

(1980)

March 31--Now begins a new era. This morning I began the schedule-in-earnest for the Sea Runners, setting up a pair of file boxes and typing ideas and details onto cards and then starting on the lead. At about 10:30, the call from Carol Hill, saying she's leaving HBJ and the editing profession.

April 2--The third day of work on Runners, and a good and astonishingly quiet and well-paced one.

Spent Monday morn and much of y'day morn on the lead for Runners, and it seems to me a good one. Have also set up file boxes--just had done so when Carol Hill called on Monday--and today studied maps of Alaska and BC coast, made a point-to-point list of islands and coastal spots the canoe journey could have touched at. This afternoon, have culled file card entries from notebooks.

April 10--Y'day afternoon I went downtown for maps of the Sea Runners' route--mounted on plywood with stickpins tracing the route from island to island

April 20--All remained quiet on the eastern front until Friday and Saturday. In the Friday mail, a letter from Tom Stewart, ed-in-chief at Atheneum, inviting me aboard if I found myself "bereft" at HBJ.

April 21 - About 12:15, I called Liz Darhansoff, who sounds younger than CH, and coolly pleasant, if that's possible.

April 21 cont.--Outlined to her the situation of Winter Bros. and the Sea Runners proposal, asked her terms (10% for US rep'n), told her Carol Smith has been handling overseas rights (she asked if I was happy with her, I said I have been; she said it wouldn't be any barrier to ~~make~~ a deal between us). We left it that she'd get copies of Winter Bros. and Sky from Marcia Magill, she'd read them and talk to CH about the ad-and-promo amndmt; I'd get the Sea Runners proposal off to her, and she'd get back to me within the week. Told her about Tom Stewart's letter, she ~~at~~ laughed and said he'd be glad to hear he'd beaten J'vich in the race of letters, added that S is a good editor.

~~April 24 - a call from Liz, saying Magill had told her the ms would reach her pronto (near week's end, actually). She said she'd ~~xxx~~ begun reading Sky the night before, thought it very fine, thought I could write a~~

April 24 cont.--"wonderful" novel. She plainly was impressed with Sky. I had just finished writing the proposal for Sea Runners when she called, told her I'd send that, the ~~a~~ Winter contract, and letters from J'vich and Tom Stewart of Atheneum, and wait to hear from her next week.

This has been a week of forced march, the phone marathon of Monday, the concentration required for the Sea Runners proposal Tuesday, then the past 2 days of scrutinizing Winter. Now (4:05) I'm fairly tired, but can maul around in the mail pile for 40 min. or so. Jack Gordon is coming for supper, in our determined effort to see other human beings. The week so far is amply successful, ~~xxxx~~ to the extent that I can tell: the obtaining of an agent evidently underway, HBJ walking on eggshells around me, and Winter reading very well, both livelier and tidier than I would have thought possible, to me.

May 3 - No progress on the HBJ-agenting situation this week:
 I at last called Liz Darhansoff y'day about 1:30, not having heard boo from ~~her~~ her, got on the phone not a boo but a very distressed croak; she's been flu-ridden all week, sounded like hell, and we agreed I'd call her Mon. or Tues. from Missoula.

May 5--Missoula, 10:15: just called Liz Darhansoff, she has agreed to agent for me. On Winter Bros, she advises that it's not a good idea to push HBJ for ad and promo guarantee, that it's better to work within the current HBJ mood of exhibiting their concern for me and hold off on the Sea Runners proposal until this fall, to see how they do. She'll take on some hassling of Winter Bros for me "for friendship--I love to bother publishers"--and will talk with Marcia Magill before the sales conf.

She asked how I'm fixed for money: whether I can wait a while on Sea Runners because the book business is so dismal just now, and also because I ought to have a ms sample of 50 pp. or so to show pub'rs. I said I could wait until mid-fall.

June 5, 3:30--At last got down to work on Sea Runners again, managed a rough 500 words. Have been reluctant to submerge myself into it as I need to, and in fact didn't really do so today, just pottered together material on R-A Company style of administration. Intend much the same tomorrow, and try get more serious next week.

9 June '80: Y'day afternoon or evening as I stepped out of the shower, I said: "Don't give us your goddamn riddles, Melander." The line in today's writing became Wernberg's, after M tells him the Haida columns are a cathedral. The line simply came out my mouth, from no discernible source except my shower habit of thinking.

June 25- Undoubtedly I'm having some mental drag because of larger events: the St. Helens explosion, which raises the question whether other volcanoes will follow it and change, or make impossible, our life here; the outlook that Reagan is going to be nominated, and maybe win; two computer false alarms about missile attack, which reinforce my belief that the war machinery will spring a leak which will murder us all. I tend to think of not much else but the writing, and have the tacit hope, I suppose really assumption, that I can go on for the next three decades or more, perhaps end up having done 15 or 20 books: when the fact is that obliteration, either by war or cancer or god knows what else loosed by this society, is at least as likely. I try to keep perspective on this country, but it's goddamn hard when the political process sorts out Reagan and Carter as choices.

~~June 25~~ 26 June '80

In the past couple weeks, began rereading Day's biog of Malcolm Lowry; on pp. 56-7 is info about shipwreckers of the Wirral, L's home area. Out of that mention came Braar's dialogue with Melander about shipwreckers.

June 30- Began editing Runners again this morn, toward getting a draft typed by Marilyn or Merlyn before we go to Alaska. The ms seems pretty good, for this stage of the game.

July 1, '80--Bright warm day, before lunch we were on the patio having a drink. I felt good from strong morning of rewrite, and C said if I wanted she'd offer me her theory of who I was going to kill off among the characters, as foretold on the opening pages. I said go ahead, she said not Melander, unless some of the others began to show leadership capacity; not Karlsson, his canoe skill is needed; not Wennberg, he's a foil to the other two; which left Braaf.

I considered, trying to keep a neutral face: it was the second time recently C brought up this matter of which character would perish, and thinking it over I couldn't see the use of keeping her in suspense. Told her it's to be Melander, which she said is audacious and not a little dismaying, he's such a strong and attractive figure. Audacious is exactly why I'm doing it that way, I told her; then said, But you were half right: it's going to be Braaf too, eventually, at the tidal trough at Rialto Beach.

the University of Washington Northwest Collection

2 July, '80--At ~~MFC~~, was going thru the card catalogue when Bob Monroe came by, asked if I was writing another book already, didn't I know the storage problem they already had? Told him my understanding of the situation was that they threw ~~xxx~~ some book out the back door ~~for~~ whenever one came in the front, steady state. Began talking about the Runners, I asked if he had any photos of Sitka. He led me back to his office, got out his bootleg copies of Bancroft ~~origins~~ Library originals (he'd got the prints from Richard Pierce, who got them before the originals went to the Bancroft).

I was merrily studying them when Bob happened by again, said "yes, yes" in his manner, then "wait a minute," and came back with two microfilms, one--the Uncle Serge diary--passed to him by Erna Gunther, who'd been given it by somebody, and the other from family papers of the last Rn gov of Alaska. Bob said they'd never been looked at; they're from his private stash, a bottom file drawer of such items. Agreed I'd come in next week and look at them.

July 8 -- I have about 35 pp. of Runners approaching readiness for a typist; have been pondering whether to do one more spirited go-through of editing before having this draft typed, and likely will. We seem to be getting things done, tho I have the feeling that the year is going to turn into a footrace before too long, what with getting the Runners sample ready, the Billings speech, and huckstering Winter.

18 July '80--Just now (10:35) came in from my daily walk around the neighborhood, a fine blue day with fog along the Olympic Peninsula from Kingston to Point No Point. On the way I got to thinking about the pressure periods a manuscript needs. For example, I've decided to rent customary cabin #7 at the Juan de Fuca Motel for 2-3 days while C's folks are visiting here, make those days when I am on Dungeness Spit at dawn, then go and write, long days of exertion on the manuscript as I did when I edited our *News: A Consumer's Guide* in a motel at LaPush. *Runners* so far needs two strong pressure periods: the first one to get the 50 pp. sample by Oct. 15, so Liz can sell it well; the second, beginning after Jan. 1, to get the entire book into draft by June 1, for polishing during the rest of the year. *This House of Sky* needed pressure to get the ms sample ready, but then much the stronger pressure in the period of finishing the ms. *Winter Brothers* had no sample to be worried over, so the pressure times came at the end, or towards it: when I decided to make the book truly day-by-day, and when I did the editing, first the going-over of the language and then trimming down the day entries.

19 Jul '80: for whatever reason, Merlyn didn't indent 1st lines of grafs when she did the ms draft for me. I've just read over the opening 11-page chunk, inserting graf marks as I went, and found it peculiarly pleasant to make the little blue (felt-tip) hook and two short strokes against the yellow paper. It all looks like sturdy progress, somehow.

July 21, '80, 9:35 a.m.--C and I airborne to Alaska; now 20 min. north of Victoria, flying along eastern shore of Vancouver Island. All is truly blue: the water, and the Coast Range, a kind of fog of clear blue, the snowcaps of the mountains like its froth.

Incredible peaks on north-northeast horizon, from 25 min. north of Victoria; like white cathedrals, with bright bushy storms moving among them.

Blue, of water and even of mountains, turns milkier as we fly toward cloudy weather.

Tremendous reach of white cloud strata, with occasional thick veins of gray, beneath us, 20 min. before Sitka. Like traveling through snow.

Descending to Sitka: clouds now thoroughly veined with gray; C says it's like the color bands of the Painted Desert, except all grays.

Landing at Sitka: plane's wingtips racing almost through trees of the islands, then down almost into water, then the runway pops up.

Sitka notes, July 22-29, '80--

Inauspicious start. Settled into our motel room, promptly heard colossal roar of chainsaw outside the window. Behind the motel sat a chainsaw repair shop. We packed up instantly and took ourselves across town to the Shee Atika Lodge.

Sitka is in the embrace of the mountains. The town's only opening is to the ocean, low lines of wooded isles out there. Quill-bunches of trees.

From town, openings--portals, channels--can be seen out among the bay islands. Looking out through the islands is like looking down a succession of open doors into a maze.

Timber on the facing shores seems to draw back to make way for water.

300 yards (paced) from where workers' barracks would have been, up hill from Shee Atika Lodge, to base of the blockhouse rock.

When the sun comes out, the grayish sunshine barely creates shadows.

