of customers lined up as volunteers to help with the hellacious move this summer. Jacque filled us in a bit on Stegner's last days; the Santa Fe speech ~~he~~ he gave was at a Mountains and Plains Booksellers award ceremony, and with James Galvin on hand for an award for The Meadow, Stegner said something about passing the mantle to a new generation of writers--and the next day his auto accident came.

Thursday night, Peter Reeburgh, a soph at CSU, walked us around campus--pretty much the whole campus--and then we went to a sports bar west of campus for supper, where for the first time in my life I had chicken-fried chicken (done like a chicken-fried steak; pretty good, actually) while Peter had a double chicken-and-chips, which ultimately made him declare it was plenty of food even for him. C ate maidenly, at least in comparison to our chicken gorges. Pete is turning handsome, and evidently settling down in college work after a freshman year of declaring independence; with a brace on his right wrist from a sprain caused by a failed pogo-stick wheelie maneuver on his mountain bike, a hacking cough from a cold, and a semi-scruffy room (but with a view of the Front Range, and his U.S. flag from his Eagle Scout status) in a scruffy ten-story dorm, he's probably a reasonable portrait of CSU studentry.

Y'day morn, opportunely before the clouds and wind came in, we drove up the Cache le Poudre (prnced Pooder, of all damned possibilities) river canyon as far as Rustic, about 40 mi. A great drive, the clear river snaking through varieties of rock formations, some cathedral-like, some bouldery. Came back to town, bought ourselves each a pair of SAS walking shoes which seem blessedly comfortable (in my case, after a pair of Nikes which inexplicably got stiffer and sorer the longer I wore them). Ft. Collins has done well by us, a pleasant newish town with a great anchor in the old downtown square. Now, onward south.

May 5, Santa Fe--Cloudy morning, with forecast of a showery day, so we intend to make a museum-going day of this. Y'day we went to Pecos Nat'l Monument, a marvelous site--the remnants of Pecos pueblo in the pinon-and-juniper Pecos River valley, under Glorieta Mesa; handsome visitors' center done with Greer Garson's \$ help; and wonderful weather for walking the pueblo site, with hawks soaring over the field where the Apaches pitched their tepees when they came to trade with the pueblo.

This Ft. Marcy Compound condo is working out well for us--gimmicky art on the walls, and a VCR which stymied us last night until the maintenance man managed to jiggle its power cord just-so, are the only flaws we find--and I think I'm getting acclimated to the altitude, which left me a little drowsy, sporadically lethargic, the first couple of days here. Will see, today, in hoofing around to museums, how revived or not I am.

Santa Fe is lovely--Carol says it's what Tucson would be like if Tucson hadn't had its growth surge toward a million, as Santa Fe yet may--with perplexing sloshes of trendiness and dilettantism. First night here, we took a look at Casa Sena, recommended to us as a dinner place, at about 5; it was deserted, and since it was a little early for dinner, we came back to the condo and had a drink, then went back downtown--to find Casa Sena thronged at 5 min. to 6. We took harbor that night, and last night as well, in the bar of the La Fonda, where the snack menu is pretty good and the people-watching is terrific. Last night's lineup of non-tourists at the bar included a guy, I don't know whether he was Hispanic or Indian, with the taut, carved facial lines--haunting cheekbones--of the tortured Christ-on-a-cross carvings in old churches in this part of the world. Meanwhile at the table next to us was a business group, bossed by a massive guy in yellow golf shirt and green polyester beltless slacks who was the equivalent of a Macy's-parade balloon of George Babbitt; amid the 3 pitchers of margaritas that table was swilling down while we were there, the big guy asked the middle-aged workaday Hispanic waitress if she was married and since she wasn't, meet Joe here who's also single, and in the business buzzsawing of

May 5 cont.--this social "mixing," big guy also dispatched one of his staff who was being transferred with a "I'm going to miss you, but..." Amid this, nightly, a (different) old jewelry maker comes by the tables to see if anybody wants to buy; mid-19th century colliding w/ the late 20th.

Sunday, after driving down from Colorado Springs (and walking around Trinidad, Colo., an old town we liked a lot, with its vintage buildings and brickwork) we stayed overnight with Mike and Patti Olsen in Las Vegas, N.M. Mike, at 48, now has 20 years in at NM Highlands Univ., and to my delight has become the one of us, out of Carstensen's UW grad students of my era, who's a hands-on, researching western historian; he's tracing out portions of the Santa Fe Trail, and he and a Nat'l Parks colleague found in the NM Archives a diary, I guess from 1821, giving the first Hispanic sighting of Anglos coming on the Trail. We enjoyed Mike and Patti's big 100-year-old western house, a place ~~usable~~ we could move right into and feel at home, and talking with Mike about Australian and New Zealand writing

Monday, as Patti went off to teach middle-grades and Mike to be dept. chair and teach the U.S. survey course and high-school-junior Solveig to star in the NMHU production of Grease, we headed along the east side of the Sangre de Cristos, searching out Rociada and its beautiful valley, from Oliver LaFarge's best book, the little memoir of his wife's family, Behind the Mountains. Then over the mountains to Taos, and on down to Santa Fe.

May 9--Sunday in Santa Fe, before we push on to Durango early tomorrow morning. A windy day--windchill factor this morning was 26 degrees--alternating between clouds and perfect clarity to the Jemez Mtns. I'm luckily feeling better today, after a fairly beat-up mood y'day; combination of either a cold or rampant allergy, and a pulled frontal thigh muscle which must have happened on the cliff ladders at Bandelier (although, mysteriously, it didn't bother me until getting out of bed the next morning; felt terrific at Bandelier). Carol has taken up the slack left by my physical droop, and will likely have to continue to today, in packing the car.

9 May cont.--Santa Fe has been splendid in a lot of ways, but we both seem to feel a week is about enough. Unexpectedly, the La Fonda Hotel has proved to be our harbor, as we repeatedly fetch up there for a beer and supper in the bar when some other place is too crowded (or, as La Tertulia was the other night when it overwhelmed us with less-than-minor-league paella, too disappointing to go back to), and it's been a marvel for people-watching. The ~~pretty~~ moneyed pretty--or more often semi-pretty; behind us last night sat a couple in new cowboy hats, handsome couple until you saw their characterless eyes and heard them whine about this or that--sloshed in in a weekend wave last night.

17 May--My account of this trip went into a nose-dive--a snuffling, sneezing nose--with the cold I caught in Santa Fe. (And which Carol is now undergoing, in what may be the messiest day of her cold's onset.) We'll leave Moab in about an hour and a half, north to Green River and then freewaying west toward Richfield, Junction, and my resumption of work, tonight's speech at the Piute County Consolidated High School. I'm afraid this final week of the trip may be dismal and wearing for Carol--she's good at gritting through an illness, but colds in motel rooms are a tough proposition--but we both think the trip so far has been truly extraordinary. The mesa-canyon-fanciful rock country has been interesting ever since we topped the rise west of Bernalillo, N.M., on the way to the Four Corners. After Durango and Mesa Verde, we made a slanted U route, down to Monument Valley and then trending north-northeast, and so almost all week, until we dropped down into the canyon of the Colorado River here at Moab, we've been comfortably within sight of the landmarks we've come to know in this wide-open arc of country--Lone Cone, near David Lavender's old ranch, over in Colorado, out by itself from the Delores Peaks and the La Platas; Lone Mesa and Mesa Verde's combined immense platform-on-the-horizon; the humped Corrizo Mtns ~~in~~ Arizona corners onto New Mexico; the compact Abajo (Blue) Mtns. up behind Blanding and the La Sals a bit larger version behind Moab here. It

17 May cont.--has all made for a week ~~far~~ of watching the immense earthcracks and upheavals trace through our route; for what must have been 3 days, we kept cropping onto another scalloped section of Comb Ridge, for instance.

It has been a visually stunning week, as C said a sensory overload. Probably both of us found Mesa Verde the most magical place; Arches Nat'l Park, y'day, particularly the trail out to Landscape Arch, was fantastic in the fundamental sense of that word; and the almost profligate, here-by-damn-is-the-West-&-Southwest route into the Needles district of Canyonlands Nat'l Park was amazing: a first 10 miles of Montana-like sage basin and ridge range country, then a drop into a green bottomland between the high red cliffs, then the valley widening and widening into the panorama of rock formations.

And the base camp at the end of it, Moab, full of ~~xx~~ vehicles antlered with mountain bikes, fine food at the Center Cafe run by Tim and Gretchen Buckingham, a nicely serviceable newish motel here at the Moab Valley Inn, and the Colorado River running high--chocolate-milky in color and carrying driftwood up to the size of major trees, a sullen old grinding river in spate--just out of town.

20 May--In Salt Lake City, in the hotel room from Hell. Room 211 in the Peery Hotel is already becoming a Doig family joke, now that C and I are getting over our colds enough to have a sense of humor about it, but the small, old, awkward, stuffy room truly did look grim y'day, when we had dogged the front desk staffers into getting us into a room as early as possible to assuage Carol's cold. Such a room; the Peery is full of a convention of brokers, and despite the months-ago reservation by Delmont Oswald of the Utah Humanities Council--Delmont is a genuine aesthete, and was mortified last night by our report on the room--the hotel simply handed us the leftover room after giving the refurbished bigger ones to the brokers. So, onward this afternoon to the small town of Roosevelt, where the motel will at least start off with our grateful presumption that

20 May cont.--"at least it isn't the Peery." The rockiest lodging of the trip aside, y'day's doings went well enough, with my voice and energy recovered enough that I performed the speech well last night in Layton, a Lynnwood-type bedroom community which surprisingly produced a crowd of about 350; signed books afterward for nearly 45 min. Interview by Ogden newspaper reporter Jeanelle Bidingier seemed to go well, too, and amid the draggy time-killing while we waited to get into the Peery, I took C out to the Waking Owl bookstore near the U. of Utah campus and we had a good visit with mgr. Nancy Rosen, formerly of the magical Country Bookshelf in Bozeman. And Delmont redeemed himself with dinner last night, terrific ~~fine~~ Italian food at the Baci Trattoria ~~in~~ near the hotel. C and I didn't catch the last name of the couple he invited to dinner w/ us, but Bonnie is head of the state arts council and her husband Dean--who made his money in a security-lock business of some kind--owns a big ranch east of here; the Oregon Trail celebration people were out there y'day, he said, fencing in the "Donner spring," the first water the ~~first~~ ill-fated Donner party came onto after leaving the Great Salt Lake area, I guess. They own 2 Maynard Dixon paintings, among other art holdings, and as both Bonnie and Delmont by dint of their jobs are "liberal" Mormons/Utahns, coping against censorship forces etc. (although with Delmont it also seems a genuine personal bent; he told a heartfelt story driving home from Layton last night of defending Ironweed to book groups who were offended by the "dirty" sex--the characters were physically dirty, was their complaint; and in Bonnie's case, she said she thinks some of the tensions of defending, and having to defend, controversial art are good for her), they made for good dinner companions.

24 May--Home, into the almost eye-stinging green of Seattle. In something of a long pull but not a particularly hard one because of good weather and light traffic, we simply kept coming y'day from Boise, and after restorative Reuben sandwiches in Ellensburg we skimmed into our driveway just after 7. Partly by luck of an enchanted clear blue 70-degree day and partly from comparison of the desert and oasis country we'd been in for a month, the Puget Sound country and Seattle truly do look ravishing--coming over ~~Snoqualmie~~ Snoqualmie Pass, the road down y'day was a tunnel of green, then both Baker and Rainier were standing out in almost touchable clarity, then downtown Seattle was in profile against the blue skyline of the Olympics.

Am not going to do a full Utah-Boise entry at the moment, as I'm determined to ~~spend~~ spend a little time each day reflecting on the trip and its country--i.e., the West, which has a number of new corners for me after these past 5 weeks on its roads. Do want to enter, though, that the financial news waiting in the mail was damn good--HBJ royalties, mostly on the re-issued h'back Sky, totaling \$13,545.

2 June--3 p.m., a mild bit of diarying before I go back to labeling slides from our trip. Have had a little more energy today, so--this morning--banged out the speech for Shorewood High School honors night tomorrow night, did a bit of bank business, and got on the phone, then and this afternoon, to Montana bookstores about the schedule of booksignings. Surprisingly, with most of the bookstore people heard from, no kinks in the plans yet. Most eyebrow-raising report from any of them: Kathy Whidden at Hastings in Great Falls recently had Tim Cahill for a signing, sold a total of 2 books.

