

building had begun as the stagecoach stop, and beneath the orange asphalt siding

end of St. Ignatius. It looked empty as I rode up, which was

expected.

Besides the street columns of cottonwoods,

a colossal old one with a trunk as big around as the wheel of a hay rake

stood ~~beside the~~ in the yard beside the front gate

would make all the difference.)

mod

at least

~~anyway~~

in Gros Ventre they did. With the cottonwoods

that already rose old and tall along English Creek, the

streetside forestation produced almost a roof over the

town. The businesses along Main Street looked considerably

better than they otherwise would have, somehow seemed to

be trying ~~to live up to the example of the trees.~~ <sup>not to disgrace</sup> The

neighborhoods, with all that green over them as shelter

from the sun and as a breeze-catcher whenever any air was

moving, were wonderful for walking. ~~(Or would have been~~

~~if anybody ever had taken a step outside; Montanans evidently~~

~~figure Henry Ford invented the replacement for logs.)~~



farthest back; as if, in the way she'd said earlier, someone was standing in outline against the gray bark. "A lot of you can remember the look of Ben English. A rangy man, standing well over six feet, and always wearing a black Stetson, always with a middle crimp. He sometimes grew a winter beard, and in his last years he wore a mustache that made him look like the unfoolable horse dealer he was. Across thirty-some years my father--Isaac Reese--and Ben English knew each other and liked each other and tried to best each other. Put the pair of them together, my mother used to say of their visits, and they would examine a horse until there was nothing left of it but a hank of tail hair and a dab of glue. Once when my father bought a horse with an odd stripe in its face, Ben told him he was glad to see a man of his age taking up a new occupation--raising zebras. My father got his turn back when Ben bought a dark bay Clydesdale that stood twenty-one hands high at the shoulder, very likely the hugest horse there ever has been in this valley, and upon asking what the horse's name was, discovered it was Benson. Whenever my father saw Ben and the Benson horse together he called out, "Benson andt Benson, but t'ank Godt vun of t'em vears a hadt."

Of all the crowd, I am sure my father laughed loudest at this Isaac Reese tale, and Pete was nodding in confirmation of that accent he and my mother had grown up under. Our speaker of the day, though, was sweeping onward. "Anyone who knew Ben English more than passingly will recall his knack for nicknames. For those of you old enough to remember them around town, Glacier Gus Swenson and Three-Day Thurlow both were christened that way by Ben English." Laughs of recognition spattered

It is said somewhere that if a person could see his entire life, he would not choose to live it. Not so with Bessie.

and historical circumstances of the hour and of their persons as factors for  
histories of everyday life. This study seeks to reveal historical variations  
historical actions as contingent on their social circumstances of existence within  
the organization of the nation in relation to historical exigencies and other  
of ethnology. This study uses the term ethnology to refer to  
The following is an ethnological study informed by some of the processes  
of knowing the case in point  
and this section of the paper will seek to reveal the sociological relevance  
point and the efforts of the family to survive in spite of the point. The family  
section of this paper will take up the actual state of the family in the case in  
on a relationship that persons come to have with those they love. A third  
there will be a discussion on the persons of persons in any case in point and  
out of history. First the case in point will be presented and discussed. Then  
who reveals their anthropological (from various agencies etc) not only to be  
I shall examine the "case in point" in order to try to see why both people



I shall examine the "case in point" in order to try to see why poor people who receive help simultaneously from several agencies are not able to get out of poverty. First the case in point will be presented and discussed. Then there will be a discussion on the helpers<sup>6</sup> of persons in any case in point and on a relationship that helpers come to have with those they help. A third section of this paper will take up the actual state of the family in the case in point and the efforts of the family to survive in spite of the help. The fourth and final section of this paper will seek to bring out the sociological relevance of knowing the case in point.

\* The following is an ethnographical study informed by some of the procedures of ethnomethodology. Garfinkel uses the term ethnomethodology "to refer to the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life."<sup>7</sup> Thus, this study seeks to treat practical activities and practical circumstances of the poor and of their helpers as topics for

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4. Rossi, Peter H. and Zahava D. Blum, "Class, Status, and Poverty", On Understanding Poverty, ed. Daniel P. Moynihan, (New York: Basic Books, 1969) p. 36-63, presents a good discussion on the different concepts now used to describe poverty.
  5. Cloward, Richard A. and Lloyd E. Ohlin, Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs, (New York: The Free Press, 1960).
  6. A helper in this paper will be defined as any person who provides a service such as a tutor, school counselor, probation officer or a caseworker.
  7. Garfinkel, Harold, Studies in Ethnomethodology, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), pp. 11.



One epic plays its rhythms in each of us; ~~and that is~~ childhood.

It is memory's visit to a time of odd proportions, when we saw life from low to the ground and on top of odd vantages. We heard daily patterns of older talk, which grooved into us. Alarms and astonishments came often. A child's mind works on fantasy and what is around it, and small wonder the residue is special.

What is memory for? To keep us from falling into the same ditch every day, certainly. But we use the OO more cleverly than that. We hold memory up and look at it as a reward to ourselves for being individual. Like the thumbprint on a window, memory is a mindprint. I made that. No one else has one exactly like it.

Why a gypsy boy could not drink chocolate milk with the rest of us is one of my mysteries.

In the first few years after my mother's death, my father ran a small cattle ranch, planted a crop of mustard on another place one summer and a crop of seed peas on yet another place the next summer, put up hay on contract in the summers, and simultaneously operated a cafe and wintered a herd of cattle.

In the first year after my mother's death, my father and <sup>1</sup> lived in three different places. In the next dozen years, I count OO more.



workout. Take that, Allie Reynolds. Hah, Lopat! You hung that one a bit and there it goes, up into the thirty-fifth row of that shale hillside. Back and forth across the prairie, an odd quartet playing to an audience of thousands -- of sheep.