July 30, '80, 3:25 p.m.--Airborne from Ketchikan to Prince Rupert. Plane: deHaviland Beaver (yellow). Dots of rain on water in harbor before take-off. Rocky tideline, trees growing out of rocks, very small beaches.

3:27--Over more water now, rougher air, plane bucks into it. Quick white fluffs of small waves, which last perhaps 15 seconds and then dissolve in the trough.

Logs are washed high onto all island tidelines, up to base of growing trees.

Dark spines of rock, age-weathered to lighter color on top.

Can't see the horizon (in cloud); simply a brighter nimbus than the ocean.

Larger waves now; white fluff carries through the trough, spreads like stain.

Occasional mountain out of fog and cloud, sloping down to the water sharp as an avalanche.

Along the route, many islands like whales of several sizes, against the greater school of coastal mountains.

3:40--Weather brightens, plane higher (but not much).

3:53--Square white tower of Canadian lighthouse.

3:54--Into thicker overcast, abrupt dimming; whatever shallow height we're at, wisps fly beneath us.

4--Over Dundas Island.

4:05--Timber grows to waterline all along the route.

4:15--Along British Columbia coast, over land now, muskeg and forest. Bald eagle speeding sideways from us 200 yards below. Log booms east along Prince Rupert shore as far as can be seen.

July 31, '80--10:20, heading for the Queen Charlotte Islands. Blustery morning before take-off from Prince Rupert, all of us sitting staring out plane windows into the weather--Grumman Goose has capacity load of eleven, including one passenger in the co-pilot's seat. When the pilot came on, someone asked him if the weather in the Charlottes was as lousy as this. Yeah, he said, beginning to answer as he walked up the aisle to the cockpit. Raining--he took a step--fog--took another step--windy--another step--rough--by then I was grateful he'd reached the cockpit, couldn't deliver any more walking weather report.

10:44--Fog, visibility a mile or so. Two fishing boats below almost indistinguishable from waves. Our pilot has right hand on wheel, fingering his black mustache with his left, as if pensive.



10:48--Fog thicker, visibility about 1/2 mile. Plane wobbles, blown sideways.

10:56--Big troughs of waves now. Flying at not more than 75 feet. Flashes of white waves against metal color of sea, then nothingness. Bumpiness and air sickness; I'm breaking into heavy sweat.

Storm north in Dixon Entrance like vast cloud of steam rising.

Impressive face of Tow Hill above beach as we fly past.

Pilot is bringing plane in to the very tip of Rose Point; hornlike curve of beach and grassland now behind us, and he's following the shore to Masset Inlet.

11:06--Touching down, absolutely smooth.

Aug. 2, '80--Our modes of travel today, from Masset to home: ~

--Rented a red Ford 4x4 pickup, Masset to Sandspit airport. When I had a sinus attack midway, I got out the open pint of scotch C had in her camera bag. She said I was now a true North Country traveler, swigging whiskey in a red pickup at 9:35 a.m.

--Took the Skidegate ferry, the *Kweena*; invited up to the bridge for chat by skipper Ken Eaton.

--Turned in the pickup, boarded Pacific Western flight 737, Sandspit to Port Hardy to Vancouver.

--Same plane went on to Seattle, but we had to get off in Vancouver first. Long wait for baggage, then long line to check bag to Seattle, then customs, then 1/2 hour delay of flight.

--From SeaTac, took airporter downtown to Washington Plaza hotel.

--Outside the hotel, caught #5 Metro bus to our Shoreline neighborhood.

--Bus only runs to within a mile of our house; C walks home, gets our car, comes back to fetch me and our baggage.

5 Aug '80: Belated point from Alaska research. In plotting Runners, I imagined that K would discover the maps ran out at the top of V'ver Island, and he would have to fake it, somehow fend, from there. When the Tebenkov maps were brought out for me at the Alaska Historical Library in Juneau and, white gloves on hands, I began reverently proceeding through them, Chart 8 of Baranov and Sitka, then Chart 9, then 10--which ran out exactly at Cape Scott, the top of V'ver I.

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11 Aug. '80: From the start, I included as one of Melander's frustrations the fact that the steamship did not often come into use, because it was such a beast to fire up and run. In Juneau research, I found that the ship truly was seldom, if at all, used in those years because Rosenberg feared Indian attack and kept the steamer at hand for its guns.

12 Aug, 4:10--Three pp of Sea Runners today which feel successful--scene of the Rn governor and the pastor--and they help me think I am gaining a bit on the work. We arrived back from Alaska on the 1st, a full week earlier than allowed for, and while I managed to do some rewriting, mostly inserting ~~of~~ or changing details, as result of Juneau and Sitka research, most of the gained days went to gestation. That, and catching up on mail, and attempting a few household chores.

I came back from Alaska feeling greatly bolstered. The research went exceedingly well, perhaps the best sustained couple of weeks of research I've ever done, and I had necessary strokes of luck as well, such as coinciding with Gene Ervine of the Nat'l Park Service in Sitka and him showing me his 1845 map of Sitka, confirming location of Wennberg's blacksmith shop, and the Blaschke details about what people ate, wore, did. I had been feeling worn, the nagging I've written of before, deriving from my body's revolt, or at least cumulative sags, the past year; also the uncertainty at HBJ, and of how Winter Brothers will be received. But the Alaska stint, where I felt ~~my~~ that I could by-god outwork, and certainly outdo in focus. anyhow else in sight, was a great restorative.

Aug. 17, '80--Odd summer day, chilly and windy, gusts whooping in trees all afternoon but no drop of rain.

This week of writing went well after some gear-grinding on Monday. Have been reading, nights the past week, Ian Watt's book on Joseph Conrad. Today just before lunch--this is a day I have taken off from writing or house chores--I came onto Watt's passage about the inherent dramatic elements of a voyage. The sort of thing I knew by gut instinct in taking on The Sea Runners, but it's a thrill to see it expressed as he has.

(i.e., English Creek)

Aug. 18~~th~~--The past few weeks, Runners has begun to get competition in my head from unexpected source, a Montana novel called Last Roof on Tough Creek. Have been mulling that idea for some time--story of a boy who spends high country summer with his forest ranger father--but ideas and coincidence have conspired to push it toward front of my head. For one thing, I read Terry Kay's Year the Light Came On, liked it, and began thinking Last Roof could have the same sort of vivacity. For another, out of the blue I had a letter from John Gruar, 82 and I suppose restless in the Masonic Home in Helena, remarking on Sky and fairly directly offering to spiel to me about any other writing he could help with. My response to him brought a 10-p. or so letter on forest rangering, the last few pages truly alive and exciting and piquant. Also wrote to Eleanor Mast at the same time for any sheep lore she may have, she suggested I talk to her husband Jake. So the material for Last Roof is beginning to flow, impelled by the fact that John and Jake and Eleanor are all getting very far along in years. Also, in Ian Watt's Conrad book I'm reading just now, he says Conrad's best work came out of pretty much a single topic, sea voyage; I've been leery of reprising House of Sky, but will have Winter Bros and Runners, ~~and possible Blue, if these cards ever add up to anything~~ between Sky and Roof if I do it, so I wouldn't really seem a one-note writer, I think. Anyway, Roof is not a bashful book; it makes itself known with surprising strength these days, even when I feel quite immersed in the Runners writing.

~~Blue~~on the Strait of Juan de Fuca)

25 Aug/2: ~~1~~ 1:45, at motel. Skyline of Olympics has been clear blue cutout, but just now a fogbank has begun blowing past, very rapidly; it moves across the fields like rain in sheets, dims the mountains by about a third. Fog of course is coming from west; meanwhile there is bright sun, cloudless sky.

Four sheep in pasture beside the motel room, between me and mts; 2 black lambs and their mother now shaded up on north side of their shed, the pelter--with much less wool--unconcernedly grazing.

driving from Hood Canal ferry to here, I did some wordless singing, it came to me that I needed to ~~make~~ ^{make} up a Xmas hymn K is to sing.

8:35 pm, after an afternoon of fogbank blowing through like ~~xxx~~ scarf swept by the wind, a clear evening; now at near-dark, the Olympics in undulating blue humps, twice as deep in color as sky. Full doubloon moon in east, over Seattle. Lights of houses between me and mtns like sparks, some of those blue: yard lights.

Blue

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27 Aug. 80--9:35 am: Have been at work steadily for 2 hours, an achieving mood of the kind I perpetually hope to catch and tame. Began by improving ~~the~~ y'day's scene of the celebratory toast at end of 1st day of escape--inserted material about grins--and then the phrase ~~of~~ about pastor housecleaning his voice box in Rosenberg scene. Then sorted the file cards plucked from Sky, divvying them into general phrasing; manners of speaking and responding, which this book needs much of; and ideas chunks (ex: this morn I inserted in section on W's waiting the Sky card with chunk, "Stanzas of argument were not his style"; y'day I inserted into the Kolosh chief's scene the chunk "When wondering begins there is no cure"); and into the categories of voyage ~~xm~~~~idea~~~~s~~ detail and coastal detail.

The cards spark ideas; if the work mood can be sustained, I'll successively spread the phrasing and "manners" cards onto table, scan thru the ms to see what might be inserted. Depending on speed of this, this afternoon I may try write on into the section which begins to describe the voyage (altho y'day's writing of the toast scene provided unexpectedly strong place to stop the ms sample I'll send Liz: B's "May you live forever and I never die," then drinking deep).

28 Aug 80/~~11~~--This morn got up, by alarm, at 5, had corn flakes, banana and 2 cups of coffee, and drove the 10 mins. to the spit. This was the best of these dawns, windless, clouds on east horizon and west but clarity overhead, and an egg-shaped moon. Roused what I think was a heron from a treetop as I came around the viewpoint overlooking the spit, and a pair of herons flew around the base of the spit while I was down there. Lights of Pt Angeles very bright and comely in the near-dark, Victoria could be seen too.

4 ~~28 Aug 80/11~~--For the record, the working arrangement I set up here in the motel room:

--elderly brown card table I brought with me is along the eastmost of the three windows looking out onto the Olympics. Have used it for typing, old photocopies of Sky ms used for rough drafting in loose pile at far side of table.