C. made a diary entry about our Memorial Day rainout, but foodfest-as-planned here at our place. Pleasant enough, but boy, this is tough weather, so rainy it's hard even to get in the minimum 4 laps of the hill park I try to do every day, and a later-in-the-day 2nd round of walking just has not happened at all since we've been home. Then too, last night during supper, at the first clap of thunder the electricity went off, I think for

2 June cont.--the fifth time since, say, Nov. In disgust we immediately decided to go out to a movie--Like Water for Chocolate, nifty magical-realism movie in most of its parts, quite funny.

Ah, and this morning's moment when Carol talked to a real estate agent on the phone about our gameness to look around for another house; told her I felt the earth shift under our feet, right then. Not yet, she claimed, we're just looking.



June 10 - It's come to this: catching up on diary in SeaTac while waiting for Maurice & Elspeth to arrive. Today seems to have been particularly hectic - beginning w/ a long phone talk w/ Sharon Dyniak at Macmillan publicity, midway thru which I realized (a) the marketing-meisters @ Mac'm have put budget clamps on Sharon which affects our freedom to schedule, without showing any evidence so far that they're putting the contractual promo'l sum into action in ads etc. and (b) Mac'm is shutting up shop next Wed. while the whole company goes on a boat ride around Manhattan I. - a sarcastic salute to Robert Maxwell before the company gets sold? (Sharon said ~~in~~ the in-house joke is, the good news that there's a boat ride, the bad news that there're no life jackets. Meanwhile, it's coming down to Lee Garner's last afternoon - tomorrow - before his summer trip, to try get the HE cover to emerge from art dept.

So, I'm in essence hunkering in to take care of the homeland - the Mont. - Puget Sound - Denver - SF Bay core of bookstores - while telling Mac'm it's up to them to come up w/ anything ~~more~~ to make me stretch my efforts beyond that.

Meanwhile. DeWitt Daggett & I

June 10 conY. - whipped thru . audio re-
cording of Heart Earth in 3 days; it
seemed so easy, it spoiled both of us
Calvinist workaholics a little.

15 June--A dab of pp. done in the airport, now an end-
of-day dab most of a week later; one of the discontents
of this summer is the scrambling-to-keep-up which
doesn't leave time for the diary. But to try, for a
moment:

Maurice Shadbolt and Elspeth Sandys arrived in good
style from San Francisco (where they de-jetlagged for
a few days after their flight from New Zealand) the
morning of the 10th. We fed them crab that night,
took them to the U Book Store--where Maurice stocked up
on Stegner paperbacks, and we introduced them to Lee
Soper--and then to the Art Museum to see the coastal
Indian masks etc., then an inspired improvisation by
Carol, lunch at Maximilien's in the Market; excellent
French food, and a good view for the guests. They
headed to Vancouver, BC, to visit Maurice's sister the
next morning, and no sooner were Carol and I relaxing
into a rare day outside than commotion began next door
at the Joyners', which proved to be the moving-in of two
half-grown Doberman pinschers which Peris is keeping for
a buddy of his for a month. The barking has ranged from
atrocious to merely annoying, and my effort to let ~~know~~
Peris know--over the backyard fence, with his head out
his bedroom window, through a storm of Doberman uproar--
that this wasn't working out from our side of things,
evidently only set him further into defensiveness. So,
we'll see how the hell this develops; thus far, we can't
walk into our back yard or onto our patio without the
dogs erupting.

Onward to better news, the re-arrival of Maurice &
Elspeth at 1:25 this afternoon, Greyhound bus prompt
to the minute and, they said, clean and efficient to
ride, although the bus station itself looks like one
of Dante's circles of doomed souls. Onward to Albique
go M&E in the morning--really in the morning,

15 June cont.--C to leave here with them at 5 a.m. for the 5:45 airport arrival they need for their flight.

And the other news of the day, the central event although I have some trouble registering it, is the arrival of a decent cover for Heart Earth--the typeface a bit gimmicky and overbusy, but the illustration and the colors both good. I still don't see the cover as any better than any of the ideas I presented to Macmillan 6 months ago, but it is a turnabout from the ugly post-modern version that was the first try. I currently watch Macmillan with a combination of fascination, irritation, ~~and~~ resignation as the publishing house lurches toward being sold.

21 June--The first day of the rest of...something. Enduring the next-door barking of Peris's foolish month of dogsitting. Refocusing on the making of pages at a regular pace in Bucking the Sun, which I did today in steely fashion (luckily, feeling good enough to apply myself to the writing that strongly). Trying to flex ourselves toward a housing change of some sort, away from this winter-chilly and noise-susceptible situation--I went out ~~with~~ Saturday afternoon with C and real-estate agent Lee Lageshulte to see several houses, which C thinks has clarified our intentions.

Now to see if I can retrieve the mental material for the diary entry I wanted to do about Maurice Shadbolt and Elspeth Sandys. About Maurice, it's mostly bits, I guess, that I didn't want to get away. One is his story, fuller than in his autobiog One of Ben's, of first meeting the Australian novelist (and Nobel Prize winner) Patrick White. Maurice's first book, The New Zealanders, had just come out, and whatever mutual friend in Wellington had provided it to White before Maurice came to the literary shindig ~~that~~ that was being thrown for White. White's first words to Maurice: "You're a spellbinder, aren't you." As Maurice told us, what 25-year-old wouldn't think that a magical moment?

--Another literary footnote: Maurice in his autobiog paints a vivid picture of his Aunt Sis, who went off to the Republican side of the Spanish Civil War as a nurse, and mentions that another writer put her in a book.

21 June cont.--He amplified to us that the book ~~xx~~ was by James MacNeish, a novel titled Joy; so stupefyingly dull, M. claims, that he never got all the way through it even if it was about his aunt!

I've kidded Carol that I gained immense credit with her by having Maurice pass through town, as his self-described telephone dyslexia when it comes to calling people about their trip itinerary and his quite contented reading on the couch while Elspeth re-packed their three hefty suitcases put C squarely on the side of Elspeth, coper ~~xx~~extraordinaire. Also, it turns out, from an extraordinarily strewn family background, which I think translates this way: her mother was mid-thirtyish and unmarried and in some nervous or mental straits when her father, as a friend of a friend, was asked to "take care of her" and as Elspeth puts it, "did, but not in the way he was supposed to." Elspeth was born and ~~px~~ privately adopted--her father, I think a dental surgeon named Somerville, was married with a couple of other children, and I guess Elspeth's mother went even farther around the mental bend. Of the couple who adopted her, the man was in his ~~xixth~~ late sixties, and died when Elspeth was still in grade school. The long and short is that she pretty much made her own way through St. Columba's school in Dunedin, and by scholarship onward. Just in the past few years, she tracked down her birth-father and his family--takes delight in ~~xxx~~ the grown brothers and sisters she didn't know she had, but her (now-dead) father's wife hasn't taken kindly to Elspeth's emergence, and one of the sisters is using Elspeth as a provocation against the unsettled woman as well. As we told Elspeth, material galore for a novel.

So, while it was hectic to have them here in our makeshift guest quarters and be making the airport and bus station runs through traffic gauntlets, we took a lot of pleasure from their visit, both in appreciating Elspeth all the more and in observing Maurice, a terrifically incisive writer (his scathing material on the British convict system that bore the Shadbolts to the ~~Southern~~ Tasman Sea is irrefutable) encased in a woolly attention span. Spiffy friends for us to have.

23 June--Went for broke today, or at least began to, in this third morning of resumed work on Bucking the Sun. Past couple of days, I dabbled out a daily couple of pp. about the dam slide, big descriptive stuff to get the output putting out again, and intended more of ~~the~~ same this morning. Instead, a bit groggy from allergy, I proposed to C that we walk Green Lake to wake up a bit, and during that three-miler I decided to begin Bucking's 3rd chapter, Peckerstroy, with a line I'd been preciousy saving as the opener of another book, maybe Keeping the Days, and for good measure, to throw in as a phrase--"clerking for God"--another line I'd intended to build an entire scene on. Here, then, it all goes, in this gamble of a book, to begin the Peckerstroy chapter:

You couldn't even believe a woman when she said hello, Darius Duff reminded himself.

He looked at Meg now across nearly twenty years, the lines at the corners of her eyes mapping that length of time and maybe something beyond. But she still had that nurselike sense of attention, the judgmental peer at you as if clerking for God. The Milnes of Crail were that way from the Reverend on down, he recalled: preacher and preacher spawn. They wore well, though, Meg the latest evidence of that--

And how will it all look in print, 3 or so years from now? Meantime, Liz called to pass along Barry Lippman's assurance that Macmillan is going to apply the contract-prescribed marketing budget to Heart Earth, yes, yes; she seems to think life is going on at Mac'n pretty much as usual, though, as I'd told her, it seems ~~the~~ fainter on the mirror than I've ever seen it before. I hope she's the one who is right.

25 June--To our surprise, we may have won the dog war with Peris. We gritted our way through last week, but early this week Carlla decamped--took the kids and went home to mother in Berkeley, we deduce, and speculate whether she told Peris "I'm not handling this dog situation" as well--which meant Peris was leaving them in the outside pen with nobody home all day. Wednesday there was such a riot of barking that Carol put 2 messages on Peris's machine, and we both talked to him when he called back

25 June cont.--to say he was trying to "balance" his right to have a dog with our ~~problem~~ complaints about the barking. C got him by saying a dog is not the problem, we'd done fine with the Hirsh's dog and Peris's own dog when he had one (which we now suspect he got rid of because it was too abject, not rambunctious enough to fit his "a man's gotta have a dog" syndrome), barking is the problem. I helped not at all by again suggesting we'd even be willing to pay to have the dogs kenneled: Peris said that was insulting, the owner of the dogs was an employed engineer who could afford to pay a kennel fee, he just didn't want them kenneled. We evidently did manage to impress on ~~him~~ Peris that there was a lot of barking, not the occasional barking he'd talked himself into believing. On Thursday morning when he went off to work, I put a message on his phone at 11--the dogs cooperatively barking in the background--to tell him they'd been barking since 9:30, Carol and I were going out to lunch and a walk to get away from it, and we hoped he'd had a chance to talk to the dog's owner about some resolution to this. Lunch at Ray's Boathouse restored us, we talked over getting out of town until Carlla comes back on Sunday if that's what it took, and got home to a phone message from Peris saying he'd been home for lunch, the dogs would be in the garage the rest of the afternoon until he took them out for exercise in the evening, and as soon as he could, they'd be kenneled, kenneling was the only answer. How he got to that conclusion we have no idea--kicks from other neighbors? Arriving home to hear for himself the racket of barking?--but we don't care, so long as it ejects ~~that~~ the barking from our lives.

30 June--The Nantucket sleigh ride of Heart Earth is on, before July ~~month~~ even reached the calendar. Lee Goerner put a message on the phone machine late y/day afternoon with the first sentence of Heart Earth's first review--from Kirkus--and called back this morning pronto to read the whole thing. The phrase there in the opener, "another profoundly original and lustrous creation", is just what we needed--legerdemain that Heart Earth is its own thing, yet akin to Sky--and other tidbits like "a clarifying

30 June cont.--beauty and a sure shaping hand" hurt not at all either. I immediately jumped Lee about getting this on the back cover, and he said he didn't know, let him rumble through ~~his~~ the production schedule for a minute: when he came up the calendar for the book he said Geez, we're supposed to have finished books the 3rd week in July! I laughed and said OK, we'd take the finished books over a production breakdown which would let us get the Kirkus quote on the cover. Lee also had the news, while staying utterly skittish of hard numbers, that the "big accounts" were ordering Heart Earth strongly--Crown, Baker & Taylor, etc.

9 July--Another week's 10 pp. done, now about an hour before lunch here on Friday. The page-making rather jerks along, and I don't yet feel I'm immersed enough in either the language or the details of Bucking the Sun, but the pages are being accomplished, half of this summer's goal of 50 now banked in the binders.