If Albert Payson Terhune were telling the story, Tip might have gone on to play centerfield for the Dodgers, stolen the '56 Series from the hated Yankees with his unbelievable catches, and then married Lassie in the Hollywood wedding of the year. And if Ring Lardner were writing this, I would have ended up as shortstop for the world champion Cleveland Indians, gliding in to the mound in my Blackfoot moccasins every fourth day to take my turn in the pitching rotation with Lemon, Wynn, and Garcia.

But I have to admit that my brief movie stardom has been my only fling on a big league diamond. The second summer we were on the reservation, when I was 14 or 15, I left in July to take a job piling bales of hay. The next year, I worked all summer on a ranch. The steps away from baseball quickened after that.

Some teacher told me it was possible to make a living with words, and before long I was in college, studying journalism.

Then there was newspaper work, and a magazine job, and now I haven't even gone the five miles to see our local expansion team play the Yankees.

Baseball just doesn't seem as real to me as it used to.

One thing is true: I'm not a fan of the game.



The past is a cave of memory. Out of its enormous volume we can discern only flecks. An occasional incident flies into our consciousness from some odd corner like a swooping bat, and will return and return. An echo vibrates in us.

The shadows hang thick, and nearly all is lost to memory's eye, but from the dim shapes we make what we were.

The mind's eye endlessly loses its way, mistaking, mistaking a father's kindness for shallowness, a suitor's ill temper for tragedy.

from the shallows of the dark

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Chapter 13 THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT MOCKERY

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from the shallows of the dark



There is a single bitter anthem of how they fared at Moss Agate. A  
the  
trainload of dairy cattle arrived from Wisconsin, made a stop at Moss  
siding  
Agate on the way to the ballyhooed new dairy operation at White Sulphur  
Springs. Grandly the Ringers were told to select the small herd they  
would run. The cows turned out to be culls, the old and halt and lame  
from Wisconsin herds, evidently bought sight unseen. My grandfather and  
grandmother tried to choose a boxcarload that looked like the least bad  
of the worst, and the unloading began. It is not clear whether the  
cows were simply turned loose or got away, but in either case ~~hundreds~~ cows  
ran everywhere, ~~unmilked~~ enormous bags swinging from days of not being  
milked, ~~meaning~~ mooring the pain of it, while away went the train to  
Even after  
begin Dick Ringling's fame as a dairy entrepreneur. Even once the cows  
got rounded up, Moss Agate ~~lacked~~ lacked a barn with stanchions, so the  
cows had to be milked in a shed.

They of course should have known that was the way the world works,  
the baronially born are entitled to deal by the trainload and let the  
peonage tend to details such as unmilked suffering. Knowing it is one  
thing and ever learning to like it is another.

Vassals can't spend all their time thinking about being vassals.

*lungo etc.*



I have lived in many houses in all kinds of terrain, but the Jensen ranch house was the only place where there was not a neighboring light, not a sign of a larger world, to be seen. This could have made for solitude. Instead, it was just emptiness, nothing out there to angle away the wind, ridgelines which simply went up at one end and down at the other, featureless in between.

Like creek animals coming onto a trapline, we were caught just as the Turney Basin homesteaders had been caught sixty years before. The Jensen ranch was a sullen brute of a place. Everything was on a slant, but not enough of a slant to drain the snow runoff which made the yard and corrals a spring quagmire. The location, just above a coulee bottom, probably was supposed to be down out of the wind, but the wind whipped down the hill anyway. Everything was ungainly. The road came along a high ridge which the wind roared across, then down a slope impossible to drive up when it was muddy. Hayfields were at the farthest corners of the ranch, we were forever hauling hay. There were bog holes like elephant traps; time and again, the Jeep pickup would go down in one, which meant a cursing walk back to the buildings to get a truck or tractor to pull it out. The grass wasn't much good, apparently lacking some vital mineral. The house was bleak and dismal. The Jensens had kept the front half of the house to store their belongings, so we had only the back half: a big kitchen-dining room, with a pantry, and with a bedroom off each end. I see now that there was no place to get

(  
*Prairie*  
Montana's seasons declared themselves. They regulated life. (My  
father did not like to be regulated by much else.) At least once a  
generation, a giant winter would send the livestock industry to its knees.  
Farming wobbled with every dry summer.



main thing, Dogs had in common w/ Ringers...

They refused to recognize how stingy the land was. And so it went on,  
people hurling their lives against the hills.

The mountains reared to the west, a wall against the high

plains stretching eastward to nobody knew where. They became like

a wall to us, too -- like the wall of a room, a familiar solidness

and design. No matter where you were in the coulee maze of our

allotment, get high enough and the mountain wall would be there,

gra-blue, tilted and pillaring.

Train

One IFA member, the white father of a child of mixed background, guesses they will "I think by the truly equal, such treatment will be down. that as our society becomes more truly integrated, more these interracial adoptions. However, it is to be hoped more open expression that many blacks are opposed to treatment of blacks toward whites is finding more and It's not surprising at a time when the long-suppressed ing families of any color for these homeless children." concerned there's no conflict. The point is to find lov- black youngsters, Miss Swan says. "As far as we're opposed to the practice of white families' adopting need of placement. And though some black groups are then of black or mixed ancestry who are presently in ARENA estimates that there are about 40,000 chil- children by white parents. one-fourth of the total number of adoptions of black towns, Oregon, and Washington accounted for almost the same two years. The 1959 survey found that Cal- many as 6,000 children of non-black minority races in ing through various agencies have adopted perhaps as back to Opportunity suggest that white families work- during 1958 and 1959. Other survey results that flowed children of black ancestry placed with white parents black children, reported a total of more than 2,000 tunity, which fathers figure about the placement of An organization in Portland, Oregon, called Oppor- to be opening up many doors to these children." many minority-group children in need of homes seem that they're getting the word out that there are too lessional would otherwise miss out on. Also, the fact that a kind of insight only parents can gain and pro-