--Motel's table, brown metal kitchen type with two drop-leaves, is lengthwise at my right, snug against card table. Not really an ell; I've intended a time or two to put up the drop-leaf nearest the window and extend the surface ~~into~~ farther along my writing-hand side, but never got around to it. Two rows, and some tag-ends, of file cards on this table, 3x5s (from Sky sorting) and 5x8s mixed; also the two gray metal file boxes labeled Swedes, ~~and~~ stack of unused file cards, 8 oz squeeze bottle of Elmer's Glue-All, plastic bag of rubber bands, box of paper clips, red felt tip, blue felt tip and a #2 pencil. Metal ripping ruler, ~~now that I've found it,~~ is kept alongside typewriter on card table; to cut-and-paste, I push the typewriter south along the card table, do the dabbling,

serving as a kind of tertiary table: Thesaurus is there, and file cards I've found use for, and marked for discard.

Brought a number of books with me--Watt's Conrad, Sky, and galley of Winter Bros, among them--but haven't really used any. Night-time reading has been peanut stuff: Summer of '42, which is alternately good and wretched, and last night, Fletch.

~~27 Aug~~

28 Aug 80--9:35 am, I'm about to call it quits on this ms stint at Juan de Fuca motel. Y'day was a breakthrough, 9 or 10 hours of very strong work. Went through virtually all of the 56 or so pp. of ms to date, tinkering verbs, inserting characterizing details, smoothening and smoothening. Except for a few stray spots--need to find Swedish folksong for K to sing, and to discover ways to extend the suspense of the night of escape, which I worked on a bit this morn--the ms is about ready for next retyping. I may be deliriously sanguine, but I feel it's very nearly good enough that I wouldn't hesitate to present it as the needed ms sample.

Some wondrous improvement in the ms. There's a line from Yeats that a poem should have the sound of a well-made box closing, and this ms seems to me to be getting well-made, dovetailed and sanded and even, already, somewhat sheened.

So far, and I think this is more than mood of the moment, Runners has been a happy book. The work at home generally has gone well, the Alaska trip clicked, and this stint on the Strait achieved amply enough that I have a kind of fullness of sensation, a sort of pleasurable tension, within me. (Consequence of this is that I had a hell of a time going to sleep last night.) Also, I may change my mind as later problems hover in--for one thing, I'm killing off the two most attractive characters, Melander and Braaf; for another, Melander is the most vivid talker--but I feel the hardest part of the book may be ~~EXEX~~ behind me now.

15 Sept. '80: sobering, even a bit alarming, day of looking ~~EX~~ over Runners. It was not helped by inability to get much done, out of a poor night's sleep and the usual problem of gearing up after vacation days. But I wasn't satisfied with the texture of much of the ms, nor--that perpetual bane--the lead.

Sept. 16— I tinkered again with the lead--my god, how much time have I spent doing that, on how many pieces of writing--and moved material around to introduce Melander sooner, got the revise under way; today, it felt as if the ms is starting to get good, ~~the~~ snapping into place.

23 Sept. '80: first day of work on Runners since ~~last Thurs~~ ~~the 18th~~ ~~because of diversion to Gheim application.~~ But this felt like an achieving day, the front portion of the ms~~es~~ beginning to feel solid, in place. I think much of this is a matter of pace; the scenes seem to be going somewhere, doing what they should, in this rewrite. Texture is another part of it, each sentence taking on some feature. Also, this is fairly pleasant work, mostly a matter of moving material around, rather than having to invent from scratch.

I worked to bottom of p. 18, and think there's a need to insert a long chunk of dialogue, perhaps set in the bathhouse. It'd be the first extended dialogue among M, K and B. Deliberately I'm trying to make the dialogue take the course it would in life, sparse at first, then looser and fuller as the men get to know each other.

24 Sept. '80--Today wrote 3 pp. of dialogue in bathhouse, first chunk of that length as it goes into the ms. Moved the ploy of K visiting the Kolosh women up to here, as strong ending line, and will cut the brief graf I had --M okaying B to start thievery--to insert this dialogue. Hard day of writing, but the result looks pretty good.

Sept 29, '80: recast this sentence, p. 25, to do away with the complicated double-dash structure, which I've already used in scenes of K at the gate. Also, it dawned on me that I want the reader to be alarmed, not have the immediate disclaimer that the voice wasn't Russian:

Braaf was making away with the sailcloth, the folded length of it cradled beneath an armload of skins he ostensibly was carrying toward the tannery, when a voice--through his fright it did register on him that the voice at least was Swedish rather than Russian-- suggested huskily into his ear, "Let's talk about what you have under those skins."

30 Sept. '80: today rewrote scene of the three choosing a canoe, into indirect dialogue. Y'day, ~~rewrote~~ rewrote the scene of B joining the escape, into direct dialogue. The pair make the funniest scenes in the book, the canoe scene perhaps too humorous, but think I'll leave it for now. They also change the thrust of the characters, Braaf at once emerging as obliquely funny, K less silent than I had intended, M more patient.

1 Oct. '80: changed this graf--problems with it being that the cemetery was outside the stockade, and neither Phyllis DeMuth, who I was certain told me the epitaph, nor the Sitka people can verify "Peace be to your dust"--to material about B hiding in a hulk. Using the hulk had added virtue of fitting better with the descptn of New Archangel, and of being plausible for W's discovery from the viewpoint of his Borgework.

where on this brow of land which holds New Archangel's four capacious graveyards--Kolosh, Russian Orthodox, Lutheran, and unconsecrated. This morning as usual Braaf angles past the particularly handsome headstone of a young Russian officer who died of pneumonia. Braaf cannot comprehend the Russian inscription, but it reads: Peace be to your dust.

6 Oct. 80--Either have finished the revise of ms sample or am abandoning it, not entirely clear which. Whatever, I seem to be written out on it for now. Last couple days of last week, and to a lesser extent today, have had great reluctance to face what needs doing in the ms, because what needs doing is some writing-from-scratch in the escape scene and I feel too weary to take on anything fresh.

As to how the ms sample now stands, I can't just say; will look back on it at week's end, when Merlyn will have retyped it all, and maybe have some notion then. Strangely, I know it's improved immensely from when I started this revise, 3 or so weeks ago: more dialogue, better pace and sequence--yet I feel less sanguine about it than I did then. I maybe am thrown a bit by the fact that the revise didn't quite go as intended, more writing-from-scratch needed than I had guessed and consequently not the time or energy left for going over it word by word and then for sentence patterns, as I'd planned. Also, despite all my tinkering, I think it still starts slow, as my stuff always does.

So: if I have any handle on myself at all today, it's that I've done considerable work the past 3 weeks, some of it a great improvement, but I'm not sure it's nearly enough.

3 Oct 80: cut this graf from bottom of ms p. 2, on re-reading this morn before Merlyn's retyping, to speed the start of the book a bit:

Yet do not be ~~led astray~~ ^{mised} by the length and loft of all this wordage of his. Whatever Melander's tongue dealt with at any given opportunity, ayed and roudabout and chaff-strewn though the route might be, in ~~the~~ most likelihood would end up with more weight to it than other men's mouthings.

13 Oct. '80:

This morn photocopied ms sample, completed cover letter to Liz. Will mail tomorrow; intended to today, but post office had a holiday, Columbus Day.

Merlyn finished the typing last Thurs., having done all 65 pp. since Monday. I changed a word in the first p. -- "however" for "But"--and she redid that by Fri. morn.

Oct. 15- Y'day, mailed to Liz the ms sample of Runners. One more flip of marble onto the roulette wheel.

Nov. 14--Hectic, hectic. Liz called, when?--night before last, the 12th?--with word from Marcia that \$15,000 is as high as HBJ will go for Sea Runners. Told her by all means have Tom Stewart at Atheneum look at the sample.

Nov. 17- about 15 min. ago, had a phone call from Liz, saying she's waiting to hear from Tom Stewart of Atheneum, who told her the Sea Runners sample is "stunning" and said he'd talk with "his people" over the weekend to see what they can offer. Stewart originally told her, before reading, that \$25,000 sounded high. So now we'll see; Liz has a call ~~in~~ to him, then has to get back to Marcia.

All of this marking, in some cosmic glint of irony, the official publication day of Winter Brothers.

Nov. 21, 3:45--O brave new world, with such decisions in't. Y'day morn just before 9:30, I borrowed a phone in the newsroom of the Bellingham Herald, listened to Liz say Atheneum had offered \$20,000 advance for Sea Runners, drew a breath and said let's take it, you done good.

The decision jangled at me through the day--bookstore parties in B'ham and Oak Harbor--and the long drive home through the wet dark, but today it still seems the sound choice. HBJ's original offer of \$7500 signaled that they haven't any faith in the Sea Runners; their upping of the offer to \$15,000 was a not-too-elegant effort to retrieve my interest, say that they didn't want to lose me as a writer. Ath'm has bid on basis of being impressed with the ms sample; Tom Stewart is an admired-in-chief, and I'd like again to be working with an ~~adm~~ ed-in-chief; and the money from them is considerably closer to my effort to make a more-or-less living wage out of writing. The decision in Ath'm's favor would have been much easier had they offered \$25,000 or \$22,500; \$20,000 was the minimum I had set in my mind, would have asked Liz to shop the ms around some more. She tells me she thinks we've done as well as we could, given the current pub'g scene; that she thinks Ath'm can market a book such as Sea Runners well; and she thinks highly of Stewart.

Dec. 4 - The writing year has been an odd one--although I don't know what a normal one would be. The two revisions of Winter Bros, carrying on into mid-March; the first 65 pp of Sea Runners, which I've had the illusion of not truly getting geared into, yet when I stop and count there are already 5 or 6 fully revised ms drafts

Dec. 16, '80--Last night as I was driving Bill & Carelyn Reeburgh from the University Tower hotel to our place for dinner, Bill told me the guys of his oceanographic crew were enthralled with my "Coming Out of the Country" story--i.e., The Sea Runners--and all were looking forward to it. Then he said, it just occurred to him, their ship the Alpha Helix was scheduled to come south from Seward to the Duwamish waterway for refitting in Jan., would I be interested in riding down the coast on it?

Dec. 18, '80--Above the Siskiyous, flying to San Francisco: W prayer as a section-ending occurred to me:

"O God who watches over fools and babes," Wennberg murmured, "what am I doing in this pisspot of a canoe?"

