

3 Jan. '05--A bright cold sheen on the start of the year. Temp in mid-30's, not acloud in the sky. Dave McKee has just now arrived (1 p.m.) to begin our project of terracing the south end of the embankment below the veg garden. Today he's to tear out a sprawling old Oregon grape plant, a badly placed lilac tree, and a mystery bush, and temporarily move the raspberries out. Tomorrow, concrete blocks for the retaining walls and dirt for the terraces. It'll be heartening to start the year off in that useful fashion.

I resumed on the Whistling Season this morn, without expecting to get much done and damned if that expectation didn't come true. Also, the inside flange of a bottom tooth chipped off during breakfast, so in about half an hour I trundle off to the dentist. Other than having to arm-wrestle the schedule more than I feel like, not much is the matter with life in this household. The preliminary adding-up of the year's finances look like we gained a couple of hundred thousand dollars in total assets (Carol in fact is more of a millionaire than ever, despite having had to take her first pension distribution in '04), and over the New Year's weekend I worked out some investment decisions. So, things are not in bad shape despite my annual jumpiness about how to get everything done that needs to be done.

Kicked off the year on a good social note, Mark and Lou Damborg here for dinner--nay, turkey dinner and champagne--on the 1st. A good gracious evening. And on the medical front, C received what look like good test results on the liver tests ordered up by Dr. Kato after one borderline number showed up in her physical.

Hey, nearly forgot: that New Year's Day dinner included salad for 4 picked from our own blessed garden (with no small thanks to the pair of coldframes).

4 Jan.--9:25, crystalline morning, a Coast Guard cutter with its red warpaint stripe bright against its white hull is incising the Sound, right up the middle, bound north.

9 Jan.--Snow days, or at least snow morns, today and y'day. About an inch each time, gone by early afternoon. The wintry stuff notwithstanding, tonight we're having a fruit salad supper, with hard-won greens--spinach, lettuce kale--from our wintered-over garden.

We've stuck close to home with this weather, and wouldn't you know, tomorrow we're each out at social dates, C committed to the Shoreline ladies' alum lunch buhch so that she can't go with me to the UW faculty club for the impromptu lunch Betsy Wilson is throwing for her visiting historians from New Mexico, her brother and his wife Ginger Scharf, whom I've met.

It's largely been a weekend of start-the-year-clean-or-else chores. I've been winnowing financial statements today and y'day it was going through the Christmas cards & letters choosing keepers and wistfully discarding the rest. I find I am quite a fan of Christmas letters, irked when I hear or read smart-ass commentary about what a drag it is to have to peruse the doings of other people's children or grandchildren. Seems to me a welcome commitment that people will take the trouble to try to summarize their year for one another. In our really quite numerous batch of cards received--around a hundred, I'd say--two things stuck out: on the basis of our friends Bush would have lost the election by about 15 to 1 (I can identify only about half a dozen of our friends, and that actually includes a few relatives, who would have voted for the goon), and peace was the motif on many, many cards, along the lines of the Thoreauvian one Eric Nalder and wife Jan sent: "Every creature is better alive than dead/men and moose and pine trees/and he who understands it aright/will rather preserve life than destroy it."

11 Jan.--Cold, damn, and due to get colder. I am so far removed from Montana Winters and C from East Coast ones, and both of us from those Lake Michigan beasts of storms, that we feel it a lot. We have managed to do our daily walk around the neighborhood, sometimes amending it by turning back at our old house, and I have the coldframes and 2 other beds swaddled in frost blankets.

11 Jan. cont.--Y'day C and I had separate social engagements. She was committed to the women's gathering at Trudy's, and so couldn't come along to the UW Faculty Club for the lunch Betsy Wilson had arranged. Besides Betsy and Dean and me, there was John Findlay, Carla Rickerson, Dick Kirkendall of the history dept., Gail Davis who I think is a preservation historian in the school of architecture, Betsy's architecture historian brother Wilson and his wife, the U of New Mexico historian Ginger Scharf. Helluva bright table. I particularly liked what Dick Kirkendall is working on, Harry Truman and how his world view was shaped by war, from Civil War tales in his family onward.

And the welcome news of today, the fax from Liz saying Harcourt has offered \$7500 apiece for p'back rights on Heart Earth and The Sea Runners, to bring 'em out with The Whistling Season in spring '06. Now to see if Scribner takes the offer, bless their pointy heads.

12 Jan.--Had an aggravating interlude that started at 10 after 6 last night when we were sitting over supper listening to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. as we, and particularly C, do several hours a day, and blat, on that frequency came ranting Jesus preachers from Twin Falls. I was so pissed off I could barely sit still, wondering if this is one more chapter of the right-wingers leading us back to the Dark Ages--we've already lost the KPLU signal on that main radio to Bible ranters somewhere over on the Kitsap Peninsula. By this morning I had figured out that a frequency coup, from the religious crapheads getting more transmission power from the FCC, wasn't likely at 10 past the hour, and all the other radios in the house didn't digest the ranters but simply spat static there on 92.1. When we came in from yardwork this afternoon, about 22 hours after the CBC vanished, there by god--no capital G, either--it was again.

This was the first mild afternoon in several days, and a gold haze of sunset is flooding the southwest corner of the Sound as I write this, 4:25.

15 Jan.--Wintry, again, in this pugnacious January. It's 36 now, @ 3:30, and I don't think it's been above that all day, and is headed below freezing again tonight. There's a white skift, combo of ice crystals and stray snow this afternoon. A week from now, we intend to be in Tucson.

After lunch, C & I put new caulk along the main bathroom's counter area, a dreaded job that ~~w~~ didn't turn out much better than dreaded. But, there it is, done.

Spent a dogged week at writing, with much sorting and shuffling, and think I am now lined out to do the "fill" sections still needed.

Martha Stewart in the slammer, Bob Whitsitt canned from the Seattle Seahawks--maybe the Doigs were a jinx, to those who crossed our paths on the St. Petersburg trip? Whitsitt was just dandy as our Estonia lunch mate--he even bought. Saying she couldn't resist seeing what the sportswriters would have to say, C brought home both the S. Times and P-I today, and we sat around goggling and chuckling.

18 Jan.--Productive day on every front except the ms, ~~work~~ where work was called off on account of weather. A vast ~~**~~ wet-kiss rainfront moved in around midnight on the 16th, kept the rain coming for more than 20 hours, went to off and on y'day, and was forecast to keep up at some intensity the rest of this week. But, lo and behold, it wasn't particularly threatening when we did our n'hood walk this morn, so we dropped all else for hung-up yardwork:

--In about 2 hours, we replanted the raspberry plenitude--must be 35-40' of 'em now--into the new terraces where the damnable embankment was. Dave McKee put in the retaining walls and fresh dirt on the 4th, and the day before he and I got the rasps out of the way and into some dirt atop a blue tarp down by the garden shed, so it's been more than two weeks of frequently freezing weather to make me look nervously down there at the big blue bundle.

--C meanwhile tackled a chore she'd wanted to do, replacing the old woody and weedy lavenders at the south ~~end~~ end of the row with young plants, and in this rain-soft soil she got it all done.

--And the mail brought 2 pieces of good news from Liz, nearly \$1600 in Rascal Fair royalties and the finalizing of ~~**~~2.39" on the 17th, a record

18 Jan. cont.--Scribner's paperback deal with Harcourt on Heart Earth and Sea Runners, whereby my nice new publisher will publish those old favorites for the next 10 years.

22 Jan.--9:45, $\frac{1}{2}$ hr from heading to SeaTac and Tucson. Springlike here, 50ish and showery. I put in most of y'day in the yard again, just because it would have been foolish not to be out in such weather.

The writing week was thin and tough, as a consequence of my imagination taking my narrator to places I'd had no idea he would go--passing notes between classroom lovebirds and the Millirons becoming honorary Drobnys, for example. In the end, I think these leaps across crevasses are worth it, but they take a lot of huffing and puffing.

31 Jan.--Wind is blowing and showers are forecast, so I do believe we are back from Tucson. The week-long trip went admirably, only one truly rainy day (the 26th) and a couple that were gorgeous and the rest in-between, not damp enough to thwart us. We got off to a nice start again by staying

2 days & 3 nights with Betty & Pete Bengtson, with each side coming up with a good idea for a day's outing. Ours was to introduce them to Ralph Walcott and the Nature Conservancy holding he's in charge of on the San Pedro River, over the Rincon Mtns east of Tucson. C & I met Ralph and wife Kathleen at Pine Butte when I contributed a gig for the Montana Conservancy's shake-the-donors weekend in '03, and I did the foreword for Ralph's book Crown of the Continent. In both cases I thought he was a helluva naturalist, very keen in observation and in putting it into words, and he proved so again at the San Pedro. The land at hand is remarkably akin to the North Fork of the Flathead in Montana in scant population (150 along the north San Pedro, Ralph said, and Dave Walter has told us a few hundred full-time along his beloved N. Fork) and length of valley and undammed watershed; Ralph said it's the only valley of its kind left in Arizona, and that set me to wondering if something similar could be said of every western state, one last remote river somewhere while all else has been radically altered. Not that the San Pedro is anything approaching pristine; I think Ralph said the Conservancy has

31 Jan. cont.--2200 acres in its 6-mile holding, really a long thin snake of land along the river, and it was used to grow alfalfa, one of the worst water-hog crops there is, and the place now is infested with tumbleweeds. The weeds need to be mowed at least twice a year, just to try to stay even with the bastards. And everything has had to be fenced (by a contractor, thank god not Ralph), six strands of barbed wire with 3 stays to hold the wires tight up-and-down between posts, to keep range cattle out. On top of all that, the houses on the place were disasters, and after getting one livable for them and another for Kathleen's mother, Beryl (as C notes, a sweet lady), Ralph and Kathleen are still living out of boxes. So, moving their life from Montana to the San Pedro, in probably their early 50's, looked to C and me brave or foolhardy, possibly both. Ralph says he wanted a respite from the constant public role he was in as the Montana Conservancy's education guy, but man, there's a lot of brute labor in this new job. In any case, he and Kathleen (and Beryl) were charming as the dickens to the four of us, taking us on a walk along the river on a trail he's cleared--bottomland of big cottonwoods and another sizable species, not fatally overrun with salt cedar. Ralph found fresh fox tracks to show us, and a bit of potsherd--as he said, you wonder whose fingers last touched that bit of pottery. Kathleen is as busy scanning around as he is, and she spotted the seed pouch of fine fiber of the virgin's bower plant; Ralph said it was the prized tinder when mountain men struck fire with a flint, they would carry a parfleche of the stuff. All in all, the San Pedro struck me as a project making some progress--the water table is rising since the Conservancy killed off all the alfalfa irrigating, and the river might actually run in a continuous stretch sometime now--but with real drawbacks and compromises. The AZ Conservancy has split the acreage into 6 parcels with conservation encumbrances (although each can be divided in half one more time by the buyer) to try to raise \$ for purchase of more ranches along the watershed. Anyway, as C noted, we're invited back to see more of the San Pedro country and probably we will.

Feb. 1--Y'day went under a blizzard of nonwriting (or at least non-ms) tasks, beginning with a bank trip to deal with around \$160,000 of matured certificates of deposit, and accelerating at noon when Brant's latest set of p'back covers appeared at the front door, along with his note saying in essence that Susan Moldow is fed up with us tinkering with this artwork. I left Brant a not notably happy phone message, saying I guess we're done in spite of ourselves. He called back later, though, to say he and the art director simply feel it's not fair to let the artist get away with an uncorrected version of the Asian-looking Mariah on the cover of Ride with Me, so there's some chance that'll be made better (although with this artist you never know). He asked me about just using the Penguin backcover material on these new ones, I took a look and said huh uh, let me work on it. I got down the hardbacks of English Creek and Ride with Me, and spliced and touched up and sprinkled pixie dust, and faxed 'em both to him this morn. Despite that, and other chores that seem to have bred like snakes while we were away, today I did get back to writing on Whistling, getting almost 2 pages, although $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 p. was the poem about Newton and the apple and different kinds of fall that I intend to have Morrie recite.

6 Feb.--Fine raucous Sunday morn "breakfast" with Walkinshaws at Cafe Septieme, which C & I used for lunch. The 4 of us chose the place from a "Seattle's best breakfasts" book they'd been given, and while my biscuits & gravy were top-notched and C's huevos rancheros were good but not great, Jean was brought a plate not even remotely resembling what she'd ordered--she'd been given last week's menu of specials and ordered off that. The cafe pretty quickly cooked up what she wanted, but service is not the Septieme's strong point; I liked the rest of it, said as soon as we walked in it looked like where Edward Hopper would eat. Jean is still producing tv, now working on a show about Roethke.

As ever I am scuffling to stay on ms schedule atop the logjam of chores. A lot of Friday afternoon went to eyeing out our biennial downslope tree trimming with a new tree guy, Dan Guild, who is the sort that needs to look at every thing two or three times. Also, he's damn pricey compared

Feb. 6 cont.--to previous trimmers. Just to get it done, we've told him to go ahead on the 9th. Indoors, I've taken on perhaps quixotic tasks toward Harcourt's p'backs of Heart Earth and Sea Runners, choosing a dozen pics out of my family collection for possible use in HE and going through 1980-82 diaries and the Sea Runners journal to see if a slim book about the writing of a book can be conjured.

9 Feb.--Whoof, the day that was. Which is to say, the day of the downslope tree-trimming. The Accurate Tree Service guys Travis and Jose~~7~~⁷--delivered promptly at 9 this morn by Dan Guild who just as promptly left us all to it, to my considerable surprise--topped 8 or 9 hard-to-reach trees, including one mammoth maple growing out of the bank at the edge of our property and the wetland and blotting out considerable of the water view. I hovered, from the bank above, a lot more than I'd counted on, and thereby got the middle set of trees done lower than they'd otherwise have been. Anyway, that should be the tree project taken care of for this year.

Managed to get a dab of writing, maybe half a page, before the tree crew came. And I did vegetable work, painstaking transplanting of lettuce seedlings in SW bed to align them into an eventual coldframe, while keeping an eye on the timberwork. We have a night out, thank heavens, with the Atwoods at the Provinces.

Ah, it should be noted; the weather could not have been sunnier and more compliant, for the tree project.

16 Feb.--Cold clear frosty nights, these past couple, the time of year when the running lights of tugs and other vessels on the Sound are very bright in the dark of night. We intend to use the weather for a Skagit day-off. First, though, I troop myself down to Group Health at Northgate for my semi-annual blood tests in the monitoring of MGUS.

An odd connection out of the blue, y'day, when I answered the phone a little before 5 and it was a woman named Nikki Vick, founder of the Field's End writing program on Bainbridge Island which David Guterson has inveigled me into speaking to in April. Pro forma publicity stuff and some mutual fumbling around with description of my speech, until

16 Feb. cont.--she hesitantly asked, "Was your wife a counselor at the 1965 High School Institute?" Yup, the lady was a Cherub, and had reports on a few others of that year (I was a counselor in '66, but as C reconstructs what happened in '65 she somehow managed to work her Together magazine job and be a counselor too)--Jan Johnson is a journalism prof in N. Carolina, Albert Scardino won a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting on a paper in Georgia, James Terr is a political satirist in New Mexico. And when C looked over the Cherub list I dug out of our archives, this morn she spotted Walter S. Mossberg, tech columnist for the Wall St. Journal. The most outlandish what-are-the-odds part of this, though, is that Nikki likely lives almost within sight of Ann ^Nelson, who was also a counselor that year.