Turns out to be a good day to have tapped out the necessary wordage, as what was a pretty goodlooking early morning--good enough to have me wondering if I ought to take the day off so we could go to the Skagit or somewhere--has turned overcast and chilly. Past couple of days were classic summer, at last, and after we had our work done each day, C and I genuinely lazed a bit, in lawnchairs in the warmth. Have socialized the last 2 nights, useful reminder to me that weeknight socializing ain't ever a great idea. Enjoyed seeing Bill Bevis and Juliette Crump at the friends' house in Madrona they were staying at on Wed., but the salmon-bake supper took forever. Last night, automatically a lot of fun, the Nelsons and supper at their place while Ann's dad is visiting. Told him I'm trying to write an engineer character in this novel, and I'd better set my mind to asking him some stuff. Laird is back from Amherst for the summer, an impossibly fine young guy, funny and bright, bright. He's working a summer job for the Seattle Times info company or whatever it's called, in essence researching on-line possibilities, and we howled at Laird's detailing of the situation he's found at the Alb'que Tribune,

9 July cont.--which does offer screen text but only if you buy that day's newspaper to get that day's on-line code number: so if you'll just buy the newspaper, then you can have access to the screen text meant to make the newspaper unnecessary...

And C just brought in the mail, with a photocopy of the good news this week started with, Publishers Weekly's starred review of Heart Earth, "poetic and precise, "worthy complement," "immensely quotable."

16 July--And this week it was the Evans Biography Prize, Heart Earth's \$10,000 start to the week. Phone call from Ross Peterson at Utah State came early Monday, when I was halfway through the first sentence of the day's intended work on Bucking the Sun, and, famed Doig discipline or not, to hell with work the rest of that day. We gathered Ann Nelson and her father Al Jarrett (Marsh had to decline because of a monumental law-office conference call) for celebratory lunch at Bella Luna, because Ann, in-lawed with Mormons, has always had such a wonderfully baleful view of "Mormon country." Aug. 17, in Logan, is the award banquet, and I spent part of Mon. and Tues. kicking Macmillan into motion toward some booksignings while I'm in Utah.

Speaking of my erstwhile publisher, Lee Goerner y'day volunteered, volunteered the info that the possible buyers of Macmillan have shaken down to this handful: Paramount (a.k.a. around the publishing house as the dreaded Simon & Schuster), Harcourt, Pierson (Viking, Addison-Wesley etc.), K3, and possibly Disney. From my personal position, of negotiating the next book contract, Disney I suppose is the preferred buyer, as that wouldn't wipe out Harcourt or Viking as possible bidders on Bucking.

Y'day afternoon, we fetched Linda Bierds and Sydney Kaplan from the airport and their 4-month sojourn in Britain and Europe. Splendid to have them back, and they're coming Sat. night for supper and to regale us with their travel tales.

The day before that, C and I met New Haven bookseller Henry Berliner and wife Mickey and daughter Juleah for lunch at the Lemon Grass, then walked Green Lake with

16 July cont.--them. Henry's Foundry bookstore is one of the eastern outposts for my work, and that of others of the western gang; he's reading Kittredge, Blew, etc. on this driving-camping trip.

Amid all else this week, I maybe foolishly but desperately undertook some sorting of bookstore and book promo files, rejigging the phone Rolodex cards, and so on; been tedious and mind-numbing beyond belief at times, but I feel I've got to get the file system retooled and functioning better.

20 July--We seem to have turned a corner, last Friday, in our house hunt. I went out that afternoon with Carol and real estate agent Lee Lageschulte and looked at 4 or so houses. One of them, on the dogleg street down by the Sound, felt comfortable to us, plus having a pretty good view of the water and the Olympics, and priced at \$319,000 instead of half a million or so. We came home and thought about, drew up a rough list of gains and losses in taking on that house: the main drawbacks were that the area for an office would need much redoing and that the entire house was short of closets and other storage, we'd likely have needed to build on a room or convert the garage. So, instead of buying that one, C has told Lee L. to get in touch when a redone house of about the size we want ever comes onto the market. Meantime, C--as she says, furious that with the money we now have we can't come up with a house in this n'hood that doesn't need big work--is tearing into this place, cleaning, revamping; just now came in ~~for~~ from shopping for carpet for the bedroom.

23 July--except for this dab of diary, a day off. I scheduled only 5 pp. of writing this week, and had them done by noon y'day. Spent some time y'day and day before stripping paint on the patio eave; halfway done, a couple of afternoons next week ought to finish it. Heavy, woolly weather today, as most of this week, and C and I walked Green Lake and otherwise have read or very mildly pottered; tomorrow, her birthday, we intend either a Dungeness hike or a Skagit one.

3 Aug.--Sweet weather at last. Last Saturday, the last of July, we finally began to get some summer, and today is trending downright hot--74 already at 9:30. C and I walked Green Lake this morning, early, and intended to do some more at Shilshole on our way to lunch at Ray's Boathouse.

Good Heart Earth news y'day when Michael Dorris called, tipping me off that he's going to do a praising review in the LA Times. I am maybe lower-key about the reaction to this book than any of the earlier ones, determined as I am to get on with life and Bucking the Sun, but the early indicators when I stop to think about them really are very good for HE.

Good news too on Bucking the Sun, at least to me and my scheduling pencil; reached the 150 pp. goal on the ms last Friday, freeing up an August which probably badly is going to need it. Y'day we took an actual day of leisure, went and hiked Dungeness Spit on one of the most glorious clear-blue days we've ever seen.

13 Aug.--Another TW3: that was the week that was. Since last Friday, the grapestake fence along the south side of the property (or anyway 85' of it) has been rebuilt, new gates have been built for both ends of the house, our bedroom closet doors were trimmed at the bottom, and the bedroom has been carpeted wall-to-wall. Besides which, Carol has cleaned much of the house and I've tended to considerable book-season business. Some sort of ultimate was reached on Wed., the 4th, when Floyd Evans and one of his shagnasty assistants were trimming trees for us, the refrigerator began sinking into a coma (it was the hottest day of the summer, and one of Seattle's hottest ever) and C surged out and bought us a new one, coming home just as the tree trimmers had coincided in the driveway with the FedEx truck bringing our first copy of Heart Earth.

The book is very comely, almost delicate inside. And beyond being pleased by the Macmillan staff's evident regard for it and praise volunteered by two of my ex-editors elsewhere--Dan Frank at Pantheon, and Lori Lipsky, departing Penguin for the Mainstreet imprint at Doubleday--I don't have any notable reaction to HE's contents yet; most of my other books, I had deliberately

Aug. 17 - Delta fl. 922, headed for Salt Lake & Logan, & the Evans Prize.

The Puget Sound basin was souped in, foggy, rainy, but at the hem of Mt. Rainier - weather has cleared. Just went over - Columbia River, 'green dots' of circle-irrigated fields bright beside it. We left house about 6:15 & traffic was okay but thickening up - 15 min. later would not have been a good idea.

Today begins the Heart Earth season that will go, one way or another, to Dec. I'm glad to have it finally starting, after these summer months of scheduling. Lee Gerner actually ~~was~~ muttered aloud, in checking his computer y'day to see what - Utah bookstores had ordered, that - advance orders for HE are up to 24-25,000.

Spent y'day in chores - many phone calls, including a couple to U. of Michigan asking abt Stagner's "Goin' West..." book there - in heavy, humid weather we've had so much this summer. Maybe this line of days in Utah will be hot, but they also should be welcome to drive.

13 Aug. cont.--not re-read after finishing the proofs and so could sit down with some freshness when the actual book came. But I've been dipping back into Heart Earth during the ms work on Bucking the Sun, I guess immersing myself into the level of language; will see whether I can sit down, this weekend, with Heart Earth and read it as an entire piece of work, anew.

Small social burst by us last weekend, dinner at Linda and Syd's last Friday night, vastly welcome to us after the two days of fence-building going on around us, and their first realization that I'd dedicated Heart Earth to them and Carol. Next night, dinner at the Walkinshaws' w/ sundry KCTS people, current or ex-; the ex-, in fact, was the occasion for the party--Moir, now of Frontline at WGBH, had worked with Jean at KCTS years ago. The other Channel 9ers were Dorothy Payton, apparently in charge of fund-raising; producer Lisa Smith; and Barry ~~Katz~~ Mitzman, who does the Serious Money show and a local Week in Review show. Funniest story of the night, Jean recalling Ron Meyer, previous KCTS station manager who was a scuba-diving enthusiast, rigging himself up in underwater gear down to and including green flippers, to greet Jacques Cousteau for a Channel 9 fundraiser--and Cousteau didn't show up and didn't show up as Ron stood hopefully around the lobby. "Waiting for Cousteau!" Jean and I whooped at the same instant, and I told her I could write her a script to go with that title in about 20 minutes' working time.

23 Aug.--Beginning the countdown toward the 2-month bookstore tour for Heart Earth, which'll start when we drive to Montana the day after Labor Day. Much to be done; in spite of myself, that is, my reminders and tries at scheduling them, I still have both damn speeches of this fall to get ready, the one to the librarians in Colorado and the Stegner piece for Missoula, and m'while phone interviews and other time-splintering stuff will be happening. Must absolutely cut-and-paste the librarians' speech together tomorrow, and work out the Stegner material by next mid-week.

Amid that graf, Lee Goerner called, checking in on our Utah trip--he himself had been at Harvard at some seminar on black publishing, and says he sees now why

23 Aug.--Rob't Parker's tough 'tec Spenser is such a hardcase; lot of attitude to be gotten through at Harvard, says Lee, sometimes just to get yourself a hamburger--and reported there's some re-ordering already on HE, a good sign.

Now, the Evans Award trip: flew to Salt Lake City last Tues., the 17th, were met by Shannon Hoskins of Utah State's Mountain West Center and, when Dick Brown of the U. of Oregon arrived a little later, Shammon drove the three of us to Logan, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ^{hr} or so drive. Promptly did a bang-up signing at small store (in a historic house) called A Book Store, run by Diane Browning and several other capable women who reminded me of the Einsteinian female staff at the Valley Bookstore in Jackson Hole. Sold 78 Heart Earths, gangbusters biz for a store that size, when Utah State isn't in session yet. That evening the award dinner was held in a very handsome USU alumni center, in a beautifully-coved dining room of almost exactly-balanced proportions--the sconce, I guess it'd be, at the far end was for some reason set higher than those on the other 3 walls, the only murmur the ghost of Thomas Jefferson would have made against the venue. Ross Peterson, who heads the Mtn West Center, had me sign up HEs for the 4 Evans couples (out of 5; one never comes to the event) who are descended from the award donors Richard and Beatrice Evans. The Evanses, who certainly have the right to wonder how an award that probably was intended to further biography of Mormon church fathers has begun finding its way to Terry Tempest Williams and me, were more than civil, seemed pleased to have C and me there; and in an exceedingly deft stroke, either by Ross Peterson or Dick Brown or both, Dick aimed his dinner speech into ~~the~~ what he calls "grassroots biography and autobio'y", i.e. Kittredge-Blew-Tisdale-etc., since the publication of This House of Sky. So, with that scholarly stamp...

B'fast the next morning with Dick, Shannon, Ross, and Chas Peterson (no relation to Ross, though ^{Chas} he does have a ~~brother~~ brother, Levi, teaching at Weber St.), producing the consensus from the Utahns that there's more polygamy than ever, right now; Chas, a Mormon

23 Aug. cont.--historian, figures there may be as many as 30,000 instances. Shannon, a non-Mormon woman who, as Carol notes, has decided an in-your-face high style is her best defense--she was easily the classiest-dressed person at the award dinner--said you can tell when the polygamists (who have wives/families in several separate houses) arrive in a n'hood: their lawns are so neat! So, I came away from Logan loving this notion of "there goes the neighborhood, just look at those neat lawns," and intrigued as ever at the complexity of the West. Chas, who now that he's ~~xx~~ retired from USU lives at St. George, says there are forecasts that the population growth from St. G. to Cedar City may keep exploding until the area outnumbers the Provo-Salt Lake-Ogden area along the Wasatch Front; and where's the water for that?

--3:25: broke off this entry when we left for Jeannette Carstensen's memorial service. Vernon died last Oct., and when I called J'ette about ten days ago, I thought she sounded faded and wandering; her son Eric Sogge said she died quickly and peacefully, thank goodness.