And in some cases, relatives of the adoptive parents were openly antagonistic to the idea--and to the adopted children. One woman said to me, "The other day, we got a letter from my parents which told us our adopted children aren't to call my father 'Dad'." Most of the couples I've heard about, however, found that such opposition usually fades quickly. As Alex Ford said to me, "It's hard for anyone to hold a grudge against a baby." Expressing a common sentiment, the adoptive parents I talked to wish people were in favor of interracial families because they believe it is on principle. But these parents feel that it may be necessary for some people to work their way around to the principle through personal experience. Once they get to know a child of another race and become emo- tionally involved with him, the parents say, it's easier for them to lose their prejudices and fears. Actually, the Fords experienced fewer problems than they had anticipated in this respect. "We've had a few friends who aren't friends any more because of Chinese and Jelle, but they weren't the kind of people we would ever want to be intimate with." Dick Landgraf, an electrical engineer, and his wife Sue have two boys of their own and have recently adopted two young black girls. Naturally the Landgrafs talked over their plans with their sons before they adopted the girls. The boys soon became as excited about the girls as their parents were, and they've since become very proud of their sisters. But Mr. Landgraf described the reactions of some of the people in the town where they live: "I suspect that some people were revolted . . . until they got to know the kids. Then they



It is a country with two major prospects, either of which can ruin <sup>destroy</sup> you. If the winter is dry and open, there is not enough moisture for grass; if it brings heavy snow and wind, the livestock will winter hard and may die. If the summer is dry, the growing grass and hay is stunted and poor. If the summer is wet, the hay can't be put up, and goes down before it can be cut or molders in the windrow once it is cut.

Part of the hardship is knowing the weather and what it can do. The benchmark of all winters was 1918 when, as Dad told it, people bought North Dakota sleugh grass, cut on top of the ice. No nutrition in it, but people paid \$65 a ton for it

Hawks and eagles kited above the ridgelines -- or at least

they did until someone could get off a shot at them, because

anything which threatened chickens or lambs was ~~seen as~~ an

*constant targets*  
enemy. Coyotes were everywhere, In the winter of 1940, Dad

*most of them*  
and the hired man shot 00 coyotes, on the hillsides within sight  
of the ranch house.



There was one name in the valley which was always spoken in hatred --

Rankin. Wellington D. Rankin of Helena was the largest landholder, the  
owned the most land, ran the

largest

most cattle, took out the largest profits. There were open reasons

to hate Rankin. His cattle drifted across his vast holdings like

tumbleweeds -- and like tumbleweeds, went into other men's pastures

and crops. At night, Rankin's cattle moseyed onto the unfenced highway,

and there was the dread of their dark forms showing up suddenly in

the headlights. The Rankin cowboys made us all somehow ashamed.

Even in a valley where ranchhands were expected to be rough or on

the bottle, the Rankin men were lowlifes. In winter, they could be

seen gloveless, a scarf tied over the ears for warmth, shivering in

thin jackets.

~~For~~ Wellington D. Rankin had a system, for like many men with

a knack for wealth, he knew that a system can squeeze profit even

from tight circumstances. His system was cheap men -- men who worked

for him because he bailed them out of jail, were underpaid, and then

somehow had to make their way the 75 miles to Helena to collect wages

from Rankin himself in his law office. His cattle, the big double O

bar brand on their gaunt ribs, fended for themselves, the mongrels

of the valley.

~~Many were far gone~~

Some were drunks, others petty thieves or just drifters. They

had in common a hopelessness.

The ~~Smith River Valley~~ Rankin presence was a stain on us all.



12/10/12  
To the southwest, beyond Black Butte and <sup>past</sup> beyond even the long green hump of Grass Mountain, a pair of <sup>set</sup> ruts can be found snaking away from the county road. The worn track leads along shale bluffs and through sagebrush and across brushy creeks until at last it sidles around a hogback ridge. On the open slope of <sup>grassy</sup> opposite foothill ~~beyond~~ this ridge, my father was born and grew up. The sudden bowl of meadowland is called the Turney Basin -- or would be, if any human voice were there to say its name.

Here, as far back into the foothills of the Big Belt Mountains at their wagons could go, a handful of Scots families had homesteaded. Two notions guided them: in the 1890s. They had two notions: to raise sheep, and to graze ~~them on free grass as much as possible.~~

wagons could go. They overshot mightily, passing over mile after mile of country which has richened into fine pasture and lush hay meadow. Their sons and daughters grew up making the bitter joke that nobody could survive in their chosen land but Scotchmen and coyotes, and <sup>long since</sup> already the coyotes had starved out.

At first, the hill country <sup>did pay</sup> paid off in several summers of free pasture, [as intended.] But in the bargain came isolation and long winters of three-foot snowdrifts. They could not know it, but those Scots families had taken up land where the habits and laws of settlement would not work.

The lines of settlement began to buckle in the gnarled contours of those foothills. What counted here was not the square corners of surveyed acres which kept neighbor from neighbor, but the meander of hay meadow along a tiny creek and the flow of grazing land between ridgelines -- and more yet, the unseen swirls of weather in the sky overhead. There was no help in law for the blizzards which sealed the Turney Basin.

First worn bare by  
iron wagon wheels  
& then by hand  
tires 7 Model-Ts

did pay 11

No help to law



We settled into our herding life, the trailer house towed back and forth along the ridge summit like a silver turtle creeping the horizon line. Our camp seemed to have straggled off the end of a wagon train in bewilderment.

The aluminum-painted roof of the trailer house dazzled in the sun, the Jeep stood nosed down a slope for a running start, milk cans of water and buckets and a larder were tucked as much as possible into the shade.

But across ~~all~~ our empire of pasture, there was <sup>a single</sup> ~~only one~~ <sup>sput</sup> tiny source of fresh water for us, a trickling spring at the ridge base. We bounced down in the Jeep every few days to fill our water cans, and perhaps to have a swimming bath in the <sup>mud-banked</sup> ~~small~~ reservoir below the spring. <sup>Fuel</sup> ~~Firewood~~ was scarcer than water; <sup>wood grew</sup> ~~there was~~ not a twig of shelter on the entire summer range, and we roved like <sup>horse thieves</sup> ~~gypsies~~ to find a collapsed shed or a driftwood pile along the Two Medicine.