(1981)

Jan. 4 - I've wanted, against all good sense, to simply step into the Sea Runners ms again and watch it write itself out the ends of my fingers. Some calculation the other day, as I set a schedule to finish roughing the ms, about 180 pp beyond what I already have, by the last week in March, that the book may have as many as twelve dozen different scenes. This will be the third book in a row that has got more

~~Jan. 9 cont.~~ complex than I dreamed it could. No wonder the bastards are hard.

7 Jan '81: Y'day midafternoon--I went to UW library in the morning, on the Seattle City Light false alarm that the n'hood's power was going to be off-- I began reworking the lead of Sea Runners. I'm attempting to make two things develop at once, the scene of the canoe coming ashore and the realization in the reader that this is "the first necessary picture in your mind" (i.e., the first of possibly many); I tinkered through 6 or 8 versions, the main problems being to get the "first necessary picture phrase" into an early and logical, yet not intrusive place, and to use the "nimble and buoyant as a magnified seabird" image without its ~~skewing~~ skewing a sentence rhythm. Finally, after supper I came up with the current version.

Today, went on from there through the next four pages, adding a few bits of dialogue from Melander, moving grafs around, and loosening up the material with expanded ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ details or side-comments. I'm searching for the right texture for the book, and this revision begins to feel somewhat like it.

8 Jan: On the inevitable other hand:

~~On Jan. 8:~~ This morning, I at once sat down and undid some of y'day's richening of prose, seeing, with C's advice last night, that it lost me some of the ms's quickness and cleanliness of rhythm. If nothing else, y'day's doings can remind me that in my eagerness to make this a brilliant book, I shouldn't forget to ~~make~~ make it a good one.

Jan. 10 - Working for myself does not seem to get easier--having to reinvent my world every morning is a considerable matter--yet I still can't imagine myself putting in hours for someone else.

I think part of my mood these past days has been the feeling that the Sea Runners work is not yet fun again. Ordinarily, if there is an "ordinarily" in such a life, I'd look ahead to grooving into the work, a span of stepping off into the blank of my mind and seeing what will happen, but I can only about half do that with the ~~Alaska~~ Alpha Helix trip impending. It probably is going to be one of the great sets of days in my life, ~~as the last fall's hunting with Wayne proved to be~~, yet it takes attention and time I don't want to give. So, to find a balance; to edge-walk again, the writing on one hand, the living and questing on the other.

Jan. 22 - Sitka, ~~22 Jan~~

Verstovia is broader than seems possible for so sharp-tipped a peak. ~~xxx~~ Its southern (~~? side toward Sound~~) slope at about halfway changes angle to even more gradual; its northern is even more gradual, very extended. An ungainly but powerful and self-composed mountain--~~again~~, like a tsarina ~~if~~

At nightfall, V gets darker than anything else around, like some cloud or storm of night advancing; some ~~xx~~ triangular tunnel into the gray-weathered sky and vanishing peaks behind it. A maw of darkness, out of which night pours and spreads over the land around town.

5:50--the last things visible are V'a and the islands in the Sound, as if they were cut-off portions of V's lengthy train of gown. Or as if they were swimming home to the mtn.

--Also, judging by sticking my head out open window to see all this, it's much chillier, with a breeze.

23 Jan 81, 10:55 am--Sun came out about 20 min. ago, low on southern horizon--not much above the mtns across the Sound from Sitka, and with fierce reflection off water. It remakes the scene here, greatly softens it; the mtns lose their moody edges, go into simple outline with silver mist, of cloud or reflected light, cloaking them; all the mtns south and east of the Sound are cutouts now. The surroundings all seem at a couple of removes from what they were. Unmoored, maybe.

--possible use: the sun appeared as if it were a new idea in the scheme of things. A blaze in the ~~ky~~ sky. *(Pine) Car*
fuel

--Now that it's out, the sun is enormous,, coming thru this clear air with tremendous aureole of blaze. Air and unexpectedness magnify it?

181

Juneau, Jan. 24--Am aboard the Alpha Helix--or, as some of the crew disgustedly said y'day, often misprnced by Coast Guard and others to Alpha Felix--at the Coast Guard-NOAA dock. Flew in from Sitka y'day afternoon, after 2 days there. The Sitka stay was useful for Runners mood and detail--how Verstovia looms in on the town in winter, for ex. Weather there broke to couple of hrs of sun late y'day morning, a tremendous dazzle ~~xxxxxx~~ striking obliquely across the Sound to town. Only apprehension so far has been flight into Juneau, with the plane diving down, in a sort of roaring aerial skid, over the hill at the end of the runway; can't decide whether I more dislike landing or taking off with that hump looming in front.

Seem to be off to a reasonable start with the crew. Bill volunteered this morn that the wise policy is to get in good with the cook, Mary, and by instinct from ranch days I already was taking some care in that direction. At dinner last night, I chipped in \$2 with ~~one~~ of the crewmen to buy her the wine carafe as a vase. ~~4~~

My mood is pretty good this morning, reassured at having seen the setup aboard here. Haven't managed to get done any real ms work, either at Sitka or here, altho in Sitka I figured out the ms spots where more detail is needed and concentrated the research accordingly (I hope). Public library here opens at 1, and I intend to go up there for the afternoon, see if it's possible to write.

Jan. 24 cont'd.—

The Helix is not as large as I expected, yet it's plenty sizable--133', with crew of 9 and capacity for 15 scientists. Good-looking ship, like a plumper version of a big fishboat, with white superstructure and baby-blue from railings down.

← INSERT

21A & 21B →

Jan. 25--6 pm--Have just finished supper, which is a fairly full affair because the ship turns out to be populated with numerous free-loaders besides me. ~~the chancellor, Howard Cutler and his wife; 2 Foundation members, Odin Strandberg and Brian Bundine, who has brought his wife, son, and another couple.~~ All this was considerably more than Dolly Dieter, the UA marine supt., had expected and bargained for, and while I'd felt some chill from her before today, when all these others turned up she was so pissed off that she began to regard me as an old-timer. It helped, I think, that I uncomplainingly and promptly moved rooms this morning when she asked me to.

Spent the afternoon standing on the bridge, more standing than I've done in some time. My back came out of it pretty well, though my right heel began to rebel by end of the day.

26 Jan., in Clarence Strait nearing Behm Canal: got up at 5 this morn, b'fasted with crew, went to bridge at 5:45, when the watch was to change, the capt'n taking over from the mate. But Mike the mate--crew also seems to include Mike the engineer and a third Mike called just Mike Miller--let the ~~xxxx~~ capt'n sleep in and stayed on bridge until 6:10. I stayed up there until 9--it's now 9:30--details are noted on Blue cards. Trip seems to be going well, so far I've balanced myself aloof enough from crew and passengers to get work done yet, I think, stay civil. Shut myself in my room pronto after supper, took an early shower a little after 7--just before the ~~xxxxx~~ ship began a spell of pitching--then cont'd reading (Bill Turner's Call the Beast Thy Brother) until

→

21A

Juneau, 24 Jan.

This morn alongside the Helix, school (?) of sea lions in the channel. They make quick ~~thr~~ forward thrusts of head thru water, as if puncturing a membrane. When many do it at once, they are close enough together, and their turbulence in the water is mass enough, that they seem some twenty-nosed sea creature pushing along.

--Their noise is a kind of burping roar, like: orhrhr!t

--a whale, probably a ^{humpback} ~~male humpback whale~~, also went past, in porpoise-like arcs of back sliding thru the water. Had a large dorsal fin, but I never saw the head for any colors there.

--When whale would spout, the spout would drift and hang in air, like dissipating steam.

21B

Jan. 25, '81--Juneau harbor. Red sky at morning, at the end of Gastineau Channel, over Admiralty Island. The captain and Dolly Dieter both commented it'll likely mean rough weather at Dixon entrance.

Beautiful morning, though, mountains out in clarity, only high stratus clouds; now at 9:10, it's nearing full light. Crisp morning, but not uncomfortable.

Flock of goldeneye ducks in water beneath bow; soft crash of ducks landing. Sea lions can be heard roaring, $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away.

Captain went over charts with me, showing the route south.

9:30--Sun coming up over ~~Admiralty~~ Admiralty I., out from around the base of Mt. Roberson(?); 1st light on peaks of Douglas & Mt. Juneau.

Jan. 26 cont'd -

just past 8. Had trouble falling asleep, but no more so than in a motel room. So far the ship's motion hasn't bothered me. Mike the mate said we did come through a gale in the after-midnight hours, I guess s. of Wrangell Narrows, with 40-50 mph wind.

My feeling so far, though I may get bored with this trip by tomorrow or the next day, is ~~xxxx~~ the one I've had on last summer's trip to Alaska and the recent times ~~xxx~~ in Montana, that, hell, I can do this as well as these people, and so I pretty much do it.

27 Jan., 7:40 pm--Am behind in today's diarying, partly due to abt $2\frac{1}{2}$ hrs spent in bunk this afternoon, to avoid seasickness while crossing Qn Ch Sound, but material is mostly on the notecards. Should record my bravura stand against seasickness, tho. This morn, during the crossing of Milbanke Sound, I had to come down from the bridge for about $\frac{1}{2}$ hr because of queasiness. So this afternoon, knowing we'd hit the Qn Ch swells about 3, I prepared myself by taking a Dramamine-type pill $\frac{1}{2}$ hr beforehand as directed, then had couple cups of coffee to

27 Jan. cont.--fend off any drowsiness from that, plus some handfulls of gorp for energy, then went up to the bridge, declaring to myself that I'd by god whip seasickness this time, stick out the entire Qn Ch crossing. 20 min. later, I was sprawled flat on my bunk.

The bonus of this voyage has turned out to be Enid Cutler, wife of the UA chancellor. Y'day morn I was on the bridge watching day-break, and she hesitantly came across and asked what I was making notes about, then began talking colors to me and tipped me to the technique of looking not quite squarely at the object to get a truer sense of its tone; then she went down and got her paints and did me 2 quick watercolors of shoreline. Then after supper, she did a portrait of me, an astonishingly good one, and I asked her if she'd ever had a show. She said yes, she'll be in one in Lincoln Center in May... Since then, she's done rapid but quite fine portraits of most of the crew, the engineer's son from a photo, etc.

The other thing I have intended to put down--I've been feeling it all during this voyage--is that this coastline awaits its great book. I wonder if I can do it.