19 Feb.--Here's one for the record. Around 10:45 y'day I was starting to print out the morning's work when the phone rang and I monitored the message machine and heard it was Tony Angell. "In that case," I broke in on him, and Tony was quite overwhelmed, telling me he'd just had the worst phone call--Lidta Tarver of the UW Press letting him know she had just been called by the Associated Press checking out a report of my death, and did Tony know? After I talked with Tony and filled C in on what was going on, I called the Associated Press. Guy on the other end said: "Well, hello there. I guess that was exaggerated." (i.e., in the spirit of the old Mark Twain line, "The report of my death is greatly...") Asked him where this tip on the late me had originated and he said it came out of Billings. I hung up, pondering whether some Doig cousin had died, and the phone instantly rang and it was David Laskin, saying "How are you?" Funny you should ask, say I. It turned out he'd just had a call like Tony's, this one from somebody he knows at Hugo House, again contacted by the AP. Inasmuch as I had vouched for my living whereabouts to the AP, I thought the matter was taken care of and we proceeded to lunch and a nap--only to start the afternoon with a phone message from the Washington Post, diplomatically asking for anyone in the household to call back. I did, pronto, with C asking from the top of the stairs "Was that the Washington Post?!"

19 Feb. cont.--The Post reporter proved to be Pat Sullivan, whom I'd crossed paths with years ago when she was on the Missoulian and interviewed me when I was given the Merriam Award at the U. of Montana. Like the AP guy she was quite surprised to be hearing my voice, but they and the other newspaper types ultimately involved all were decently congratulatory--that's not quite the word, but humanly appreciative that an obit story in this rare case was not fatal to the person. Pat told me her source was someone at the UM and then I really began to think, uh oh, goddamn the Internet. C now urged me to call Lois Welch before the UM grapevine reached her, so I left Lo a message and then tried to call Ginny Merriam at the Missoulian to quash the rumor should it hit there. Ginny was out, so I asked to talk to her editor and it turned out to be Sherry Devlin. Told her what was up, and got the Helena AP phone number from her (there's no Billings AP, evidently). Guy there said yeah, they'd passed the report along to Seattle to be checked out, it came to them from the Billings Gazette. I called the Gazette and worked my way from copy desk to news editor to the reporter, Mary Pickett, who had been called (and this was tickling in the back of my mind as a distinct possibility) by Sue Hart of Eastern Montana College, asking if the Gazette knew if it was true. I thanked Mary and called Sue--she had heard it from Gary Svee, complete with details such as died in emergency room of congestive heart failure etc. Ye gods, I thought, and drew a breath on all this by going outside for some yard work and fruit tree grafting, before tackling Svee. Came back in to two phone messages. Svee, giving a very shaggy apology, saying his seance had got its wires crossed, sorry how things take off on the Internet, and delivered not one goddamn bit of what I wanted, details of how this had happened. The other message, blessedly, was Mary Pickett of the Gazette again, who had put it all together. Earlier this week, a Billings figure named Ivan White died, apparently a fellow who was respected regular caller-in to the Marvin Granger talk show on Billings radio and was also known in the local literary circle. "Ivan" was being eulogized on the show Thursday night, Svee's wife Diane

19 Feb. cont.--hears only the first name and the gory details and encomiums for his writing and humanity and tells Gary. Gary knows Sue has been a friend of ours, calls her, and away it goes. Upshot is that the Gazette is doing a story this morning saying I'm still upright on the ground, and later y'day Sherry Devlin called to say the Missoulian will do a "brite" that I'm still kicking. Call me Lazarus.

25 Feb.--A week after that episode, I can finally turn off my imagination, the scenario lurking there that all that was a portent of what I would get handed in today's semiannual exam for status of MGUS/or myeloma. Big reprieve from Dr. Ginsberg, who after 4 years of parsing my blood tests and tracking through theirs ups and downs by computer today, concludes I simply have borderline readings that flit up and down. No definitive signs of myeloma--conspicuous anemia or elevated monoclonal protein or calcium or creatinine, no bone lesions, and so on--and so he suggested a year between exams instead of these six-month vigils. I told him I'd take that promotion.

On the other side of the coin of life, Jeanne Baldwin called this morning to tell us Ben had died on the 22nd. We knew from her January letter he was in terrible shape in a nursing home, so this is a mercy--Jeanne said she couldn't wish him back in the state he was in. He was a terrific figure in my life, from the first day I walked into his office at Northwestern as his advisee, raw young workhorse from the west that I was, and my heart turned over with pride this morning when Jeanne spoke the words, "Ivan, you were his favorite." The man had a galaxy of students who went on to win Pulitzers and other huzzahs, so that brevet from Jeanne I will prize forever.

On the home front, I've had a reasonable week of writing, and the eerily dry bright weather let us do yardwork every afternoon until today's gray and overcast.

8 March--Physical from Dr. Kato today. Blood pressure 106/64, pulse 60, wt 155 (my high school football weight). On the other hand (or rather probing finger), she is as I expected on the case of my 65-yr-old prostate, and so I have had the 1st PSA test ever and will need to get an appointment with the urologist.
69 above!

9 March--Work on the ms has gone as needs to, so far this week: 2 pp/day and some brushing up of what's been written in this chapter to this point.

Interrupted this to call Marcella & Dave Walter, to see how they're doing: it's always fraught.

10 March--And the inevitable follow-up, from a Kato physical. Phone message awaited after nap today, call Dr. K's office, and I thought uh oh, the damn prostate result or the cholesterol reading or any of the rest of the battery of tests she ordered up; they give you good news by mail, not phone, said I. Ah, but not so. When I finally managed to get hold of someone in her office, the prostate PSA was "pretty good," .74 on a scale of 0 to 4, and they simply want me to follow through with the urologist anyway. Monday, I'll see what he thinks. On cholesterol, I'm overflowing on the "good" kind--a reading of 45 is good, mine was 111.

16 March--Stormiest day in months--blustery, no real rain-fall yet--and of course this is the night we and the Nelsons lit on, weeks ago, to go out to the Islay steak-and-scotch place on Bainbridge. So, about 4:15 C and I will head out into the weather to search for a parking space within reach of the ferry terminal. I've had a day of writing that will pay off nicely down the line, dabbling in changes in this half of the ms and finally closing out the first section (with Toby's nailless toe) in this sizable chapter, but I'd like to be further along with this month's total output than I am. As C points out, at least I know I'm working as hard as I can.

On the 14th, I went to Group Health on Capitol Hill where the urologist, Dr. Thompson, followed up on Dr. K's referral after my physical, and he concluded I don't need a biopsy on my prostate. What a tetchy damn organ the

16 March cont.--prostate seems to be, its cancer potentialities full of conundrums about how to read them and what to do about them, but, physical every year and a half or so seems to me the logical route, where doctors can feel for any more asymmetry or whatever in mine and the dreaded doubling of the PSA reading can be watched for.

All in all, I have come out of the past few weeks with mighty reprieves, on the fires that kill in the body cells. The general run of my physical arithmetic, from weight to blood pressure to pulse to cholesterol etc., is terrific. C mused that my body must be, in essence, younger than my age, to produce such results. So, my outlook on life likely should be adjusted somewhat. One never do know, but my wariness that MGUS was going to turn into multiple myeloma that would get me--1 in 100 odds aren't all that favorable, if you think of them, crossing a street 100 times and knowing one of those times you're not going to make it--should let up now. Attitude should be helped along, too, by how good

I feel physically these days; the drought winter has given us the exercise of working outdoors, and little of the damp blowy weather that can make me ache. I'm sure I will show every sign of plugging along as I always have, but it will be interesting to see if some horizons I hadn't much counted on open up now.

26 March--Well, well, well. Y'day was an unexpected chapter in the life of a wordslogger, when I did a wind-blown five-minute reading for the Nature Conservancy at Ebey's Landing and found myself considerably lionized. The grand old man of the bluff, sigh, but what the hell, I'll take it. C & I said to each other this morning what fool luck the Conservancy had, scheduling an outdoor ceremony (in honor of adding the west woods to the bluff preservation area) this time of year, and they evaded fiasco by about 12 hours--a big rain moved in around 2:30 this morn.

Also, the directions to the site said to go 6 miles north of Coupeville to look for Sherman Road, when in actuality it's .6 miles, and so on. The wind really did whoop across the bluff--in my blue jeans and heavy cord shirt and vest and rainjacket as a windbreaker, I was the only one of the speakers dressed for the weather, and I could have stood a

26 March cont.--sweatshirt instead of the vest--so I pinned down my pages of script with both hands and roared out the passage. The piece could not have been more specific to the place if I had tailored it for the occasion--there around us were the leather and corduroy fields of Day 43 of Winter Brothers, the peaked cap barn peeping around the west woods--and that particular constituency seemed to feel the impact. Met a lot of people, including the congressman from the district, Rick Larson, a fan of Rascal Fair, and re-met others, Joel Connelly of the P-I, Steve Raymond formerly of the Seattle Times. So, chilly, blustery, daring the weather the day turned out to work.

Mark Damborg did heroic work in getting us there, driving, driving, driving in the face of the flummoxing directions and a road blockage south of Coupeville, and the time drawing down on us, and so on. All in all, inspite of a very slow deli set of sandwiches, we made it to the ceremony with, oh, five or ten minutes to spare. Probably ~~for~~ for the zillionth time in these pages, bless Mark and Lou. Lou had called early in the week to ask us to go bird-watching on the Skagit Flats with them on the 24th, have dinner at the Rhododendron, all great-sounding stuff that I had to turn them down on because of the ms schedule. Already obligated on the 25th for this Conservancy gig, I said, then thought to add: but on the chance you'd like to come along on that.. They snapped it up, C planned a crockpot soup supper for us when we got back, I picked salad makings from our garden, we had a perfectly fine time. Which we'll resume tomorrow, when we go to their place for Easter.

In general around here, it has been writing and yard work, decent dollops of both. I now have 256 pp. of presentable ms, with probably another 25-35 to go. There's a nice stash of 15 pp. or so of the last ch. that I leapt ahead and did some time ago, but I still have some scenes to do that require considerable invention, so I expect to be writing tooth and nail until we leave for the Oregon coast, and our 40th anniversary treat to ourselves, on April 16.

A piece of unexpected book news, albeit a small one: Brant Rumble called from Scribner on the 21st saying I'd be

26 March cont.--receiving the revised Mariah Montana cover the next day. I will? said I. How'd that happen? Brant and I both thought we'd been stonewalled by the cover artist or the art dept. or both, but here, by god, was a version with as Brant said a Mariah who looks "like a white person." Not the greatest white person, but at least not swarthy and slightly slant-eyed like the previous version.

We are a-burst with spring on the property, many things in bloom, and on the 24th the first stop-and-go procession of quail passed through the back yard.

10 April--Forty years ago, in remote Evanston, I entered the last week before our wedding, madly busy at The Rotarian, Dad and Grandma about to arrive despite her case of something close to walking pneumonia and flooded train tracks between Montana and Illinois. And Carol had her own great juggling of the last of single life. A week from now, we'll be at Arch Cape on the Oregon coast, celebrating with a good meal and good wine, Ann and Marshall Nelson our hosts and stalwarts from the day they attended our wedding.

In the meantime, I am madly busy etc. I am constantly a week or two behind where I feel I ought to be on the Whistling ms, although I bent nearly all of the next-to-the-next-to-the-last chapter to my will on Friday, with some strong production by pencil and yellow pad. I'd been bothered (still am, a bit) by eyelid twitches, so I took time out early in the week to go get all my glasses straightened and also to re-evaluate stints at the computer as I told C, I'd better slow down a bit to make progress. In any case, the eyes are somewhat better and it may be that the writing is too.

And since the last diary entry, the first few p'backs of Prairie Nocturne arrived from Brant. I still don't like the cover art or format, but the book looks better than I expected.

15 April--Readying for our anniversary trip to the Oregon coast. Mild rain has moved in today and may stay through the weekend, but the forecast looks better thereafter.

Some of the garden is going with us, salad makings for a couple of nights and a whopping bag of overwintered spinach. We've worked like blazes the past couple of days and so are in reasonable shape with the packing and assembling now, Friday afternoon. Have hit a rough patch of technology, though, with a "fatal error" message on my printer from a messy paper jam 2 days ago, and C's instant heroic efforts to get it back into action colliding with, so far, the news that my computer doesn't have the right port for the comeliest replacement printer and now a message that parts probably can't be got for the old printer. Yikes and goddamn. She's to call the repairman when he gets back from lunch, to see what he recommends next.

I've plowed hard on the ms this week, and may be within sight of a draft of the penultimate chapter, the last full one to be done, by the end of this month. Much will then depend on how it all reads, and what I can come up with as finales at the two remaining loose ends, the last of the antepenultimate ch. and the very end of the book.

Also this week: had my eyes checked, mostly because of some twitching and itching, and damned if everything isn't perfectly okay: one more gold star on my surprising clean bill of health this spring. Eyedrops, eyedrops, were the only prescription shoved at me by the wondrous optometrist Liz Faulstich.

Night of the 12th, we went to Elliott Bay for Linda Bierds' reading of new book of poems, First Hand. As C said, you just sit there listening and think 'genius'. These are immensely sophisticated pieces of work on scientific topics and scientists, and they make me believe that if Wordsworth was a touchstone of the Romantic era etc., Linda should be read hundreds of years from now as the muse of this era of titanic scientific implications.

As I'm getting into the book, I found she's also done a terrific little intro; she could be a mighty essayist if she ever wanted to turn in that direction.

2 May cont.--mangled my name into something like "doyj".

Indeed, Frankensteined it into some made-up language, as there is no instance in English where an "oi/oy" sound is followed by a "j". Other than that, the Portlanders pretty much came through on this first literary festival--my U Club talk went okay, I took care to give Meg a bit of introduction and announce the right title of her book (dolt Colton lumped us both into his intro before I spoke, gave the title of one of Meg's old books, then announced he had another function to go to), and at the convention center reading the next day I had a standing-room only crowd. C and I had a funny time just ahead of the reading, when we had an Oregon version of life passing in front of our eyes: we walk one direction and there's Craig Lesley, and then Joe Bianco came along, and then we met up with Bill Lang...

Couple of other things, before I poop out on the day: it's 4:30, and I wrote on the ms this afternoon as well as this morning. On the 28th, the ~~Riam~~ Damborgs took us to the Mark Morris Dance Group performance at Meany Theater at the UW, and while C and I were skeptical that we would like that much modern dance, we were enchanted. Morris himself wasn't dancing in these, he sure staged the hell out of them. The first piece, "Mosaic and United," with five dancers, was crisper; besides the synchronization and the terrific litheness of the dancer Marjorie Folkman, I really liked the way Morris used the edges of the stage. People flew in and out of the wings like cuts a film editor would make, editing. The second piece, "Violet Cavern," with full fifteen dancers and a jazz trio, was really quite something, too; sensation lighting of the stage-set banners over the dancing. Stagecraft through and through.

Two nights ago, the 30th, David Guterson and I managed some of that ourselves, on Bainbridge. The Fields End talk he talked me into doing was sold out and beyond, people turned away at the door, and the speech about the makings of House of Sky, I think the best one I've ever put together, went over big. C and I liked the Gutersons, David and Robin, too; more about that when I have more oomph.

12 May--Today I printed out the full reading manuscript of The Whistling Season. 328 pp., 93,000 words. And so, as Rose Llewellynn says in my telling of it: huzzah!