If we could have plucked grass with the sheep and shared <sup>dregs</sup> ~~swills~~ of water, ~~it~~ all would have been ease. But as it was, we led

~~It was~~ a queer dangling life,

three of us spending eternal days on ridge-spines which had no fuel, little shade, less water; all had to be fetched, if it finally could be found. The sheep had their own bafflement: the shadeless blaze of midday flattened them, puffing, into the bunchgrass.

*leaves  
the place  
to shade up*



Save for flip

The homesteaders seem to have had no more sense of the valley's risks than I did as a six-year-old looking out across what could have been country from a picture book. Mountain range to mountain range, the hay meadows and fenced grazing land and winter wheat fields filled the countryside, a broad peaceful deck of pattern between the high backdrops of summer pasture. Spring and autumn, bands of sheep and herds of cattle could be seen trailing across the valley in slow flows. The cattle would <sup>pool into a dark tide</sup> ~~bunch into dark pools~~ which you could follow from the moment they bawled past until they drew over a far ridgeline. Sheep were harder to sort from the landscape at a distance, just a <sup>softer patch of gray</sup> ~~soft gray patch~~ which I had to squint hard at to find among the sameness of sage. The surest <sup>for sheep</sup> ~~marker~~ <sup>up out of</sup> ~~was~~ the rounded white canvas of the herder's wagon, standing ~~out against~~ the flat valley color like an igloo.



Pershing:

He was betting that even this dab of service on the Indian frontier would stand an officer in good stead.

The hunting was something wonderful, deer galore, prairie chickens...

Fort A was a model post...

Angeline didn't approve of, was never going to approve

To Sergeant R's surprise, the man snapped him a salute.

"I was cavalry myself, Warren Williamson... Rode with Phil Sheridan...

Spruce Some good horseflesh under you

We put ourselves to it, sir

The Crees were touchy about their pony herd

The U.S. and Canada flung the Crees back and forth across the border like  
a game of Annie-I-over. This was the big roundup, the last of Little Bear's  
band,

We were white before they started baking us in Arizona

A rascalion, but that did not hurt

"This don't pan  
smell right. Where's the mister?"

"Your husband. Your man."

"Brailey, you and Goggins take these back."

up  
Goggins shut and assiduously crashed through the brush.

"Damn."

back  
He wasn't about to ride into a couple of hundred Indians, even Indians as  
whipped as <sup>leading</sup> these, "Brailey, get him buried, up on that sidehill." "Pretty  
place for it, anyhow."

"Only just barely." (Monty's memory of Mose)

Wes remembered him too well.

Let them think what they think.

Something similar had happened to Pershing at OO...There, it was discovered  
they ~~xx~~ man was wanted in Canada; this one, too, <sup>same w/</sup> ~~for~~ every chance was.

no doubt



like something back to the War.

Approximate as it was

just in time for a bone-snapping blizzard

by smallpox and OO and the attentions of the U.S. Cavalry,  
Depleted as they were, the Blackfeet were probably young braves trying

to get their spirits up by stealing a few horses. Mose's platoon had given  
them proper hell, killing one and sending the rest running back to the  
Reservation.

It had taken him a day or two to decide, but Mose now felt right  
about being up here... Doing a spruce job of things before he mustered out  
at the end of the month.

little something  
Mose knew a thing or two about cattle, having worked on the sly for  
the (supplier) at Fort...

Ninian: "The Blackfoot Agency. That agent will have our cows butchered  
and the difference in his pocketxx by nightfall.

who had been taking prairie squats all their natural lives were suddenly  
overcome with modesty and the need for the privacy of brush.

would never have been brought into being.

*Mose felt obscurely pious*

Angus sometimes came into view

Water was the reward when he stumbled in  
lunged in past

jolted into the yard of the old Barclay

place and at least could come to a halt. Susan swung down off her horse  
out of her

saddle and handed him the waterbag. She watched critically as he

They did not speak much, M generally too winded and Susan absorbed in

topping off the day's vocal exercises with this excursion toward  
into lung stamina.  
pulmonary

Little by little



was having  
Susan had him run on the shank of the morning, before the blaze of noon

bore down on them. "It's merely roadwork, the sort <sup>of</sup> ~~Gibbs~~ Dempsey and

<sup>at a trot</sup>  
Gibbons put themselves through," she told him, all reasonableness. "And

at the end, you don't have to do battle with either of them." No, only

<sup>trying to make</sup> with her. <sup>to him than was whispering out</sup> Breath burned in and out of him <sup>o a regular basis.</sup>  
<sup>His feet, in mid leather sparring shoes, felt heavy as chopping blocks</sup>  
and Monty imagined that even at this distance he could see Dolph shaking <sup>cracks</sup> <sup>cracks</sup> <sup>of water</sup>

his head.

She rode astraddle, in a divided skirt, and rode like

<sup>that way</sup>  
Weeks went, then a month, but a loop of time...Monty realized he had run  
years off himself.

She picked out a course... He could lope along the road up the North Fork,  
until the ~~road~~ wagon track up to the old Barclay place. Then the sheep  
trail angling west, across the Barclay reservoir, ~~depleted~~... and  
gradually down to the road again.

The day came when he did not stop when he hit the road, but loped  
on for another quarter of a mile

a loop that he would question Wes's

People giving you the eye like you're above yourself, and nobody to take  
your side.

as a kind of soothing syrup when we hit a point of frustration--when out of nowhere  
Monty produced: " certain  
"Maybe it isn't my place to ask, but do you think the Major will figure is going to

he's getting his money's worth?"

but the Major ever gets back here, you think he'll figure he's getting

"Major Williamson can afford any price we could ever cost him."