A bit more on the Utah trip: I did a KISN radio interview by phone from our motel room Wed. morning--host Hans Peterson, the fourth or so Peterson central to our trip, was good; quoted from Nabokov about getting it down on paper, in asking me how a writer gets underway daily--and before and aft, C and I walked the USU campus and exulted in the dry mountain air. Shannon drove us back to Salt Lake, this time through Logan Canyon where a colossal road project is gouging through, and we were in the Marriott by about 1:30. That hotel was a great improvement over the Peery-flop of our May stay, but still not quite on the mark--oldish (the Marriotts are a Mormon family and this may have been their first "modern" hotel) by now, the room was hard to keep at a comfortable temp (all-or-nothing air conditioning) and let in a lot of street noise; we've vowed next time to try the newer looking Doubletree. The King's English bookstore, though, truly had its act together, and sold 153 copies of Heart Earth, besides drawing a turn-away crowd to the reading held in a picture-framing shop

23 Aug. cont.--a few doors down the street; considerable space in there, where they set up rented chairs. So, I was won over to the King's English; but the store I figured would do well, the Waking Owl, flubbed the next day, not managing to get phone or mail orders flowing ahead of time, and putting out 2 different times for the reading I did; all in all, only 28 HE's there, though a pretty good number of p'backs. I had touted the Waking Owl under the impression I'd also be signing at Sam Weller's store downtown, so the skew to two "toney" bookstores was inadvertent; but if the Waking Owl indeed has its distinctive clientele, it's not in evidence when the U. of Utah isn't in session. Live and goddamn learn, I guess. Anyway, the flight home and then the drive home both went well, C scooting us home just ahead of rush hour traffic. Should note too another great meal, the dinner after the King's English signing at Baci, zingy Italian restaurant in downtown Salt Lake. The other lingering impression is of being driven around by bookstore women piloting Jeep Cherokees, which at the King's English they joke is the Utah state car.

30 Aug.--Crisscross of comets yesterday, rising, falling. In the morning we took a signed copy of Heart Earth over to Linda Bierds and Sydney Kaplan, and learned Linda is in a white-hot streak of poetry as she finishes up The Ghost Trio; has done 5 poems in about the last 5 weeks, the material and inspiration from ~~their~~ her overseas stay coursing out of her, writing in the afternoons as well as her usual morning shift, so wound up she's having some insomnia. Pasteur at Chamonix, Wedgewood's son--she specifically mentioned those two among the topics she's made into completed poems in this streak. Linda at her usual pace of output is dazzling enough, so Carol and I came home feeling we'd been around some literary history in the making. Then that evening, news (by way of Craig Lesley's phone call) of Bill Stafford's death. Bill's letter to me, quick onto the paper after he received his comp copy of Heart Earth, was on top of the pile on my desk: "Again our lives have been enhanced, made Montana-great, charmed and charged: we have added heart earth to our holdings and we like it even more....How come the words wake up when you all nudge them?..." He enclosed a sample of his latest,

30 Aug. cont.--a typically Staffordian enterprise of tireless fluency: "Silver Star," a poem to go on a sign along the Methow River in the Winthrop ranger district. "A new outlet for us writers: signs all over The West..." So, there went another original soul.

Sandwiched between these poetic highs and lows y'day was another remarkable experience: the voice of our Hollywood friend Jerry Ziesmer, which spoke "Terminate with extreme prejudice" in Apocalypse Now, reading us over the phone Michael Dorris's stunning LATimes review of Heart Earth.

5 Sept.--Sunday morn of Labor Day weekend, foggy, maybe fitting for this soggy summer. We're tapping things into place for the Montana-Jackson-Spokane-(and, for me) Eugene trip, pretty much all day today to tinker at it and then pick up the rental car tomorrow at 11 and do our packing; inasmuch as we're only aiming to the motel at the 10,000 Silver Dollar oasis Tues. night, we don't even have to leave until mid-morning or so on Tues.

Gaps in the diary lately:

Much promo work already for Heart Earth; last Wed., back-to-back-to-back phone interviews w/ Gf Trib, Kalispell Interlake, and Helena Independent-Record, plus KOSI K'spell taped radio show Fri. afternoon, plus C and I mailing out 40+ copies of the LA Times rave review, and a lot of phone time with Judy Burns and ultimately Sharon Dynak abt SF Bay area trip and so on.

Oh, yes: and somewhere there, maybe, Tues., I patted the Bucking the Sun ms proposal into shape--added a ch. chronology and sample leads for all 10 chs.--and FedExed to Liz to hit Macmillan with, the day after Labor Day. We're aiming for \$475,000. Carol was the one who suggested that now might be a good time to put it to Mac'n, with the company about to be sold and, at least in theory, they shouldn't be keen to lose me right now; I could see that, but was weighing it against the gain in waiting to see who buys the outfit, i.e. Simon & Schuster? To my surprise, Liz was all for the do-it-now timing C suggested; I kidded her that maybe it's just her euphoria at becoming (as she'd just told me w/ considerable bemusement) the Mingo Springs (Maine) Ladies Open golf

5 Sept. cont.--champ, but anyway, we'll soon see about Mac'n and the contract future of Bucking the Sun, there or elsewhere.

On Aug. 26, we at last managed to have Richard White and Beverly Purrington over for dinner. Enjoyed them; Beverly is heading up a graduate program in I think education at the Antioch branch here, Richard is doing his booklength trio of Columbia R. essays for Hill & Wang and a contracted piece for a Ted Turner-published book on Indians. Evening's best story: Richard telling of the two of them nearly being run over by a runaway tourist-carriage near the Newberry Library in Chicago, flinging themselves to safety between parked cars just in time and, in Richard's case, avoiding the obvious headline WESTERN HISTORIAN KILLED BY HORSE.

8 Sept., @ the 10,000 Silver Dollar Motel -
And so this is a return to Montana in
a silver Cadillac - accounted for by Carol's
triumphant upgrading of our Avis rental car
when the first try, an Oldsmobile, was
killing my back by the time I drove it home
from downtown Seattle. We agreed that
traveling in the big Cad y'day was like
driving our own living room, such space &
amenity. Off to a good start, we are, having
sent to the Mac's publicity mavens Sharon &
Judy ballcaps reading "MONTANA - 10,000
Silver Dollar Bar" and now about to go over,
at 6 a.m., to breakfast. Then on to Kalispell
& the Heart Earth launch. The book made the
Seattle Times best-seller list on Sunday,
much to my surprise; Bailey White & I are
• only non-nostrum entries on non-fiction
list.

9 Sept. - Sold every book in Kalispell.
Joann Jensen @ Bks West was
mortified to have her 130 HES
disappear w/ signing time only half
over; her husband went & brought 6
copies Wadden had, & people patiently
waited for those to arrive. At Village
Bks, 110 HES went. All this & a
glorious sun-lit drive (3 1/2 hrs) Kalispell
to Choteau, thru Marias Pass.

12 Sept.--Makeshifting in Wendy's room at the Malones' in Bozeman. First snow of the season, though it's melting fast. No bookstore appearance today--thank god Mac'n never got around to arranging Billings signings for this day--but I'm going in to the Country Bookshelf later this morning to sign up more of their stock; Mary Jane DiSanti, a book biz marvel, ordered 400 Heart ~~Earth~~ Earths and 100 hardback Skys. Y'day's signing there was healthy, bringing the store's sold total of Heart Earth up to 233, though herky-jerky; booksignings not only reflect the communities--Great Falls is always notable for long quiet orderly lines of bookbuyers, workaday and unpretentious; downtown Missoula usually produces people who want to give me their version of the universe and show off the polish on their own credentials--but somehow catch infections that then set the mood for the entire couple of hours. So, the third customer in the Country Bookshelf y'day, a plumpish woman, leaned way down to say confidentially into my ear, in a manner which made me think she was going to tell me my fly was unzipped, "Chris is right over your head watching this." Chris? Who the hell was Chris, and what was he doing on the balcony right above me? It turned out it was her son--Carol, who'd found a chair elsewhere in the balcony to spectate the signing table, called him "the fat kid"--who I was to sign the book for. And things kept going that unexpected way: an inscription to Lucille which turned out to need "the Norwegian spelling, L-U-C-E-L"; another to a guy who assured me his name was Tom Foolery (at points like that, I give an It's-all-rock-and-roll shrug and dab in the name with a straight face); someone who wanted the inscription "More fodder for your bookshelf!"; and so on. One at least was genuine fun, when a pretty goodlooking but not greatlooking young woman said she and her sister had laughed over English Creek and Jick's regard for Leona's "blouseful," given how flatchested both of them are, and could I do anything with that in an inscription? I hooted and said sure, and in went "To Barbara, from a guy who knows a blouseful when he sees one." Perfect! she said and went merrily off.

Sept. 12 cont.--Others who came into the bookstore included a 30ish couple who ranch up the S. Fork of Sixteen Creek, beyond the setting of Heart Earth; and Alta Onstad, widow of the pastor who buried my mother. That bit was hard, Alta arriving almost in tears because of her emotion at Lyle Onstad being dead now, and she was on her way to White Sulphur to a 60th anniversary shindig at the church the two of them came to in 1942. We both did some hard swallowing and worked our way through it.

I hear Mike whistling upstairs--9:30 now--and will go visit after a little. He and Kate came home here to the MSU presidential house about 9 last night, flying home from Pullman and the MSU*WSU football game in which the Bobcats got whopped in the 2nd half.

Back to the booksigning trail. Totals have been the best ever: 236 in Kalispell, 220 in Great Falls, 247 in Helena, 233 here--not to mention a fair number of hardback Skys and p'back everythings sold too. Notable too that there're more interviews of all kinds; it's just kind of average on this trip to do a couple of interviews a day, here in this not very media-thick part of the world, in and around the bookstore stuff. Meanwhile, Liz has put in on Mac'n the Bucking the Sun proposal, and I gather Lee Goerner's ~~reaction~~ ^{one} reaction was a rather wounded ~~one~~; he asked her if this wasn't a strange time for the next book proposal, with Heart Earth just now out. And I'm not even sure he knows yet that there's a \$475,000 pricetag on it. Be Lee as he may, we wanted to set the timing rather than let the imminent sale of Mac'n dictate the contract schedule; I did tell Liz to let Mac'n have until Oct. 15 or 20, whatever it takes to get everybody back from and over the Frankfurt Book Fair, rather than the strict 30 days to consider the proposal. Meanwhile again, reviews of Heart Earth are happening; Chuck Verrill of Liz's agency read C and me the Washn Post review, dark reading of Heart Earth by Carolyn See but ultimately favorable enough. And so it goes.

Sept. 19, I think - Abroad Horizon #2221
wanting to hop to Eugene. The great
Montana trip is behind now, 1400 copies
of Heart Earth sold by hand, and much
greater media coverage than ever before.

Have now sold, with the Utah trip & this
one, more than half as many books as the
Mariah Montana tour 3 yrs ago. Now, with
huge moments packed into memory - the
nurse, 3d in line @ Fact & Fiction in
Missoula, who broke down while trying to
ask me for an inscription ^{in memory} of her
husband, who'd recently died; the
Stegner symposium, & Patricia Nelson
Limerick wonderfully setting the terms;
String Lake & . Tetons & . Bugling
etc etc down - onward to . PNB
today & tomorrow, then C fetches me
at SeaTac tomorrow night.

22 Sept. -- And so, in all likelihood, endeth a dozen
years, five books, with Atheneum/Macmillan. Their
offer ~~on~~ on Bucking the Sun is \$160,000; Liz says
she didn't laugh, just asked if they wanted to leave
that figure as a floor bid. Onward we go, to try on
the future at -- Pantheon? Hyperion? Holt? Viking?
HarperCollins? Harcourt?

Sept. 24 - An Brennan's in W' lake Hall.

High noon, start of lunch for signing, & not a soul in sight. V e z h a l l z e e.

Also this morning, &:

- dealt w/ Judy Burns of Mac's publicity, abt. Colo trip & other stuff.
- got a haircut, & booked \$7400 + from Audio Press "River" cassette.
- signed up stock @ Edmunds Bk Store, & learned that business is slow - "flat" is booksellers' less damning word - there, as it still is here (i.e., @ 12:10, still nobody).
- waded thru freeway traffic from Edmunds to downtown Seattle, realizing yet again it's slower & tougher than I calculated.

Y'day, a blessed day off, deliberately doing no book biz at all. Instead, framed in. Woodshed - side gate w/ cedar stripping, turned on. Emergency power system for winter, unclogged a drainpipe elbow, & so on.

So is this going to be an absolute shutout? 12:15 now, & still nobody. * I suppose it helps a person keep perspective; on other hand, I hate it like hell.

26 Sept.--Damnably busy, as I'm doubtless overworking the local booksigning beat: Puss N' Books in Redmond and ParkPlace in Kirkland both y'day afternoon/night, for total of about 50 Hearts Earths sold. I dunno. Am going to have to cut back appreciably on bookstore handwork next time around, and having done this 7 times for hardbacks and another 3-4 for paperbacks etc., I've maybe earned some sitting back.