18 May--The Whistling Season left here y'day for NY and Maine, Becky's and Liz's ms copies express-mailed from the U District. As I came home and dazedly told C, my subsequent day on the UW campus surely proved what an indescribable line of work I am in:

--From the U District post office, I went to Denny Hall, rm 218, where the Classics Dept. secretary Leslie Joshi gave me a tutorial on Latin. When I showed up with my list of ten instances where I have Paul or Morrie using Latin in the book, Leslie promptly sat me down and plunged in. She proved to be very bright, quite funny, and quite a natural at offering suggestions that would juice up the scene a little. Where I'd haphazardly had Morrie say "dear Paul," she worked out "philologe novissime" (young scholar) instead, which for the doz. readers I'll ever have who know any Latin gives a nice tickle of rhyme ("phylo-low-jay no-vees-ah-may"). An even neater touch was where I have Morrie tell Paul "Translate away," and she added "discupule" (striver), pronounced "dis-kew-pyou-lay" and thus rhyming the Latin with the English. I was fairly enthralled for the hour or so this went on, thinking Who is this person? and then in parting conversation when she said she'd read This House of Sky in a UW class and her father taught in the history department, I learned she's the daughter of Imre Boba, who taught medieval history.

--Onward I went to old loved Suzzalo, buffalo hunter crossing Red Square in my faded jeans and rainjacket and kangaroo skin hiking boots and Civil War beard and sun-faded crush hat, amid students talking, talking, talking into their cell phones. (Pepping myself up with a mocha in the UW library coffee shop that afternoon, I'm pretty sure I saw a young woman dial up a friend elsewhere in the library to ask what answer she'd got for a certain question.) In any case, I feel quite taken with the university on visits like this, aware that I've been coming to that campus and that library for one sweet hell of a long time (since '66)

18 May cont.--but not feeling old about it, just nicely veteran. And so, I fell to, doing the ever disparate fact-checking needed for my stuff:

--Found I had it backward about the flivver, I'm writing about a Model T in 1910 instead of a Model A (the 1920s model).

--Revved up a 30ish male reference librarian who evidently was happy to have a question that took him off the computer and into the reference stacks, where he led me to a Shakespeare concordance, then a First Folio facsimile, then a more modern readable version, as I tracked down "O, the charity of a penny cord" to Cymbeline, Act V Scene V, and thus amended my blind guess that it might be Falstaff that the bard was threatening to hang; made it "a nobleman" instead.

--Made one of those mine-tunnel treks through the old-books stacks of Floor 3, of the kind I've surely done hundreds of by now, to emerge with a monograph on arrowheads (for scene where Morrie tells Damon the one he's just found is beveled) and a philosophical work on Santayana (to refine Morrie's quote from S'yana to "The world of matter is the absolute reality").

--Discovered, Model A-like, that I was remembering it backwards and it's Sarah Bernhardt who was the Divine, not Eleanora Duse.

And 8 or 10 other instances of that sort of thing. This morn, I went back into the ms and worked in Leslie's Latin and the other changes, preparatory to sending 'em in to Becky after she's read the ms.

Other news: spanking new copies of the paperbacks of the trilogy arrived y'day, and while C and I still aren't fond of the cover art, it is pretty damned nice to see those books in a family grouping. And across the next couple of days, we're having company, Mark Wyman staying with us while he researches hop-pickers and such.

19 May--A day of pecking away, in the calm wind-shadow of the manuscript leaving the house. Trio of constituency-tending letters to Scribner, about my burst of paperbacks there. Some dabs of sorting clippings out of the strata on the desk. A bit of thinking ahead through the year, which drifted out of plesantry when I realized the

19 May cont.--perpetual invitation to the Missoula Book Festival/sits right there at the time of our intended Montana trip and I either have to participate or dodge it again; but in either case, decide.

Just now, though, to begin the afternoon while C is at Gp Health for neck therapy and Mark Wyman is burrowing in the Sand Point archives, I sat here reading through Linda Bierds poems in First Hand, in fact traced out the line tricks of the pantoum form in "DNA" and I am feeling quite pleasantly dazzled to know such a sorceress. Last Sunday, the 15th, we went to Bainbridge for the belated party Sydney arranged to mark Linda's 60th birthday. Linda read at Eagle Harbor Books that afternoon, then had us all gather for a drink at a nearby eatery/drinkery, then led us in cavalcade to the house on Rhodes End. The bunch of us were: Lexie Evans, from the Kalispell area, who is something like dean of students at Seattle Central CC; Betty Lou Valentine, a black woman who has been director of Central Youth Services; Michael & Mary Kay Diedrich, MK a high school and WSU buddy of Linda's; Cynthia and Frank Buxton, she a friend of Billy Collins and Frank an actor, Calif. transplants to Bainbridge a number of years ago; Pat & Otto whose last names I did not get, Pat a former opera singer and Otto's story unknown to me, except that he's had recent local fame as a salty old Norwegian in a Taco Bell TV commercial; Sydney's son Fred, exec chef for the evening, and his wife Rebecca, who at 30 was just being born at the time most of this crowd was getting to know each other, back in the women's movement, but who copes with us quite nicely. A remarkably congenial evening, conversation shared around the bunch--or when Pat would get going too long on something, Lexie with authority of old friendship would shut her down. Highlights:

--Mary/Kay and Linda, I swear to god, were surgically separated at birth. MK is a taller gawtier version of Linda, just as funny. They told stories of their truncated WSU careers, where MK was kicked out and Linda effectively flunked out. Linda says she had the highest grade point average on her dorm floor one quarter: 2.4!

--Otto did not say a lot--he's a little hard of hearing--but as C noted, what a twinkly guy. At Linda's grade-pt

May 19 cont.--story, he solemnly assured her: "A ladylike C." And as the old Norwegian salt stories were told--he really does look like one, chinlike beard, craggy face--he gave us a bit of a Norwegian drinking song, complete with spoon taps on the glass.

May 25--What mornings this outlook provides. I got up a few minutes after 4, and a big clear full moon was in the southwestern sky, and at the north end of the yard were white orbs nearly as bright as pale lights--C's white florabunda and Chicago Peace rose blossoms. Then in the corridor of view between the big-leak maples was a ship, so white I at first thought it was a cruise ship--a Wilhelmsen Wallenius box ship, its high white sides catching the first of morning light.

Yesterday was a day off, for a trip to the Skagit flats. It started off seeming none too wise a choice, thick traffic on the freeway and the weather cloudier the farther north we went. At our usual Indian Slough hike, the tide was so low that everything was mudflats, and the sum of birds, besides robins, was two kildeer. Then when we got to LaConner ~~ixmax~~ its streets were crammed. But in the Brew Pub, the stout waitress met us on the way in and asked if we wanted a couple of Pilsners and a Neapolitan pizza, our customary lunch there (although, to our amazement she was remembering our order from 2-3 months ago). The pizza was good and the beer we think is terrific. Afterward, went across the street to the new produce market and bought some fruit toward a big salad supper. Weather had cleared, and by the time we were home, @ 2, the day was fine and the evening proved to be damn near perfect for deck-sitting. How lucky we feel, to live here.

A quite different way to live went through here last week, in the person of old friend Mark Wyman. As best we can tell, Mark doesn't register his surroundings much, and thus has spent decades living on School Street in a town called Normal in the middle of the Midwest, Illinois. Admittedly we have not been around him in his youthful haunts in Wisconsin, River Falls and the Wyman summer cabin somewhere; but as C said, he hardly seems to notice this place or its setting when he's here. He was here 3 nights, 18-20, while researching hop-picking for his book

May 25 cont.--on hoboes and other itinerant labor. He's warm and entertaining, and our friendship of three dozen years holds up, but he is a very different being from the patterned pair of us. At breakfasts, proclaiming he didn't want us to go to any trouble, he would whirl in and out of the kitchen at cross-purposes to the quite simple process of one of us providing him cereal, toast, coffee and fixings. The difference in attention span--and Mark's ability to aim his hoppity-skippety focus across big masses of sources I think makes him a splendid researcher--finally hit me as something in his genes, given what a hyperactive kid his son Danny was when little. Mark's last night here, when we were at the Provinces on his insistence that he take us out, C went to the ladies' room and he and I waited in the hallway, me at my usual Scotch parade rest and Mark moving from one foot to the other every several seconds. We did not get to see Eva this time, as she was flying into Vancouver and then they were going out to a place just beyond Sooke Harbor--she hungers to see the ocean, and Mark seems to think the Strait qualifies as that.

The day Mark left, the 21st, Tony and Lee came for supper, Copper River sockeye and Wapato asparagus and a whopping salad from our garden, all of which seemed to score wonderfully with them. Tony brought transparencies from the catalogue of the upcoming Santa Fe show--to my considerable amusement, they've had a hell of a time with the catalogue since I begged off doing the foreword--and his Swedish colleague, Lars whose last name I didn't get, has some sensational paintings in it. He also had proofs of the crow and raven book Yale is doing, and it looks spiffy.

As for the diarist, I am reasonably comfortably in low gear since sending the ms in, doing much yardwork (as we've commented to each other lately, there is almost a terrifying amount of it to be kept done) and pleasant reading such as Treglown's biography of V.S. Pritchett. (Who would have thought VSP, under that barmy uncle guise, was such a sexpot?) Haven't yet tackled the Sea Runners journal or thoughts toward the 2nd book on the Harcourt contract, but will soon.

1 June--Now it is the month that brings summer. This spring has not exactly flashed by, yet I look around for it and it's pretty thoroughly gone: the Whistling ms out of here at least preliminarily, the garden up strong and the pea crop already waning. One glory that comes with mid-May is the arrival of Copper River salmon; we've been hosting friends on it--most recently, the Damborgs here on the 25th--and feed ourselves on it many of the rest of the nights. C's last buy--she gets a whole fish and has it goned out--we'll have our 3rd supper of tonight, with salmon salad from our garden tomorrow night.

Our San Francisco trip has been tucked out of sight a bit there in the first calendar week of June, and so this week has turned into a preparatory one. Y'day we both stirred uneasily, at about the same minute, over not having any paperwork from the U. of Montana about the hotel reservation they'd supposedly made for us, so I made phone calls and lucky I did: it had slipped both our minds that the original deal with Bill Johnston, the UM alum director, was for him to book us into the Stanford Court for 5 nights, he'd cover 2 and we'd get Scribner to pick up the others. The Scribner publicity dept. didn't even come close to going for that, so I dead-level carefully told Bill two nights only, on his tab. Part of getting ready has ~~for~~ been for me to nurse my old right crotch muscle pull, mostly with stretching exercises but also with an ungodly amount of caution as I get out of chairs, so that I can navigate the hilly terrain of SF and Pacific Grove, most especially Pt. Lobos. It's coming along, I have decent hopes by now. Today when I began going through the 1980 diary for the Sea Runners journal material, there I was, nursing the same goddamn right leg for a lot of that year; back then, it was the tight-hamstring feeling evidently caused by the tipped disc in my back.

Life does not seem as chocked with momentous happenings (although I have fairly recently changed publishing houses, haven't I, just as I was in the throes of in '80) as it was 25 years ago, which I am perfectly glad about. Mt. St. Helens going off, my juggling of Winter Brothers and The Sea Runners, big trips to Alaska and Montana--yikes, it was hard running, all the time.

1 June cont.--Certainly some of our concerns have changed, greatly for the better. Back then, I was still tussling, despite two books with good sales records, both of 'em nominated for the leading book award, to try to get to \$25,000 annual income from writing. This week I've been laboring to invest sums bigger than that. (It's surprisingly hard: can't buy the inflation-indexed savings bond we'd like except on the Internet or with cash, and withdrawing \$30,000 cash gets a person on some kind of FBI list these days; can't move another \$30,000 in my IRA because Vanguard has closed the ~~fund~~ mutual funds I'd singled out; etgoddamncetera.)

As to the household, it goes along both wondrously and dauntingly, the daunting part being this glorious but complex piece of property. On Memorial Day, yard guy Dave McKee came a dug a 10' trench at the base of the suddenly kamikaze-aggressive black bamboo patch~~x~~ and put down a 20"-wide metal shield (roof flashing I'd bought) to keep its roots from charging across the lawn. Dave dug out 3 or 4 big root tangents--I estimated he came up with probably 25 pounds of roots--and today C found yet another one at the north end of the lawn. For all that, we adore this place, and now raspberries are getting ripe, insuring the adoration.

2 June--New York was heard from y'day, in duet. First call was from Liz, saying she likes the Whistling ms. If she were to have any quibbles, she added, quibbling, it would be that there should be more hint that Rose and Oliver end up together. I think I disagree--C definitely does--and Liz made pretty much the same comment on Prairie Nocturne. Anyway, now to see what Becky says. She checked in by phone message late in the day--surprising me, as it's Book Expo week in NY--to say that while she hadn't intended to start her editing hand, she couldn't resist as she went along; says she isn't doing much because it's "so beautiful." She knows we're on the brink of our California week, but I'll call her this morn and tell her to send me her edited version by the time we get back, if she can, and I'll see if I can go over it by the time she passes

2 June cont.--through here at the start of July.

Showery weather this morn, contradicting the forecast; it's not unwelcome to us, given the cost of summer water for this property. I am still being gingerly with my crotch muscle pull, which is much better due to my stretching regimen twice a day, but I managed to do some veg gardening Y'day afternoon, such as harvesting the onion crop. Also, John and Katharina Maloof came to borrow our St. Petersburg books, preparatory to their trip there.

Across the past two days, I've gone through my '80-'82 diaries for entries on the writing of Sea Runners; marked them off on the pp. with stickits and will photocopy them when we get back from Calif., integrate them with the "Blue as the Odyssey" filecards and see whether it adds up to anything substantial.

I've been tending to a lot of different categories of things since The Whistling Season went out of the house--and doing only so-so on my doctrine that I should spend some time every day on something with some intellectual

tickle to it--and as noted last time, finances are a frequent foe. Y'day I made, or at least started to make, the change of course I'd decided on for my SEP IRA money, where the strategy of aggressive stocks that minted money in the late '90s has shrunk money ever since. Called Steve Charlston at Piper Jaffray and sold off about \$45,000 in stocks. All in all, there's a couple of hundred thousand dollars ~~in~~ that have dwindled away in that account from its peak. Even so, I feel fairly sanguine about the result there, with the rest of our finances in better shape and still a \$300,000 chunk there in SEP IRA funds; add that to the million and a quarter currently in my Profit Sharing funds and it's a considerable fillip to the eventual pension.

4 June--The eve of California, something we've not been able to say for some time. The calendar arithmetic gets alarming, when we calculate how long it's been since we've done a favorite journey of this sort, yet we do keep busy, there's no deprivation of going and doing, in our average course through life.

We both have spent the day at chores, so we don't have

4 June cont.--to face every damn one of them when we get home. I did quite an extensive stint of gardening this morning, nervously watering things and crossing my fingers for while we're away, although the forecast is cool and showery.

A sad episode is happening next door, where Dorothy Kastner suffered a stroke a month or so ago. For the seven years we've been here, Dorothy as regular as clock-work would draw her living-room blinds against the late-afternoon sun. Those blinds never move now, standing closed most of the way, as Dorothy's life now is.

13 June--Back from San Francisco, and Pt. Lobos, and the Monterey aquarium--all in all, a good 6-day trip. The main event, my reading and q-&a for the U of Montana alums, went satisfactorily; a mainly pleasant bunch, with a few gasbags to be endured. Funniest moment, for C and me, was when the alumni director Bill Johnston recalled for the group my honorary doctorate from the U. of Montana--which is actually from Montana State U.

We had a rental car on the trip, and so drove--and parked--in San Francisco in sometimes hair-raising fashion. Lived to tell the tale, and our final forenoon there was actually quite magical; wonderful food at Greens at Ft. Mason, with fog sitting atop the Golden Gate bridge.

Ah, and Point Lobos, magnificent as ever, 2 days in a row. Great suppers at Peppers, on and on.

As always happens, we came home to a blizzard of mail, most of it financial, and I spent much of Saturday, the 11th, kicking most of that into shape. Made a decision, not long before we left on the trip, to give up on the one aggressive investment portfolio we have, my SEP/IRA, and just protect the remaining nub there, which is still a not bad \$300,000. So, have been selling tech stocks at Piper, moving funds around in the Vanguard IRA account, etc.

