winned for WORK SONG and MISS YOU 14 March '08
Ringling's was a life without hurry. The entire town had to be
looked at each time you went outdoors, just to remind yourself it was
to read the maestro of it all, Thomas Wolfe, himself a kind of literary


great rains cleanse through gulch and gully, they — rumble with spoked
thunder... I will go up and down the country, and back and forth across
the country on the great trains... I will go out West where states are
square...."

Yes, well; west was my polar direction, but Montana is nowhere near square.
The flight to Texas was one more step from family history. It was my first time in an airplane. I had always traveled to college by train. At the Ringling depot, I would stand on the platform with my luggage and the Milwaukee passenger train stretching itself out from behind the hills would clamber to a stop. It was a special feeling to be the only one on or off a train when it stopped. A hint of having effect on grand forces, of commanding for a moment the great power chain of railroad, bunched in the colossal engine and spanned across all the graded, tie-built miles.

Similarly, the telephone. The first phone I can remember in my family was after the folks moved to WSS (note that Gordon and Sherry Doig got there phone on the ranch just this winter), which must have been about '67. Before, it meant going to Brekkes or Angus to use the phone; even earlier, when I was in jr high, it meant going down to pay phone at Mike Ryan's store. Phone calls were vaster then, more momentous.

Garage, or any shelter for a car; never had any in the family, and the house in WSS still doesn't. Cars sat outside, as God intended, though they would be parked out of wind as much as possible.
A blue norther would come from the horizon like an instant ice age.

I was called Old Man, like an Indian name. The first haircut down to the skin at Lackland left me bald for weeks. At last a slight red bristle showed. But always I heard "how old are you?"

I read the tension and dry tone of my letters home, and wish for better. Why does talking across a generation drain the life out of what's said? Not until my late 20s was I fully at ease with Dad, searching for talk to make with him instead of merely being desultory.

For the first time in my life, I saw a snowstorm come from the southeast, and it disoriented me, as if rain were to come up from the ground or sideways out of trees.
Outline for THE REALMS OF UTOPIA

Part One: Visions in the Dawn

Except for Aldous Huxley's Island, which is off my local library shelves at the moment, the photocopied selections for Part One are attached. In the sample...
The body has memory, too. You would have to pay considerable to get
me onto a horse these days, but the elevated feeling of being on horseback
stunt
returns readily enough when I need to write of it. That trick of the
and managed to more or less teach me--
tongue, prrr prrr, which my father coaxed sheep with \textit{xsminadshuk}--that found
its way into the mouth of an English Creek character. "Basic everyday
if
matters": they are the majority of life, why not
I had become their talisman against the stranger new world—the guarantor that if I were with them, the airliner would not crash from the sky, their automobile would not break down on the fierce freeway—their doctor would not say anything so awful.
Along its way toward today, this country of ours lost its big backyard. It is a deprivation we can regret most keenly during an election year. Consider: up until the admission of Arizona to the Union in 1912 -- the last chunk of the continental U.S. to be shepherded into statehood -- there always was some unshorn westward territory which could absorb some of our excess politicians. But then we ran out of territorial governments in the great western backyard, and we've been up to our eardrums in surplus politicians ever since.

The great point about the territorial system was that would-be politicos could obtain office out there without subjecting all of us to the rigamarole of campaigns and elections. The main office-holders of a territory -- and between the time of the original thirteen states and Arizona's 1912 admission, a total of 29 territories had existed as preludes to statehood -- simply were named by the President and confirmed by the Senate. This brought some unforgettable styles of government:

--Montana Territory after the Civil War had an acting governor
The train lit my imagination. It showed me the high plains country, mounted the sweet apprehension of coming home — How will I tell them I want to continue for a Master's degree? Will they be speaking to one another? On those homeward trains, I could feel myself changing, see against the earlier journeys that I was not the same, as if there were rows of sets of eyes and nerve ends, used in the past trips and now outmoded. What I was becoming I didn't know, although I daydreamed about it constantly, but whatever it would be, it would not be in the Montana (valley) footsteps.

Once, when I had gone to the dome car, I came back to find my seat taken by a Dakota farm woman and her new baby. The train was near-full, and I called the conductor. Should I have?

Look out the window, then read. Often I would re-read Of Time and the River, lines that beat on the rails and into the future:
It would be unfair to say that ALL the major officials of Washington Territory by then were embroiled with one another and snitching to President Lincoln at the least opportunity. Judge Wyche was keeping his peace and dealing out "substantial justice." And Judge Oliphant, who surely would have stumbled into somebody's disfavor had he been around, was holding court off in the far-flung Eastern Washington district most of the time.

The best testimony to Washington Territory's minor position out in the national backyard at the time -- and maybe to the essential sanity of the Lincoln administration -- is that in all these political vendettas, nobody really won or lost much more than anybody else.

In the entire set of top Republican officials, the only person who was relieved of his job in Washington Territory during the Civil War was Victor Smith, and he immediately was handed another which he liked at least as well.

The countless pleas for intramural vengeance by these officeholders to that friend of friends, Abraham Lincoln, largely were futile. The man did have a war to run.

What, then, were the results of these efforts to make new careers,
The body has memory too. I **remember** bring a hand close to my eye in strong light, and the small white scars **are** still there. They are the cuts from a jackknife, or a sharp edge of machinery -- all small flows of blood and then a healing into a white line of memory across the skin. If I bump my right knee, pain erupts there, as if the two years I wore it bandaged are shrieking to get out. When I played handball for the first time in my life at age 32, I found myself touching the back wall behind me to find it with my fingers. It is the same touching from the hours of bouncing a rubber ball off a house and catching it against a tin shed. Even the tongue muscles work in remembered patterns. In the living room where my father sat so many hours, I find myself talking like him.
Moss Agate was bone-and-gristle country.
There was distance to contend with. Travel meant riding by horseback for hours, often in bad weather. Even when the car came into that country, the rutted roads and mud made going somewhere no easy task. But in the factors of distance and isolation came a freedom of sorts -- the space to move in according to your own whims and bents. It was this openness, this fact that a person was a speck on an earthly sea, that was too much for some of the settlers. Some retreated into the dimness of their cabins and the grimmer darkness of their own worst impulses, and lost touch with hope. There still were some alive when I was a boy, near-hermits living off somewhere with their lives festering. But for another mood, the openness was a chance and a challenge. The day had long past when the country was unfenced, and it is one of the legends of the west that the coming of barbed wire had ended the freest era.

But that did not hold true in our area. The fences instead pulled together a way of life, a pattern of support and basic supplies inside which a person could move. It was not strands of wire which made the great change in that land -- it was the growth of units of government and business.
some talent, then losing them to bigger newspapers.