Monty is nobody's f

knows

"The Major once told me he felt the copper hand of God around him, in the  
war.

"Well, he is a praying man."

"For him it seems to have worked," *& said up thinking*

"If you don't mind my asking, how do you mean?"

Was I imagining, or did he ostentatiously not look at S's picture?

*I suppose in any kind of situation, there's seldom a star's officers, then*



I don't quite know what to make of this, but somehow we got off onto  
Wes today. It was mainly Monty's instigation, and it threw me for a loop.  
We had reached our daily stage of tea and honey--I administer it as a kind  
of soothing syrup when we hit a certain point of frustration--when out of  
nowhere came:

"Miss Susan, excuse my asking, but the Major ever gets back here,  
you think he'll figure he's getting his money's worth?"

he shouldn't worry  
I answered to the effect that MW can afford any price we could  
ever cost him. But M did not let it rest there. Looking extremely  
M wouldn't  
dubious

He didn't look mooified, so I added that the Major had no shortage  
either or funds  
of hope for his singing  
this musical endvr of ours.

~~then read the skeptical~~  
M wagged his head as if considering that and said:

His skeptical tone  
This surprised me, given what  
his mother's life of gospel.

Without thinking I said:

How do you mean?

diary:

Somehow we got off onto family today.

--Susan's cousins on the Missouri

--Samuel (Monty remarks abt his pic)

- M says something a soldier

I don't quite know what to make of this, but somehow we got off onto family today. It was mainly Monty's instigation, ~~although~~ and I suppose

it threw me for a loop that he is as curious about my family stock as I

at times am about his. ("Angel Momma" is long dead but still ticking, <sup>from</sup> ~~in~~

the way he cites her.)

~~his citations of her~~

*We had reached. day's stage of tea & honey — I admit I am sure he thinks I administer it like*

"Miss Susan, excuse my asking, but you're on your own, are you?

Far as family goes, I mean?"

"A raft of shirt-tail relatives over in the Missouri bottoms, but

I've never even laid eyes on them. Why?"

"Bothers me

"That picture,"



He knew what the name Williamson meant, in the Two Medicine country.

His father's hunger for land, an appetite inherited by Wendell...

He (Wes) had not managed to put it together, either, had he. Petticoat fever.

<sup>Dull woman</sup>  
No, there was more to Susan than that. *Which made it even worse.*

...a limit to how much land a man can swallow without turning himself into an island. In the legislature, he was always being sized up by other state senators from the cow counties; and by the suspicious city senators...

All of them found it hard to credit Wes's politics; Roosevelt had been through it on a much larger scale...

Their route took them along the

He knew what she meant. It galled him, the OO sitting on a song he wanted to come out of him...

Saturday night had to belong to a wage hand, not a hell of a lot else did.



and recited that she was holding her own

and as of old said things along the line of holding her own

and said she was holding her own, the season was about to start at their

Lake George place

up at the Lake George place now for

Easter break with the gold-dust twins, although they were'et especially

twins any more, scarcely even sisters...Susan half-listened, focused  
fascinated as of old

with into a room with him. In the time  
on the change of atmosphere Wes brought with him into the room

before him one of her beaus at musical evenings, a tippler, had smelled

of cloves. She could swear W always smelled of silk.

He broke off what he was saying

in the confounding song

several ones. The song sounded as old as the hills and yet

as  
newborn

fresh as the next heartbeat. And Monty's is a propitious voice for

a song so, so skittery

it; the

in his new bottom range; the resonance he can put into the deep well

of 'ohs' in stone, along, throne, and that final jack-in-the box  
ending-line surprier Jones

makes one wonder, How



She was more wrenlike than ever, Susan saw

for staying in and  
The next day came blowy, perfect bad weather facing unwritten music,  
and she was trying yet again to get underway  
Susan

→ "You've been familying

From girl on, Susan had known  
wondered what went on in there past those  
gray eyes  
eyepits with their odd freckle markers under each, as though Adair  
marveled at the alloy of this marriage,

had dreaded visits with Adair McCaskill

weathered  
strung through the valleys and across the girth of prairie  
connected and not,

Adair in her way could be as drifty as an icebeeb

hungry for any other  
The Adairs, the Anguses, of the flivver trip: the women with chapped hands  
women to talk to, even ones from Helena  
and hard-used hearts, the men half-bemused and half-alarmed that they would  
be hearing...

that were all the supper that could be mustered...near Ingomar.

The Dane woman at Dagmar

The pledge of allegiance in Danish

The workhorses that pulled the Susan B. out of the ditch, a black horse  
with a bald face named Night

Neither could he see  
get anywhere in this pig-iron world without them,  
most especially her, sitting there regarding him like  
unbending as  
as if she held all the secrets.

There on the right side of his rib cage...tire patch.

Susan arose

She studied the wrecked spot, careful not to touch him

he tried to maintain to himself.  
The hell with it. If this's all she wrote, that's how it has to be.

chugging along  
I was scuffling when I got here.

Telling her lifted the teetertotter off him, the back and forth in him

about whether the goring was an excuse or a bodily something that  
pinch his body was in.

at the same time emptied him,  
But it left him empty, taken down to slag. Dully he looked at the fierce  
took back

face  
figure standing her ground



expand:

McCs, Susan & Monty @ night

Susan turned up the wick on the lamp,  
leaned to the lamp and turned up its wick, casting the circle of  
light a little more

to the figure standing still and stiff at the edge of its circle

*John*  
she said between ~~that~~ he was a summer  
knowing words wr-enough.  
there wr- words made for this.  
w care,

Can't get anywhere w/o them

How to get from here to there.

At wr- as if he trusted wr people, even there.

jury of the eyes

afterlap

That's all she wrote.

Letitia #2

toned-down ones.

Poor old body

Take a mluthful of stars

Set your ladder 'gainst a cloud.