On the main front, I called Becky this morn to find out the schedule on the Whistling ms, and she said it's fabulous, no major structural changes needed, etc. Said they're going to have so much fun publishing it, have already had 2 meetings, she wanted to know if I have any cover art ideas, they may also tweak the Sky cover while

13 June cont.--they're at it--whew. All in all, I'm about to be back in the word business full-scale, starting tomorrow when I photocopy the Sea Runners diary entries to see what those and the Sea R file cards add up to; then by the end of the week, Becky is supposed to have the line-edited Whistling ms back to me.

18 June-- Whoops, Becky did not manage to ship the Whistling Season back to me, and so I am not neckdeep in that, yet. Even so, the past week pretty well lapped up just under my chin. Pulling together the Sea Runners journal material was surprisingly tricky--much of it extant in file cards I deliberately did at the time (the lamented Blue as the Odyssey little-book project), but some of it on handwritten cards, and a quantity of musing in my '80-'82 diaries. And it may be a quixotic endeavor; I've told Becky as carefully as I know how that I'm offering this material up with my blessing, but let's use it only if we're sure it'll enhance the forthcoming Sea Runners paperback and its sales appeal.

Last Saturday night and Sunday, C's San Diego cousin Pat Depew pirouetted through here, along with her friend Jean (we never did get a last name) who had piloted Pat to her 50th reunion of her nursing class in Spokane, in a colossal motorhome. Jean and I took a look at how the big rig barely fit into the space between our front hedge and the road, and at the slant of our driveway, which raised the prospect that the rig could roll back and hit our garage while she tried to get it to climb out of there, and we agreed she's better put it next door in front of the Ness house; thank goodness, they're in Norway. It was a good visit--C says she gets a kick out of Pat, and so do I--although Jean is somewhat hard to read, fairly blunt and her topics sometimes coming out of nowhere. She doesn't go through life without burdens: a husband who has 'sleazures,' and as C noted, she twice mentioned a daughter who killed herself several years ago. We are always reminded how staid our lives have been, comparatively

24 June--It's still whoops, no ms back from Becky, though I have a hunch it'll show up today, Friday. Have spent the week rejigging some finances, mostly in the account that has been our main conundrum, my SEP IRA--which has made a lot of money, lost a lot of money, and still is a lot of money--and on gardening. Weather has been pleasant, giving us a dose of rain for the property a few days ago, and temp in the mid-70s. We have a quite social week coming up, the Walkinshaws here for supper tonight, we go to Nalders via the Edmonds ferry tomorrow, Monday is my birthday, Wednesday is Provincias w/ Nelsons if they're available, Friday is Becky's visit, complete with husband Marshall and the twin girls. Thanks goodness we have the property in reasonably good shape, and our garden is producing. All in all, a mellow enough period, although not very far back in my head is the next go-through of The Whistling Season and the need to think about the book beyond it.

27 June--My birthday, and I'm thwarted by the weather, not to say flummoxed by it. When C asked me some time back what I wanted to do with the day, I came up with a hike at Ebey's Landing, or failing that, a more usual trip to the Skagit flats. What I did not get my head around was either of those could be blanked out by weather, and indeed it is foggy and drizzling. I've suggested to C that we just go to Chinook's for lunch, although if the murk doesn't lift at all I may cancel out on that, too.

The Whistling Season came back from Becky on Saturday the 25th, with no major amendments to it. Her cover letter was fulsome with praise, and by an odd stroke of chance, my tale of a threatened school resonates with her situation there on Manhattan Island, where it sounds as if the estimable public school her twins go to is in peril. She and family are to be here Friday night, so more to come, on all this.

11 July--The bald patch in the diary the past two weeks is the result of concentration on The Whistling Season--I finished the revision, guided by Becky's notes and line-editing and considerably more of my own, this morning. The next couple of days, I re-read, in a light go-over, and then off it goes to NY again.

20 July--As C says, here I am, temporarily unemployed. I express-mailed the revised ms of The Whistling Season--my go-through after Becky's line-editing--y'day morning.

31 July--All of a sudden, tomorrow is August. If nothing else the weather says so, 80ish. Much has been going on, in our social life and the book biz, which I'll attempt to catch up on at the start of this coming week (i.e., August). One item: we were visited by Craig & Kathy Lesley on the 26th and 27th, after we all but got hammerlocks on them at Woodstock and insisted they come up here and see us and the house (in 7 years, they hadn't yet) and we all do some conversational catching up, and lo--C sold them our Honda Accord. And on the book side of life, I have to call Becky in the morn about The Whistling Season cover mock-ups that came on Friday. The Tom Jones one, which of course is elegant art, looks a little somber and spooky to me, while the favorite of everybody at Harcourt, a photo of a schoolhouse with prairie grass waving in the foreground, is--like Tom's--an abandoned schoolhouse, not a functioning one as in my novel.

1 August--Just got off the phone with Becky on the matter of the cover art, and she's going to see what the art director can do to fix up the schoolhouse.

This is a month I don't look forward to, with sizable chores looming throughout it. Will have to plug away at it all and simply aim to get as much done by Labor Day as possible.

10 Aug.--A day both cloudy and foggy, after a few exquisite clear ones in mid-70s. I am feeling somewhat becalmed, or maybe adrift is the better term, with nothing evident happening on the book front this week; great garden progress, though, as we've harvested blueberries, peaches, apples, beans...

10 Aug. cont.--Much water under the social bridge lately. Lois Welch is here now, flying home to Missoula this afternoon. Saturday the 6th, we had the Laskins here for drinks and hilarity, preparatory to their trip to St. Petersburg & Moscow. Their daughter Emily, a Russian major at Columbia, is studying at the Smolny Institute, & David has picked up a couple of NY Times travel page assignments. One of those is in the Times' "In the footsteps of..." feature, so it was proposed to David that he do "In the Footsteps of Eugene Onegin". He cleared his throat and said, do you perhaps mean in the footsteps of Pushkin? We had a roaring laugh about how this harked back to the Harold Rossism, "Is Moby Dick the man or the whale?"

The night before, Patricia MacDonnell came to dinner, and while it was interesting to watch an art museum curator's take on things, the socializing was of a style opposite, say, to the Laskins bringing us freshly picked blackberries. Patricia was 1½ hours late (hung up with a graphic designer some of that time), not noticeably contrite, and empty-handed when she showed up. Ah, well.

15 Aug.--We have become a one-car family. C sold the 10-year-old Honda Accord, in impeccable condition and with only 40,000 miles on it, to Craig and Kathy Lesley, and they came up from Portland last Saturday, the 13th, to take possession of it. And to have a spiffy lunch with us of cold chicken we'd grilled the night before, salad from our garden, etc.

Although I'm not getting a word written on anything (including the pages of this diary), life is damnably busy. Spent today wrestling finances, working out a strategy on my perpetually straggling IRA--the one clunky component of our holdings that keeps having trouble--and while I was at that, FedEx brought the copy-edited ms of Whistling, 2 weeks earlier than anticipated.

It's staying hot and dry; 83 on the lower deck now @ 4:20.

22 Aug.--Am now free of the copy-edited ms, which came unexpectedly early--last week--but am now up to my eyebrows in tasks/chores to try to get done before Labor Day. I'm somewhat dismayed at how things keep piling up on me when I'm not writing--because I'm not writing?--and simply must try to drill through a bunch of them these next few mornings.

This poor damned jilted diary has had a terrible summer, and I'll need to make a real effort to tend to it. As a start, the copy-edited ms episode: the easiest to handle since the halcyon days of Zoe Kharpertian, copy editor supreme. The Harcourt editor in charge of production, David Hough, sent a highly useful cover letter saying his department wasn't to be a "style Nazi," and I should do what I wanted with suggested changes. Actually I took many of them, except where some tone I wanted in the writing had been lost and, quite a notable exception, the copy editor's mounting enthusiasm for inserting ~~quoting~~ exclamation points. I killed off all those, I think. The main news is that The Whistling Season read very well

indeed to me, after several weeks away from it. It's going to be wonderful to see it in type, the next step.

In coincidental celebration of FedExing the ms back to Hough in San Diego, we had a fine Saturday night at the Mayfields', marking Betty's 50th birthday. The down note was that Betsy Wilson and Dean Pollack weren't there, their house having been burglarized--while they were asleep in it--the night before. The others on hand made a formidably hilarious backyard tableful of quick minds:

--Patty from Vancouver, Betty's buddy since high school, and husband Peter who had just taken his son to Texas Tech in Waco and been baffled by localese there such as "Laughs good" (Life's good).

--Carolyn and Richard, whom we've met before at Betty & Roy's. He worked with Roy, and Carolyn--like Patty--shares a Catholic upbringing with Betty. I sat next to her, i.e. between her and Betty, and had a good conversation all evening.

--Ollie and Christina, the flying Finns. She is one of the best-looking women I've ever been around and Ollie is

22 Aug. cont.--quite a looker in his own right, and they have entrancing minds to match. She has started business as a meeting facilitator, and the one lack of the evening C and I agreed, was that we never got a chance to get her going on the art of facilitating. Ollie was next to Carolyn, and so I did get to talk to him. He's a project leader on some digital photo endeavor at Microsoft, and what a mind. He told a story of when the Mayfields were with them in Finland and Betty read out of the Lonely Planet guidebook that the town they were passing was the most boring one in Finland; Ollie, no fan of his native country, whipped the steering wheel around and said, "We have to see that." After the bunch of them verified that the place was indeed dull and stodgy beyond belief, they went in a store to ask for local t-shirts--only to be told nobody had ever asked for those before. Later, Ollie did a hilarious bit when Peter was telling about being in the foreign country of Texas and being drowned in country-and-western music: no, no, said Ollie, there's inspiration there, you play c-&-w backwards and your pickup fixes itself, your dog comes home, your whiskey bottle fills back up again...

--The group was rounded out by a couple of women who came solo: Char, whom C and I remembered from the Paul Allen Alaska cruise--she's Allen's scheduler or some such--and Deb, who'd worked with Roy and come from Spokane for the party. A greatly classy evening.

7 Sept.--And so it is autumn, clear and crisp, whatever the calendar says. Sundown and evening y'day, with the mountains at their most classic pure outline, the quarter-moon hung there like a gold crescent on two clasps of silver, Venus above it to the left and Jupiter similarly above it to the right. As dark came on and this conjunction descended into the mountains, it resembled an owlface sketch, hooked beak and brilliant pinspot eyes.

Days currently go to chores and tasks that I suppose do amount to more than that--finances, speechwriting, tending the garden--to such an extent that I am continually busy even though I am not getting any real work written.

Sept. 7 cont.--At some point this fall, perhaps mid-Oct., that has to change rather radically and the next book be coming to life.

The summer eased to an end with pleasant neighborhood gatherings, I guess unnoted in these pages since my last entry. Gary and Judy Shirley, outbound to a new home in Stanwood, had a last-hurrah open house at their place up at the end of the block, Sunday the 4th. C and I went early, and people ~~xxx~~ were pouring in by the time we left. We've grown much closer with the Shirleys this past half year, through considerable food-swapping--our veggies for Judy's baked goods and Gary's smoked salmon--and I suppose because Judy is no longer off to her job every day and can socially navigate a lot more easily. Gonna miss them; they were the youngest folks except for us in this line of six houses, and turnover could start in the other four at any time.

The other open house was the Sunday before, a n'hood potluck at the Deorios at the far other end of the street, and it literally was an eye-opener. We'd watched their house being redone, at obvious great effort and expense, but didn't know the source of the \$: Chris D is early, and apparently sizably, into the RIDF chips mandated by WalMart et al to ultimately be on every item in the stores. These things are smaller than a speck of sand, Chris told C and me, and he has a 95-person firm in Ballard dealing in 'em--and he's chairman of the industry specifications committee, so guess what, his outfit is handily ahead in meeting the specs. This street, of 18 or so solo bluff-sitting houses between those open-house sites, is the nesting place for a notable number of us upward strivers.

Sept. 9--Have done chores the past few days until I am blue in the face, so am not terribly far from being ready for the C d'Alene/Montana trip. One undeniable gain on the week: Becky sent the Whistling Season page samples, and the design is elegant.

Sept. 11--Made some time this afternoon to think about the next book, and so far am not convinced it ought to be the Montana non-fiction I'm signed up for. Will know better after our forthcoming trip, I hope.

Four years ago, the World Trade Center towers fell to earth, consigning us to terrorism in the shadows and Bushism running the country. The New Orleans flood has shown the abyss of flaw in Bush and his bunch--they've got the government, but they don't really want to be the government, or at least any kind of government that has to administer anything hard and necessary, such as policing Iraq after our invasion or getting relief to New Orleans.

Here on the home front, another gain in the biz of books, y'day: mockup of the new Sea Runners p'back cover came and it's quite beautiful, a dramatic coastscape. I had to swallow a bit on the knowledge that it's a Big Sur photo rather than anywhere in Alaska, but decided it was worth it to get a good cover out of the sausage-grinding art process. Tomorrow, Whistling Season revises are promised.

Sept. 19, Choteau--Indian summer, the leaves just starting to turn out back of the Stage Stop motel, and marvelous light on the Rocky Mtn Front and fields and benchlands on our excursion into the Augusta country this morn. The roads west of town, however, were ~~so~~ ungodly washboardy--toward both the Game Range and Gibson Dam--that we didn't go all the way in to the mountains. Stopped for lunch in the car where the road topped a knob and the Front and its reefs were looming squarely in front of us.

Luckily, and I would have said against the odds, yesterday's roads were more forgiving when we showed Dave and Marcella Walter the Jensen ranch country and beyond to the Boone & Crockett center near the forks of Dupuyer Creek. The road west across that territory, past the ridge road--rather, set of tracks--into the old ranch has deteriorated mightily in the 3 years since Joe Moll of the Nature Conservancy took us across there, and y'day's transit probably was the last one we dare make; the Jensen country is relapsing to what it was before the Jensens and ~~us the link~~ the likes of us, half a century ago. On my mind ~~as~~ as I rammed us along that dwindling road, and I said so to Dave and Marcella to let them know I didn't intend anything rash, was the thought that at the end of the long plunge across there would be one ultimate uncrossable mudhole and we'd have to backtrack all the way. But lo, at last I could see the old Den Boer place and the turn in the road toward Dupuyer Creek and I announced, "I'm beginning to think this might work." C and I couldn't remember which drainage the Boone & Crockett place was in, and wrongly chose the ^{south} road in to the old Salansky place, but that at least offered that stunning view, I think one of the great ones in the West, of the ranch at the foot of the Rockies, the reefs towering over it. Then when we corrected course and made it in to the B&C place to eat the lunch Marcella had packed, luck really panned out: four riders were trailing the B&C cattle down from the foothills, across the meadow below us, as we sat on the deck of the B&C environmental education

Sept. 19 cont.--center. A long sinuous line of black cattle, mooing for all they were worth, the riders whooping them along, in perfect sunshine under those matchless mountains--how western can it get?

After lunch, we drove north to the Two Medicine River to show them the cliffs our sheep went off of in the House of Sky scene, then looped east and came into Valier from the north. Not a helluva lot left to show anyone in Valier, just the Tidyman house and the old school, and then we headed back to Choteau where we'd stashed their vehicle here at the Stage Stop. Dave had suggested they'd like to start back to Helena by about 4, and at four minutes to 4, C pulled in alongside their car and said, "Here you are." They seemed to have a good time with the day, and I was glad the weather and dissolving backcountry roads cooperated.