The work was splendid. The Lindsay-Schaub management saw itself in the role of obliged gentry, and took its editorial page seriously. Seven of us wrote for it, spewing out copy for the morning and evening papers in Decatur, the chain towns across southern Illinois, the big Sunday edition. I found I could write four editorials in a day, deft and unoffending, and still have time to lay out the editorial page.

The editor of the editorial page, he had gone nearly blind years before, and with the brine of sight left to him had stayed on the job. Through his thick glasses he could read copy held close in front of him, and make his editing marks in fat pencil strokes. He had been a young newspaperman in Springfield when Vachel Lindsay was alive and reciting his poems there. He had an elegance. Handing me the wire service story that the traditional puff of smoke had announced John XXIII as pope, he said Habemus papam, hmm?

He kept on a shrine-shelf in his office the martini glass of his predecessor as editorial page editor.

And living in Decatur was duller than Ringling. The city's home-family-church was more staid than I could stand. I dated the publisher's college-age daughter a time or two, looked at the perplexities of that, and backed off. Afternoons off, I went next door and drank beer with my landlady. Then, a few times a month, I began to go to Chicago on assignment, to report on meetings of the board which governed the Downstate universities. I began seeing Carol, whom I had worked with in the summer job at Northwestern.

A note came from Carol, whom I had worked with in the summer job at Northwestern. She had moved back to Evanston, taken a job as a magazine editor. My reporting assignments took me to Chicago every few weeks, and we began seeing each other.
But. Was the true rhythm of this travel in pistons, or in the apparatus back of my eyes? I half-knew that even as the train flung headlong, faster across the xeric middle-American prairie than the earth ought even to be able to hold, I somehow was moving beyond its pace. The train, for all its cleaving toiling striding power, aimed itself back and forth along given lines. I felt that I was hurling free of such markings.

Each in each space of journey, I could count up what I knew that had not been known the time before: the course in writing and reporting, the adventuring into Russian as I had once followed Mrs. Tidyman into Latin, the hours of history. College had turned out to be a map I was going across in zigs and zags and loops of joy, and all I knew about a destination was that it would be somewhere I could work at writing. The train hours were a capsule of time when all this pulsed in the mind. When I stepped down again to a Montana depot platform, Dad or Grandma would be asking, as ever, How was your trip? I might answer There was a herd of antelope, forty-fifty of them, on the flats a bit ago or Fields are green across Minnesota already or We were held up in Miles City waiting for a freight--any answer but the one which said what a plunging time those journeys were.

A think that there can never be such an instant in my life again.
Years after, when soldiers talk, it is not the muck and tedium

Not the muck and tedium of combat life but the furloughs in Herculaneum or Paris are relived when soldiers talk. I can understand such a wile of the past. Throughout the Cuban missile crisis I was on duty at an Air Force base, yet what I remember first is not the tremor of near war but latrines.

Nations' pantomimes of power are no joke, though they are absurd.

The buds grow day by day. I worry that they are too early, that cold weather will ambush them. Outside my window is a crab apple tree which was surprised that way and the past year has seemed dead. Now it is reincarnating in awkward splays of new branches, a funny half-dead half-alive skeleton amid the green of rhododendron and 00.
Sixteen looked like a scattering of houses which had spilled off flatcars as the Milwaukee trains flew down the canyon. Such 

you can read them the whole townless length of the mainline -- Ringling, the previous stop along the 

of the railroad's run through the county: Lennep, Loweth, Ringling, Maudlow -- tracks, was even worse scattered -- were so tiny they had no 

even a few hundred pattern at all. A town even of 500 people would show some straight-sided blocks of homes, a main street. But Sixteen 

added up to maybe one-tenth of a small town, and the houses 

happened to go up wherever anyone 

yet Sixteen had a reason in life, two reasons. The 

passenger trains did stop there, and Tom Kerr ran a store 

and post office.
In those photos of the Boig ranch, the rimrock of Wall Mountain is in the background, arcing along the horizon like a fence of rock pillars. It is a meaningful setting, because that country was walled off from many things...
Dialogue: I suppose he was going girlie...
How do I woo the past? What turn of my hand above the keyboard will bring it near?

And why do I work at it? I dream forward, but those are different towards dreams than those into the past...
money is gone, then back to a job. These men make themselves plain when you
tend camp, though you assume generally that's what they are anyway. They
get meaner and surlier each time you come, hoping to force a fight and an
excuse to quit.

--The sheepwagon. The last child of the prairie schooner. A long
wagon bed set on high wheels, with a white canvas top. The inside is compact
as a ship's cabin, full of chests which double as bunk seats, a table which
hinges down from the wall, snug cabinets. The bed extends across the back
of the wagon. A small wood stove is near the front door. The door is a dutch
doors, so from the inside with the bottom portion closed, it is remarkably
like looking out of a ship and seeing an ocean of grass and archipelagos
of trees.

A sheepwagon sits high -- the floor is chest high to a man on the
ground -- and moves with a topheavy gait. A good move is one that doesn't
topple the stovepipe.

We all are murdered by mortality in due time, but sheep act as if
they can't wait. They arrange appointments with death which boggle the
mind.

A sheepwagon on the move is a bin; the little front steps are thrown
in, plus any firewood the herder has chopped, plus the fuel oil can and
maybe a milk can full of spring water. If a cabinet door works open and
drops a dozen eggs or an open can of Carnation milk in the middle of it all,
there is a fine mess. At the end of the move, there is the leveling up to
be done -- small holes to be dug for the wheels to drop into, or stout
stick under a corner of the wagon box. Put a cup of water on the table
and see how level it is.
She was 5'3" and 155 pounds—three inches shorter than Dad and 30 pounds heavier. She was strong enough to lift a bale of hay, and had the stamina to work all day, then fix the meals.

Gee golly, what'll I cook?

She could not stand to have her arms covered, always wore short-sleeved dresses. Her arms were dark scarred as a torture victims, small white lines of scar from dog's claws and barb wire and rough siding.
until the house was a kind of brindle color. When we bought asphalt siding which looked like red brick, we told ourselves we had improved the looks of the house a millionfold, and the siding would keep some of the wind out as well. It didn't, noticeably. Blizzard mornings, I would wake up and find snow finely sifted on the windowsill above the head of my bed, like spilled sugar.

Our rippling water front, I glimpsed from stove peering, I ground the stove peering, I ground the stove peering. I'm my rippling water front. It's easy for me to grow into.

Even now, keener in my memories to me, and per time in our lives a strange season all might and gray and fall-run nitroglycerin.