Tomorrow, Colorado. More to the point, tomorrow night, Denver fat cats, one of my least favorite venues. Possibly this'll be a better bunch--for the Rocky Mtn Book Fair/ Colorado Center for the Book--than the Kappa Kappa Gamma crowd and that religious lout of a football coach (U. of Colo.) from three years ago. One break so far, the weather is holding; Indian summer here and a good forecast for the entire West at least into the weekend.

30 Sept.--50 min. until Shuttle Express fetches me off to the airport and Denver. Good prime ink this morn, John Marshall's handsome and painstaking article in the P-I. Before changing clothes and closing the suitcase, wanted to list some of what comes down the phone line these days:

--Terry Orme of Salt Lake City Tribune wanting me to come be a narrative mentor to newspapermen next April. (Dee McNamer, I said.)

--Gordon Brittan of Montana State U. wanting me to go to NY next Feb. for some kind of Stegner tribute reprise. (Huh-uh.)

--Chris Gray of Bay Area Digital wanting me to give a blurb for their audio cassette of Mary Clearman Blew's reading of All But the Waltz. (Feel free to swipe from my Washn Post review, I said.)

--Flurry of phone calls from Mac'n y'day over whether they'd run a Seattle Times ad whether or not I did a Crown signing (whereby Crown wd run an ad); it's turning out that the Crown signing can't be fit in anyway.

--Bill Kittredge asking if he can use the WSS bars scene from This House of Sky for the Penguin anthology of western writing he's putting together. Sure, I said,

30 Sept. cont.--but Harcourt has to do the actual permission granting. Bill said he now has McMurtry and me; I said he should just add himself and have the three of us comprise the whole anthology, how about.

--Wall-to-wall phone interviews, 3 Colo. papers Tues. morning: laid-back from Aspen Daily News, lazily shaggy from the Boulder Coloradan, worried but focused from Aspen Times. Christ only knows how those stories will turn out, but similar trio of interviews from Skagit Valley papers produced actually pretty good pieces.

--Wisconsin Public Radio, wanting to know if I could get myself to a studio, i.e. KUOW, for the Oct. 7 interview. (Told them no, it wipes out about half a day to go to the UW.)

--Liz the Babe Didriksen of agents, wanting to know what delivery date we can promise on Bucking the Sun as she ~~shops~~ shops it around (Susan Moldow of HarperC was asking). Feb. 15 '96, I told her. '96 sounds like forever, says she, we'll just say "2 years" instead.

Sept. 30 - 11:05, SeaTac; so far, this day is all airport. I was ~~final~~ final passenger picked up on Shuttle Express run, so was at airport by about 9:50. Found out the Denver flight was delayed 45 min., had United ticket agent cast around for other airlines' earlier flights, could find no space. So I used United's phone to let the KBOE interviewer know I'm likely to be late for my appt., then called Judy Burns @ Mac's publicity. Since then I've had lunch - 1st of probably 4 meals today - & browsed the airport newsstands, & now will ~~add~~ either just sit or read an Ed McBain.

Progress: inbound delayed plane from Denver was just announced.

11:55: Progress after setback. My seat, 10C, was sopping wet when I poured my jammy into it. Maintenance took abt 20 min. to come, take a look, produce a new seat bottom but then to phone for a seat bottom cover. Anyhoo, after all that on this pt which was repeatedly announced as jam/full, there are 3 empty seats alongside me.

Oct. 1 - Stapleton airport, for . Last time? I've never been a fan of Denver, of . Rocky Mtn Book Fair proved to be . triennial bummer I've gone through here, now for .
• 3d - & if I have any sense - & / in at time.
• ~~fat~~ cat deniers / signings just don't produce books sold; maybe a total of 25-30 for an evening & entire morning, this time. Onward to Aspen; & now a break for yogurt.

-10 min. later, now on shuttle bus to . puddlejumper airplane to Aspen. Weather is warm, nearly hot; at least no Stapleton being and this time.

Oct. 4 - At the Boulderado, another of Colorado's goofy old hotels. When Earlene Baches deposited me here y'day afternoon after . Ft. Collins signing (only so-so; 25 Heart Earths), the indifferent college girl hotel clerk put me in a garret room in . old wing of this turn-of- - century pile of brick - naked pipes in . ceiling, & one tiny, high window. I called down & said, hey, this is claustrophobic, how about some windows. As a result I'm in . "new" wing, circa 1960, & . path from . lobby is approximately this: up . massive staircase to . mezzanine, go behind . staircase to a corridor to a sky bridge, across to another old atrium and then up a staircase,

Oct. 4, Boulderado cont. - around atrium & down a hallway to where a section ends with room 328, then next comes mine, 341.

This is all in Pearl St. mall area, Boulder at its most Berkeleyesque, I guess - a weekend st. festival in progress when I got here y'day, Sunday, & much hanging-out and street musicianship-sort-of. This morning, a little black guy w/ a gold earring was popping wheelies w/ his Cushman-like street sweeper in mall.

Weather meanwhile is sensational - I'm just back from 45 min. of strolling & having a decaf latte in a sidewalk cafe - with flatirons gorgeous in sunshine, though it's probably going to get genuinely hot this afternoon, & as y'day in Ft. Collins, too damn nice for anybody to be inside at a bookstore reading.

At this point of this trip I'm only aware of tundra of schedule & how damnably hard it is to sell books by hand beyond my books' Montana/NW heartland, but good news from Carol last night was that Heart Earth was #1 y'day on Seattle Times bestseller list - quite incredible to me given all big-selling northern stuff (including Fulghum) on that non-fiction list.

Oct. 4, Boulderado cont./2 - Crossed paths
in Brown Palace y'day morning w/ Bill
Kittredge & Craig Hedley - if a section
of ceiling had let loose above our breakfast
table, shape of Western writing would have
changed considerably then & there.

Kittredge, very much in straight & narrow
these recent years, told of bypassing a Rocky
Mtn Book Fair party Sat. night but being
in elevator w/ canoeing - down - - -

Yellowstone author, can't think of his name,
who moved back to Montana: Bill said: grey
was as drunk "as a white North American
cangel" & crowing that he was about to
go to a party with an ~~Egyptian~~ Egyptian
writer, how about that? I contributed
my Book Fair tale, telling Bill &
Craig that, okay, God took his revenge
on me for those Oregon Historical Society
book signings they've both ragged me
about, where they claim they sit & watch
crowd troop past to my table - fate &
goddamn Book Fair put me between

The Topay Man (muscular model for
Penguin romance line) & Clarissa
Pinkola Estes. Craig in turn had an
escort story. I'd been mildly sheepish
about insisting to Macmillan publicity
dept. that somebody besides a random
Book Fair volunteer pick me up at
airport (next time I'm going to insist

Oct. 4, Boulderado cont./3 - on a taxi, but that's another story), but Craig's tale of what he laughingly called "junior-variety treatment" confirms my rating of utter amateurs. Craig's plane got in 5 min. early, & when he got off, nobody was there to meet him. Off he went to rest-room, & when he came out 5 min. later, ~~there~~ arrival area was deserted except for volunteer escort pitifully holding her "CRAIG LESLEY" sign toward abandoned arrival gate.

Oct. 5 - Aboard United /1 293, on runway at Stapleton for what is supposed to be last time. This 6-day Colorado tour has seemed damn long, maybe because of hoppy-skippy feeling of a different hotel every night. I think tour was maybe worth it - except for Boulder, fewer HEs went at signings than I'd hoped, but I had good crowds at my 2 speaking gigs and, as I have to keep reminding myself, I am lugging home \$2500 for those speeches.

& 2 weeks from today, future arrives: big's auction of Bucking the Sun.

Oct. 5 cont. - 9 o'clock & still on
damned Stapleton runway. 3 of 4
United ffls I've been on during this
trip have been late. Am beginning to
regret my arrangement to go over to
Pac Pipeline & sign up HE Stacks when -
whenever, it's looking like - I got to
Sea Tac. I'll save me a $\frac{1}{2}$ day later,
but this perpetual hanging-around of
travel is becoming grueling. Doesn't
help any that there's been no
apparent reason for plane hunkering
here - as I wrote this, pilot finally
came on intercom to say we're in
line w/ planes taking off on another
runway, whatever. Well that's about
another 5-6 min., says he, which
likely means 10-15.

Airborne! At 9:40, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ min. late.
& take off w/ toward south, so that
we're over Denver Tech Center now
& still aren't heading west - worse,
we've just turned east! Great
circle route, evidently.

8 Oct.--Finally a day for some collecting of thoughts, after the Kolpakova-like effort onstage last night at the U. of Washington; when prima ballerina of the Kirov Ballet, she said of dancing Aurora in "Sleeping Beauty," "If you dance it all, it is wonderful and very hard." In last night's reading, 425 in the audience, I danced it all I could, and C and I both felt something new had been reached--the speaking venue which "national" touring writers get but which I'd never been given before, the audience size (continuing this year's trend of 1,000 in Missoula, standing room only at the Mountains & Plains library conference, the gloriously jam-packed night at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane), and my feeling of ease w/ the q-and-a period afterward. Watch it all come apart tonight on Bainbridge Island or next week at Elliott Bay, but last night I did achieve what I try for in writing-as-a-performing art: own the stage.

Meanwhile, my erstwhile publisher is doing its best to rile me. Yesterday revealed that Macmillan blithely breached the contract clause which specifies a 50,000 first printing for Heart Earth; with something like 37,000 books shipped, they're down to only hundreds left in stock in the warehouse. Lee Goerner naturally is in Frankfurt and London amid all this, so the explanation was left up to Harry McCulloch, the sales manager, ~~which~~ when Liz called at my behest to ask what the hell is going on: there's sizable stock at Pacific Pipeline and Ingram's, and Harry would rather send customers there than have the books sitting ~~in~~ in the Mac'n warehouse. This must be an astounding policy to the Mac'n sales reps--I'm really curious to hear Jon Rantala's reaction--and it's certainly been surprising as hell to the bookstore people at Powell's in ~~Portland~~ Beaverton, Fireside in Olympia, and the U Book Store to hear that the publisher of the currently best-selling non-fiction book in the Northwest doesn't want to sell them anymore. For me, of course, the more vital point is that Macmillan obviously has reneged on the contract promise to put a 50,000-level of national marketing muscle behind the book; that and their lowball offer of \$160,000 for Bucking the Sun ain't exactly stoking my affection.

8 Oct. cont.--Afternoon now, waiting to leave for the 5:25 Bainbridge ferry and the reading/signing tonight at Eagle Harbor Books. I'm going to begin a dump of booktour details into these pp. as best I can get to them now and later:

--Colorado Springs: Opening a pre-sold copy of Heart Earth, I saw it was to be inscribed to rightwing U.S. Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho with already-written-out inscription about his "real understanding of the West." No way was I going to put helpful pap into that politico's book, so I did my standard "this book of our western heart of it all," let him make what he will of that and particularly the Western Civil War of Incorporation passage. Picked up the next book, to be inscribed to the even righter-wing U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns of Montana! Same pap requested, same no-way.

--Boulder: a Cat Stevens impersonator, 1st I'd heard in eons (even Cat Stephens doesn't do Cat Stephens any more), outside the NY Deli on the Pearl Street mall, and the guy was really uncannily good at rasping "Where Do the Children Play?"

--Aspen, lord have mercy, Aspen: even the mailman looked like a ski bum. Then there was the Jeep Cherokee stretch limo. Then there was the couple in safari suits boarding the plane to Denver w/ me, carrying blue sleeping bags. Then there was the young guy (ski bum) in the bookstore coffee shop telling his cohorts his program for getting all the toxins out of his body.

--Mount Vernon: the Scott's Bookstore stories from Mary Scott and her right-hand, Chris. Chris: the customer who came in to buy Belva Plain's Tapestry, declaring she wanted Upholstery; and the one wanting Ron Hubbard's Dianetics, calling it Diuretics. Mary's tale of the early days of the bookstore, in a tiny storefront downtown which had no toilet; she'd have to lock up whenever she needed to go to the bathroom and hustle to the movie theater next door. Came the day when she did that, and returned to find a furious customer, who'd been quietly browsing in a corner, locked in.