28 Jan., 8:45 am, in Strait of Georgia, likely off Hornby I.--Am feeling good at the moment, after a tough night. Couldn't get to sleep, spent more than 4 hours trying. As with y'day's effort against seasickness, I tried all the logic I could think of, sitting in galley talking to Howard Cutler until about 8, then went to bed, ~~x~~ read, and about 8:30 took a D₂amine, hoping it would put me to sleep in the next half hour or so. Nothing. Finally tried another D'mine after midnight, either it or exhaustion of lying sleepless in bunk so long did the job.

28 Jan. cont.--But I got up at 5, flailing at alarm as if it were a snake as it racketed on the floor beside my bunk, and went up for the morning watch with the captain as I've done each day. We're making good time, he says--a following wind has put us up to 11.6 knots; ship had been doing 10.95 average. He thinks now we'll reach the Duwamish shipyard by 11, 11:30 tonight.

Just now passing east of lighthouse on raft of rock; Sisters light, maybe?

Have enjoyed the capt'n, Roy ~~R~~ Robeck, and the rest of the crew. R served in merchant marine and 2 yrs aboard a hospital ship--the 1st one into Yokahama at war's end, to take aboard American POWs--and is coming up on his ~~60th~~ 60th b'day. Watching both him and the mate, Mike Demchenko, provides that pleasure of seeing someone good at his job. The ship seems to have excellent people at the vital jobs--captain, mate, cook, engineer--and at least middling good crew below that.

29 Jan--Home, as of about 12:45 this morning. Lack the energy to do a full entry today, but should note what kind of day it's been: Jean Walkinshaw of channel 9 called; then Larry Rumley, about S. Times' intention to run excerpt from Winter Bros, which was news to me; in the mail C left for me to open was Miami Herald review; when I called a few prime bookstores to tell them of S. Times, Marilyn Martin at U Bk Store told me Winter Bros is reviewed in this week's People magazine, which I told her at last has given me the ultimate definition of mixed emotions.

9 Feb. '81--Managed some organizing of the 2nd quarter of the ms, setting up a ring-binder titled--after Swedes, Swedes 2, and More Swedes--O God More Swedes Yet. Have decided to use, at least for now, tabbed pages to divvy the scenes of this roughed section; in Friday's session of thinking it over and browsing the bookstore for possible aids to organization, couldn't come up with anything better. Of course, this ~~product~~ pondering is primarily stalling; if I'd get down to the gutwork of writing, much of the organizational hassle would take care of itself.

Be that as it may, I've now scheduled in 6 pp of revision of this roughed material for each day of this week, and likely for the 4 workdays of next week as well. Will see if, in trying to bend the ms to about its halfway point, a hundred pp. or more, it won't get underway more than it has recently.

--Occurred to me while walking the n'hood this afternoon: I'd like each sentence of this book to excel.

11 Feb. '81--9:15 am: this may be short-lived, but the ms begins to feel alive. I've already revised 3 pp., half the day's quota, and am about to try some immersion into the "phrasing" and "coastal details" file cards, a plunge I've been reluctant to take. The change in weather somehow may account for, or at least contribute to, this: a skift of snow on the ground this morning, C walking up the hill to work, me feeling somehow more comfortably wintered in, ready to achieve. Mysterious, but so it seems.

~~11 Feb. '81~~ A physical reminder this noon when I walked through the snow to the QFC on Richmond Beach Road: my right heel took the brunt of the Alpha Helix work, growing tender through the hours of standing on metal deck plates of the wheelhouse; by sometime in the second day, I folded a handkerchief into the heel-space inside my boot to try for extra cushioning. My back, which dislikes more than about ten minutes of standing, also felt it, and I learned to lean periodically against the back wall of the wheelhouse to rest it.

3 pm--The day continued as well as it started. I took a mid-day break by walking thru the snow to food store on Richmond Beach Road, about an hour's excursion, then light lunch and a quick go-through of the Seattle Times and the Weekly, and back to work. I've tallied 8 pp. of rewrite today, roughly 1500 words, and within them a number of sentences which will pretty well stand as finished, I think. Have quit at a point where I think I can resume tomorrow--the crossing from Baranof I. to Kuiu I.--and seem to have energy left to do some making of file cards from notebook jottings.

This has been the most achieving, and right-mooded, day on Sea Runners in a long while, likely since before promo season got underway last fall. I revised 8 pp., which along with 6 y'day I think gets the ms launched from where the 65-pp sample left off. I've always had the feeling on this book that at some point, it should take off, accelerate toward completion. I don't yet know that it will happen, given my clockwork style of schedule, but at least the ms feels as if it's rousing itself a bit.

Feb. 11 cont'd —

During the spate of Winter Bros' commotion the past few weeks, I intended to make an entry about how increasing celebrityhood, to the extent I've had it, has felt to me. It must have a frail hold, because in this more workmanlike week much of the impression has faded. But I think what I had in mind was details such as the 11 Feb. cont.--sudden run of caricaturing and other presenting of my face, a face which hasn't been presented to the world all that much in my preceding 41 years. But now there's been the Pac NW caricature, the Weekly's illustration of Swan and me, and if the S. Times excerpt happens, another Swan-Doig motif; along with it has gone considerable photographing and requests for pics of me. I begin to wonder about the Indians' notion of the shadow-catcher or soul-catcher; does such stuff alter who I am? I suppose it must, but the next question is whether it diminishes me or revivifies me. My only policy so far, if it amounts to that, is to keep as much control of my time as I can; put from mind as quickly as I can the more silly of what's going on (astonishing how easily I forgot the People magazine review; I kept coming onto the issue around the house, thinking what the hell is this doing here, then remembering, oh yeah...); and postpone people, of whom there's a startling new legion, who are determined they're going to have lunch with me.

18 Feb. '81: After a faltering day y'day, trying to tool up from a 3-day weekend, this has been a day of strong editing, the writing and rewriting of the past weeks evidently having reached a critical mass.

First of the day's decisions was one of style. To cut what had been the resumption ~~from~~ following the ms sample--"So, Melander's plan had slipped them from the seven-year shackle of New Archangel. Now it would be seen whether it somehow could carry them ten hundred miles along one of the earth's most wild coastlines"--and go directly back to action, Melander permitting a few hours of sleep before resumed paddling. The rhetorical sentences, I intend to tuck away within quicker passages somewhere. If I do some of this, I should be speeding the narrative with action leads, yet delivering notional passages within...

--Sometime within the past few days, I've had the idea of going to italicized interior passages for K and probably W in the last portion of the book, probably K's beginning right after he realizes there are no further maps, and W's after Braaf's drowning.

23 Feb. '81:

Am at a stumping section, as I recall I was with the Tidyman material in House of Sky and the Mt. Rainier material in Winter, tho I hope this one is not so major. (Both those came out to be among the best pieces in those books.) I need to describe the North Pacific, and as yet don't have the background for it. First thing this morn I scrapped the material I'd intended about explorers, thinking I'd better keep the emphasis on the ocean itself; may, however, say something about the NW Passage quest, to the effect that the Pacific never yielded itself to this notion that it was a crooked stair to somewhere else.

2-27-81: The 20 or so pp. after B's champagne swig have taken shape the past few days; next week I'll have Merlyn do the 1st typescript of this section. Have tried to regulate pace and nuance in this section, even at this "early" stage. An example: have been aware that too ~~many~~ of the scenes--there are I think 18 in the just over 20 pp.--end in periodic pronouncement style. The 1st one ends with the descptn of M as worker ant on mtn, the next ends with series concluding "dark brought night two of their leaving of NA". I had the Kuiu scene ending with "This had been a day of stumble...But..." Just now, I cut that as an ending, leaving that scene to end on action, canoe pulling to ~~xxx~~ shelter "just short of full dark", and putting the "stumble...but" material as lead for next scene.

A bonus of this is that the new "first day of stumble" phrase sets up later such stumbles, too.

2 March '81--It seems to be a positive disadvantage to have a good title ready for a book, as with *Winter Brothers* and now *Sea Runners*. While I was working on *Winter ms*, Sloan Wilson's novel *Ice Brothers* came out, and a book called I think *Winter Journey*. And late last week I opened the Feb. 20 Pub Wkly to find the 1st book in Nonfiction is titled *Sea Run*.

NONFICTION

SEA RUN: Surviving My Mother's

Madness

Mary Lou Shields, Seaview, \$11.95

ISBN 0-87223-665-X

In this example of a growing number of case histories by analysts, the author alternates between episodes of her life—past and present—and verbatim exchanges with her analyst. Together, during five years, they attempt to dispel her fears of repeating her mother's schizophrenic pattern. They seek also to help her recover from a sordid childhood spent under the care of stern relatives during her mother's confinement in a state mental hospital. To add to Shields's emotional travails, her drunken father's sexual advances warp her relationships with husband and lovers. A feminist consciousness-raising and self-defense group offers the author an outlet for her feelings of inadequacy as a woman in a male-dominated society, but gives her Freudian male analyst a hard time. One admires Shields's inner strength which brings her triumphantly through to the brink of a new career as a writer, the ghosts of her parents apparently laid to rest. [March 23]

3 March '81--Making a last search thru pocket notebook from Alaska trip, prior to discarding for a new one, I find the line I may have put down somewhere else: I am part of an old coastal scene--back to the Indians--of the traveler and the stories he tells. Swan, of course, was another.

--Today I did a couple half-page Karlsson monologues, deliberately making the sentences shorter than the general run of the book, trying to make it sound more as a man would talk to himself. Also decided to have him "talk" to Melander occasionally in these.

6 March--1:45, end of a decent writing week: 25 pp., bang on schedule. Y'day was a muss, a recalcitrant grab-and-paste day, but the other 4 went well enough, better first-drafting than I'd expected, or so it seems now.

10 March '81--The month's name is apt so far; the past 7 writing days, I've marched on schedule, averaging 5 pp./day as intended. Most of it is choppy, written by the graf, sometimes just a sentence lifted from the file cards; it's the effort to get a critical mass accumulated, so I can get the revising and adding-to underway.

Today during the walk up to Sh'line ~~(and maybe the sauna there)~~ occurred to me to add the couple of proverbial bits--paper is the schoolman's forest, etc.--to the Rosenberg scene, and to say something here about the effort I'm making ~~with~~ to put a proverbial sound into this ms. The aim is to tap into the interest proverbs hold for us; they're nuggets of idea and language, and we all respond to their gleam. Thus, the proverbial tang of M's dialogue; and I'm considering whether to put biblical flavor into W's interior monologues. Have ransacked a number of books of seamen's slang and the like, to pattern M's talk on. Also, I trust that my proverbs aren't diluted too much by the fact that a number of them, I've made up.