We reached their place in Helena on the 17th, which already seems quite a time ago, and the night before that, Lois Welch put us up in Missoula. In what she said was the first dinner of that size since Jim's mortal cancer diagnosis three years ago, Lois invited the usual suspects--Kittredge and Annick, Bevis and Juliette--and, new to the table, Ginny Merriam. Good as it was to see everybody, it was an evening of ~~not~~ scatty, scattered conversation, a lot of it skewed by Bevis's hyper report of a monthlong canoe trip (it felt that long to his listeners, for sure) he and Juliette had made in far north Canada. I can only theorize that he was so pumped up at being able to pull off such a strenuous feat in defiance of age, 60 or so I guess; on the other hand, he only just did pull it off, because he and Juliette did spill their canoe in whitewater and had to be rescued, and Juliette was telling us, Never again. I think the real heroism in that night's crowd is Lois's; in a few weeks, she'll be in Machu Pichu.

And back behind the Missoula stop was the Coeur d' Alene speech and daylong appearances that occasioned and funded this trip. It needs its own diary entry, but suffice to say, it went damn well.

29 Sept.--Yesterday:

--First thing, which is to say in the dark of morning at 5:30, I set to work (again, yet, still) compiling my copyright infringement claims in the electronic database class action suit. Required a combination of spelunking, excavation, and divining rod in our archives around here, as documentation ranging from 30-year-old payment slips for magazine articles to exact citations of publication dates (Elizabeth Simpson's list of my works in Earthlight served admirably) had to be hauled out. Before our Idaho-Montana trip I had looked over the Authors Guild e-mailings and figured there wasn't enough money involved to justify the effort, but we came back from the trip to a freshly worded e-mail that pointed out Class A copyright violations--book excerpts that show up in databases--could be worth \$1500 each. Thus I groaned and plunged into the couple of days needed to compile and copy everything, and we shall eventually see if any of the ten Class A instances I came up with, plus the other 3 doz. claims, pay off enough to have made it worthwhile.

--10 a.m., I interrupted that grubwork for an interview scheduled by the Hutchinson Cancer Center, in their project of studying 1,000 randomly chosen men without prostate cancer (hopefully, me) and 1,000 with it. Sitting here responding to the questions of med tech Jim Murphy, who despite that emerald-green name was of a blackness of such deep ebony it was kind of fascinating, I interrupted the process about 15 minutes into it to take a phone call from Liz:

--Whose news was that she had renegotiated the contract with Harcourt, dropping the non-fiction book notion and substituting my "11th Man" novel idea, and thereby had gained us an additional \$50,000, payable upon signing the contract.

This turnabout in contract fortunes strikes C and me as an incredible lightning bolt of luck, with the caveat that luck sometimes is the residue of design. I had some trepidation about springing a change of book projects on Liz, since we're so thoroughly fixed up with Harcourt on this 2-book contract, but she assured me "nobody will

29 Sept. cont.--mind you writing fiction. And we'll add some money to the contract." So, I spiffed up the "11th Man" prospectus--it was one of the four I ginned up when we were making last efforts to find a meeting of the minds with Scribner, and was called "String of Pearls," after the WWII song, then--and overnight mailed it to Liz, and damned if she didn't run it by Becky in record time. Becky sounded ecstatic--will try to transcribe her phone message here when C gets back from Costco and we can listen to the tape together--which brought home to me that everyone was merely being polite about the nonfiction book idea, what they all really want me to do is haul off and write haymaker fiction.

3 Oct.--Along those lines, the transcript of Becky's phone call to me:

"Ivan, it's Becky Saletan calling. I am so happy about this new novel. I think it's just fantastic. It plays to all of your strengths, it's going to be so much fun to work with and publish--and Andre is equally on board. So we are really, really thrilled. Obviously if you ever decide to go back to non-fiction we'll be here for that too, but this is just great. Absolutely exciting."

5 Oct.--"This is a life-changing event."

So said Dr. Eggert in his Bronx accent, yesterday afternoon, and started Carol on Prednisone at suppertime.

He's diagnosed the ailment behind her muscle achiness, and fatigue--since mid-July--as temporal arteritis, or giant cell arteritis, possibly great cell arteritis; the biopsy will tell. It's an inflammatory disease with alarming possibilities--vision problems, high blood pressure, among others--but highly treatable, on the average in the 2-year range, or if C is lucky, 6-8 months. It begins with a blast of Prednisone, 2 pills this breakfasttime and 3 from tomorrow on, and 3 other sets of pills to work against side effects.

So it sounds like hell, and I'm weepy about it. But there is the rate and time frame of getting rid of this damn disease, and so far C has tolerated the medication OK; and perhaps most of all, we're grateful for this forceful doctor. He may well have saved her from something terrible by picking up the phone and hauling her in to Group Health as soon as he saw her test results y'day.

6 Oct. - A broad Horizon #2341
for Sun Valley. Raining as we wait to
leave Seattle. h-o-n-g time in the air-
port, the Shuttle Express tour can deliver
me @ 1:30 for this 4:20 flt. SeaTac's
new Pacific Marketplace does offer
decent chairs & tables, so I settled in &
marked up my reading ms for tomorrow
night. On the way down, I did the food
g'aime for the Fred Hutch prostate study
in the back of the tarmac, so at least I
feel I got something done during this
afternoon of levitating.

Carol was vastly improved when I left
her, on just her 2nd day of Prednisone.
I had the marvelous feeling I had regained
the wife I knew. There is no knowing what
is ahead - I'm a bit worried even about
tomorrow, when she goes in for the lateral
artery biopsy & will have to drive herself
home alone - but by damn, so far so good,
these momentous last 24 hours.

7 Oct., Ketchum - In the Kentwood Lodge (8:05 AM), killing time in the over-grand room Diane Peavey went to great pains to pick out for me. The bed is mammoth, with a headboard of 4" round timbers nearly reaching the ceiling; & there's a jacuzzi in the corner of the room, with 2 walls of mirrors there - the honeymooners' special, evidently.

It's a pretty day, with sunshine on the timbered slopes. Last night's social dinner at the Ketchum Grill went well, although I muffed my dinner order, choosing duck breast & only later realizing everyone else was having lamb shank or lamb meatballs - & from the bites I had, theirs was a helluva lot better. Quite a bunch of us at the table: besides John & Diane Peavey, the Festival director Heather LaMonica & husband Tim; Gary & Sarah Hunt (& new baby Penelope) of Iconoclast Bookstore; Susan Springer, who's to be my escort, starting tonight; and on one side of me, Jennie who's in charge of my craft session tomorrow, & John Rember, the writer from Stanley, up in the Sawtooth Valley. Good conversation with them; Rember apparently is a kind of Idaho Rick Bass, deep into environmental issues in the Sawtooths. Late 50s or 60ish, looks like a forest ranger,

7 Oct. cont. - was a Kittredge student @ U of T. Jennie, to my surprise, ultimately admitted she's under contract to U. of Okla. From to form her dissertation on western medicine into a book but isn't sure she wants to go through with it. I hugged her a bit about that over dinner, & intended to get her aside for a few minutes tomorrow to bring home the message - some more.

Ah, & the Passerby, who travel in a car with a heavily cracked windshield and always have with them a girl, a year-old border collie. John is great company, with good surprising turns of mind. & I'm enjoying Diane, although having to watch out for her miso-momaging tendency a bit.

The house front: called C before dinner last night, she said she's still doing fine with the medication regimen. Today is the day that bothers me, her trip to Capital Hill for the biopsy & then the intamification - "the deed," the doctor calls it - of Pradaxin - to 3 pills @ once. She said David had been called to see how she's doing, making me doubly glad & called him & his here worrywart tendency into the picture.

All for now; soon to be off to the Hammingway house.

Oct. 8 - Ketchum in the rain, damn it. Am going to have to spend the majority of the day holing up out of the weather, until plane time this evening, probably at the escort Susan Springer's place in Hailey. I have the writing craft session to ~~the~~ teach there, 9-10, in the house Ezra Pound was born in, then was going to kill time at the sheep festival fair until lunch and the 12-12:30 books signing - but ah, as Eiseley knew, in a time of frost seek a minor sun.

My main event, last night's reading & q+a in the theater, went very well - an overflow crowd, & Marc Johnson was left on the stage with me. Also sold a lot of books, mostly SAy's, afterward. I don't know if Marc intended it or simply thought fast, but as we took "one more question," it was a soliloquy from the visiting Scotsman, who raises a few sheep in Angell & otherwise is a salmon researcher at U. of Idaho, about the cloned sheep, Dolly, & his suggestion that next year's festival feature her namesake, Dolly Parton. I grinned through it, meanwhile thinking "thanks a hell of a lot for stepping on our exit line," when Marc said, "Alan, will you read one more thing?" He'd singled out the Heart Earth scene of the sheep-herder blazing away at imaginary coyotes, & it brought down the house.

12 Oct.--I got home from Sun Valley on the 8th to find C tolerating the medications remarkably well--no stomach trouble, no puffing up from the prednisone. The main thing she's noticed is a heaviness in the legs, from the beta blocker she's on for elevated blood pressure. And her biopsy was negative on temporal arteritis, the giant cell kind. We're cautiously optimistic about this stuff.

I chewed the inside of my mouth all to hell over leaving her for the Sun Valley speaking gig, but Dr. Eggert thought it was okay, C insisted I go, and so on. I called our writing buddies, the Davids, Laskin and Williams, asking if they could be available if she had to make a run to Group Health and was too woozy from medication to drive. They both nobly offered themselves up--David W. with an interesting little pause that I may be reading too much into, but it felt to me like his realization of this kind of responsibility, which maybe had not been invoked that much in his first 40 years of life; and C said when I came home, "David Laskin, what a sweetie!

He called every day to see how I was and tell me where he was going to be." Which of course is precisely the worrywart attribute I was counting on when I called him up and enlisted him for this.

So, we found friends to come through for us, although one of my concerns is how much our network has diminished, as friends--Nelsons, Linda and Syd--and neighbors--Atwoods, Shirleys--have moved away, generally across Puget Sound, and much of the remaining contingent are turning into geezers with their own medical burdens. We're going to have to work on this.

The Sun Valley gig was surprisingly winsome. In contradiction of its troglodyte politics, Idaho has presented us reasonable and likable people both times this fall. Diane Peavey roused a little skepticism in me in the sometimes rushed planning for my being in Sun Valley, but hell, she's straddling the fact that Alvin Josephy, her father, is dying, back there in Connecticut. ~~Herminshand~~ ~~Stinky~~ The more I was around Diane, the better I liked her tuning in on her generous contribution of noblesse oblige to the sheep-trailing festival; she fussed over me more than I ever want, but I learned to banter it off when I

12 Oct. cont.--had to, and she took the kidding well. Her husband, John, I liked right away. Damned if I know the last time I used the word, but he looks dashing, with his neat gray mustache and his big white Stetson and cowboy boots. When Diane was running late for the Friday night reception at the Sun Valley Lodge and dispatched John to fetch me from the Kentwood Motel, I got a great kick out of him depositing me in his huge muddy pickup, the Peaveys' omnipresent year-old border collie Aggie pert in the seat behind us, to that swank lodge entrance. John is the third-generation Peavey in the sheep business, and I was told his son Tom runs the ranch now. I found it ~~was~~ hilarious that John not only was at Northwestern at the time I was (a senior in '57 when I came as a freshman), but he was Willy the Wildcat, the game and goofy mascot for our hapless athletic teams.

Diane with all her duties had to hand me off to someone to drive me around and otherwise provide, and that went well enough, too--Susan Springer, a wiry fairly good-looking 47-year-old, apparently in Sun Valley to lick her wounds after the breakup of a 20-year marriage in Alaska and quite a swath of life in Seldovia. She's currently treading water--or as her Episcopal church terms it, in a year of "discernment"--before deciding whether to enter seminary and become a priest. That didn't sound to me like anything a 47-year-old ought to be doing, but I tried to keep a poker face and just pointed out three years is a long time, especially in any kind of academe. She swore that didn't bother her, she's able to live in the moment or at least the day, and maybe she is. Certainly she was wired-up enough to juggle me and a pesky 6-month-old pup that was like having an attention-deficit toddler constantly on hand, and she provided me a place to hole up at her place and nap away in her guest room in the afternoon I had to kill before plane time on the 8th.

There was a damnable bunch of downtime during the Sun Valley pair of days, which lets me know what I'm in for with the next book tour. Would a Walkman--or brave new world, an iPod--help? Starbucks saved my skin in the early mornings, providing a place to get some manner of b'fast at 6.

12 Oct. cont.--And now to the favor I asked of Diane Peavey when I agreed to come do the gig for her, the tour of Hemingway's house:

It's on a little rise, partway up a hill, above the Wood River at a suburban edge of Ketchum. Four grossly conspicuous McMansions are its neighbors, to call them that; the place to the north is 20,000 sq ft. Walking to the house from the car, I exclaimed--and Diane praised my eye, said most people don't get it--about the place being made of cast concrete, some of it patterned to look like wood and of that general color. It has a hefty appearance, lodgelike, and although there's a whopping downstairs fireplace of lava rock (two trophy heads over it, impala and lesser kudu) and an upstairs bedroom one of redstone (a gazelle contributed its head to that one) there's none of the feel of muscular dark wood and boar-hunting appurtenances a person might expect of H'way. In a somewhat peculiar way--maybe it's the concrete heft of the place--it has a feel of forced manly spaciousness, rather than intrinsic architectural expanse; the living room is the entire eastern $\frac{1}{2}$ of the house, as is the master bedroom above it.

To begin with his end: the front hall where he shot himself is 8' long and 6' wide, paneled in brown-blond wood. The thick front door has a big round handle in the middle of it. There's a shelf on the east wall where it meets the interior door, big enough to hold a movie projector; a slot in the wall allowed him to show movies, on a quite large screen, at the far end of the lengthy living room. It'd been my understanding he killed himself there where Mary would find him when she came home, but Diane and Matt Miller, the Idaho Conservancy guy who was there to show us around, have a version that puts Mary upstairs when it happens. Diane was definite, from hearing it first-hand from the source, that a neighbor named

Don Anderson (still living near the H'way property in a house Mary gave him, as I savvied it) had come across H'way making his first attempt at himself, somewhere out of the house, some time before and took the gun and gun case away from him. Am just now looking in Hotchner's Papa Hemingway and seeing there were a bunch of

12 Oct. cont.--electrical shock treatments at the Mayo Clinic, and something like paranoia before (and after? On the other hand, the local-history librarian there in Ketchum showed me the inch-thick ~~file~~ FBI/CIA file he'd obtained through the Freedom of Information Act). Hotchner also says the gunrack was in the "vestibule," which would ~~exp~~ to toward explaining his doing the deed there. The incident of Don Anderson wrestling the gun away is there too.

The view east over the Big Wood River to the Pioneer Mountains is full of big cottonwoods, turning golden at this time of year. Matt Miller said there's a herd of elk that frequent the property, which is 15 acres mostly along the river. Upstairs, there's a big bed in the master bedroom, under the north window, a trunk at its foot with "Hemingway" painted (not printed) on in red paint. Peculiar, although probably modern for its time, curved closet of light burl wood. A thoroughly 1950s mint green bathroom. The second bedroom, up there, was his work room. A Royal portable typewriter, Quiet Deluxe model (although I wasn't sure it was old enough to have been actually his), sits on a mirrorless dresser, looking north to the Boulder Mountains, so that he could stand and type to favor his back. Downstairs are a pair of Spanish tile small tables, the size of end tables, with bullfight scenes depicted: Sverte de Capa (a cape move), Sverte de Matar, La Puntilla (stabbing of the bull), Pasa de Muleta, Rara Sverte de Banderillas (planting those long barbs in the bull), and lastly, La Cogida, a goring, the matador carried high by the bull's horn in his groin.