11 Oct.--An actual day off from the bookstore trail, which has meant plowing through the desk accumulation. Fine fortunate weather, though, which should give me a chance to spade up some more of the veg garden this afternoon--putting it away for winter. The Bellevue U Book Store signing on Sat. afternoon was so-so, about 3 dozen HE's sold. But the Friday night event on Bainbridge Island was a smash--standing-room only crowd in the Fellowship Hall of the church rented by the Eagle Harbor Bookstore folks--150+ people. And more vitally for the book, it came through the local reviewing process pretty much unscathed--Dom Fry liking it in y'day's Seattle Times, despite some quibbles with my lingo. Most vital of all, in the bestseller chart at the bottom of the page, there Heart Earth sat again at #1.

14 Oct.--More bookstore moments:

--Last night at the Mercer St. Tower store, woman on her way to the ballet stopped to make conversation, asked if Carol is still teaching. Yes, I said, at Shoreline. Does she teach under her own name? she asked. Sure, I said. What is it? she asked. Carol Doig, I said, not even remotely grasping until later that this was a did-she-keep-her-maiden-name foray.

--Also at Tower: a woman had me sign up a book to her son, who she said had discovered my writing; with a catch in her throat, she said "He's terminally ill"--which in these times I suppose must mean AIDS.

--Also at Tower, more catch in the throat: middle-aged man, also trying to control his emotion, had me sign up a book to his mother who's battled cancer for 5 years.

--At Eagle Harbor bookstore last Friday night, among the crowd there was Preston Sandbo, little old fireplug of a man, Montana-born, ex-newspaperman, who always used to show up at my U Book Store signings; now he says he's too short of breath to make that across-the-Sound trip. The actuarial odds are that that was our parting time; that same night, a young couple had me sign up a book to their new daughter, named Adair after Dair Barclay of Dancing at the Rascal Fair.

14 Oct. cont.--Bookstore moments cont.--

--At the Rocky Mountain Book Fair, the reading I gave had to follow Judy Blume's appearance, where she had about 700 avid grade school kids as an audience and concluded with a bang-up q-&a session. I sighed and watched the room empty, to see how marginal my constituency was going to look in comparison (actually turned out to be a respectable 250 or so), and as class-clots of kids were shepherded out by teachers, it dawned on me that a very young and agog group in the front row were not budging. As I waited to get underway with my reading, the teacher explained that they were a Montessori class who'd been studying the West and they were there to hear me; indeed, some of them had books to be signed and those who didn't, I ~~signed~~ autographed pieces of paper for. They were a wonderful addition, bright faces and excited squirms there front and center, and so when the question period came I started with them. A tyke who couldn't have been more than 8 or 9 asked me about the opening line of Dancing at the Rascal Fair! After a couple more astute questions from the Montessorians, I told the rest of the crowd they could take their turn now but they'd have to go some to ask better critical questions than these kids.

18 Oct.--Just checked w/ Liz on the time and outlook of tomorrow's Bucking the Sun auction, and there are a couple of storm warning signals: two of the deep pockets have dropped out, Hyperion and Pantheon. (Liz: Sonny Mehta doesn't get this kind of book and Dan Frank "cdn't get him to get it.") This still leaves as bidders Harcourt, HarperCollins, Holt, Macmillan sort-of, and Houghton Mifflin, Simon & Schuster and Viking yet to indicate to Liz. It also leaves the prospect that Bucking could go for less than Heart Earth did; not a pleasant career turn, though it does have to be viewed in light of the \$50,000 foreign rights (on Sky and HE) chunk that I engineered into the HE deal. This year we've been practically swimming in money, so it won't be surprising if it dries up somewhat; tomorrow brings the climate for the next few years.

--Bookstore moments cont.--At opening night of Rocky Mtn Book Fair, Clarissa Pinkola Estes told me that news of my coming to Denver had been on CompuServe. I chuckled and didn't think much of it until the next day when two young women came up to me and handed me their CompuServe numbers and pseudonyms, wanting to know if I have a modem, how I could be talked to by computer, etc.

--On the other hand, my absolute most fervent Denver fan was an exceedingly pregnant woman--this would be her fifth child, and it looked only moments away--who by appearances could have been a sodbuster wife and who rattled on about her own desires to write, once she gets the kids out of the way.

--I noted briefly in an earlier entry that I'd been seated between The Topaz Man and Clarissa Pinkola Estes at the fatcat opening-night signing at the Denver book fair, both of whom had constituencies far more numerous and fervent than mine. The Topaz Man, Steve Sandalis, is the model for Penguin's romance line, but mostly he was signing his beefcake calendar--women coming up to him purring, "Would you sign this month for me?"

--The pleasantest aspect of that first Book Fair night was meeting Morvine Williams, the #2 person at the Library of Congress's Center for the Book; a rather distinguished-looking black woman, she has the Afro-American-church-audience habit of response--if only an mmhuh but usually more--to whatever a banquet speaker (even one as dim and anecdotal as Clive Cussler, walking through the role, was) utters.

19 Oct.--Liz called @ 8:25, to say she's halfway thru the second round and "caution is what I see here"; the bid increments are \$10,000, and at the moment Holt leads with \$200,000. Viking has dropped out, Kathryn Court telling Liz she couldn't get the backing for a sizable hardback bid, and so Liz has suggested to her that they back Macmillan w/ an expression of p'back interest (Holt was tried first on that ploy, and told Kathryn they want to go it alone). So, still in the bidding are Harcourt, the high bidder in round 1 w/ \$185,000; Simon & Schuster, the low bidder in round 1 (who thus must have stayed in w/ a \$5-10,000 round 2 bid); Holt; Harper; Houghton, a surprise; and Macmillan by dint of its topping right. Liz says she got voicemail in a couple of cases as she tries to run round 2, so doubts she can get the auction done by NY lunchtime. All in all, it's shaping up along the line of y'day's intimation that Bucking may go for less than Heart Earth did, maybe in the \$210,000-\$225,000 range; I do have some relief, though, that Macmillan's lowball \$160,000 offer has been obliterated.

--1:45: blessedly, I'm proven too pessimistic in this morning's estimation. The situation now is: \$250,000, w/ Harcourt saying that's its limit but HarperCollins indicating it'll go higher, and Simon & Schuster, whose last bid was \$235,000, indicating it could too. So, Liz's question: this being the point at which, as she says, it starts to get subtle, which ought we to lean toward, Harper or S & S? She got Chuck Verrill into the conversation, and Chuck said S&S, because of Michael Jacobs and the young editor, Gary Luke, who's been doing the bidding there today; I semi-reluctantly agreed, as a person has to be both half-fearful and half-intrigued by the twining-together of media going on with Paramount etc.

--The above is the 3rd round, the 2nd round having ended @ 12:50 with all 5 bidders still in, having done increments of \$5-10,000, to bring the total to \$230,000, Harcourt in the lead by dint of the order of rotation (S&S; Holt; Harper & Houghton having made identical 1st round bids; and then Harcourt as the highest 1st-round bidder). At that phone call Liz was sounding weary, not at all sure the auction could get done today ("people keep having to talk to other people before they can do anything"), but on the next (the \$250,000) call she thought it was winding down, can be done yet this very day.

19 Oct. cont.--Final report of the auction day is that it isn't final yet, but close: Simon & Schuster, it looks like, at \$260,000, although Liz is dissatisfied w/ their paperback-split terms (flat 7½% trade p'back royalty if they publish Bucking themselves, 50/50 split if they sell it to mass market) and going to try to iron a little more money out of Gary Luke in the morning if he won't/can't budge from those terms. The HarperCollins terms are considerably better, but their payout of the advance is greatly more elongated--a final payment on paperback pub'n, i.e. an extra year--and I will reiterate to Liz that S&S's payout of ½ on signing is infinitely preferable.

There's still the wild card of Macmillan's 10% topping right, but Liz and this household both doubt it'll happen; Liz said she did let Lee Goerner know the bid is over a quarter of a million to see if he'd blurt out, "Then we won't be doing anything," but characteristically he didn't tip his hand.

So: in any case, this contract will be for more than the previous one--no small relief when possible publishers such as Viking, Random House and Disney-backed Hyperion folded right away--and the sum will be at least \$100,000 better than Macmillan's alarming offer. And it is money at a level that, most of my life, I couldn't even imagine.

20 Oct.--Ratification day: publisher #3 in my wordlife, Simon & Schuster @ \$260,000. Liz called a little after 7 this morning to report that she had managed to better the paperback split but only after the advance was earned out; I parsed through with her the electronic and audio rights, which we may have to yield up. On the more positive side, S&S will pay ½ the advance in January, a truly healthy slug of money up front. On the inevitable other hands, the other 2 payments likely won't come until '96 (year of publication), leaving '95 as a void, and as Liz warns and I'd already been preparing myself for, S&S contracts are in the you-ain't-seen-nothing-yet category. But I feel we must try this big-publisher gambit for Bucking the Sun, or the sales of my books will stay stuck at the regional 30,000 level --with me contributing 10% of that with books sold by hand--that Macmillan hasn't managed to break past. Conceivably, there may be a lid of about 30,000 sales on writers like me--Stegner I think never

20 Oct. cont.--got past it until Crossing to Safety, and I'm not sure even that broke out big in hardback--but Bucking the Sun is obviously the book to try to dent that lid with.

Lee Goerner just called, with a graceful farewell; nothing befit him so well as... He said he couldn't match the S&S offer "for all kinds of reasons," which given Macmillan's limbo/paralysis as the sale of the company keeps not happening, I can believe; but I did have to make myself hold my tongue about Macmillan's wan performance on Heart Earth. He asked who my editor would be, and when told Gary Luke, spoke well of him. We both kept the conversation to this-being-publishing-we-may-end-up-together-on-the-next-street-corner; or as Lee put it, "who knows, we'll all end up working for Si Newhouse." I asked him how Frankfurt/London had been, he said his passport and American Express card were swiped, the 5th such case reported to the US Embassy that afternoon, and so he's pretty sure "it was a more hardcore criminal than my colleagues in publishing"; what, not even Andrew ~~Wylie~~, the notorious agent, I kidded. And as to the sale of Mac'n, Lee said the ~~xxx~~ word is that ~~it~~ the bids still are not all in, and so the 5th of Nov. is the new date by which it's supposed to all happen. He claims to be looking at it as "the worst that can happen is I lose a job--they can't send me to Vietnam" etc.; he added, although carefully, that he figures there's not much ~~future~~ future for him at Mac'n if S&S is the buyer: ~~xx~~ but as so often in publishing, his next words were "But who knows."

And now Gary Luke has introduced himself by phone: Seattle-born, Mt. Baker kid, Fairhaven grad. Not, he said, of the Wing Luke family, the "Luke" being a purchased name that many Chinese took upon coming to this country; his father was born in south China, his mother in Hong Kong. He sounds sharp, and was deft/frank enough to say he still finds himself surprised to be at S&S and in NY, when he'd prefer to live in Seattle. Previous jobs have been @ Dell/Delacorte, when Nelson Doubleday was succumbing to his romance with the NY Mets, and at NAL/Dutton, which all went in purchase by Penguin; considerable hide-toughening experiences which I'm glad

20 Oct. cont.--to see. As to writers he's handling: locally, Shaun Wong and UW non-fiction writer John Gottman; Mark Christiansen of Portland, working on a Blade Runner-like novel; M.R. Montgomery; Paul Krassner's new book; the What Jane Austen Ate etc. book; AP science writer Paul Raeburn's book on the corn gene pool and farm policy; Sam Fussell, doing a noirish caper novel; some first-time writers such as poet Leon Lee, doing a memoir; and, saying he likes rock-and-roll, somebody doing a bio of Lou Reed. He outright says what the list makes plain, that he likes doing a lot of different things, and certainly I don't see anybody much like me in the same stable. I in turn told him that I'm known as somebody who doesn't need close handholding but is glad enough to talk regularly, that in me he's getting something like the soul of a poet but the habits of a clerk, and if those ever start getting reversed he ought to let me know--he laughed and said he'd resort to a sharp message. He stressed what is on both our minds, that S&S's supposed strength is its national marketing ability, "strength beyond the Mississippi" (from the Seattle point of view). And so we shall see: a good start, it feels like.