12 March--An Edwardian spring? The sunlit weather goes on, days in the 60s. The season seems sprung, out of kilter; this is like having the start of summer 3 months too soon...

we'll be twirling parasols next.
Yet it may be that the pressure of the outside world forces me--us?--into equilibrium of our own. Dunno. I keep expecting things to go to hell, somehow.

For all that, my daily working mood is as good as I can expect; Runners seems to progress and to do a lot of good things on the pages. I continue to have the brinking feeling that I can make some kind of leap toward completion of this book. There're geographical crevasses, though; the Vancouver I. and Wash'n coast portions of the book haven't had the eyework done on them yet.

20 March '81--About 1 today, finished revise of 36 pp. for Merlyn to put into typescript. The pp don't feel as far along as the last batch, and I had to grit and slap together crude transitions at times, but at least they're a draft. This brings the ms up to about halfway--M's death--in typescript.

--in today's editing, changed: "In a half-moment Braaf recognized that the phantasm was of wood..." to "In a half-moment Braaf recognized that the phantasm was blind, as wood must be..." thereby delaying another beat or two the revelation that he's seeing a totem pole.

--also changed scene of W looking back at Indians on beach from sequence which had him seeing first the pair shooting, then others emerging from the forest, then those around the crippled canoe, to a sequence of the shooters--those at canoe--the ones emerging from the forest, to forward the sense of more and more threat appearing. Also put in "more oh God more" phrase.

4 Continue to be of two minds about Sea Runners: the book often seems to be just getting underway, yet I've worked on it quite a lot of the past year, now. I may yet, depending on mood after the Oregon trip--I'm counting on that to freshen energy--try a few days at Dungeness to see how far I can wrench the rough draft toward totality. Most of the spring's work, though, I hope will be smoothing of the typescript, and I hope it'll be less draining. This ms section of the past some weeks has had big complicated sequences--Dixon Entrance, M's death--and I suppose that's why I feel like I've been in a bout.

30

March 30-

Arrived back from Oregon Thursday night, the 26th-- gone six days, total. Best portion of the trip was Sunday at Leadbetter Point, the north end of Long Beach peninsula. We were out for more than 5 hours, hiking most of the while, to study the setting for the Swedes to come ashore. Every manner of weather. And coming back, we found that a canal-like small stream we'd hopped over on our way out was now filled by incoming tide; had to strip to underpants and wade thigh-deep. Luckily the water was narrow. Bonus of the day was seeing two snowy owls, including one during lunch which sat atop driftwood 70 yards from us like a big sleepy white cat.

April 6-

Spent the day on first re-read of Sea Runners type-script so far, about half the intended book. It's not bad, although somewhat choppy. Considerably short of what I hope to achieve, but that's customarily the case. Oddly, the dialogue, which by rights I should have had fits with, seems to me better than the narrative.

8 April '81: edited p. 37, dialogue between Wannberg and Melander, to show W's abruptness: his talk has more contractions than that of the others.

22 April--Hiatus in the diary, reasonably reliable sign of progress in the ms. Have been slogging hard, editing 10 pp/day. The pace is more stringent than it should be --I end each day caved-in--but this is one of those betwixt times, when I need to muscle the existing ms into revision before I can get on with original drafting. I suppose the ~~pg~~ progress is enormous, a couple thousand words of the ms much improved every day, but it's hard to appreciate it because of same sort of days looming ahead. I still would like a bit more fun out of Sea Runners than I seem to get; it continues to tantalize, say, there's revelation and ease ahead, just around the next bend of time...

24 April '81--10 a.m., an awkward strung-out morning I'm now going to try to redeem. Was ~~gax~~ groggy, with half a headache behind my right eye, when I first tried to work. Laid down for an hour, then went to Edmonds for coffee and a cinnamon roll, I now feel at least semi-human again. Probably the chore ahead, writing the early scene of Melander crossing the settlement, is one I don't want to face; at least, I haven't faced it, these past few weeks. But also the grind of the past 2 weeks is catching up with me; the first half of the ms is improving vastly, so it's worth it, but revamping 10 pp. a day, as I've done for 5 of the last 7 workdays, is a load. I've kept at it because I want to have this revision achieved by 1 May, week from today.

27 April '81--This morning, a Monday, I intended to go on with the revise of the 1st half of the ms; the escape scene is the next that needs doing. But for whatever reason I began looking at the start of the ms, trying to judge its "feel"; the barracks scene which I revised on Friday--actually, mostly wrote from scratch--doesn't yet have what I want. One thing nudges another, I looked at the immediately preceding material, the "Melander maybe under different policy" piece. It always has seemed a lump of background, bumping awkwardly out of the ms; I think I originally had it very near to the lead, then reset it after the explanation of Melander and the steamship. Now I've moved it to just after M's leave-taking of the Finn skipper; this uses the narrative, the question of what will happen to M as regards the steamship, to carry the reader thru this background chunk. Maybe I'll change my mind again, but right now it seems to smoothen the ms, to feel right.

30 April '81: revised this in Tow Hill section for better pace, and to avoid the thumpy style of "placid seawater...misted trees".

Having pushed the canoe into the placid seawater and turned toward the misted trees, Karlsson and Melander found themselves crossing...

4 May--A brave new month? Last week I finished revising Runners into a considerable semblance of what I want; y'day C read it and gave me her comments. There likely are ten or a dozen spots where I want to bolster; by and large, though, this first half of the ms isn't far from retyping, then going off to Liz and Atheneum. I plan to peck away at the ms problems this week, then go over the whole thing for a week at the end of this month, and call that good.

4 May '81: Have reached a calmer--more contemplative?--plateau of the ms, since achieving the revise of the 1st half to within 95% or so of what I want it to be, for shipping off to Ath'm and the next chunk of advance. Reached this point by the end of last Thursday, April 30. I re-read ms on Friday, C commented on it Sunday. There are at least a dozen fixes I want to make in it, but for some reason they don't seem that daunting. It may be that a gain made sometime last week is the palliative; looking back at unused material on weather and coast, I began fitting them into the ms and gained an immediate 4 pp. or so, and some good language and pace. In a sense, that gain puts me farther along, in that respect, than I'd expected to be.

--Am now going to try, for the rest of this week, to work on the fixes for 2-2½ hours each morning, and ~~think~~ think toward the last half of the ms the rest of the work time. Next week, I should resume the 5 pp/day roughing, to get 50 pp. added to the existing 40, by end of May.

5 May '81: Sometime in last month's revision, decided to use this device. So far, it seems not to be obtrusive:

Can't've ... shouldn't've (use this double contraction as style of dialogue for one character, perhaps Braaf?) ← rw ?

6 May '81: This week is one of tinkering, working away at the list of niggles C and I each came up with on re-reading the 1st half of ms, and it reminds me that I should ~~now~~ schedule a couple, maybe three weeks, at the end of the entire ms for similar nicking-in of detail and turn of phrase. That portion of time, just after the exaltation of being "done" with accumulating the ms, seems to be an important one; it puts a sense of rightness into the work, the final strokes of craft.

--Y'day I looted notebooks and old files for material to enhance ~~the~~ scene of K and raindrops, p. 99A--mtn stream trying to leap from itself, veils of spray, and "quick thin lakes strewn by a half-day rain" are all from poetry fragments, some done a dozen or more years ago, or from description written after coastal hikes.

7 May '81--Some distraction the past two days, banking and other chores. But today I wrote, surprise to myself, 2½ pp. of dialogue to fit into Tow Hill episode--M's tale about Bering, W quoting the Bible. I don't know if they'll hold up; might shift them around in later ms. But they seem to be reasonable progress, on a day when I wasn't sure I'd get any.

12 May '81--Have just finished the 2nd day of roughing the last half of ms. Having set 8 pp/day as a goal for the next two weeks, I purposely achieved 10 y'day, to have a bit of margin for myself. Today's 8 went as I wish they all would: did 5 in the morning, mostly by pasting together or rewriting existing rough material, then another 3 in the afternoon, mostly original work (B-W dialogue on where Melander is now that he's dead).

Each start of morning is tough, although today I did have left-over time in which to ~~me~~ pick out some rewritable pages which I hope will give me a start tomorrow. But if I can gut through these 10 workdays, achieving 80--I'll actually settle for 75--pp., I'll have whipped the major chore of the second half of the ms.

15 May '81--Occurs to me, as I hack and salvage to make 8 pp. of rough draft each day this week, that a first draft is like butchering: the guts of the book out in the open, blood and muck all around, mystifying chunks of bone (tripe) and fat and gristle which don't yet reveal themselves as anything palatable. It takes a while to get the good cuts out of all this, and longest of all to get it at last well done.

18 May--Have splattered to a stop today, just now (1 pm) getting around to anything at all useful. Last week was extreme, putting together average of 8 pp/day to bring some semblance of a second half of the ms into being. It's into, but I'm fagged.

Also have had a case of the jitters today about the first several pp. of Sea Runners, fearing it's too slow-starting. There's such a helluva lot of background to work in there, I have to carry it all somehow, with language or storytelling manner, and at the moment am not sure I have.

19 May '81--Last evening began thinking about how to speed the first several pp., and this morning made a few cuts which I think do so considerably. Bottom of p. 2, trimmed some of the fanciness from descn of M's style of talking; p. 4, cut 2 sentences about his appreciation of steamship; in section of him walking NA, cut descn of 8-logged building I'd put in in previous draft; also cut descn of other mtns around Verstovia like "attendants arrayed a few steps in back of a Tsarina," just made use of "attended." And improved, I hope, some verbs and turns of phrase: "the long light copied Swedish summer" instead of "was like"... "took such a constitutional" instead of "liked to do so..." and "A threefold Jericho, this place New Archangel..." instead of "NA was a threefold Jericho..."

Yesterday was a zombieish day, got little done except finishing the read of Two Years Before the Mast. Today, for whatever reason, I have more energy.

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20 May '81: cut this today, as too fancy; section on Pacific needs something more, but fact rather than rhetoric.

It is like the North Pacific to mask its power, ^{wreak}~~have~~ its effect on you before you can come awake to the fact; the perpendicular animal that is man, after all, is ^{only a beguiled} a visitor upon this wild blue shard-shaped planet ~~named~~ named the North Pacific.