I can write of these few years only through this memory section, and only as far as I have seen able to find what was seen of me, exposed, for nothing of knapsack--photocopy--writen fine, kept back--this surviving. It is as in my father tried to sound each creek of her from out waters.

but always there are the tearjerking crevices of memory, and even then I dimpipe bath. I see, press the eye's inside and softly draw with what seemed to be some part beginning to disappear behind the green--the green, crept back of a gone the impact before the breezes for cover. The face was no only, piping as a white-platter, put those mocking eyes through it. Dark-pattern--I crinkled pronounced. All and fully present; my father then my mother 've been nightly as call as day. A voice with the
what he had been through in the bog of months just behind us. It happened faster than any of us could follow. This man who had spent six careful years courting my mother now married the young ranch cook he had known only weeks. Ruth, Dad: only the loins could have drawn together this pairing. For the sake of the both of them, my struggling father and the woman who had stepped inside my mother's outline, I hope that there were times in bed before the quick marriage, and that something close to love kindled then. Because all too soon, the war between them had begun.

Even now Ruth is mysterious to me, and her time in our lives a strange season all mist and dusk and half-seen silhouettes. I can write of these few years only through this hazed sensation, and only as far as I have been able to find what has been so long obscured. For nothing of Ruth—photograph, written line, keepsake—has survived. It is as if my father tried to scour every trace of her from our lives.

But always there are the farthest crevices of memory, and along them I glimpse Ruth. I see best the eyes, large and softly brown with what seemed to be some hurt beginning to happen behind them—the deep, trapped look of a doe the instant before she breaks for cover. The face was too oval, plain as a white platter, but those madonna eyes graced it. Dark-haired—I think, brunette; slim but full breasted; and taller than my mother had been, nearly as tall as Dad. A voice with the
Neither of us had been lectured that a saloon is no place for a six-seven-eight-nine-year old. Had we been, and had we thought the argument through, I think we could have decided that a saloon had its good points for a child. For in those knots of drinking men, I learned much about listening, and how to see in detail. There is nothing like watching alcohol change a person before your eyes to learn about shades of character.

The bars put a sharing in my life nobody else my age had. They were a place almost entirely without other children — certainly none as regular as me at Dad's elbow — and this open ticket into the country of adults was much livelier and more informative than school. I had a full role to play. When Lloyd Robertson teased that if he was unlucky enough to have Scots blood in him he'd cut his throat to let it out, I was expected to retort that he might as well because a Missourian like him was nothing but a Scotchman with his brains kicked out. When Pete McCabe leaned across the bar to ask what kind of pop I wanted, both of us took my deciding seriously, even though the answer nearly always was grape.

The first taste of high manners I can remember came the night Dad was drinking with the black sheep brother of our local state senator. The brother was known to be a wizard in handling horses, but also a hopeless lush. I was used to drinkers teetering off the bar stool every second beat to head for the toilet. But this one paused, tottered, and gravely said: "Excuse me. I have to go empty my bladder." I had never heard a man speak words that way before.
The writer's dread is that only the fingers are talking, that the mind's story has dodged the attempt to piece it out into sentence and episode. Yet fingers may know a coax or two to try on memory's scales. One is the plain stroking of fact onto paper. From there the past must stipple in the details if anything is ever to be explained. Now the broad strokes are these:

The writer's dread is that only the fingers are talking, that the mind's story has dodged the attempt to piece it out into sentence and episode. Yet fingers may know a coax or two to try on memory. One is to stroke the biggest facts flatly onto paper. From there the past must fill in the edgework of detail.

So, in broad strokes, Charles Campbell Doig in 1945:

He had a son to raise by himself.

He needed a job.

We needed somewhere to live.

He felt a long grief for my mother.

The son and the grief were the long problems. In me, he had an odd little sobersides who would toss rocks at a cougar one afternoon and the next want to know why the gypsy boy couldn't have chocolate milk and cookies when the rest of the first grade did. How the two of us managed each other will be told time and again. His grief for my mother was a different bafflement for him. For 16 years, they had been inseparable. Some months after she died, a man told him to buck up, not let a thing like that keep bothering him. Years later Dad told me how he still despised the man for that pair of sentences.
You've lived all those years since, so you know what happened. What I thought would happen, I don't know. About all I can remember.

June 27, 1946 -- A lot has happened. It was my first year in school. The first several days I didn't know anybody, and shied away at recess. Susan B knew me from when Dad put up the hay on her father's ranch, and she made friends with me. I already knew how to read, so learning how to read was dull. We lived on the Straugh ranch, about 15 miles from town. I had perfect attendance. At graduation they called up the two of us from the whole school who had perfect attendance -- me and Stanley Stamper, the center on the basketball team. Steve and Larry Ward lived on the neighboring ranch. We wandered around the hills and sagebrush, and one day we saw an animal in the coulee behind the house and threw rocks at it and drove it up a tree. When we told our parents about it, they said it was a cougar.
Carol once said she knew where I was when JFK was shot. I told her no, not if she thought I was on the job. Instead I was having lunch in a saloon. We had a composure test for political aspirants. The whole editorial page staff -- usually seven of us -- would cram into a booth with the candidate crammed right in with us. This proximity, Bill Rango's coffee and our quick questions tried his mettle to our satisfaction or disappointment.
In this booth I was having lunch, with one and probably more of my fellow writers, when the bar quieted and the voice from the television set suddenly came clear.

I've been working as an editorial writer for Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers here in Decatur, Illinois, since April 15. I earn $112 a week, almost three times as much as I did on ranches in Montana. I'm about to buy a car.

The job is excellent. The paper here -- papers, rather, since they publish both a morning and an afternoon paper -- is the headquarters for a chain of dailies here in Downstate. There are seven of us on the editorial staff, and our editorials on state, national and international matters appear in all the papers.

Besides writing a couple of editorials a day, I also edit the editorial page for either the morning or the afternoon paper. This involves layout, writing headlines, editing the copy -- the whole shebang. And what continually amazes me, it also involves deciding which columns of feature stories to use. Rather than subscribing to a few columnists and running them regularly, the papers subscribe to damn near everyone and let us choose the best material each day.

The great topic of this summer is the racial upheaval, and it's both an opportunity and a burden to be writing about it. It's not enough to point accusingly at the South, but it's a considerable job to keep editorial comment above such an obvious level.

I've been here more than two months now, and have learned a hell of a lot more about newspapering than I once thought I'd ever know. I like this job very much -- although Decatur still hasn't persuaded me the city has any charms -- and seemingly my work has been satisfactory. I still think I'll likely be moving on around the first of the year. There's still an itch to get away from the Midwest for awhile.
One value of America is the richness of memory it has provided. In a way, it accounts for national weakness for nostalgia fads -- media open for all, so much about an era is known, then can be recapitulated as common property later.