25 Oct.--Reluctantly about to resume the bookstore trail: Sacramento tomorrow, the San Francisco Bay area the 3 days after. After last week's change of publishers, I put my head toward Bucking the Sun, usefully sorting and thinking the last few days of last week, and this morn I wrote a couple of pp., the first ones since, what, July, underway on the eclipse-in-the-eye experience that I'm giving one of my Bucking characters, probably Neil. C is working outside, as I did y'day afternoon, although both of us are maybe feeling random aches from flu shots on Sat. Since the last diary entry, we've gone to Anthony's Home Port in Edmonds, night of the auction to celebrate that and the gorgeous evening; Provinces w/ the Nelsons the next night, the food luckily wonderful enough to lure us back next month for monthly oriental meal w/ Ann and Marsh; and Sat. night @ the Angells', Gavia now big enough to walk like a streak and, Tony says, provoke her father.

26 Oct.--Waiting for Shuttle Express to the airport, then an Alaska silver bird to Sacramento. Perhaps because of allergy grogginess, perhaps because of 10 days off from the booktour trail, likely both, I'm finding this Calif. trip a bit unreal. Am going to need to focus ahead, in airport or on plane, to possible Sacramento Bee interview this afternoon and the public interview in San Rafael tomorrow night; sharpen myself one more time, whether I want to or not.

Tried to buzz through some accumulated correspondence this morning. Funniest note, naturally, was from Cindy Burdell, I think the only one of our friends who remarked on the S. Times' front-of-section ear touting the review inside: a scuzzy line illustration vaguely of my features and the tag "science fiction writer's memoir". Told Cindy in my postcard that, yeah, I have a sinister sci-fi netherlife, probably induced in me by reading the Seattle Times, like that potion Jekyll/Hyde took.

Lovely weather here, bright and crisp, and according to the weather maps I'm going to high temperatures in Calif., supposedly 88 in Sac'to today and 90 in SF. Have put on my Jacob's-shirt of many colors and short sleeves, in case the forecast is right.

Sea Tac, Oct. 26 - Waiting to go aboard
Alaska fl. 412 to Sacramento, & already
musing on vagaries of traveling. I was
the first passenger on Shuttle Express, &
when the 2nd stop turned out to be a
physical rehab center, driver & I both
thought, uh-oh. Every body was in wheel-
chairs on premises, & after a 15-min.
wait ("They're trying to get her down from
her room," driver was told), an elderly
Filipino woman arrived, her daughter
took a look at the Shuttle Express & said,
"She can't get out of her wheelchair, you
know," & driver called for a
calvanance & away we at last went -
me still only passenger, & rest of his
pick-ups canceled because of delay.
So it was away to airport in solitary
splendor, finally.

27 Oct. - In Stanford Court, above cable car
crossroads of world (Powell & Calif. Sts). View
eastward, to TransAm Bldg ~~East Tower~~, U
terrific, so I'll try earplugs away noise.
Y'day, good signing - 52 H's & @ Tower Bldg
in Sac'to, though sought-after interview @
Sac'to Bee fell through. Another day in
Book City.

29 Oct. - In. U of Cal library, briefly. 4:15
now, & escort Naomi Engel in to pick me
up @ Oxford^{St.} campus gate @ 5. Just
finished KPFA (Pacific) interview
show w/ the two Richards - Krupoff &
Wolinsky - & they were excellent: well-
prepared, personable, leading into what felt
like a helluva good interview. Earlier
this afternoon, much more laid back -
downright diffident - interview by Allan
Farley at KALW, but I think I was
on-beam enough to bring that one to life.
Yet to come, tonight's reading @ Back
Oak.

So, I'm doing pretty well, although
ready to call it quits in this season of
book touring. The hotel - Stanford Court,
well-run & spiffy without being silly
about it - has helped a lot. Y' day, faced
with evening interview beginning @ 8 in
San Rafael, after a long drag through
commuter traffic to get there, I managed
to turn day around: took such a long
early afternoon nap that it was
equivalent of a night's sleep, then poured
coffee into myself, went out to dinner
w/ Sydney Boudreau & Annie Egan of
City Arts & lectures, & felt fresh & alert
by performance time. Quite possibly more
so than my interviewer, local radio
personality Sedge Thomson, who didn't

29 Oct. cont. - show up in time for our sound-check of microphones, then chit-chatted w/ me in auld lang syne fashion about Seattle & UW rather than exploring what we might talk about usefully onstage, then relied on his God's-older-brother voice more than memorableness of guest-casting. A thought - evening went fine from my Spencer Tracyish perspective - I didn't forget my lines & I didn't bump into the furniture - but City Arts & Lectures mavens, Sydney Boldstein & Steve Barclay, were muttering darkly about Sedge afterward. Sydney, on disparity between Sedge's pretentious voice and his not particularly engaged stage manner: ~~the~~ "He's not a MEXSCH."

• weather here has been extraordinarily summery - to point where dinner in Hayes St. Grill last night felt East Coastish to Sydney, Annie & me - while Santa Anas are feeding big fires in Los Angeles area. So far, nothing here repeating Oakland Hills fires of a few years ago.

Tomorrow, a long day coming, a lot of car hours to get to Capitol & Menlo Park & back, then a kind of ragtag - end signing @ Green Apple B&B in SF Richmond district - & then home, 8 November.

2 Nov.--By its little fingernails, Heart Earth clung to the #10 spot on the Seattle Times bestseller list last Sun. Same day, the Everett Herald proclaimed me "a Flying Wallenda of words" and ran an arty color pic of me in a backyard tunnel of greenery. During the Tuesday-Saturday California trip last week, I drew an audience of over 700 to San Rafael in the City Arts & Lecture Series; did okay in the 4 or 5 radio interviews and SF Chronicle interview, I think; survived the 200-mile roundtrip to Capitola and Menlo Park bookstores with a rookie escort; and munged around Green Apple Books in SF's Richmond District on Sat. morn with an audience of 15 for my reading and total of 5 books sold.

Home. Definitely saner place. And a magnificent greeting from Carol, welcome-back gift in the form of Tony Angell's watersnake sculpture.

So, now to do what we do. I managed a couple more pp. of Bucking the Sun ms y'day, putting me actually a little ahead of the schedule I'd hoped for in resuming the writing, and am going to try today to organize, think, feel my way forward. C meanwhile is gritting her way through paper-grading, as always at this point of the quarter, but we're both feeling pretty good, mighty prosperous, and looking ahead to life.

Later, this same day: we've just been out to vote, in the election that's probably going to bring California Prop.-13 budget limit crap down on this state, and on teachers such as C specifically. As she tells me, I've made us some money just in time--she can walk away from underpaid professoring whenever she feels like it. Now, although this is one of those days when the kitchen curtain rod has gone flooey and dishes and newspapers and mail ~~has~~ have all piled up maliciously despite our efforts, to try to take some time to set the California trip into the diary.

The pleasantest portion of my four San Francisco days came each morning, right after breakfast, a bit after dawn, when I would go out of the Stanford Court hotel and up Nob Hill a block or two to the park between there and Grace Cathedral. Simply strolling there the first morning, trying to figure how to walk enough to get some exercise without sweating myself up in hill-climbing--any direction you head from that summit of Nob Hill takes you sharply down, which means you're going to have to come sharply

2 Nov. cont.--back up the gradient--I was charmed by a few separate Chinese dog-walkers in front of me, who when they came to the waist-high abutment along the west edge of the park, hoisted their scotties up onto the abutment and the dogs happily toddled along up there mid-high with their owners. Then I noticed, up in the park, a 60ish Chinese man in a ballcap going through very graceful and stylized exercise motions: for a while, holding one hand out, palm up, in front of his face and circling dancelike from that pivot point as if from a partner, the other hand half-raised, half-up; then he might go through some quick fluid semi-boxing or martial arts motions; then the arms and steps might be balletic, or swordsmanlike. Going up into the park, I found several kinds of Chinese exercising going on in stately regularity. A group of 8 or 10, including one middle-aging Caucasian guy who'd attained a modicum of facility at it and another one who just advertised how clunky our Caucasian bodies are, went thru a slow but steady routine of bodily motions and I suppose meditating. Three middle-aged women did wonderful sword-dance exercises with telescoping blunt swords--like giant zipblades! An old man as skinny as he was elderly, probably less than 100 pounds even in his heavy sweater and big flat cap, trotted around and around the park. An equally old-looking one sat cross-legged in prayer on the rim of the dolphin-and-triton-shell fountain amid all this. A younger Chinese man came through, doing backflips in his blue tracksuit. So it went, each morning the same people composing their day that way, and I found it wonderfully peaceful, relaxing, to watch for 20 min. or so before going into my day of busyness. A pensive time, but thought-provoking too: there with Grace Cathedral as backdrop and the thousands-of-years rhythm of those Chinese exercise rituals as foreground, I thought back to Utah in May, the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City as backdrop to very different traditions, and wondered how this country manages to hang together at all.

So: O hands clapped to music, o brightening glance/ how can we tell the dancer from the dance? After those Yeatsian starts to my day, something for me to keep in mind about myself as I went out into the booktour dance. Have jotted down enough of myself at the City Arts &

2 Nov. cont.--Lectures venue in San Rafael, but want to hang onto this story. Part of the lecturemeisters' (Sydney Goldstein and her partner Steve Barclay) snit against Sedge Thomson was that he began the night by excusing himself to the audience, coming backstage and pointing out that there was no water in the glasses for us onstage. Sydney, though, had to laugh ruefully and tell of the time when Sedge started the interview with Tony Hillerman, then said, "Mr. Hillerman, may I have a word with you backstage?" Off they went behind the curtain, and Tony said, "What is it--is my fly open?" Sedge said, "Yes."

Finally, at least for today--curtain rods and phone calls still loom--two memorable eating venues. Had lunch at the Buena Vista, across the street from where the cable cars turn around at the waterfront, pretty much straight out of, say, Steinbeck. Veteran waitress got in a shouting match with veteran streetwoman; in 30 seconds it was all forgotten. And the best meal I had, a slim margin better than the Hayes Street Grill where the lecturemeisters took me, was at the Berkeley marina, at the restaurant called Skate's; fine food besides the view of the sun going down through the Golden Gate. Victoria Shoemaker of Black Oak bookstore and the escort Naomi Eppel, both longtime Berkeleyans, admitted they would never have thought to come there instead of somewhere uptown, it took me wandering in from the outlands to say, hey, let's go where we can the sunset.

8 Nov.--This has felt like two days, a morning where I fairly serenely sorted and thought through Bucking the Sun filecards pertinent to this week's writing, and an afternoon where I've whaled away ~~and~~ at deskwork and barely kept even. Took me well over an hour to craft a blurb for Eric Nalder's oil tanker book; I considered it essential to do, because Eric's done a stupendous job in the book, but the blurbing does get to be yet another career around here. Other requests, speaking etc., are still coming in at more than one a day, so besides the yea-saying of blurbs there's all the nay-saying to so much else. I'm hoping that either the situation or I will settle down a little, but I dunno.

10 Nov.--The leaves fly down, the season changes. I just now stood at the study window watching a blizzard of leaves, from an unusual north breeze.

The season changes: on the phone machine when I came back from walking the park was Liz with the news, which I'd about half-expected, that the new owner of Macmillan is Paramount/Simon & Schuster. I don't know what this bodes--for me, it's probably an advantage to have my backlist books under the same roof as my next one--but it's sad to see yet another publishing house vanish. Atheneum's demise, if that's what this is (and I can't see how it won't be), began not just with Robert Maxwell but with the Scribners, so superannuated they didn't know anything to do with the Atheneum/Scribners/etc. group of imprints but putz around and sell them to Macmillan. Then Maxwell expensively gobbled Macmillan. I do know for sure that I feel better about having a contract in the works from the pre-sale Simon & Schuster, than being an author within a Macmillan that's about to be cannibalized.

15 Nov.--Now just before lunch, and I've achieved the day's couple of pp. of Bucking, after a dreadful Monday start, slow and logey and a midsize windstorm kicking around overhead. At least we have a bit of reassurance on the wind score, Jerry Franklin having come y'day and looked at our situation amid the big trees out front and concluding we're not in any great risk.

Chored through much of the weekend, mostly on the house--the bathroom sink drain, the fireplace grout, and so on--which isn't good for my mood about hunkering in for winter. On the bright side, I don't really have anything serious to complain about, and Thanksgiving is coming.

23 Nov.--In snow and cold, both of which came on the weekend. Carol has walked to campus both mornings of this teaching week, and as tonight is supposed to be colder yet and the road up the hill has a lot of ice, she'll likely do the same tomorrow. We will get out in the afternoon, one way or another, to fetch home the Thanksgiving turkey.