27 May '81: Early in Memorial Day weekend, I think maybe Friday night, I came to the idea of adapting the CJW Russell newspaper letter to use as ending. Can't tell yet whether I'll stick with it, but it looks promising. The settler's name I made up is Jonathan E(dwads) Cotter, simply because it sounds so ineffably Yankee.

--The idea came in the evening, so the next morning I roughed a version of it, even though it wasn't a writing day; just now have done a second draft.

May 29 --Maybe without being conscious about it, I think what I've done these past few years is to combine the day-by-day intensity of journalism--as in magazine writing--with book-length ambitions. This has meant that all the tinkering with language and technique, instead of hitting that magazine-article point of being about as good as it can within the limits of 1500-2000 words (and for the scant payment involved), goes on and on, the ms getting more and more craft put into it.

--A phrase came to me for what I'm trying with this book: "thrift of line, extravagance of result"--indeed, I put it into the ms, in description of the Kolosh canoe, although I thought of it first in connection with the ms.

May 30 --Y'day afternoon, C brought home from Merlyn the final typed pp. of the start of the ms, and I began typing in the page numbers of those that needed it--a stage of ms process C says she can recognize by the "tick-tack" sound of typewriter slapping the double digits onto the paper.

3 June '81: At UW today, inquired at MSS for mid-19th c. letters to look at, as guide to salutation style for the mock-letter which is the current ending of Runners. Karyl Winn suggested the Ayers family papers, which provided a number of options; Connie chipped in a "business reference" book with hackneyed expressions--i.e., 19th centuryisms--to be avoided. Then went up to NW Colctn to see if I could get the name of the Ore. Weekly Times editor at the time, Glenda found a prompt reference.

--details of the salutation-gathering: the place on the same line with the date; the "th" of "19th" at the top of the ~~1~~ last digit; the D^r for Dear, and the variant I liked as a sign-off, Yours &c.

--Also, the Ayers were Conn. people, and the fictitious writer of the letter is meant to be a Yankee, Jonathan E(dwards) Cotter.

5 June--3 pm, just back from mailing off the 1st $\frac{1}{2}$ of Runners ms to Liz. Mystifying to me, but assembling, photocopying and mailing a ms always takes a day, and a rugged one at that.

Hasn't yet sunk in to me, if it ever does before we take off to Montana, that I've wrapped up the first half of Sea Runners. Re-reading the ms--not very definitive, because I'm too close to it just now--it seems to me pretty good line by line, but maybe doesn't yet have the resonance, depth, I want. Anyway, it's been a major half-year of work; seems an awfully slow process, but the language of this ms does seem to ~~1~~ me to be farther along than either Sky or Winter at this stage. I do see, now and again, just what a hell of a dare this book is: the scene-by-scene effort it requires.

26 June--In Bill Lang's office, up a gulch from Montana City: 11:15, have spent the morning sorting the archival research of this trip, noting down possible uses of material. Also put down the kernel paragraphs of 2 possible scenes, the bedsprings photo taken by LIFE at Ft. Peck and the "everything on the place was mortgaged except the air" graf. A fine blue day, I look from Bill's window to what must be the north, timbered ridges with rock castles.

This stay at the Langs' has been auspicious, both in this morn's work toward Last Roof and in the incident which happened within ten min. after we arrived on Wed., about 5:20 or so. C and I had followed Bill out from the Histcl Society after work, were standing around the kitchen table with Bill and Sue, starting on mugs of beer, when phone rang, 7-yr-old or so Joel Lang picked it up, listened, said it's for you, Ivan. I was startled, then muddled as I unclearly heard someone saying congratulations on something or other. Asked who I was being congratulated by, it was Liz; said she likes the Sea Runners 1st half, so does Tom Stewart--wish I could remember her exact phrase, but it was something like he's "thrilled" with it. She said he's ordering up a check, I maybe would have it by when I get back to Seattle, which I doubt. Anyway, great good news.

Chatted with Liz a bit, she said (a) she's been sick for ten days until then, (b) Tony is in China--he works for Random House, is trying to sell Chinese on encyclopedias; and (c) her cat fell out the window.

July 27 - This morning, took up Runners again, but without any real advance, so often the first-day-back result.

The summer is going, at a pace which has me uneasy.

Summer always passes at a strange sideways gait--like a man with a sprung body, somehow out of kilter--and has for as long as I can recall.

29 July '81--1st real day of resumption of Runners. Daunting damn task to get underway again, partly because I'm being schizo and want also to achieve the sundry house chores, some dabbling with friends, exercising myself into ~~xxx~~ shape, all of them of course direct conflicts with the immersion the ms needs.

I did revise, to not all that much improvement, 3 pp. today, as well as leafing thru much of the 1st half of the ms to try catch its mood. Quite a lot of that 1st half seems to me pretty good; but I'm appalled at the work ahead to get the 2nd half into rough draft. Am going to try do that by the time C starts back to work in mid-Sept., though it's problematical whether I can find the time and focus. My original notion was that I'd try do 8 pp. per workday, a combination of revise and fresh drafting. Today's slog panicked me about the problems of that--coming up with the fresh drafting--until I went up about 3:30 to walk the track and during that decided to come home and jot an outline and estimate of pp. per episode in it, then work toward those totals. Have just done so, and it adds up to 83 pp. of the 100 I figured I want in the 1st draft of this second half. So I think that breaks down the numbers into something workable, and in the next week, I'll see if I can't pile up some pages on that basis.

31 July '81--The past couple days, first ones back at the ms, have been rough, but sometime y'day I had two ideas on how to handle the interior monologues I intend in the book's ~~3rd~~ ^{2nd} half: frame them in ellipses, and keep them short, at least at the start. Have just tried it out, breaking a draft of K's first musing into 3 shorter monologues, and it looks good. Think I'll further set off these first ones by surrounding them with dialogue or description, at first breakfast after M'd death, when K decides not to admit absence of maps.

--As I see these monologues, they're to be a surprising element, in the way Melander's metaphorical language was in the first half; an odd angle into the story, a slant shaft into the lode...

23 Aug. '81: 11:30, have just reworked ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{had} the ending pp. of the ms to have K build a signal fire atop the log. Thought of this on Friday, while C was at Mason Clinic with her parents and I some hours to sit around and mull. This is Sunday, and a sunny one, but with visitors in the house I've holed up in the study this morn, trying to ~~do~~ work toward a rough of the 2nd half of the ms by the time they leave, Sept. 2. Tomorrow I ~~try~~ start a so-many-pp/day schedule.

28 Aug.--4:45, a bleary day sinking to a close. Woke last night about an hour after going to sleep and had hell's own time getting back asleep. Between that and the harrowing time all four of us have had in this household, I could not get underway on the Runners ms today, which is at a tricky stage just now, needing some fresh ideas and plotting and characterization. So I sloshed around, counted the pp. of the 2nd half rough--57, which means I'm just 3 short of the shedule I'd set. Wrote, or at least jacklegged together 15 pp. this week. Next week, tho, I need about 20 and am not sure I can ~~fetch~~ fetch 20. I'm about three weeks short of where I desperately want to be: done with the 2nd half rough draft, ready to begin tuning the entire ms. I hope like hell to hit that stage by the end of Sept., then polish, polish, polish~~ing~~ this obdurate book.

4 Sept. '81--Am trying to retrieve the Runners schedule, after loss of abt 4 days of writing due to Lucie's illness during her visit. I have 63 pp. of 2nd half draft, where I'd hoped to have 80 by today or tomorrow. Of the total ms, I have 190 pp. of abt 240 intended.

So, the situation ain't great, particularly given how weary I am and the complexity of the ms just now. Two notions fight in me: to try slog out the necessary pp. to meet the quota, or to stop and think things over for today and the weekend. Am tilting toward the latter, thinking of going to UW library for needed books on bgnd of K and W in Sweden and on w. coast of Vancouver I.; those sections of ms would bring 2nd half total to about 75 pp., which I'd settle for.

15 Sept. '81--Revised the 1st 7 pp. of draft of 2d half, and the book began to feel underway again. The revise took on some flesh, if not yet all the muscle and flex I want. Think I begin to see how to make K an interesting character--by beginning to reveal his history and complement it with interior monologue--and then do some of the same with W.

The ms continues difficult to bring the full force of the file cards and other research to bear on it; possibly because of scene-by-scene structure. This I think will change somewhat in the rewriting and polishing after the entire draft is achieved, but it is a bugger to achieve.

Would like to pin down the mood of today, why it~~is~~--and intimations of it as far back as Friday and Sat., on the Olympics hikes--begins to feel like achievement, possibility. Possibly the restedness from the Oly trip, possibly my internal clock. I'm not eager for these next 3 weeks of doing the rough draft; am considerably bothered they weren't achieved earlier; but I do look at them as a stint with better times just beyond.

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28 Sept.--2:10, have begun the third of what I hope are last weeks of dynamite-and-quarry on Runners; after this week's 25 pp. are got, it should be construction time, embellish and revise toward completion. Have gone thru these weeks, 30 pp. reworked in each of last 2 weeks, somewhat appalled, wondering why there proves to be so much work left on Runners when I've already worked like a haystacker on it all these months. I guess--am praying--the answer is that the effort has lifted the 1st half of the ms into better shape than usual.

30 Sept.--2:45: A pivot day on Sea Runners, or so I hope. Have done, for 3d day in a row, 5 pp. of mostly fresh material. That leaves 10 to go to make the week's end goal of 85 pp. draft of second half of ms, and those 10 I can write in the next two days if I have to tear off fingernails and write them in blood.

1 Oct. '81--First of a month, and by a month from now, there should be long progress on ms: it should have nearly final shape, need just touching-up and polishing.

The last 3 weeks have been a constant levering on the 2nd half, and y'day the task finally pivoted.

As I see the chore next: keep at the ms at as high a pace as I can without breaking my guts as I've done these 3 weeks; after likely 2 weeks of that, which I hope will produce fuller charzns of K and W and fill in most of the plot gaps, evaluate and see how the work has to be divvied into days again.

7 Oct.--The trance of rewriting seems to have begun, a couple of weeks earlier than intended. I am tinkering at the 1st half of the ms, trying to bring up luster, and the days fog away somewhere.