Geography accounts for a lot -- isolation between oceans has meant no warfare on our soil, no boundary feuds north or south. What we have is collective national memory of family unit making its way on the vast and quiet land.

Suddenness and vastness of change goes into our memory, too.

Born in 1890s, person saw us go from horseback to jet plane.

In the skull vault is everything we have ever taken or been given. The 00 of 00 rests against 00, and both compressed to dots of memory and so made intense.

One way or another, the workings of memory have taken up

A son
my life. A student, imprinting into my mind the imprintings of generations. A writer, ferreting into memory of others, the printed versions. A husband,

And now, at middle life, all of these older than

I am older now than my mother when she died, and the very age when the father, when my grandfather pitched sideways a heart attack spun him sideways and he died.

I am spaced between having been young and not yet middle aged, What stays and what goes

Doctors who work in the mind can offer explanations why the huge moments stay with us -- first love, death. But how explain the particles --
I read the Tribune for the baseball scores and stories, memorizing batting averages, etc. Then, since you can read a sports page only so many times, I began reading everything else in the paper. By the time I was 7 or 8, I would sit on a bar stool reading, oblivious to all else.
I had the sensation that I knew what it meant to be each of them --
the man

the woman

And with it went the moroseness that these would never be an easy
match
Notions jittered in my mind like fancywear on a clothesline.
Our national memory is motion, and it was no different for us, even though Dad and Grandma both had spent most of their lives within the mountain bounds of the valley.
Aware of my name, the only one like it in the county, EYEvun, eye-vun. But better that than Pinky, or Red.
The only hatless man in the saloon would be the bartender. I peered out from under a broad black grim, which men would roughly co around on my head. Sweat on hat bands - dress hats for town.
The son was his long concern. In me, he had an odd little sobersides who would toss rocks at a cougar one afternoon and the next want to know why the gypsy boy couldn't have chocolate milk and cookies when the rest of the first grade did. I doubt that Dad had any theories about raising a child. His answer simply was to treat me like a small resident man, take me wherever he went, if I wanted to go. Perhaps best of all for my upbringing, this included the saloons of White Sulphur Springs.

The town's non-drinkers probably weren't enthused about it, but the crowd, at the bar was proud that a town of 1200 could support nine saloons.
Quite young he must have begun to have the cat's cradle of
lines at the corner of his eyes. The squint of looking into
the sun and wind does that, and he spent nearly every day of his
life at the beach or on the water. One fine day he came ashore...
The landmark showing where my father was born can be seen from nearly anywhere in the valley, too, and I remember mixed comments from him about it. Down the length of the valley from White Sulphur Springs, Wall Mountain rises into sight, a great regular band of rock along its north face like a vast wall. In the homesteaders' community beyond Wall Mountain, he was born in 1901. It is a fine thing to see a monument above your birthplace. On the other hand, Wall Mountain had before his eyes every day as a perpetual reminder of hard times. "Things were so tough nobody lived back there but Scotchmen and coyotes," Dad would say, "and it got cleared so tough the coyotes moved out."

When the pair of us came back to the Smith River Valley, we lived some weeks with Dad's favorite brother, more weeks with his best friend from boyhood. I started school in White Sulphur Springs.
The single moment most intense for our lives was my mother's death: it changed everything that would happen after it. But the direction of change, the tone of our lives for the next several years, began on that ranch. It put my father back into the slog of job and country which his own father had started 50 years before: the slog of

to work a living out of their land.

out of country which didn't want to give it up.

70 years later, a land began this - 70 yrs

contend with man & land, this land man & man.

The single moment most intense for our lives, like the hot light of an explosion, had been my mother's death: it reached into us and changed everything that would happen afterward.

It was too much to admit that country stood empty for a reason -- that its grass lacked nutrition it would feed the winter stacked snow on it.
My father suddenly had a son to raise by himself. He needed a job. He had to find somewhere for us to live. [Across half a lifetime, I look back at him and try to find why only the first and most confounding of those terrors seemed not to baffle him.

He set out after a job and a roof by bringing us out of the Bridger peaks to the highlands of south central Montana where he had spent nearly all his life. The Smith River Valley is a sage-gray deck of land between surges of mountain and ridge, so broad and elevated that the sweep of sage-gray miles is more valley in name than intent. White settlers had rooted in the area only eighty years earlier, and [already] weather and livestock prices had flattened most of the [original] homesteads and [next] generation of diehards as well. I have wondered about Dad's [full] emotions for this landscape ghosted with [lost effort] but like many feelings, they were lost unsaid between us. Clearly he liked to hunt deer and elk along the timbered slopes edging the valley. And to the end of his life he spoke fondness for the Dogie Ranch on the east fork of the Smith River, where he became foreman with 00 men under him when he was 22 years old. Beyond that, what he felt for this [unpromising] home territory of the American generations of Doigs stayed within him.

Perhaps because I inherited no open enthusiasm for the terrain, I see there with a hard eye. Whenever I return to the valley, the odd, unfinished feeling comes into me.
That is as much as can be eked out, then, about the background my father came out of. Country, settlers' patterns, family -- read into them all you can, and still you are left wondering the story draws down to the boundaries of my father's life. Charles Campbell Doig. Charlie.

I am never going to know, with much truth, just what it must have been to be young Charlie Doig. Everything from the tone of mind to the surrounding years stands in the way of such understanding.
June 27, 1946 --- Today I am seven years old. I will be in the second grade this fall.

I didn't like school when I started. I didn't know anybody and at recess I sat on the sidewalk by myself. Except Susan Buckingham knew me from when Daddy put up her daddy's hay at the Loophole ranch and she made friends with me.

A gypsy boy was in our grade. When we had a party he couldn't have any cookies or chocolate milk. He lived in a trailer house down by the river.

We live on the Straugh ranch. The school bus comes from Ringling. Daddy or Wally drives me in the pickup to the gate to meet the bus. Sometimes we have to walk when the snow or mud is deep.

I go to town when Daddy does. He goes in the bars and drinks beer with his friends and I go with him. People buy me pop and talk to me. When I get sleepy I go to the pickup and lay down.

The first grade was easy except for coloring. I already knew how to read. I have more funnybooks than any of the other kids. But coloring with crayons is hard. I draw pictures of cowboy and Indian fights. Mrs. Holmes says I don't do a good job of coloring out to the edges of the paper. I turn the paper around and color the other way along the edges.