I've spent this week trying to organize life in general and Bucking the Sun in particular (did write 1 p. today, a physical description of Owen Duff that I think is surprisingly complete), and so far haven't managed to

23 Nov. cont.--climb out of the mood of my-God-when-is-all-this-going-to-get-done? Maybe Thanksgiving will help, maybe whatever time off we can manage over Xmas will help.

6 Dec.--3:15, just called Marshall Nelson and he described the Simon & Schuster contract as "inelegant," so he'll try to work himself free in 45 min. or so to go over it with C and me in detail on the phone.

Meanwhile, this is the swing day to Bucking the Sun, the Heart Earth booktour now behind me, as of 3 p.m. y'day when I left the Oregon Historical Society annual shindig and C and I scooted north on I-5 in fine sunshine. I haven't run the total yet, but I think the signings sold 3,000 Heart Earths by hand, which would work out to 70-some per bookstore, best ever.

The Portland trip was considerable fun, although not as glorious as a few years ago when the Park Blocks Revels revved up the entire n'hood around the OHS. We still had a good Heathman dinner with Craig and Kathy Lesley, per tradition, and Sunday morning there was a high-spirited annual Jingle Bells 4-mile mass run, ending up downtown--~~people~~ runners pushing baby bobbies, wearing bells, reindeer antlers, whatever, and as C noted, except for the first few finishers, nobody overly competing, just participating for the fun of it. Saturday lunchtime, even more spectacular, came a parade of motorcycle clubs down the Broadway heart of Portland, hell's geezers on big ~~one~~ old Harley hogs and other cycles, some of the black-leather-jacketed riders so veteran they had long Santa-like beards that were real.

While catching up here, I should note the Thanksgiving lineup, and that the day was sunny and further brightened by 17-month old Gavia Angell. (The usual walk around the n'hood was magnificently thrown askew by Gavia's presence from the house down to the 175th corner, delays for her mittens, her hat, etc.; we ultimately and laughingly ended up in two entirely separate contingents, me ahead with one and Ann leading the other, even after Gavia and Tony and Lee headed home from the corner.) Anyway, the old and proven friends on hand: Mark and Lou Damborg,

6 Dec. cont.--Ann McCartney and Norm Lindquist, Linda Bierds and Sydney Kaplan, Peter Rockas and Cathy Acker, Linda Sullivan and Jeff Saeger, and the 3 Angells. Plus, to our pleased surprise, Jack Gordon for the first hour or two, complete with copious hors d'oeuvres and good humor. I asked Peter afterward if he'd worked on Jack (whose dithery will-I-come-or-won't-I tradition of the past some years had terminally exasperated me, ~~and~~ C--the Jack-exasperated one of last year--calling him this year; it's fine with us whether he comes or not, but we simply need to know) and Peter smiled and said he'd told Jack "this is family," he'd better come.

7 Dec.--Publishing history has been made, ahem. Today I signed and sent off the contract for Bucking the Sun, and Linda Bierds got word that Holt will publish The Ghost Trio next fall.

8 Dec.--Storm coming in. Barometer @ 29.2 and still dropping, steady driving rain now, and dusklike darkness at 11 a.m. With gale winds on the way.

C's last day of class this quarter; she'll be home in less than half an hour, and then it's onward for us through her exam week and my pecking out another 10 or 12 Bucking pages, till we get on a plane for Palm Springs a week from tomorrow. Evidently not a moment too soon.

9 Dec.--All-day rain, 6 or 7 hours of it heavy. Letting up now, @ 3:15, and I'm about to call it a day. Moved up the time of my exercising on my cross-country ski machine to 2 instead of usual 4 or so, to revive enough to finish the day's needed 3 pp. C stayed away from campus today, "dead day" between last classes and exams, and has done a ton of deskwork, some laundry, is crockpotting a soup and will make crabcakes for supper.

11 Dec.--The weather settled down from blustery to merely soggy over the weekend and since. Last night we went with Linda and Sydney to the Provinces in Edmonds, fine exhilarating Asian food to celebrate Holt's pub'n plans for Linda's next book of poems, The Ghost Trio, next fall. Saturday night, we were at Eric and Jan

14 Dec. cont.--Nalder's, with Linda Sullivan and Jeff Saeger, for supper and in essence a celebration of Eric's forthcoming investigative book, Tankers Full of Trouble. Apart from socializing, we ^{are} whipping chores as best we can--writing Xmas cards turned out to be more of a task than I'd even dreaded it'd be, as I shot myself in the foot this year by not wanting to face writing a Xmas ph'copy letter and so ended up dabbing individual messages on a ton of cards--and steering toward Thurs. morning when, for better or worse, we fly to Palm Springs. My desk is at last clean of correspondence, clippings etc., as a result of a grim dutiful yesterday, and this morn I will be able to spend some time on file cards and some thinking about Bucking the Sun, before an afternoon of banking and other chores. Tugs at my time and attention keep coming at a surprising rate; pretty much daily; just turned down next-autumn invites to Sun Valley and Steamboat Springs, and even on Sunday morning the phone rang, it was Bevis passing along a request from his brother at U. of British Columbia for me to come up and give a reading (which I've since turned down, too). One turndown of this past week was emphatic, in fact profane. Rick Newby, and I don't know who else, of Falcon Press in Helena are intending an anthology on Montana topics titled An Embarrassment of Riches, with at least some of the thrust a criticism of the "western Montana bias" and ~~literature~~ mainstream-literature-over-experimental-stuff in The Last Best Place. This seems to me vulturous, the Montana Gothic and why-don't-we-have-some-Montana-surrealism guys complaining that their stuff got left out, when in actuality they've been neither very good nor persevering at their genres. To me, they're hanging around, nitpicking, when they ought to honing their craft; and I was particularly pissed off that Newby got Rich Roeder, ailing and beset as he's been, to call and ask me to write the foreword to their anthology, instead of doing the asking himself. I do hate dilettantism, particularly with adolescence thrown in.

Dec. 14 cont.--Cleaning out my pocket notebook of this autumn, found the reminder of a story Ripley Schemm told, the night in Sept. when we were all at Bevises'. There was a time when she would pick up Dick Hugo and Lois Welch after their day at the U. of Montana and they'd all go home up Rattlesnake Creek. Ripley could always tell when the two of them had come out of an English Dept. meeting, as they'd both be glum and silent. About halfway home, Dick would say, "Wasn't that a horseshit meeting?" and Lois would agree that it was. Then Dick would say, "But I thought when I told them thus-and-such, that was pretty good." Lois would respond, "That was very good. That was exactly what they deserved to hear."

22 Dec.--Home again after a terrific 5 days in Palm Springs. C came up with the place, after I took a look at both of us sometime in the drear weather of late Nov. and said we'd better go get some sunshine, and it worked to a T--a direct Alaska Airlines flight, and the Villa Capri which Kathrin Maloof had scouted when she and John were there. The main thing was, the weather was exquisite and we were able to go out day after day and hike, in new and uncrowded circumstances:

--1st day, Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument, where we went in to the natural rock amphitheater that rustlers supposedly used as a corral; then drove on through to Cottonwood Springs, stopping on the way at a cholla garden.

--2nd day, Palm Canyon on the Agua Caliente Resvn, a marvelous trail up a deep little canyon where the stream feeds a constant line of palms and other foliage.

--3rd day, The Living Desert, ~~xxx~~ on the outskirts of Palm Desert; well-laid-out zoo and gardens, and trail loops out across the alluvial fan beyond and up into the foothills of Eisenhower Mtn; we went up to a ridge and had lunch overlooking the Coachella Valley.

--4th day, Thousand Palms Oasis, a conservation district run by the Conservancy and other agencies; fan palms there, their shag never burnt off as the Palm Canyon palms' had been, so it was a wonder of oasis-feel.

--Y'day, our final morning, the weather was the best yet and so we bagged the notion of going to the Palm

22 Dec. cont.--Springs Desert Museum and went back up Palm Canyon. This time, got more than we bargained for as we decided to return by the ridgeclimbing Victor Trail rather than come back inside the canyon and missed the cutoff back to the parking area, so that we had to traipse down a wash to intersect the road and then backtrack up the road to our car. All this, and still managed to be on our 1:40 plane to Seattle.

The eating was good, especially the Italian food in at Banducci's and the Southwest spicy food at the Blue Coyote; other nights, ate at Las Casuelas, a local family-run institution, and at Harry's Hofbrau, a combo deli-cafeteria, and both of those were fine, too. And in our lodging, the Villa Capri turned out to be a Canadian snowbird haven--run by Germaine and Ben Vivian, originally from Victoria, and the only other residents at the moment Newt and Irene from Moncton, New Brunswick. All were pleasant, full of kidding, and there was something about big, stolid-standing Newt I couldn't quite identify until our final day, when friends of theirs came to meet them for lunch and the other man was introduced as having been a policeman with Newt, 50 years ago. Indeed, our flight northward had a number of similar rangy lantern-jawed Scotch Canadian geezers.

So, we both came home feeling immensely better, restored by some sunshine and time off, and now to see if we can maintain it through the holidays and, dare we hope, January.

30 Dec.--And now we're about to let '93 go. In rain, an improvement over the fog and gray earlier this week. We socialized some last week--at the Nelsons' the 22nd, over to the Lankfords' open house on Xmas Eve, dinner @ the Rodens/Clemens gathering on Christmas. And actually went to a movie, Monday night, Remains of the Day--Anthony Hopkins wonderful but also a touch too unbelievably repressed as Stephens the butler, and Emma Thompson the absolute astonishment that she's been reputed to be. I've spent some time on finances, but quite a bit, too, on gleaning material from notebooks toward Bucking the Sun. Monday, C and I both launch back into what we do.

(remarks @ Evans Biography Award banquet, Logan, Utah, 17 Aug. '93)

Early in Heart Earth, in describing my parents' journey down through the Rockies as they tried "to trade predicament in Montana for predicament in Arizona," I put it this way:

"My parents and my father's sister Anna and her husband Joe and the five-year-old dirtmover that was me had thrown what we had into a Ford coupe and pinballed our way down through the West a thousand and fifty miles, ration books straining from gas station to gas station along U.S. 89, me most of the time intrepidly shelved crosswise in the coupe's rear window, until we rolled to a halt in Phoenix the night before Thanksgiving of 1944."

So, that carload of western questers passed through town, here, that last November of World War Two. And I think it's safe to say that the word "astonishment" wouldn't begin to measure the surprise that Berneta and Charlie Doig, my parents, would have felt, at my being back here tonight to collect this award for the story of them and the Mountain West within their heart of hearts.

It's particularly pleasing that the Evans Award comes from another western family--and my thanks to the various Evanses, who are here tonight to see my parents honored, in a way, by their parents, David and Beatrice Evans.

Much about this handful of book, Heart Earth, has been unexpected. If my mother's letters from that last half-year of the war had not ricocheted so miraculously--from American deserts and mountaintops to a ship in combat in the South Pacific to a family trunk closed away for forty-one years to a last will and testament to, at very last, a son's eyes--I would not have had enough of a look into her mood and words to ever have written about her.

Nor is it any small surprise to me, to have Heart Earth already so successful, fifteen years after my first effort at writing about the landscape of western minds, in This House of Sky.

Dick Brown, himself one of our western treasures, keeps saying out loud that This House of Sky lives on in a lineage of strong modern writing in the American West, and I'm both proud and pleased to be a member of this western writing community at this moment in literature and history. We are a pretty various bunch of wordsmiths, and I think that's to our credit. I'm reminded of what another writer, who lived and worked far from the supposed literary centers of the world, once said about what he hoped was the worth of his own writing. He was an African novelist, named Camara Laye--born in Guinea, he lived the last part of his life in exile in Senegal, where he died in 1980.

Camara Laye once told an interviewer, who was asking how it was to work so far away from other writers, from the literary power centers, that he thought the cultures of the world, as expressed in their writers, were all participating in one vast dance, each with its own special movement, each contributing something significant to the total world rhythm.

I can hear that, in our own western pages. The jukebox saloon tunes in the background of the prose of William Kittredge, the kitchen-sung songs wafting out as the work of Barbara Kingsolver and Terry Tempest Williams, the anthems of small places and family niches in the writings of Mary Clearman Blew and Craig Lesley and Teresa Jordan, the tribal rhythms of the reservation behind the words of James Welch and Michael Dorris and Louise Erdrich, the poetic balladry under Rudolfo Anaya's words and Norman Maclean's words and Wallace Stegner's words and I hope maybe my own--if we are doing them right, they are something more than words, they are heartbeats of the West.