Then hammer up Heaven

with silver nails

Oh hammer up heaven

~~mint~~

Fixin' up Heaven

Slicken' up Heaven

Heaven, strong roof of my soul

*bucket of stars*



Just another praying Jones.

possible lyric:

Does the hawk know its shadow?

Does the stone roll alone?

Is. Throne Out of crowd?

I am one out of many,  
of their name call me  
When wind pett grass

Monty: "They're just songs fy a woman who couldn't write her name  
and a bunch of timber beasts who liked to fly <sup>across</sup> around the church."

Susan: "Then why did you sing it just now?"

skitter

whoop

I am vexed,

I am hexed,

I come before Your throne

One out of many

Just another praying Jones.

Add:

Wes takes her for buggy ride, up the N Fork  
review old homesteads as they pass; mention Erskines  
feel of country

At start of scene, Adair is on hand. "Sin-eater" remark, out of this.



"His what? When?"

"He said it was during the--1918."

"Susan, I was overseas. All I ever heard from Wendell about ranch doings were..."

*Tell her. See how she likes knowing. Carrying it around...Bring the thing with me from New York one of these times. Say to her, "Here. This is the tangle our lives are. Undo it if you can."*

"I have me something of my own I want to sing."

She folded her arms. "Be my guest."

*"Why must I wander..."*

*This ol' pig-iron world."*

Susan rested her chin on her fist, studying him. "I know most gospel songs. Why have I never heard the likes of that?"

Monty shrugged. "Just one I learned when I was little."

"Are there," she could not wait to pounce, "more where that one came from?"

"I guess so. Some."

Wes & Wendell--

--the house without woman's touch; Wendell's young wife from Memphis had  
lasted only...



Like the ~~mills~~ of the gods, the drivewheels of faith sometimes could  
grind ~~exceeding~~ fine.

The ~~country~~ was going gaunt, like a grayhound's flanks. You always  
had to pick your days in the TM country.

Someone who had been patted by Presidents and generals, and she was  
~~having~~ him on as if she were a mischievous schoolgirl.

I just came to see that you're squared away all right

"Something?"

the Rockies ~~taking~~ on dimension of cliff and reef and every form of crag,  
like ~~facets~~ <sup>cut  
facet</sup> chipped onto arrowheads, while

Wes thought again of the haggard land between that irrigation project and  
Ft. A.

the eastward flatnesses carrying away NC behind him and the NF of EC  
ahead of him.

~~He didn't know~~ which he would gladly take.

add:

more of Adair and Susan

homestead women: they had come from somewhere, and that somewhere had not left them. (lingered in them)

--"our ambassadress to the shanties" (J. Rankin jokes; Susan is the only leading suff from a homestead)

--the Dane woman @ Dagmar, whose pastor insisted on sermons in Danish, and thereby lost the children.

--spots of the past

- Susan, around Adair, realizes she doesn't know <sup>the</sup> <sup>way</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>find</sup> <sup>one</sup> about solitude.
- Adair's lesson: a way for her voice to keep her company.  
"You can sing to yourself & not be thought deaf."  
soft in head

lots

were  
drawn  
that way.  
more &  
music



"Fickle," chided it  
The cat lazed on a rag rug. Adair tickled it behind one ear.

"You're a fickle sort

Don't trip over  
"He's my star boarder

"It was here or mill work. Rob sent for me

Episodes. OOs that hung in the mind like tapestries

~~Fool~~ that I've been:

Ruminative, tending toward...

[ nothing wrong with that arrangement.

[ she didn't care a whit what the outside of the Duff homestead looked like  
during her musical residency here.

Over

~~Behind~~ its stand of diamond willows, plump at their ends with budbreak,  
the creek ducked past.

even  
~~To~~ the west, closer than she had remembered, the mountains reared

~~Door~~ or no door, she conceded, she ~~had~~ at least had lucked into

→ [ intrigued by the populace of the solitude.

Catching herself...she chuckled

an unforgettable  
yet with a tang,

out there  
the prairie dominion unrolling like Bedouin tarpaulin to meet  
in from the other horizon

[ She drank up the solitude while she could

[ Solitude, and the swarm of the living and the dead



add to diary scene:

Compose an operetta.

more diary entry

episodes: here or later entry (after Adair), they become key to operetta

- ~~eat~~
- destined always to be trunk songs, hidden away
- tour for votes  
alarmed men; men ugly w/ anger & disdain
- Monty today

I need to tell myself over and over that Monty's voice is not merely  
(a physical thing).

She would write a line, then unravel it. Even.  
propositions (liked gettable) clanked.  
(didn't want to fit)

With her eyes closed could perform the evening of favorites that drew  
Could recite her repertoire, there in the one-room schoolhouses

the homestead families to the

and

the fledgling motion picture emporiums, so that her rouse

on the heels of her rousing

songs Dr. Maria Dean or Belle Fligelman could have at them on behalf

of the suffrage amendment. They sat and absorbed it, those farm women  
wind-burnt

with chapped hands, those men who had to be ~~swayed~~ made to see  
needed persuading

knew that t

caught men who knew they would hear these arguments

over and over from their wives and daughters, and Susan stood waiting

in the wings to drive it

clinch each gathering

sing the house down as a closer.

lonesome

as the carloads of the crusade trundled past the gulches where kerosene  
isolated

lamps glowed yellow, she was the one

puddles of light such as she had come from, she felt

singled out and more determined than ever to step in front of those  
onto the stage for

the cause and sing the house down.

by the winks of the vast Montana night.

those homestead window casements

by birth

her homestead.

some luck of the draw back at birth

law

@ there

Not that performance of a lifetime went uncriticized



"I would like lessons."

"Adair, really, I'm just here to

"I only see him every other day..."

"Susan, I'm not asking you to make me famous. " That's welcome. "It  
Thank goodness for that.  
would be something to do."

Susan resorted to some breathing control.

"One by one they've gone. There aren't any children from the North Fork  
's not one child

at Angus's school any more. 'The loing of the country are drying up.'

You know how he is.