There are boys I play with now at the ranch. Steve and Larry live on the ranch across the road. We play in the hills and the sagebrush and one day we saw an animal in the coulee behind our house. We threw rocks and yelled at it until it ran up into a tree. We told Daddy about it. He said it was a cougar and it could have ate all three of us.
The winter of 1948-49 in Montana our part of Montana was the one to measure all other winters against. Day upon day, it was weather in which to look out the window and curse, being a little afraid. Death-cold months, as if the sun had gone forever and the planet was giving over to glaciers. Snow fell, drifted, crusted over, then fell and drifted and crusted over again. The county roads were blocked solid for long periods.
The neighboring ranch were a runty pair of boys about my age, and we prowled and ambushed and explored together. The three of us came on an animal in one of the farthest gullies, and howling like findin' fiends, pelted rocks at it until the creature loped into the trees. When we described happily reported it all to Dad, it became down clear to him that we had treed a cougar on a foray out of the Castle Mountains.

The cougar was the Chief of the Desert. He had been seen around the area for years, and was known to be a danger to the local wildlife. Dad was pleased with our discovery and promised to take us on a hunt the next day.
The stories of the other three family members tell themselves with fewer curlicues, but even their lives were out of the ordinary in the trek off to some remote fate. The second sister, Mary, married a Scots homesteader across the mountains southward from the Burney Basin. A brother, Jack, has nearly vanished from memory because of his early death, in all likelihood while ranch in the hope that the mountain air would help his health.

And the morning after that, the life of nine-year-old Charles Campbell Doig began to point away from the Basin. It would take almost a dozen years to convince them, but the swamp of inheritance law and mortgage in which my grandfather's death mired the family was going to mean that my father and the others would take little benefit out of that homestead ranch. They would try in those years to make the place work and to fend with everything that was pressing in on the Basin settlers, But in the end, all paths from Peter Doig's grave took them out into the world on their own.
surprising thing is mo they came b & the eyes open, havi g worked at ranges & area, they knew something of weather, grass, temperatures of trace- mades them rage, they were like any l & i & mwm & falling, they did see -rno end, yet b seen, goth of govt, l big ranches.

idea (hunted) we a small, too boring, to work b mo avg & drn entry. f crave Scots homesteades & hew had & land agric. end have held, range free, f l them read have made it, c the hand work. As it we, now did,
Since then, the valley farmers and ranchers have discovered water -- or rather, discovered the pumping systems which siphon up from the water table. The valley is saved again until the water table begins to play out.
But the bestowing was being asked in a hard place, and at the wrong time.

The notions of a grass heaven are one thing, and winter in the Big Belts is another. At first, the hill country did pay off with its summers of free pasture. In the bargain, however, came isolation and Januaries of three-foot snowdrifts. The homestead staked out by Peter and Ann Doig, my father's parents, lay at an elevation of 5700 feet, and 35 miles by dirt road from the nearest town. Those Scots families of the Basin -- Doigs, Christisons, Mitchells, a few who came later -- could not know it at first, but they had taken up land where the habits and laws of settlement were not going to work. There was no help in law for the blizzards which would seal in the Tierney Basin in the terrible winters ahead. No foothills ranch you built for yourself could head off a future of national forest boundaries and big cattle companies. These Basin people had come thousands of miles for their squares of land, they held them longer than good sense or bank balances said they should have been able to, and in the end they could hold on no longer.
In that area of sagebrush flats and shale ridges, the ranch buildings are either up in the foothills near summer pasture or along a creek near the bottomland hay meadows. The Prescott ranch

buildings were on the banks of Battle Creek, far down between high ridges.
The Prescotts, in a pretentious moment, had built a kind of guest house. As I remember it, it was a bungalow above a garage or storehouse, a verandah all around. Sitting high as it did, living there was like being in a tower over the ranch yard.

There was a gas tank, big enough for me to clamber on as if it were a stagecoach. A big sheepshed.
How do a man and a boy ever get along, I wonder? At least in our case, the man was scrabbling hard for a living, while the boy drifted along reading everything in sight.
For a week or so, I had a run of prosperity. By listening to the evening news on the radio, I could get the baseball scores which would not show up in the Great Falls Tribune until the next afternoon. I began betting one of the bar regulars about the games which would show up in the Trib. This went on with me winning every day, a dime a game, until Dad took some notice. He made me quit it, but read me no moral lessons from it that I can recall.
What it must have been like to be just past twenty years old, foreman of the Dogie, and already to have escaped death at least three times, can be read in bits of my father's behavior then.
That slaying winter did away with the family stake which
could have been shared out to start the Doig brothers on ranches
of their own. With one or another of the brothers trying to keep
it going for their mother, the original homestead stayed in family
hands until 1937. But from the spring of 1920 on, the seven Doig
youngsters were headed away from the foothold their father had
made in the hush hills above Sixteenmile Creek. The oldest
became a barber, the next a handyman in a grain elevator,
one after another of them drifting out of the Turney Basin
like seeds on a cold wind. Only one ever succeeded in starting
a ranch of his own and hanging on to it. My father was never
to own an acre of land. His life would be spent on other
men's ranches.
The proportions of his features. His face was straight lines. Square shoulders. His turns of phrase...
A few of the settling families hung back so far on the fringes of the community they were more like forest creatures than the ridge-running coyotes than children of the Basin, eventually some three dozen of them, attended a one-room school from late spring until fall.

The children from the family farthest into the hills came to school, as the law said, but were as shy as wild creatures. If they met someone on the road, they would dart into the brush. Schoolmates met one of them on a brushless stretch one afternoon, and they flopped down with their lunchboxes in front of their heads to hide them.

In Glasgow or Edinburgh, boys such as my father soon would have been in industrial jobs, working in the shipyards of the Clyde or for some shopkeeper near the Firth of Forth.
brotherhood

The community of drinkers had its types. There were regular
bar flies -- a cruel term, but right in its image of hovering within
range and smell of booze. Some would try to borrow money for a
drink, others simply sat and waited out the bartender. There were
sheepherders or ranch hands blowing in all their money, which might
mean a week or ten days of successive drunks. There were binge
drinkers, more regular than the ranch hands.
When it got too much for me, I would go to the pickup, shove the gearshift into low to get it out of my way, lie down on the seat, pull a coat over me, and try to sleep. If I couldn't keep warm enough or something else woke me, off I would go to hunt Dad down again and start asking when we could go home.
Ruth, I have not seen you for twenty years, nor spoken to you for twenty-five. If memory reaches to you from this patch of the past as it does me, there must be a sourness about it, the aftertaste of disappointment and regret.
When the marriage finally ripped beyond repair, it tore loose all reason in Dad. His bitter dismay went on and on. It strangest effect was that he no longer would say Ruth's name. Instead, he took up the taunt provided by an elderly lady, one of the true respectables of the town. The town could never resist choosing up sides in something like this, and the lady, coming to Dad's defense, reached for a contemptible enough phrase for the deceiver who had married him. She sputtered: "Why, that's that little flip!" For some reason, that somewhat Victorian expression of disgust captivated Dad; it seemed to free him of all he had been battling. From the moment the taunt got back to him, he never referred to Ruth by her name: it was forever "Flip," and damned Flip...
Dad and I went for a weekly bath at an artesian hot well near the ranch. No running water at ranch, so any bath at home meant heating tub atop stove. It was a chore Dad must have disliked, because other times we went to town -- to Carl's barber shop -- for a bath. The artesian well bubbled up through a twelve-inch pipe, putting out an endless spurt of water you couldn't quite hold your hand in. By the time the water streamed off down the hill about 50 yards --leaving a bed of that slimy grass I so disliked -- and poured into a wooden frame set into the ground, it was a perfect warmth. The only one who didn't like the arrangement was our barber, who found the sulphur made our hair stiff and hard to cut.