17 Oct.--Here's a set of days I approach with some dread, the re-carpeting of downstairs. C and I worked through the weekend to empty the three ~~4~~-drawer file cabinets--we thus have about thirty linear feet of file folders and their decades of holdings, either boxed and stacked or lined across the hearth shelf of the fireplace--and stow some smaller furniture in the garden room and the furnace room. But mid-morning, Arnie Vogel's carpet guys must take over, working around the fact of our major furniture and the built-in office desk and shelves. We are going to be

17 Oct. cont.--pretty badly dislocated during this, but the point is to grit and trudge through it.

C meanwhile is soldiering through her medication regimen, the weekly Fosamax added to the rest of it this morn.

On the 13th, we met the Damborgs at the Flying Fish for dinner, and then they came with us to the Patagonia store on the next block for the reading of Ellen Meloy's work that I contributed to the effort for her posthumously published book, *Eating Stone*. She could write like blazes, certainly. Don Snow, her former editor at Northern Lights, came over from Whitman College for the evening, and our third reader was Leandra (whose last name I did not get; she has a Darwin book coming out from Little Brown), and everyone did well. Drew about thirty people, a scant number that makes me wince, but nothing I could do about it. Katy Freeman, the Pantheon publicist who set this up, said the Bellingham readers drew about 80 due to a B'ham Herald story, but only a dozen in Portland where the Oregonian didn't do anything.

Well, what else. Got underway, a bit, on *The Eleventh Man* last week, creating the names beyond Ben Reinking's and tinkering with opening pages. Feels reasonable, so far.

19 Oct.--Whew. On the 17th, the carpet crew from Vogel's--2 young Hispanics in the morning, 3 more after lunch--tore out the cream-colored carpet in all the downstairs rooms except the garden room, and laid the sturdy brown tweed variety we've like so well in the garden room. A colossal day's work, replete with bursts of Spanish and periodic cell-phone breaks just the way ranch hands used to take cigarette breaks, and C and I worked all weekend before emptying file cabinets and otherwise getting ready for the carpet work, and now we've labored y'day and today getting things back in order. I've winnowed out 3 beerbox size masses of files to go to the UW ms collection, we've thrown away probably 40 or 50 pounds of ~~old~~ outdated paperwork, and in the revamping we regained a couple of file cabinet drawers for future use. The project shoots the week, but that's about what I expected.

21 Oct.--The Skagit restored us one more time, y'day. With the Sun Valley trip and readying for the carpeting, I had worked through the past couple of weekends and was feeling it, so I proposed we take the day off if the weather warranted it at all. C had an early appointment with Dr. Kato--good enough news there; the good doctor ratified Eggert's regimen of treatment and told C to enjoy herself while the prednisone had arthritis symptoms and everything else at bay--and the day looked worth the gamble when she got back at about 9, so we headed north. A very balmy day in the Skagit country, actually, no wind at Indian Slough, highly unusual. So, our usual dike hike, some birdwatching--a vew V's of snow geese, very high, coming in from the north--the customary pizza and pilsner in LaConner, and we came home feeling good.

Fore and aft of that little trip, I've been tinkering with the lead of The Eleventh Man. I think I have enough to go on now, and all else permitting, I maybe can start making regular output on the ms this coming week.

C remains a miracle, tolerating the medicines remarkably well.

27 Oct.--I am at work on 11th Man, am I ever. It has so many plot possibilities my brain practically pops with them. Monday was rugged, as a start-up day always is, but I've turned out good wordage, albeit in shreds of scenes, every day since.

Y'day afternoon, bit a bullet I haven't wanted to go near and traveled to south Seattle to a lighting store in search of cure for the office's not robust enough track lighting. That, and dropping off Tony Angell's nice new raven mask print for framing, took the afternoon, but the lighting is a little better.

One bit of biz this week: Liz sent a copy of an e-mail exchange with our putative movie agent, Richard Green, along with a penciled question as to whether we should stick with Richard on The Whistling Season. I called her, said I unfortunately didn't have any better idea, did she? Said to her I didn't suppose Richard handled Annie Proulx's

27 Oct. cont.--Brokeback Mountain and turned himself into the hottest agent in Hollywood at the moment, and she sighed and said no, Lynn did that. So we decided to let Lynn have a look at Whistling, although I never have any hopes that she'll get smitten with any of my work, and if she passes, why hello again Richard. Meanwhile, the gist of his exchange with Liz is that he has laid Prairie Nocturne on John Pielmeier, who wrote the play and script Agnes of God, and in Richard's agently telling of course "loved it," so Richard and his agent partner of the moment "are trying to find a place that would want to develop it for John to write and possibly direct." We'll believe it when it happens, but it's a smidgin ~~more~~ from Richard when we ain't had nothing for a long while.

5 Nov.--Have just had a second spirited week of work on on 11th Man, although it was largely pepping up the opening scene of Ben's bus ride home from the war. Now there's a pretty good possibility I can jam onto the computer whatever I can think up, this coming week--i.e., build wordage. The book still excites me, I guess because of its building blocks of plot and character.

On the 1st, we had the monthly Provinces meal with the Nelsons, usual hilarity dampened only by the shuttered Baskin & Robbins where we top off those evenings with ice cream. After Marsh and Ann drove off into the night, I finally discerned a sign that said the place is not dead, just remodeling, hallelujah.

Before that, dinner with the Walkinshaws at the XO Bistro in their Capitol Hill n'hood. Pretty nice grub, C and I concluded, although not up to Union given the price. Walt's uncertain sense of balance is such--and he is after all 90 or so--that they took a look at Horizon House, where they could have had the apartment where Jacob Lawrence lived. Not for them, they concluded: there's not yet in-house medical care there and so if one of them went down, the other would be 6 blocks away. And there's nothing wrong with Walt's analytical sense--he divined that the number of Jean's friends there in Horizon House who have lost some of their marbles would mean constant visitation to her. Therefore the Walkinshaws are cleaning

5 Nov. cont.--out the basement of their venerable Capitol Hill house and will seek a medical student boarder to help them out as needed. Gutsy.

And last night, we were supper ^aspartans by having John Roden over, while Jean is hospitalized in the wake of her knee operation. C and I were wary that he'd slog over on foot in the dark, rain, and wind, but hell no, he's reliably contradictory, and so he showed up handsomely dressed in matching slacks and blazer and turtleneck, convivial to the nth. He talked up a storm during supper, never getting around to eating his salad even after I pointed out to him it was dessert time for the rest of us, and seemed to thoroughly enjoy himself. As I said to C afterward, There, whew, an evening without apoplexy.

I've just poached into C's diary while she's at the grocery store to check my impressions against her medical self-evaluation, and we seem agreed that she's getting along quite well, although slowed by the beta blocker. This week we watched a series of videos--Stagecoach (which I think may end up having pertinence to 11th Man, if I give Ben Reinking a cineaste side; anyway that's why we watched it, pretty entertaining), the first Zorro pic, and The English Patient again, which is still stunning in its camerawork and crystalline drama bits--Binochet's hopscotch by herself in the garden at night; Fienne's little leap and click of his heels in the air as he drunkenly approaches the banquet table. And before that we watched much of the baseball playoffs and the World Series. The Series showed how out of step with the world we are--we like the tight baseball the White Sox and Astros played, and the Nielsen ratings were the lowest since the paleolithic age. Anyway, as I began to say here, these are at least tries at staying up later and getting more sleep--the prednisone has C awake sometimes at 2:30 or so, and I'm not much better. Luckily we both look at early awakening as not the worst possible affliction.

Ah, and we bought a car since the last diary entry.

8 Nov.--Have spent the first 2 days of the week organizing 11th Man, including finding pics today of how I think Cass and Ben ought to look. Not much advance in wordage, but I've seen how to loosen up the quite tight armature of the opening grafts, making it considerably less high-pitched for the reader.

8 Nov. cont.--And this is the day of the ARC. In the mail, 4 of the babies, the advanced reading copy of The Whistling Season. In its blue jacket it is handsome indeed. C and I particularly like, i.e. better than the cover photo of the weatherbeaten school, the bell tower and roofpeak image gracing the bottom of the back cover. Nifty all around, though, in its details, and who knows, maybe even in its prose. Ah, and oh, it has a heft in the hand, too.

Last night at the Damborgs' suggestion we went with them to the ornithological society meeting at the UW Horticultural Center--with a reliably knockout lasagna meal at Cafe Lago beforehand--to hear Tony Angell and his co-author John Marzluf do their tag+team talk and PowerPoint show on their book, "In the Company of Ravens and Crows." They had it down really quite smooth, gracious as the dickens in yielding the floor to each other.

So life wends its literary way around here. A detail from the Coeur d'Alene speaking gig several weeks ago still makes me giggle. Excavating my pocket notebook this morn, I discovered I commenced writing in it from the back when I set it up for the C d'A trip, and so had neglected to get down here the Dickensian conventioneer groups we shared the big resort hotel with: one assembled bunch was gasket fabricators, another was pecan shellers, and elbowing in for luncheon were ones who announced themselves as Christian Women.

Another curious aspect of the C d'A speech was that during the banquet I was put next to Marc Brinkmeyer, honcho of Riley Creek Timber, who evidently had ponied up major money for the event and in fact was the main push behind my appearance before the 1,150 high school students that morning as part of the deal. Brinkmeyer was a big smart ducal guy, and in the course of the meal he mentioned the Montana sawmills his outfit had bought up, along the lines of "if we could put together Idaho's resources and the Montana work ethic, we'd really have something." I

asked him where those mills had been--he'd said they came as part of a bigger deal and Riley Creek had simply killed 'em off--and he recited Thompson Falls, a couple of places I've forgotten, and White Sulphur Springs! I leaped at the chance to ask him something that had been on my mind since

8 Nov. cont.--I was a teenager, when that sawmill came to town about the time we moved to Dupuyer, and whenever we were back to WSS here would be logging trucks coming in from Kings Hill loaded with skinny trees: did that sawmill ever make any sense? No, he said, the trees, most of them less than 12" in (I think) trunk dimension (rather than circumference) were what was derided in the business as "carrot tops." Too small for lumber, about the only use they fit, he said, was for mine timbers; install them green and they would warp all to hell but hold. All right, that was the instructive evening in C d'a, so next I am in Ketchum signing up books after the Trailing of the Sheep theater-night shindig and a woman comes up to me and tells me she and her husband owned and ran the sawmill in WSS. Did they ever make any money? Only when they sold it off.

11 Nov.--Well, hell, the appearance of bad news this afternoon, about an hour ago: first a fire truck in emergency response, then an ambulance, next door at the Nesses. We hope Kaare is all right, but...

Weather is still rainy and chilly. C braved it this morn with a trip downtown to Artform, rescuing the framing of our new Tony Angell print--the Kwakiutl raven mask--after my north-end try turned into a fiasco.

I have written, mostly rewritten, all week on 11th Man. Reasonable progress, but I need to make a bunch of pp. fly together soon, I hope this coming week.

12 Nov.--Better (somewhat) news from next door: son Arnie came over at suppertime with the report that Kaare fell off a ladder, rather than the heart attack I'd feared.

13 Nov.--9 on a rainy Sunday morning, and I've just finished the lovely experience of reading The Whistling Season in bound form. Which is to say, in its book life, even if it is the advanced reading copy chrysalis. I am very happy with ~~the~~ the book, its voice, the footing beneath both words and characters. As I read it over, evenings and stolen dabs of time and then most of yesterday ~~the~~ and an ultimate couple of hours this morn, I kept by my side the proofread pages where I had inserted fixes,

13 Nov. cont.--and those provide a pleasure of their own. Four dozen of them across the 345 pp., those little finishing strokes--a more deft word in most cases, an extraneous one nipped out here and there--are the residue of all the design that I put into the book, starting with Paul Milliron's musing voice and Latinate passion for words.

And yesterday morning, I had the delicious experience of calling Tony Angell and reading to him the handsome review of his and Marzluff's "In the Company of Ravens and Crows" in the Wall Street Journal.

14 Nov.--Whew, tough day at the skunkworks, and I see I brought it on myself. From habit I warmed up this morning by going over the opening scene, and this close to my re-read of *The Whistling Season*, it of course looked gawky. Began tinkering with it, meanwhile mildly alarmed that I was spinning my wheels that way instead of producing fresh wordage but not daring to let possibly useful changes get away from me. So now I have two versions of the opening scene, plus an alternative way into the book--an opening mid-air graf establishing an anonymous voice, "My name does not matter, nor who I am in the story..."--and must let them sit for a while.

Impromptu socializing last night, when the Lageshultes asked us up to soup supper and to see their pictures of Russia. O woe, they meant all their pictures, caught on digital camera and stored in infinite capacity in Roger's laptop. C and I came home glazed and muttering "Editing! Editing!" But also as C noted, Lee and Roger are such enthusiasts, what's a goggle-eyed guest to do?

21 Nov.--The holiday season is padding onto the calendar on little cat feet. C spent weekend stints cleaning windows etc. and I did some mild mobilization on my end of Thanksgiving logistics. Three days from now, we do the turkey and the hosting--this year there'll be 17 of us.

On the work front, I'll be taking this week to mull *The 11th Man* plot and do a swatch of library research tomorrow, on a major chore day out in the world. I made what I hope is considerable progress the last 2-3 days of last week, when I finished the scene of Ben borrowing the

21 Nov. cont.--car from Tom Harry, and a revise of the opening scene that finally feels about right to me. I'm deliberately not going to re-read those for a while; it's time now to stretch into the other parts of the book.

Sat. night the 19th, Tony and Lee came for a crab feed. Tony and Marzluff are doing really damn well with their ravens and crows book. Couple of cautionary tales out of that evening, one of them the perils of e-mail. Tony and Bert Bender, buddies all the way back to high school or somewhere, fire stuff off to each other every day, and it sounds as if Bert is having trouble with Tony's success on this book, possibly because its co-evolution theme bumps against Bert's academic specialty, evolutionary theory's affect on literature. In any case, he e-mailed that Tony was beating his chest about ~~how~~ how the book was doing, and apparently there were a stunned couple of days when they had to feel their way to some kind of truce. Tony's other report was on Bob and Dee Simmons, who moved to Bellingham to be near their kids, and two of those kids are so estranged they won't speak to one another. Tony thinks they're really lonely; Bob showed up at his place the other day.

Here at our bluff pinnacle, we're fogged in for third or fourth day in a row. Quite dense this morning.

On the medical front, C saw Dr. Eggert on the 18th and he cut her Prednisone intake a bit; she's had three quite good days and nights since.

25 Nov.--A day with such a Saturday feel to it--the Friday after Thanksgiving--that it's tricky to date it right. Day-long rain, although y'day we lucked out with only showers for the traditional walk around the n'hood between turkey and pie. Sixteen of us gathered here. Old regulars except for David Laskin and Kate O'Neill and daughters Alice and Sarah. The standards: Mark & Lou Damborg, Ray & Priscilla Bowen, Bill Calvin & Kathleen Graubard, John & Katharina Maloof, and what are becoming our traditional overnight guests from Bellingham, Norm Lindquist and Ann McCartney. In what I hope to hell is not going to become a tradition, Ann was a social mess y'day, I suppose bingeing on too much food and ultimately too much alcohol. This rankles a lot, because she is our oldest friend in the

26 Nov. cont.--group and it pisses me off royally to be driven into a mood against her. But, when I came back from leading the walk, there Ann was, planted at the stove countertop--the absolute central one in the kitchen using her electric mixer on whipped cream for her pies and spraying the stuff all over that end of the kitchen. Worse, she knew it and kept right at it. C was looking angry and dismayed, and some of the other women were looking askance this exhibition; not wanting to make it into a real scene, C and I let it play out. And I think C made the point to her later that she doesn't want to see that happen again. Anyway, between that and Ann bulldozing her parliamentary gig onto anyone who might conceivably be in a position to get her a booking--this we thought was at least as tacky--and the fact that she was still drinking champagne as we sat around after everyone else left and she was giving us her tipsy views of the world, it was a sufficient day of Ann. And now that that's off my chest, I can say the rest of the holiday was fine, much good food, people visiting without apparent effort.