Oct. 15--Have had a strong week on Runners, particular advance y'day morning when I wrote 3 pp. of bgnd and charztn on Karlsson, one of those hard-to-cross bridges. Am bang on schedule so far this week, tho tomorrow may be a heller, since I've used up a lot of the easily-rewritten stuff already. I have begun to feel that I'm over the hump on the ms, with the 2nd half at last shaping up, but there's also the nag that this is coming late, not all that much of the year left.

Oct. 25- This is the part of writing a book that Orwell said is like having a long illness, a kind of sameness and haze about it, but some pleasure of advance too.

Oct. 31- I now have just over 100 draft pp. of 2nd half of ms, some of it decent stuff, and the plot is in place. But what I missed in previous calculations is that these are 100 triple-spaced draft pp., instead of double-spaced typescript: therefore I'm still short about 25-30 pp. Spent some time y'day juggling the 2nd $\frac{1}{2}$ together, and inserted yellow "scene to come" sheets at about 20 places. Some will be brief, the descent of Vancouver Island will be the longest. Hope to do them at about 2 per day.

So: a lot of reasonable work on the ms in Oct., the 2nd $\frac{1}{2}$ of ms taking shape and some life--and given the complexity and challenge of it, I suppose that's no small result. The rest of the job looks quantifiable: fill in the 2nd $\frac{1}{2}$ scenes and do as much look-over of the 1st half as possible, by Thanksgiving; then the rest of the smoothing. There's not as much time left as I'd like; could well be finishing the typing just before we go to NY on Dec. 20.

10 Nov. 81--Ms is demanding so much work that I've forfeited both the diary and these entries, recently. But as best I can summarize what's been happening: --1st week of this month, I worked on 1st $\frac{1}{2}$ of ms, so C could read it in some version of completeness last weekend; also strung together the second $\frac{1}{2}$ a bit more, and inserted yellow "scene to come" sheets where filling in is needed; about 20 of those, now worked down to 15 or so. C began Friday afternoon, finished ms by Sat. night, Sun. morn went over suggestions with me. Not really so many; main one was that M could not have given up on getting all the maps, he was too careful and organized, would have sent K back for the rest; she suggested I change it to a case of only 4 maps being available, the steamship never venturing farther south than that. end

--Was weary at ~~the~~ end of last week, but with a couple of days' rest and being heartened by C's sense, and mine, that not much more needed doing on the ms than I already knew, felt much better. Hard to maintain, though. Y'day was a useful one, several good patches inserted, but all still on 1st $\frac{1}{2}$. This morn, too, the work had to be on 1st $\frac{1}{2}$, insert of descptn of paddling. Set to work right after lunch on the 2nd $\frac{1}{2}$ scene of the crossing of Milbanke Sound, didn't get far. Did some mild editing, some moping, then about 3:15 took the plunge and rewrote W's blackest interior musing, on death of his wife (also restored to ms at C's sug'n) into dialogue; decided to run graf of Cook's journal descptn of Vancouver I. coast, idea I may or may not stick with; began to wonder if I can meld the Cook jnl and material I have on ~~the~~ "the dreaming"--ideas perking a bit, finally.

16 Nov.--Pretty much all of life is ms, to the point where C evidently bought us a car (Diane Zink's Ford) at noon and is going to tell me about it at suppertime.

20 Nov. '81--The week I think I bent and strung the bow. Second $\frac{1}{2}$ of ms is at last feeling right; I've filled in the yellow "to come" pp. except for 4 or so at Shoalwater Bay, and the Vancouver I. run (and I've a rough of that). Also went thru the pp., 132 of them at week's start, and brought nearly all of them up to the point needed before final polish. Still to come, personality of K and W, K's divided mind about the coast. But the main stuff I think is at last in place.

I may get a book out of this yet.

3 Dec. '81-- 9:30 am. This morning, and for the most part the days of this week, at last are the point at which the ms begins to knit itself together. With no intention at all of it, I spent Monday and most of Tuesday on the Makah whaling scene, which has become one of the longer and stronger of the book, I think. At once this morning I set to reworking the ShiShi scene, and in not much more than an hour had refashioned the 3 pp. of K at the seastacks into 4 pp, including a couple of new interior monolog grafts. Then went to Edmonds for coffee break, while driving 3 new bits for ms came to me:

--B suggesting milk cow etc to W's wintering; (p. 165)

--men as chilled as if cold water poured into bones

--for Vancouver section, "3 times it snowed, swarm of white from out of the gray."

Island

5 Dec.--Sat. morning, and a bleary one, evdtly my eyes played out from past week's work on Runners. Did make enormous progress, bringing about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the second $\frac{1}{2}$ of the ms into shape. It's been a beast, back there in the deep part of the book, but now I begin to think it may be the best part of the ms. Next week's task is to get the concluding 40-50 pp into shape.

Have let myself get too weary, as I suppose I do on every book at this point.

14 Dec. --Belated entry, but the Runners ms was done on Friday, the 11th. Managed it by noon. Got back last of typescript today, 260 pp., exact total--65000 words--I wanted it to be.

(1982)

4 Jan.--A beginning in snow. Only a half-inch or so, but the city as usual is struck paraplegic by it. With us, snow days are a kind of pleasure. C backpacks to work, as she's just done this morn--1st morn of classes--and I walk around the n'hood before the cars get out. Life is quiet.

C and I are both extraordinarily sanguine just now. What'll bring us down is the rest of the world, which seems to be going to hell on the downslope while we're holding fine in our lives. My mood derives from Sea Runners, where it's all so far, so good. Likely I'll hear from Tom Stewart this week, and that could turn things around. But Liz called y'day, said she loved the ms, thought the language wonderful. And the session with her ~~in NY~~ and Tom in NY went fine. Tom said what I wanted to hear--a Paul Bacon cover, a handsome prod'n job, early fall pub'n so the book can gather reviews.

Tom is younger than I expected, probably 35 bit more; Harvard, which I didn't expect either, doesn't seem to have affected him too much; good-looking, in a kind of young Leslie Howard sort of way. Wore a hand-tied bowtie, first I've seen in decades.

7 Jan.--On the 4th, Tom Stewart's reaction to Runners came in the mail, beginning: "I have read, and I pronounce myself delighted! It's a brilliant performance, engrossing, bright but never clever, and very exciting." I'll take that anytime.

8 Jan. '82: last Monday, the 4th, Tom Stewart's letter appraising the ms arrived, along with the snowstorm that covered the roads for the rest of the week until today. I'd intended to take time off, get out--downtown, and to Ebey's Landing, for ex--but given the weather and Tom's prompt response, decided to get back to ms instead. Spent most of time since then working on 1st 75 pp. of ms, the New Archangel end. Have g reviewed all the Sitka and Rn America source material, made crx or additions on ms with green lines. Today revamped, mostly by moving around, the bgnd material in the ppl which intro M, and the 1st scene of M and K;

--ms p. 19: opening line abt B's desire to leave NA went thru mutations ~~from one~~ across abt yr and a half:

--originally, "B wd have given the fingers of one hand..."

--in revise before ~~reworking~~ ms completion in late '81, "fingers from one hand"

--now has become "fingers from either hand"

19 Jan '82: at Lapush last Thurs., after last of Winter Bros filming there, C and I walked the beach to the breakwater, looked at the town with its pilings rising from water, I thought up the line "low tide showing the shins of the town." Have just installed it in the Astoria descptn, p. 139 of ms,

p. 213--crx Jane's cargo total in Jan.

22 Jan '82: y'day went to Fed Rec Center to track down Tom Cox's ref'ce to ^{the brig} Jane, in Olympia customs house records; opened the register, beautiful broad pages of copperplate script giving ship name, where built, owner, last port, master, where bound, and cargo--and under cargo for all ships such as Jane, simply the notation: "Piles ~~not~~ & lumber." By studying the pages for 1851-54 I finally found one cargo entry with some arithmetic--the Leonesa, 12,000 feet of piles--and luck of luck, it was a brig as the Jane was. Since it was 180-tonner and Jane about 165-tonner, I made the Jane's cargo 11,000'.

27 Jan--Am very nearly, at by god last, at the summit of the manuscript. Tomorrow should do it, in terms of substantive changes. Then maybe tinkering on Friday, read it over on weekend, mail it off on Monday. These past 3 days in particular have been the weary but good kind, faintly like after-sex, of expending myself and seeing the ms emerge better and better. This week's work has been mostly on the last of the book, Karlsson and Wennberg after Braaf's death, and the Willapa material especially has been deepened, made more dramatic.

3 Feb.--On the 1st I mailed off the revised ms to Tom Stewart, Liz Darhansoff, and Carol Smith in London. Y'day sent Tom the 4th Tebenkov map to pass along as possible inspiration for the cover, and some other random stuff. Today, am free of Runners for the first time in one helluva while.

9 Feb '82 --Have just read Flannery O'Connor's letters, and among the wise comments--often wisecracks as well--is her running battle against people who see symbolism that isn't there. She perpetually was asked why her character the Misfit wore a black hat, and perpetually answered, because Georgia farmers wear black hats. Which makes me think I ought to get down how it happened that Wennberg is a Bible-spouter. On the Alpha Helix trip, while talking with Howard Cutler about indenturement, he asked how many years my Swedes had to serve. & 7, I said. That reminded him of the biblical refce--serving for Ruth--tho he couldn't quite recall it, and went off to ask his wife. I was taken with the 7 year resonance--it's also in Conrad; the Chinese in Typhoon are 7-year ~~men~~ men--and wanted to use the biblical refce. My first try was simply to quote it, but it looked awkward, and I decided to have one of the characters use it. Braaf, a thief, was obviously no candidate; Melander, a sailor, wasn't much more eligible; and for plot purposes, I wanted Karlsson to be a rationalist. Which left Wennberg, and since I wanted to complicate him anyway, making him a fallen-away believer seemed worth the effort; and the time of the men weathered in at Tow Hill and storytelling seemed the obvious place. So: no vast intention behind it all, just Howard's remark and my liking for the biblical rhythm.

17 Feb. --Arrived back from the Methow weekend abt 4 pm on the 15th, and amid the soggy mail waiting in the box was Tom Stewart's letter about my revise of Runners, beginning "It's beautiful, simply beautiful." May you live forever and I never die, Tom.

1 March--Interesting day, fiddling with the start of the Montana novel. Seems to me a very fine lead. Now, as ever, to see if it holds up.

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