You could lie back and look at the Castle Mountains, Baldy, or the Crazies.
he had been numbed into doing almost nothing. Now he tried to do 
everything at once. The cafe across the street from The Stockman 
came up for rent. Dad and Ruth took it on. At the same time, he 
put our cattle in winter pasture in the foothills of the Big Belts.

Mornings he drove out to pitch hay to the cattle, then worked in 
the cafe from mid-afternoon until closing at 2 a.m. Often I was 
with him one place or another — Ruth would have nothing to do 
with the cattle, although the cafe held her interest — and he 
seemed to be trying to set life in place all at once. None of 
it worked out, although the year in the cafe went better than 
anyone had a right to expect. I loved the place — milkshakes 
for supper, the sizzle of food on the grill — steaks were cheap 
and nearly everyone ate them — the singing of the boisterous 
dishwasher. I give them due, Dad and Ruth worked that cafe 
like a tool, and it added something to the town. They stayed open 
phone over 
until the bars closed; Pete McCabe would come across from the 
Stockman a few minutes before two in the morning, to tell them 
to put his steak on the grill.
One change did come into my life with Ruth: I spent more time living in town, "boarding out," as we called it. All through the school year, I lived in transit: Monday morning until the final bell of Friday as the town boarder, Friday until Sunday evening on whatever ranch Dad was working on. It made me always a visitor to town, outside the mesh of family. If I had been independent of a mother, now I was independent of Dad, too. It made a gap.
If Ruth had any effect on my life, I have no idea what it could have been.

She and my father fought their own private war, and I know he was torn badly inside by the experience. But Ruth and I slid past each other, polite, some warmth, no harm. Strange to be unwound from a marriage flying apart over my head, but I was carefully within myself, too carefully.
my boyhood — I "boarded-out" 1 to 3 during the school year. It extended the role I had when I bar-tended with Dad; I was in the boarding life, walking to the schoolhouse, going around town, but not of it. The five schoolboys of each week, I lived in my brother's room, upstairs and across the hall. After school, Friday afternoon or evening, Dad would come to town.

The rabbit's darting in our headlight beams, to the ranch.
Munger might have had his own initial research in mind when he insisted on carefully-plotted expenditure of time and effort. In 1908, not quite 25 years old, he had been somewhat offhandedly sent from Forest Service headquarters in Washington, D. C., to study the encroachment of lodgepole pine on Ponderosa pine in the Pacific Northwest. Since Munger's Forest Service career at the time amounted to the grand sum of two months and he had never laid eyes on either species of pine in his life, the assignment was, as Munger later understated it, "rather presumptuous." But it served to get the young New Englander to the Pacific Northwest; the brief project into the pines led to a full career in this region.

Trained at Yale, the academic hub of American forestry at the time, Munger knew the New Haven men who ran the U. S. Forest Service during the first quarter of this century. Henry S. Graves, Chief of the Forest Service from 1910 to 1919, had been one of his professors in graduate school. William B. Greeley, who headed the Forest Service from 1919 to 1928, earned his master's degree in the Yale forestry program a few years before Munger did likewise. And Munger not only knew Gifford Pinchot, the storied and flamboyant father of the modern Forest Service, but was on hand the night Pinchot was fired by President Taft. A public vendetta had erupted between Pinchot and Secretary of the Interior Richard A. Ballinger about Interior's plans to lease out coal and timber lands in Alaska. On the evening
Machines I had never seen before arrived to fight the winter. A CC which the men called a weasel crawled over the snowdrifts, bobbing and bouncing like a slow sled as it headed down the hill toward us. A bulldozer with tracks as high as Dad's shoulder butted a lane through the drifts. An airplane on skis landed some mail and food at a neighboring ranch.

great to

Dad climbed the treads of the bulldozer cabin and went off with the crew to plow out Jim and Flossie Keith on the ranch to the north. Dad had run that ranch for nearly five years, and knew its every inch. But as he guided the bulldozer driver through a ground blizzard on the flats, the two of them broke through a drift into a newly dozed swath. They had plowed circled onto their own track.
The Stockman Bar would start us for the night. Walking through
We drifted like nomads across the Blackfoot reservation, but being American nomads we had everything from a washing machine to a straight-back chair. Moving once or twice a week was a major job. The trailer house had to be packed so things wouldn't fall out of cupboards. The jeep took a tremendous load: the washing machine, water cans, firewood, gasoline drum. All packed, we would trail off across the ridgeline, the jeep pulling the dowdy trailer house, the faded Dodge bumping along behind.

Across all that small empire of pasture, there was only one source of water, annuit spring with a small reservoir. We came in the jeep to fill milk cans with water, and every so often to have a bath in the little reservoir. For their part, the sheep drank in pothole lakes left over from the spring thaw of snowdrifts. One measure of the summer was how quickly the hakam ponds dried up, and how you could make use of the remaining ones in planning the herd's grazing.

Not a twig of shelter on the entire summer range. This was grass country, pure and simple, and nothing there was besides grass, rolling ridges, the seams of lakes.

While the reservation went into its summer drought, the snow on the peaks of Glacier National Park gleamed fifty miles away. The big Two Medicine River rolled down its gorge at the edge of our land; no way down the mukum steep cliffs. So we sat on the high mukum island of ridges, in sight of all the water needed and with little of it at hand.