I see my last entry was the day before I set off into a day of chores, bringing home our new Tony Angell print of a Kwakiutl raven mask, then U District chores, mostly of the bookstore kind; this workspace now possesses whopping books such as The Encyclopedia of Weapons of World War II. I've been becalmed in the wordmaking, doing some plot thinking etc. C meanwhile is raptly into the crankiest WWII book I brought home, Paul Fussell's.

This has been an even longer day than usual--Ann & Norm got up at 3 for a 6 A.M. flight to Cancun--and the early hours did yield my finishing ~~work~~ of our Xmas letter and a run to the post office for Xmas stamps. C and I now are about to take our daily walk of the n'hood, the rain having let up. She went through y'day magnificently, her stamina holding up and managing as well as can be done as traffic flooded through her kitchen.

28 Nov.--Weather is coming in, a blue-gray front arriving from the south, bringing dark about an hour early. Inch or two of snow in the forecast, maybe more later in the week. Good weather to hunker in and write, as I began again this morn on The Eleventh Man.

1 December--A day that was. This morn I came downstairs as usual to catch the 6:07 tv weather forecast--an inch or two of snow, which indeed has fattened the heather and berry bushes outside the window, at 3:30 now--and at the foot of the stairs on my way back up, I noticed a wet spot on the carpet. Pretty sure I hadn't spilled the coffee I was carrying, I tested the moisture on my lips and it seemed to be water. I asked upstairs to Carol, whether she'd been down and possibly spilled something, but even as I was doing so, I moved my foot and there was another spot. By now I was scrambling to feel along the base of the wall and bottom of the stairs for a leak, and as C came scrambling down for a look, it hit both of us at about the same instant: the sonofabitching water heater.

Indeed. The furnace room was sopping and the water had oozed out the bottom of the stairwell and was wicking out into the new carpet. We hauled in a garden hose and began draining the heater into the washroom drain, although forgetting the step of opening the kitchen hot faucet to help the pressure situation, and then began lugging wet stuff out of the furnace room--old carpet rolls, phonograph albums, boxes, boxes. But, everything improved from there. Aaron Schuster, the Mercurylike plumber, installed a new water heater by about 10:30. Aaron was barely out of the driveway when here came the carpet cleaner, ~~David~~ C's onetime student, David Anima; right now the big blower he left is whooshing the last traces of moisture out of the affected rug portion. Tomorrow, first thing, the carpet guy Arnie Vogel will have someone here to replace the rug pad and cram the rug back into place. It's a pricey day, \$500 just for the water heater, but as things have simmered down we're almost giddy that it didn't happen a week ago, Thanksgiving.

Barely managed to get to 11th Man this afternoon--I'm going to address Xmas letter envelopes for the illusion of achieving something--but I perhaps did hit on the opening-scene line that had baffled me the past couple of days, how to make first mention of Cass in Ben's life without tipping the fact that she's a hotshot pilot: just say she came out of the blue to him.

Dec. 12--On an otherwise sound day, we just now had the bad news that Margaret Svec suffered a stroke this morning and is in Swedish Hospital. Thank goodness C was over there just a few days ago, showing Margaret the new car, visiting as she has done so many times.

The new car, a spiffy silver Honda Civic, came into our household on Dec. 7. C is very pleased with it, itching to take it on a highway tryout, and if the weather will let us at all, I hope we can do that as soon as tomorrow.

Today's coup, in what has been a chore-laden December, was getting a hired hauler in here to take the stuff we cleaned out of the furnace room to the dump. That water heater episode is now behind us.

And I have just now gone out and covered the lettuce beds for the night. We had a fine salmon salad supper out of them recently, and will have a side salad tonight.

As to the day's work, I began going back through my notebooks--Phrasing etc.--for things that might apply to 11th Man. Quite a pleasant pastime; I have put a lot of lively language in those across more than 30 years. And this afternoon, it was back to the future: went over the basics of the booktour with Michelle at Harcourt.

Dec. 16--Yesterday was a good one. It started off profitably when our stock broker Steve Charlston called with the news that Abgenix, an IRA stock I had been gnashing my teeth over, is being bought by Amgen and I'm in for about \$6300 windfall profit. Also, the page samples of the fresh paperback of Heart Earth had come, and they're really something--bold "handwriting" of my mother's inter-chapter letter entries, with big ghostly postmark over. And the title page is a double-truck layout of one of our greatest of family photos, the one of me as a little kid in a black hat peering through the sheep corral panels as my dad wrangles lambs. So, I phoned huzzahs to Stacia Decker, who has largely handled that reprint. Then came a phone message from Becky after lunch, saying I had a "lovely" Booklist review of Whistling Season. I reached her near the end of the day--amidst the Harcourt Christmas party, there she was, answering the

16 Dec. cont.--phone and eggnog in the other hand--and when she faxed the review through, it was the eternal

Bill Ott, this time liking a book of mine very much: "best since the marvelous English Creek." He went on to say it has "all the charm of old-school storytelling, from Dickens to Laura Ingalls Wilder," a combo I have probably not been compared to hitherto. C and I are never going to get used to the schedule of this book--Ott's review was slugged "June 2006", every other book on the page was Jan. or March--but we're trying to ride with it, booktour planning before final version of the cover, reviews starting half a year before pub date.

Have just come in from frost-blanketing the lettuce beds, as I've been necessarily doing every night. This cold snap is supposed to last through the weekend. Queerly, with the tinge of arctic air has come a whitish husky, peering at us like White Fang. In one of those unaccountable developments with neighbors, Henry Kastner, alone next door since Dorothy's stroke earlier this year, apparently ~~is~~ has this dog for company--it's likely his daughter's--and it spends days on his back porch, where it can ~~not~~ come our direction on the catwalk outside Henry's front windows. Every damn so often, I look out from the living room or somewhere and there the call of the wild is, looking back at me with yellow eyes. The dog barked considerably its first day or so here, but has not since. Henry, we'll have to see how this goes.

19 Dec.--The weather softened today, rain breaking the week or ten days of cold snap, and rain in the forecast onward toward Christmas. I got back to the 11th Man ms today, and when C asked at lunch how my morning had been and I said okay, she pointed out that's good for a Monday. I did see useful bits of change that make the eternal first chapter flow along better.

A minor note of elegy, which are getting all too frequent. Early Sat. morning, the phone rang and I answered it reluctantly, knowing it was too early to be anything but bad news from somewhere. From quite a ways into the past, it turned out: Wayne Sourbeer had died, Pamela was calling from Helena to tell me. He was a piece of work, when we were filming Winter Brothers for

19 Dec. cont.--KCTS a quarter of a century ago. "It's going to be so good," he'd say after we'd done a successful sequence. A big bearded moppy shambling man, not to say a terrific photographer who had only one eye, Wayne somewhere found time to be a drinker and a lady's man, doing it all while living on a houseboat. The call from Pamela, final woman in his life and his wife for at least a couple of decaes, jarred me on the Richter scale of coincidence. A day or so before I'd been on the phone with David Laskin, anent his NY Times review of Tim Egan's Dust Bowl book awarding Egan about a gentleman's C, and asked him how his LaConner trip had gone, where he was to meet up with Delores Tarzan for background on his ~~ix~~ Times travel piece on Graves, Tobey, Callahan & Anderson. He said she'd had a stroke, needed to be helped by her husband was maybe a bit addled. I found that sad to hear, on more than one level; she brought to mind Sourbeer, as she had been one of his houseboat flames way back then.

25 Dec.--I've received a cold for Christmas, and am snuffling and hulking along, hoping for it to dry up somewhat by the time the Damborgs and Rodens come for dinner.

Rain has quit, for now, after a very wet night. It's been quite balmy with this Pineapple Express pattern of the past some days: record 62 y'day.

Since the last entry, Linda and Syd were here for lunch, on the 20th. They reported the latest on the search for a chair for the ungovernable English Dept., and said they're going to Venice for a month next summer, for the sake of Linda's next book of poetry. She evidently got no writing done all fall--a season without poems from her is I think a first since we've known her--because of classes and committees, and she's buying time off for most of next year.

And I ventured to the UW myself, first time in a while, for library work, on the 22nd. Met up with David Laskin in the U Book Store, asked if he wanted to go to lunch, he said sure, and we rejoined at Ivar's Salmon House. I happily scandalized him with my caloric salmon sandwich and french fries, while he skimped by on a cup of chowder and a green salad, but he did succumb to having a beer with me. Good time, good talk; he and Kate are great new friends for us.

25 Dec. cont.--I pegged away at 11th Man last week, still tinkering with sequence to get the story well and truly under way, up there at the front. It's starting to seem right. I do hope for a week or two of piling up pages, before we go to Tucson.

C is now down to 30 mg of prednisone, half the original dosage. She's getting by pretty well except for the sleep situation. We've had nights/mornings around here lately when we're both awake by 3 a.m.

Whup, mustn't forget the phone call this morn from Ann and Marshall Nelson, down there on the Oregon coast at Arch Cape opening their Xmas presents and finding the advance reading copy of The Whistling Season dedicated and inscribed to them. Made them both teary, they reported. Another Xmas surprise was a call from their daughter Sarah, reporting they'll be grandparents again.

26 Dec.--Day after Christmas, my cold and the weather both clearing. At 3:35 now, low sun is catching the purple in our heather herd. C is upstairs cleaning and cheffing, as we're entertaining again tonight, Linda and Jeff coming for, what, Boxing Day dinner, I guess.

Y'day's with the Rodens and Damborgs got off to a tellin start when Jean showed up at the door alone, in the 5:30 dark, asking: "Is John here? I didn't see him on the road." Goddamn, again, I thought, and we gave him another 15 minutes before Mark and I set out in the damborg's Volvo looking for him. We drove and drove, no John. All the way, .6 mile, to the T intersection at 10th and Innis Arden Way, and no sign of him. C had suggested we check the park in case he'd gone in there for a restroom, so I had Mark turn onto Innis Arden Way to head up the hill. Around the corner, just before the dip, there he was, by the side of the road, not quite turning in circles in confusion but close. He was beside himself with frustration, naturally, madder at himself than I was at him, which is saying considerable. I haven't a clue what wrong turn he took, where he'd been (although I realized with a shock later, from his goings-on about how he had looked for our place, that he apparently does it on recognition of our driveway and then our house, likely

26 Dec. cont.--doesn't know our address or even the name of our street), any of that, although of course what followed was a long siege from him of "What in the world happened? I went up here, and turned left, not right" etc. I told him a number of times to never mind, forget it, try to figure it out later, and kept getting a fuming "I can't forget it"--he had a point there; it's a turning point in his life if he no longer, at 85, can march off into the night, the hell with the rest of us--until we got to our door and he asked how long Jean had been there. Half an hour, I told him. "Now I'll never hear the end of it," he said. "Should you?" I said. He went quiet a moment, then said, "No, I guess not."

It seems like a dozen times over the years that I, or I and Jean, or I and somebody--although it's likely more like 6 or 8--have gone out into the night that way and fetched him in. (Jean and I once found him out in the middle of the goddamn park; I still can't figure out what he was doing out there going cross-country.) It is a role

I detest, having to go out trying to calculate where to look for him and how soon to call the cops, because I see it as utterly goddamn needless--the rest of us pushed into this because he is willful about Marineing off into the dark rainy night without flashlight, reflector stripes, or apparently even address. Say for him, he does it all the way--never a "sorry" to Carol about royally screwing up a cooking schedule nor anything to Mark or me or Jean about coming getting him. Of course he is not going to change.

Dinner itself went pretty well, the Damborgs being the magnificently resilient friends they are, although John was full of things-aren't-what-they-used-to-be rants and "Why is that?" expostulations about the state of this or that. (After years of serving too often as some kind of walking reference book for him, my mental and sometimes oral answer to his rhetoric has become, "Because" and "Get over it.") He bogged things down on geezer moans about computers, with Mark doing a noble job of answering, actually getting some points home to him, until finally Lou made the knife-at-the-throat "cut" signal to Mark.

26 Dec.--As best we could tell, when the Damborgs were departing after the Rodens, Mark had got a kick out of it all, although we're not so sure about Lou.

As C said when there just the two of us, after, "Well, we survived it."

We opened our presents then--some CDs, some books, some fancy booze, not a bad haul.

29 Dec.--This betwixt and between set of days between holidays has turned into a nonwriting week, which probably is all right (although as always it gives me some flutters) I have managed some useful research, riffling through 4 WWII memoirs for details, turns of phrase, and the like.

Took those books back to UW library today when we treated ourselves to an outing and went to the Burke Museum's show of Alaska Nat'l Wildlife Refuge pics by Banerjee. It is magical work, and apparently has done something to rally opinion against the vandals always at the ANWR gate.

Have done some financial tucking and trimming these past days, although most of what's needed awaits the new year, the \$46,000 from Liz's office, and so on. C and I wrote charitable checks totaling \$11,500, not a bad day's work.

Through it all, since a couple of days before Xmas, I have had a cold, which is now breaking up. For her part, C seems to be getting by better on her medication regimen, perhaps noticeably so since the most recent cut in prednisone dosage.

All in all, we're closing down the year quietly but with some flavor. After nap today, I set up the BBQ--just ahead of threatening weather, as we continue to get the shower fringes of the big storms hitting California--and grilled 4 nights' worth of salmon. And there'll be a fruit salad supper tomorrow night, all the greens from our garden. Nice.

31 Dec.--8 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours left of '05, and when it goes I hope it takes my cold with it. I figured it was on the wane y'day, but I had the roughest night of this nine-day stint of being under-the-weather, my gurgling full nose getting me wide awake at midnight, and I gathered myself down to the guest room for the rest of the night. C tells me, and my

31 Dec. cont.--impression had been, that I've always shaken off colds pretty quickly, so I have to wonder whether my immune system, with the MGUS tag on it, is not as vigorous as it was.

All said and done, though, it's only a goddamn cold, and in the really vital health situation around here, C is persevering as well as could possibly be done. Today we amended our New Year's semi-tradition of 11 o'clock lunch at Ivar's on the waterfront--tomorrow there's both a rainy windy weather system coming and a Seahawks game on tv--and made it clam chowder, slaw and beer for New Year's Eve lunch instead. The spirit of tradition came through for us, as we were the first and only drinkers/diners in Ivar's bar, at the usual table overlooking the fireboat.

This morning I did the first rough calculation of our financial holdings--past \$4.5 million now, pretty good where we came from, although it seems hellish hard to make that much money make money--and then settled in to read page proofs of Heart Earth, for the winsome new paperback. Fittingly in this literary house, the year will make its passage in that endeavor, when I pick up those old loved pages to resume in the morning.

Ellen Meloy reading, Oct. ¹13, 2005

I was not fortunate enough to know Ellen Meloy personally. But I knew her work, all the way back when she began doing essays for Don Snow at **Northern Lights**, and there was always something special about her observant eye and the fire of her writing.

Ellen was in that tradition of writers about nature who can go places that would damn near kill the rest of us, and persevere and even thrive there, and bring back the story of what they were looking at in wonderful words. She was, I believe, historically in

the good company of writers such ² as Peter Matthiessen, Barry Lopez, Edward Hoagland, and Terry Tempest Williams.