Susan flushed with the knowledge that she did know, perhaps better  
than this woman Angus McCaskill had been married to for 00 years.

"Susan! I've brought you a *person of importance.*"

Angus's hail...

Canny of Angus to give her time to find a face

"I have to go 00"

put roundish thoughts into squarish heads. I wouldn't have  
And you  
it any other way.

"There's evidence of that."

Adair said nothing during this teacherly exchange.

"Adair, I apologize, but there isn't a baked..."

Adair produced a dishtowel bundle. "You could eat a scone if you had to."

It was still warm from the oven. Susan looked at her. A woman who put  
may  
bread in the oven (before breakfast?) "It will be hard to cut

As good a time as any.

...

It was a scarring thought.

...

So painfully so.

...

~~Roseanne~~

...

The life inside her head. The long dreaming, the floated existence  
passed  
which went by on the bend of hours

...

In Darius, years of accumulated echoes of not having Meg, a roar of  
in him he waited to have this woman, this night.  
whispers as they...  
lover

scatell tone



The white tops of the Olympics hover into the city....

The daft old parliament building...

As we got off the airplane, someone said, It's still the most beautiful part of the world. (tribute to Olympics and Strait)

Victoria, literally, is islanded, and has a reputation for Englishness. Like most American state capitals, it has been outshoved by a younger, cannier rival--in this case, Vancouver, across the water.

been the first time he touched against death. And touched ahead, too, somewhere in his scaredness, to the life he was going to have from then on in that lamed family, on that Basin homestead.

In several ways, his boyhood would go along opposite routes from the one I would live at his side thirty years later. Five brothers and a sister crowding all his home hours; the one of me, alone and treasuring it that way. His school years which, shying from those Basin winters, began with spring thaw and then hurried hit-and-miss through summer; all my summers ending in earliest September quick as the bell at the end of a recess, school creeping on then through three entire seasons of the year. My classmates were town kids, wearing town shoes and with a combed, town way of behaving. Some schoolmates of his came from families drawn back so far into the hills and their own peculiarities of living that the children were more like the coyotes which watchfully loped the ridgelines than like the other Basin youngsters. One family's boys, he remembered, started school so skittish that when someone met them on an open stretch of road where they couldn't dart into the brush, they flopped flat with their lunchboxes propped in front of their heads to hide behind.

Dad on horseback every chance he had, on his way to being one of the envied riders in a county of riders; me reading every moment I could, tipping any open page up into



*Train*  
and tumbled country, but pretty. As I have been known to say about Montana  
terrain before, it may not be much as a site but you can't beat it as a <sup>sight</sup> ~~site~~.  
Besides, strolling was not our aim, at the end of a day on horseback.

as you can plainly see. Don't

you know, Jick, they advertise in those big newspapers for one-handed  
raggedy-ass camptenders? You bet they do.

*Train*  
He seemed sort of sensitive on that topic, so I switched around  
to something I knew would take him in a different direction. Are you  
from around here originally?

Not hardly. Not a Two Medicine man by birth. He glanced at me.  
Like you. Naw, I--

opposite side of Breed Butte from me. He was on that same weary  
mare my father and I had seen the two smaller Hebner jockeys trying  
to urge into motion <sup>at the outset</sup> ~~the morning of~~ our counting trip; a moment,  
like a lot of the summer, which already was beginning to seem  
somewhere back in history. The first couple of mornings I waved to  
Clayton, but received no response. And I didn't deserve any. I  
ought to have known Hebners didn't go in for waving.

*pulling in*

I never would have thought of Alec as one of those people that  
trouble follows around. Yet now it was beginning to seem so.

who

steadily grew more beautiful, which in Montana also meant more hostile  
to settlement. From where I rode now along this high ground, Walter  
Kyle's was the lone ranch to be look<sup>ed</sup> back on between here and the English  
Creek ranger station, and with Walter batching and doing all the work  
himself, even his counted only as a ~~somewhat~~ shirt-tail outfit.

Normally I would have been met with some joke from my father about  
keeping my hat on my head lest the wind blow my hair off instead. But

"It'll be a humdinger if we can get it all," Pete predicted. That  
was, if the rain didn't resume and keep the hay too wet too stack, or  
if hail or a windstorm didn't knock it flat. Just about when you

Train



Oh, Jesus: that Toussaint tale of the first Fourth: "I was in there drinking with them. I was already an old man. Fifteen." And then Marie: "Ancient as Jick." Did all that mean

Lila Sedge and the Sedgwick House are together in my memory because once in a while my father and I would stop at the Sedgwick House cafe if we had been somewhere and were too late for supper at home, and Lila Sedge would be eating at her corner table. She would be stirring her spoon in whatever the sou<sup>p</sup>-of-the-day was, ~~and~~ while both of us always ordered oyster stew. It came from a can, but was made impressive by a blob of butter melting in the

change to  
Mac & Jide  
eating at  
Lila Sedge in  
corner window  
of Lunch  
S. House - shortly  
figured she  
couldn't go in  
so we'd stay  
10:00 at.

But my mind was back on the summer, the situation of it so far and what could come in the time ahead. None of it was easy thinking. Stanley and I were headed for the same English Creek ranger station where I had spent two-thirds of my life, but we McCaskills somehow seemed to be different people than had been under its roof before. Again I tried to track how any of this had



The lagoon is not quite like any other piece of coastwork I have seen. A narrow band of gravel beach which has looped out from the base of the bluff about 000 feet at its widest and entrapped several acres of tidewater and logs, it is a kind of seagoing corral. So much so, in fact, that the driftlogs as I look down at them become cattle-like, each nudging onto the next and by doing so, gradually bending the weave of the herd. In the way the logs touch to each other~~m~~, their swirl mingles into an eddy of my memory. Cattle in the stockyards of the Montana range towns--Ringling, White

*Prison*

Sulphur Springs. They are being chuted into railroad cars: a dog aggravates at their heels, the gabardined stockbuyer slaps the corral boards with a tasselled whip thin as a wand. The herd of brown-red backs is wound tight against an end of the corral, a rivulet of ~~some~~ steers bangs up the high-walled ramp into the stockcar. This heavy shoving pattern of livestock is exactly the driftlogs' rhythm of nudge, as if the single scene is carved in my mind and items merely swap themselves in and out of its contours as they please: the logs below me might moo, the remembered cattle give off splinters.



and the travel and the mountains. Of entering another Two summer together, I may as well say. All of that, questions the size of mine would unbalance.