In early July of 1955, we sheared the sheep. A Mexican crew came, set up on the prairie where we had built corrals out of steel posts, woven wire, and panels.
The life at the University of Washington is lived today somewhere in between those sentiments. And finally, squinch. One of the beguilements of a jotter line is that you never know how promptly it can help out. Squinch no sooner has been jetted into the notebook than I bump into a use for it. You've just read it -- in the lead for this article.
Tom and I were in Frenchy's when one of my classmates came in and said a bunch of them were going to burn out the Hoots. What brought the idea on just then -- the Hoots had been there for years, people had lived in peace with them -- is unclear; it apparently came like a fever, and lit 8 or 10 of the Walier boys at once. Tom and I turned them down, I suppose more out of concern for our own necks than regard for the Hoots. Of course, the raiders managed to start enough of a stubble fire to draw attention and cause someone to call the sheriff; of course, the entire carload of them panicked and they lost their nerve and panicilly drove into a ditch, where the entire carload of them were caught and arrested.
THE DAWNING OF THE AGE OF ECOLOGY

I thought that job on the forest survey ... was the best possible job in the world. It was exploring an unknown resource, in beautiful places, with some wonderful timber -- and getting paid for it.

--Philip A. Briegeleb, recalling his start at the PNW Experiment Station

Through at least one lens of history, you can look at the 15 years or so after World War II and say that the PNW Experiment Station was catching up with the times, in terms of facilities and administration and thrusts of research. During the next decade or so, the times did a mighty squirm and began crowding hard at the Station once again.

This was the era when the words ecology and environment passed from their customary usage in the bio-sciences into the national vocabulary. It was the time when a sizable body of Americans turned to something like the ethic of the late conservationist Aldo Leopold, himself once an eager young forester in the U. S. Forest Service: "Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild,
It may have been those engaging eyes which accounted for much of the town's affection for Tom: they reflected exactly his slow appraisal of well life, his mulling effort to make his head speak as loudly as his hands could. Two years ahead of me in high school, Tom merely was pacing through until he could get out to join his father full-time in the service station and use the inherited magic with machines. Each of us had a resource the other didn't—my wordpower, Tom's instinct with machinery—and so something to respect in each other. And we saw, although neither could have said it at the time, that each of us had been raised alone as best our families had been able to find time for us; it had made us self-reliant enough not to demand all of each other's hours, yet intrigued enough with a similar life so close at hand to want to become full friends. It was Tom, of course, who had been behind Gettie's hunch to take me into her household. You two are a lot of company for each other, aren't you? she said cheerily, and we were.
to absorb and integrate disparate cultural elements: beginnings of an individualism that tends to disrupt old social bonds without creating new order on a higher plane. Professionalizing of war, already differentiated as a culture-trait, acquires new energy through increasing technical equipment, and new impetus from economic rivalry. Opening up of a grave breach between the owners of the machinery of production and the workers, whether slave or free: beginning of the class struggle in active form. Fixation on pecuniary symbols of gain, as the growing class of merchants and bankers begin to exercise greater influence.

Fourth Stage: Megalopolis. Beginning of the decline. The city under the influence of a capitalistic mythos concentrates upon bigness and power. The owners of the instruments of production and distribution subordinate every other fact in life to the achievement of riches and the display of wealth. Physical conquest by military means: financial domination by trade and legal processes: loans, mortgages, speculative enterprises. The agricultural base extends: the lines of supply become more tenuous: the impulse to aggressive enterprise and enterprising aggression grows as the lust for power diminishes the attraction of all other attributes of life: as the moral sense becomes more callous and the will-to-culture increasingly impotent. Standardization, largely in pecuniary terms, of the cultural products themselves in art, literature, architecture, and language. Mechanical reproduction takes the place of original art: bigness takes the place of form: voluminousness takes the place of significance. Triumph of mechanism in every department: passivity: manual helplessness: bureaucratism: failure of direct action.

Megalopolis ushers in an age of cultural aggrandizement: scholarship and science by tabulation: sterile research: elaborate fact-finding apparatus and refined technic with no reference to rational intellectual purpose or ultimate possibilities of social use: Alexandrianism. Belief in abstract quantity in every department of life: the biggest monuments, the highest buildings, the most expensive materials, the largest food supply, the greatest number of worshipers, the biggest population. Education becomes quantitative: domination of the cram-machine and the encyclopedia, and domination of megalopolis as concrete encyclopedia: all-containing. Knowledge divorced
For all its reputation then as a country-club university, Northwestern had a number of academic strongholds. I was within one of them, the school of journalism, and on the faculty there made the friends and allies for a lifetime.
the streets of Great Falls or Helena, where young women went to escape to a store job and the start toward marriage and a life they hoped would be bigger than the hometown had offered--city eyes, expecting eyes. Yet here Ruth was in the valley, passing the syrup pitcher along the table, and for all anyone could tell, she seemed ready to stay until she sorted through to whatever she was looking for.

Already Ruth had misread twice--two marriages failed, and still she couldn't have been much older than 25. And Dad must have known about the husbands before him; the valley kept no such secrets. But living womanless had left us wide open for Ruth. To me, she was someone who might provide some mothering again. Not much mothering, because she kept a tight, careful mood, like a cat ghosting through new tall grass. But the purr of a soft voice, fruit and fresh cookies added to my lunchbox, even a rare open grin when I found an excuse to come into the kitchen--all were pettings I hadn't had recently. And for Dad, Ruth must have become a chance to dodge the past, a woman to put between him and the death on the summer mountain. It happened faster than any of us could follow. This man who had spent six careful years courting my mother now married the young ranch cook he had known only weeks.

Ruth, Dad: they were a pairing only the loins could have tugged together, and whatever they felt for each other before the quick marriage, it was not enough. Because all too soon, the warfare between them had begun.
College life is tribalism of a kind, and Latham House, in its Aleutian adroitness from the rest of the campus, fostered its own logic of behavior.
I remember that the two of them began to carve at one another before we moved from the ranch, several months after the wedding. The ranch itself nicked away at everyone's nerves. Every sprinkle of rain puttied the road into a slick gumbo. It was like living at the far end of a mile-long trough of molasses, the pickup wallowing and whipping as Dad cussed his way back and forth. Yet the ranch was too dry for good hay or grain, and too shaley up where the cattle had to graze. The hills were treacherous in another way. One afternoon I climbed the sharp gulch behind our house with the two boys from the neighboring ranch. Throwing flat pieces of shale against the rock outcroppings to hear the zing, we went farther up the foothills toward the Castle Mountains than any of us had been before. Atop a rim of rock, in the gray of the sage against the sky, we spotted a tensed outline of tan. The animal flashed away from our rocks and yells. When we told Dad, his mouth went tight. Cougar, he said.