Her last book, **Eating Stone**, keeps godlike watch over a band of desert bighorn sheep in the redrock country of southern Utah. The selection I'm going to read, to start things off tonight, is from the opening chapter, of that four-year bonding of threatened wild creatures and Ellen Meloy's supremely gifted imagination:

Copy

Seattle
October 9, 2005

Dear Dave and Marcella

You two and the Choteau country were even more inspiration than usual this time around. After our tour with you, we spent Monday in the Sun River country in shirtsleeve Indian summer weather --beguiling by any standard. On Tuesday morning Ivan said "I think I've just changed our plans; let's go to Great Falls." To the library, of course, and as a result of Ivan's conversation with Dave. For an hour and a half we pillaged everything we could find about the World War II transport of planes to Alaska, where the Soviets then took over for the trip across Siberia. (He's just been digging into the results and has come across some rip-roaring tales of survival, as well as some dandy detail: the red star was painted on the planes in the Falls, for instance.)

So that will contribute one piece to the sprawling WW II story he's been interested in for some years.

Just one little problem, though. His contract -- accepted by Harcourt but put together when he was trying to reach agreement with Scribner -- calls for a nonfiction book. Ivan gathered his courage and called his agent to see how she would react to a change of contract. "No one's going to object if you want to write fiction," she promptly told him, and he promptly sent her a spiffed up prospectus. She was on the phone as soon as she got it -- call her at home, she ordered -- saying it was a terrific idea and she'd call his editor Becky right away. In less than 24 hours she was back reporting that Becky was enthusiastic, the contract would be amended and, miracle of miracles, that he'd get more advance money, too. We'd never heard of such a thing!

So Ivan is happily beginning work, as time allows. Meanwhile, we've read page proofs for *The Whistling Season*. Harcourt has done a beautiful job of page design, and the proofs were clean, clean, clean. What a pleasure.

Next, Marcella, a report on the peculiar arthritis-like but yet not arthritis symptoms I discussed with you. I'm now in the hands of a rheumatologist, and it cost me the trip to Sun Valley last week. It was near astonishing. I'd asked to be referred to the rheumatology clinic at Group Health and was waiting for a call to schedule that when, at 2 p.m. last Tuesday (we were to leave for Sun Valley on Thursday) a rheumatologist called me, asked me about my symptoms and said "How would you like to take a trip this afternoon?" I extracted Ivan from his garden we went to see Dr. Eggert, who spent an hour and a half telling me what I had and what to do about it.

To strip it of the medical jargon, I have inflammation of the arteries. It can be

handled and should be done promptly, since otherwise nasty problems can occur, including vision loss. Obviously this doctor was going to be aggressive. He sent me home with four prescriptions and said "Start tonight. And watch for side effects." Such as hallucinations, or depression, or acute pain.... Report in immediately if any of these occur. So I came home and unpacked, Ivan called two of his writing buddies who live nearby in case I needed help, and I called a friend to check on me. As it turned out, I had no adverse effects, much to Ivan's relief, and I'm into the first stages of treatment that's expected to take 8 months to two years with -- ugh -- prednisone, the only medication that works on this problem. Naturally that also means Fosamax, and something to protect the gastrointestinal tract. Finally, a beta blocker because my blood pressure spiked.

Yipe. What a difference a few hours makes. The prednisone had me feeling better in 18 hours, but it's eradicating the inflammation that's the long-term problem. Enough. Since I sat in your kitchen and complained, I thought you deserved an update.

Ivan's trip to The Trailing of the Sheep Festival in Ketchum went well, with a turn-away crowd of more than 300 at the local theater for an evening reading and conversation, two robust book signings, and a craft session. He ate some good lamb, too, but didn't stay around for the trailing of the sheep. We all know he knows more about that than folks who plan festivals. Although there still are sheep outfits around Ketchum and Hailey, and the woman behind the festival, Diane Josephy Peavey, is married to a third-generation sheepman.

We frequently think of you two, and wonder how the job strategy is proceeding, Marcella. We know you're in for a busy season as all this gets sorted, and we no doubt will call from time to time and will welcome your calls, too, as usual. We'd be surprised if there were no twists and turns, but we also know you have a sense of adventure and a sense of humor.

It was wonderful to see you two. Stay well and stay in touch.

FROM PAGE A1

Doig

Continued

Only to have Doig himself answer the telephone.

"It is kind of moving – the amount of stricken reaction," he said. "I had many, many well-wishers today."

A few calls of his own revealed

how, and where, the erroneous report began – on a radio talk show in Billings Thursday night.

Seems a Billings man named Ivan White, who had been a regular caller on the show, died earlier this week. On Thursday, dozens of listeners called to say how much they'd miss him, his commentaries and his writings.

A late-comer to the program heard only "Ivan," "writing" and

"praise," and called Sue Hart, who teaches Montana literature at Montana State University-Billings and is a longtime friend of the Doig family.

"Ivan Doig is dead," the caller said.

Hart called the Billings Gazette newsroom to ask if the terrible news were true. The Gazette called the Associated Press in Helena, which called the Associated Press

in Seattle.

On Friday morning, an AP reporter started making inquiries at the University of Washington Press, the Richard Hugo House and the University of Montana.

Someone at UM called the Washington Post.

And on and on.

"The first I knew of it was a little before noon, when several friends called after being interviewed by

the AP," Doig said. "They were pretty upset."

"Until I answered."

For the record, Doig is not only healthy, but just a month from finishing another book, this one set in a one-room schoolhouse at Marias Coulee, a fictitious area north of Valier during the dryland homestead era of 1909 and 1910.

And that, he said, is the next time he expects to be making news.

Missoulian 3/19/83 Contrary to reports, Ivan Doig alive, well

By SHERRY DEVLIN
of the Missoulian

Ivan Doig lives!

Reports of the celebrated writer's demise – and there were many on Friday – were indeed exaggerated.

"I am perfectly healthy, doing fine," Doig confirmed from his home in Seattle, where the condolences began arriving about noon on Friday and continued past nightfall.

"It's been a pretty good preview," Doig said at day's end. "But I am just as glad to have it as a walk-through than as the real event."

Born in White Sulphur Springs in 1939, Doig is known for his historical novels set in some of the state's harshest, but most beautiful, landscapes.

His 1978 "This House of Sky" helped define a new type of Montana literature – one that told real stories about real Montanans.

His friends and fans are devoted and abundant, the extent of which became clear Friday afternoon, as dozens of would-be mourners called, in shock, to the Doig home.

See DOIG, Page A7

Politicians bridge political divide to save 'paradise'

IN THE NORTHWEST

JOEL CONNELLY



COUPEVILLE – Pausing only to shake loose \$2,000 from a maritime lobbyist for a forthcoming House race, the big man devoted his late afternoon monologue to Chivas Regal, Chesterfields and land conservation.

Rep. Phil Burton, D-Calif., had recently engineered Congress' passage of what was nicknamed the 1978 "Parks Barrel Bill," stitching together preservation proposals covering 20-plus states and daring anybody on the political right to raise a ruckus.

It's doubtful that Phil ever donned a backpack, but he was intimately familiar with topography and boundaries from Point Reyes north of his San Francisco district, to the new Ebey's Landing Historical Reserve on Whidbey Island in Washington.

"Buddy, I've got news for you!" Burton intoned, his cigarette nearly brushing the nose of Seattle's freshman Rep. Mike Lowry.

"It's you people who will have to come up with the money," Burton added, giving me a full-in-the-face Lyndon Johnson treatment, "or all we'll have done, up on that island in Washington, is to draw a border around a bunch of condominiums. They'll drain the lagoons. The blue herons will have to beat it."

The memory of that long-ago conversation – held in a dark, constricted House office that gave off a primordial feel of turf – flashed to mind last Friday as about 150 people gathered in the breezy open spaces of Ebey's Landing.

A long 27 years after Parks Barrel, the National Park Service was finally securing 325 acres of wind-stunted trees that flank the much-loved bluff trail in America's first and only national historic reserve.

The Nature Conservancy acquired the "West Woods" from the estate of longtime landowner Robert Pratt, who died in 1999. In turn, the Park Service paid \$1.4 million to the Conservancy for a scenic easement – or land protection agreement – with some management rights.

What a bargain! The woods were independently appraised at \$3.5 million. The Conservancy donated the bulk of its value to the park system, courtesy of 600 individual donors.

South Whidbey-based philanthropist Nancy Skinner Nordhoff came through with a cool \$1 million.

Beyond all the figures, however, the

bluff-top celebration was a Good Friday reminder that it's possible to resurrect cooperation in America.

"It's great to look out here and this is what your grandchildren are going to see!" declared Island County Commissioner Mac McDowell, a rock-ribbed Republican.

Rep. Rick Larsen, D-Wash., praised his Republican predecessor Jack Metcalf, an islander who worked in Congress to keep privately owned farmland in the reserve from being subdivided.

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., pledged to work for one more chunk from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund; a half-million dollars is needed for the Park Service to acquire one more scenic easement on farmland around the historic 150-year-old Ferry House.

The man that Cantwell unseated in 2000 – Sen. Slade Gorton, R-Wash. – used his Appropriations Committee clout to secure more than \$3 million for Ebey's Landing.

Piece by piece – working with private outfits such as The Nature Conservancy and Trust for Public Lands – the Park Service has so far protected 1,774 acres at Ebey's Landing.

What has inoculated Ebey's Landing even from the nasty land-use fights and "values" debates of Island County politics?

"This is where settlement of the Pacific Northwest began," said John Rose, incoming state board chairman of The

Nature Conservancy.

The Reserve is named for Col. Isaac Neff Ebey, who came west from Missouri in 1851 to settle a land he described as rich in soil and "almost a paradise of nature." Alas, the colonel was slain in 1857 by Haida Indians seeking revenge for the killing of one of their chiefs.

The settlement of nearby Coupeville, a mecca for ships' officers and their families, began a year after Ebey arrived.

A wily Phil Burton saw fit to shape Parks Barrel Bill language so as to protect both nature – wild bluffs overlooking Admiralty Inlet – and man's historic imprint, symbolized by the historic officers' homes of Coupeville.

Unlike wilderness areas, where man "is only a visitor," the reserve was created, in Congress' words, "to preserve and protect a rural community which provides an unbroken historic record from 19th century exploration and settlement in Puget Sound to the present time."

Or as author Ivan Doig put it at the celebration, "Here, scenes still fit onto each other despite the distances of time."

The concept is one to root for – not resist.

In the late 1980s, the state's congressional delegation found money to buy up two miles of Keystone Spit – south of where the ferry leaves for Port Townsend – even after two condos had been built. Bird-rich Crockett Lake, with its herons, was

rescued at the same time.

In addition to forest land bought from his estate, Robert Pratt specified in his will that 147 acres – including the renowned bluff-top trail and Perego Lagoon below on the beach – be donated to a non-profit land conservation group. The Nature Conservancy was picked as recipient.

One of the Northwest's early spring winter storms was blowing in by the time Friday's ceremony broke up.

Still, John Rose and his wife headed down to walk their dogs on the beach. The couple courted at Ebey's Landing three decades ago.

Once, a few years back, Mickie and I were just reaching the top of the bluff when a bagpiper stepped out and began playing. He had been pre-positioned by a romantically inclined young man who happened upon this spot to propose marriage to his girlfriend.

We lazed around the bluff for a couple hours before backtracking.

It was one of those days when hawks were riding the air currents and the Olympics seemed to rise directly out of Admiralty Inlet.

The piper was playing on, with happy news to report. The young couple were engaged.

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Oops, rumor greatly exaggerated

By **MARY PICKETT**

Of The Gazette Staff

The good news is that author Ivan Doig is very much alive and living in Seattle.

The bad news is that on Friday rumors circulated from coast to coast that the Montana native had died.

On Thursday night, the hosts and guests of the Yellowstone Public Radio call-in program "Your Opinion Please!" gave moving on-air eulogies for Ivon White, a Billings intellectual and commentator who died earlier in the week.

One Billings resident caught a part of the program and, hearing the name "Ivon" discussed in solemn,

respectful tones, assumed that it was Doig who had died. That resident passed the news along to another resident, who called a third resident. That person called The Gazette Friday morning.

A reporter alerted editors, who in turn called the Associated Press in Helena.

The Associated Press called Doig at home in Seattle to find him hale and hearty.

The Washington Post also called Doig to check on the rumor.

Doig, curious about how the rumor got started, called The Gazette Friday afternoon.

After joking about having a Mark Twain moment ("The news of my death has been greatly exaggerat-

ed"), Doig said that he is doing well and deep into writing his 11th book.

The book, yet unnamed, is about Montana in the homestead era in 1909 and 1910. A one-room schoolhouse is the star of the book, Doig said.

Several of his books also will be reissued in paperback in the near future.

Doig, born in White Sulphur Springs, has written extensively about Montana in his novels, including "This House of Sky," "English Creek" and "Dancing at the Rascal Fair." He took the rumor of his demise in stride, and, after a morning of writing, he spent the afternoon grafting fruit trees in his Seattle garden.

When I was asked to read five minutes or so for this occasion,
the natural choice was from **Winter Brothers**, day forty-three of
that book of mine, a winter diary in which I followed in
imagination and footsteps our leading pioneer diarist of the
nineteenth century along this coast, James G. Swan. The words
are from about a quarter of a century ago now, but they take place
on this same timeless reach of earth. From those pages, for this
land:

Whidbey Island, this first dawn of February. Admiralty Inlet, with the Strait of Juan de Fuca angling like a flat blue glacier into one end and Puget Sound out the other. This promontory surge of the island's steep edge, lifting me to look west onto the entire great bending valley of water.

→
Come look from this eminence of bluff now in the soft hour before daybreak and you will declare on Bibles that Captain Ebey's retaliatory death at the hands of Tlingit canoemen 122 years ago--148, now--was the last sharp moment on this landscape. The island's farm fields are leather and corduroy, rich even panels between black-furred stands of forest. Tan grass

which broomed the backs of my ³ hands as I climbed the path up to
here/now whisks soundlessly against a four-wire fenceline. The
sky's only clouds are hung tidily on the southernmost Cascade
Mountains at the precise rim of summit where the sun will loft
itself. ~~Yes: Rural America of the nineteenth century, your eyes,
say--or Westphalia, or Devonshire.~~

Directly below where I stand sits an aging barn with its long
peaked eave pointing southeast, like the bill of a cap turned
attentively toward sunrise. We will sunwatch together.

Across Admiralty, the street lights of Port Townsend begin to
quench into the day. The timber-heavy shoreline angling

westward out the Strait from the town seems not so black and barbed as it was minutes ago. That shoreline is my reason--one of my reasons; the other is sheerly that I love this blufftop arc above the tiering horizons of water and shore and mountains--to be here. Across there, invisible yet imprinted, curves the canoe route which James Swan traveled time on time during his Neah Bay years.

I hurry north along the bluff, wanting to watch the light come onto the lagoon which bows out from the shoreline below. The lagoon is not quite like any other piece of coastwork I have even ~~seen~~^R: a narrow band of gravel beach which mysteriously has

looped out from the base of the bluff⁵--the curve of the gravel snare about two hundred yards across at its widest--and entrapped several acres of tidewater. Driftlogs by the hundreds float within it like pewter tableware spilled across marble.

The sun now rides clear of the mountains, but so far onto the southern horizon at this time of year that its luster slants almost directly along the Sound and Admiralty Inlet, as if needing the ricochet help from the water in order to travel the extreme polar distances to the lagoon and, at last, me.

/A second illumination of this sunrise./ I realize that I bring myself back and back to this bluff because /here/ scenes still fit

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onto each other despite their distances of time. Becoming rarer in the American West, constancy of this sort. What I am looking out over in this fresh dawn is little enough changed from the past that James Swan in a Makah canoe, coming or going on the Port Townsend-Neah Bay route, can be readily imagined across there, the sailing seagulls slide through his line of sight as they do mine. Resonance of this rare sort, the reliable echo from the eye inward, I think we had better learn to prize like breath.