Not for the first time in my life nor the last, delay stood in for decision. Tonight in camp, I told myself: there, that would have to be early enough. Or at least was as early as I was going to be able to muster any asking.

<sup>Dode</sup> Les Withrow claimed that the best herder he ever had on the Two, prior to <sup>Sam</sup> Pete Hoy, was an irrigator he'd hired in one of the war years when he couldn't find anybody else. The guy never had herded before and didn't even take much interest in the band of sheep; What he did was ride the canyon and shoot at everything that was just a little suspicious. If it was black, a burnt stump, he'd have to blaze away at it. Tending his camp this one time, I happened to look up over onto the opposite ridge and I said, "Say, there's something over there that kind of resembles a bear." Jesus, he jumped for that rifle and BOOM! BOOM! After he got those touched off he stopped to take a look. "No," he says, "no, I guess it ain't, it didn't run." While he terrorized anything shaggy the sheep did pretty much as they pleased, and <sup>Dode</sup> Les said that year's lambs were just beautiful, averaging 91 pounds.

Kick--the absolute--living crap--out of him--and the horse--he

rode--in on, Ray envisioned. Goddamn--booger--eater--him--anyhow.

✓

By now Velma and the gabardined beau had reached a spot to sit--the guy was glancing around a little nervously from all the looking-over the pair of them had been getting; he had a lot of that ahead too, for during the course of a rodeo day any man with Velma Simms was going to ~~would~~ feel every eye in town pass over him at least once--  
~~at last~~  
and Tollie was declaring "We are--just about--to get--"

✓

Since <sup>families</sup> ~~people~~ hardly ever ate out in those days, there were only two feeding places in Gros Ventre. The other one besides the cafe in the Sedgwick House was the Lunchery, which sat next to the Medicine Lodge saloon and thus ~~was frequented~~ had a ready supply of patrons <sup>s more interested</sup> ~~in~~ in quantity than quality.

his horse and readying to go be a ranger. Why I kept my silence is a puzzle I have thought about a lot. In a sense, I have thought about it all the years since that June lunchtime above the Noon Creek-English Creek divide. My conclusion, such as it is, is that asking would have been the necessary cost for any illumination from my father right then; and right then I could not exact such a cost from either of us. Another necessity had to be paid attention to, first. We needed that trail day, the rhythm or ritual or whatever it was, of beginning a counting trip, of again fitting ourselves to the groove of the task

change



Then in '02, a fellow came  
to me and wanted to know if I would manage his outfit that winter. He  
had a contract for hauling lumber from Lake Blaine into Kalispell. Had  
a bunch of four-horse teams, about half a dozen of them, on this job, and  
the scissorbill he'd had in charge was inclined to hang around the  
saloons and poker tables and let the setup go to general hell. So right  
away I made it <sup>t</sup> ~~clear~~ law that the drivers had to be at the barn 6:30 every  
morning so as to hitch up and be on that road by 7. It'd been their  
habit under the scissorbill to get away from the barn late as 8 or  
9 o'clock and then trot those horses out about ten miles to Lake  
Blaine. Well, hell, by the time they got out there to the lumber mill  
naturally they were all warmed up and then would stand there and get  
cold during the loading and so of course were all getting sick and  
losing flesh. All I did was to make the drivers walk those teams  
both ways, and we never had a sick horse all that winter.

Four or five years of ranch jobs ensued for Stanley, and also a  
reputation for being able to cope. We were dehorning these Texas steers  
one time. There was one old ornery sonofabitch of a buckskin steer we  
never could get corralled with the rest. After so long the ~~for~~<sup>s</sup>man said  
he'd pay five dollars for anyone that would bring this steer in. Another  
snot-nose kid and I decided we'd just be the ones and bring him on in.  
We come onto him about three miles away from the corral, all by himself,  
and he was really on the prod. Tried to drive him and couldn't. Well,  
then we figured we'd rope him and drag him in. Then we got to thinking,  
three miles is quite a drag, ain't it? So we each loosed



and tanned  
vigorous men kept trim by their time outdoors, women  
who'd likely been comely schoolteachers or nurses <sup>were</sup> ~~and been~~ <sup>fit</sup> those men, probably  
drawn to them, perhaps  
at some dance like this.

(no 4) I have never seen it commented on, but I wouldn't be <sup>at all</sup> ~~a bit~~ surprised  
if those wives were a main reason why the Forest Service was resented  
so in the west in its early decades. Sure, economics and the westerners'  
habits of free range and of overworking the grass and timber accounted  
for enough of the resentment. But it can't have helped that rangers  
~~picked~~ <sup>plucked</sup> off so many of the schoolmarm and nurses and so on. And anybody  
local, such as my father, who both had "turned green" and captured an  
opportunity such as my mother, must have been viewed as a double  
aggravation.

project bigwigs. But downtown Gros Ventre has a sense  
of belonging there; of aptness, maybe is the term. This  
may be an idea ~~made up of~~ <sup>with its weight in</sup> moonbeams, but my belief is  
that Gros Ventre somehow has tried to live up to its

Whether or not it can be called proof, I don't know, but I can  
give evidence that Gros Ventre at heart believed itself a place of  
in-between, a foothills town. For Gros Ventrians always have fully  
held the customary attitude that hill people have toward flatlanders:

A mark  
so it was  
that he  
was so a part  
of the town

advises -  
Ed Lamb -  
no  
enemies

was trying