By then Dad had begun to call the ranch This goddamned rock pile, the surest sign that he had started to talk himself into dropping the share-lease. Ruth probably was ready to leave after the first night of howling coyotes, or of the cougar edging out of the Castles to scream down a gulch. Working as cook on the big ranches out in the open expanse of the valley was one thing, but slogging away there in the tumbled foothills was another. Her mouth could fire words those soft eyes seemed to know nothing about. I can hear her across the years:

Charlie, I don't have to stay here, I didn't marry this
Latham House was, then, an edgy, scruffy place to live—and I would not have changed a whit of it. I think I found relief in a situation where all that needed be done was to get along with your roommate; after my career of boarding out, that was simple enough. My first year, with Ackerman—twice my size and three times as red-haired and freckled—went in easy chatter; my second, when Zimmerman and I traded no more than a thousand words during the entire year, went as companionably.

In Latham's watter of angled walls and random hallways were a few leftover chunks of space which had been made into single rooms, and in

My junior year, I qualified for The Shoe, a tiny single room nicknamed for its shoebox dimensions. There was barely space to slide into the room between the cot crowded against one wall and the dresser against the other. The metal clothes closet stood outside the door in the hallway, like a fat man thwarted by a narrow gate. The Shoe congested further when I saw the chance to swap its spindly desk for a huge, handsomely-shelved one down the hall. With the biggest accomplice I could recruit, I emptied The Shoe, dismantled the desk, wedged it into the room and across the far wall, and reassembled it to bulk there like an oak galleon in a bottle. Rooming alone, I levered my grades up and my reading rocketed; Dinesen murmured in after Faulkner, Turgenev tipped hats with Wilder.
The great river of my childhood flowed in the sky.
The valley's own dab of stream only nosed and dithered
along the flanks of the mountains, like a puppy shadowing
its mother. Beyond the Big Belts and across a second
valley from ours lay the Missouri, but so new and narrow
from its headwaters that it too lacked the proportion

shoulders. Brothers indeed, Taylor and Bob, in desperation
as well as in skin, the one daydreaming of New York and
second fame, the other fumbling for his next bottle of
whiskey.

Rose Gordon lived apart from her brothers, in both place
and behavior. She was the one in the family who had chosen
to be jolly toward the white faces all around, and a time
or two a week she came along Main Street with her constant
greeting, How do you do? And how are you today? Rose had
faith in words and manners. The death of any old-timer
would bring out her pen, and a long letter extolling the
departed. She was especially fond of two groups in the
valley's history, the Scots who had homesteaded in the
Basin and the Indians who had worn away before the tide
of settlement.

Her passion for the Indians, fellow sufferers for the
dusk of their skin, was understandable enough. They were
the first ladies of this land, she would say of the Indian
women she had seen when she was a girl, and the saying of
it announced that Rose Gordon knew ladyship from personal
experiences. But the transplanted Scots, my father's family
I am told now that I was something of a mechanical man, typing
up course notes until they became private, crafted texts all my own,
and concentrating where it counted most -- the journalism courses, history--
and running a second education in random books alongside the coursework.
I was not humorless, but not much more than wry. College was a job
I knew I could do well, and I ticked away its tasks.

mumbled Russian verb declensions as Archie chanted Dishes
comin' through, Ivory!

I said little of my background, or of Dad and Grandma; I was in another
country now, and the earlier ones. I was of two minds

In my first two days, I was asked a dozen times whether I was an
army veteran belatedly starting an education.

By now I have seen real cathedrals, and none of them hold the
force that CO library did then. It was the most elegant building
I had ever seen. The campus legend was that Frank Lloyd Wright once
had been driven past, and remarked that it looked like a pig lying
on its back.
But the Rainbow never became the danger to us that it could have. Dad did not become one of its night-after-night drinkers; he must have seen the risk clearly enough to back off in time. Every third or fourth trip to town, he might end up there and we would be in for a late stay, but most of the time the routine which carried us through the other saloons and all their attractions was enough for him.

Through those first hard-edged months after my mother's death, then, our life began to steady out this way in the valley. I coasted through school and spent my real learning time on barstools. I liked Dad's notion of treating me as though I already was grown and raised, only wishing that it would lengthen me up beyond the height of everybody's elbows. Dad's grief was easing up, and he seemed sound enough again to drop the scab-hilled ranch and take on a better one. But one more time, something turned his life, our life: a new woman stepped inside the outline where my mother had been.
The Rotarian gave me what I had thought I wanted: the chance to do manuscripts everything connected with a magazine. Magazines poured across for editing, assignments made to writers, illustrations approved—and
FROM THE SAGE CIRCUIT TO WRIGLEY FIELD IN
ONE DESPERATE BOYHOOD

The Wrigley Field grandstand ominously silent behind me, I swing desperately at the ball. It mortars into center field, my fifth looping fly ball in a row.

The area around home plate fills with memorable language. Mine.

I stomp towards second base, my 32-ounce bat dragging a grim trail on the infield grass. Standing over the bag, I set myself. Toss a ball in the air.

Swing -- and I swear by the sacred hem of Ernie Banks'
I had met the woman I wanted to marry. Rather, re-met her: she was
Carol, one of the staff at the summer sessions I had worked in.
Fragrant little chips of history spewed from the saw cut, and accumulated on the snow before each kneeling sawyer. We sensed that these two piles of sawdust were something more than wood: that they were the integrated transect of a century; that our saw was biting its way, stroke by stroke, decade by decade, into the chronology of a lifetime, written in concentric annual rings of good oak.

--Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

Chips of history, and the give-and-take strokes of those who make them; they accumulate into a record we can read as the recent past of Pacific Northwest's timberland and grassland, and the federal research centered on them. But the accumulation goes on even as we size up what is already there; already the PNW Station is halfway through the decade that opened with the environmental push of 1970.

A new Director presided over most of this half-decade. Robert E. Buckman, a silviculturist with a research background earned in the conifer forests of the Northern Rockies and the region of the upper Great Lakes, came into the Portland job when Philip Briegleb retired on May 31, 1971. Buckman had been serving as assistant to the Deputy
Northwestern was an Olympus of fraternities and sororities: the houses with Greek markings proffered themselves row upon row along Sheridan Road past campus. The Latham residents were like a rebel tribe grinning madly at the edge of the plantation. **Our Homecoming tradition was to hold a one-minute house meeting on the motion: to hell with Homecoming.** It passed with tumult but no debate until the year someone suggested we rent a theater marquee to say it. No theatre would cooperate, and we swathed the front of the house in toilet paper instead. In my sophomore year I presided over intra- in tag football, mural teams of such inept ferocity—a brawl with the team from the Episcopal seminary; in basketball, wholesale evictions—that we began to make forfeit a style, sometimes sending one or another of us in street clothes to present himself to the other team, other times not showing up at all and then insisting by note the other team had been at the wrong place at the wrong time and we were claiming the game. Votapek came in from his piano practice, walked straight to the ancient upright at the back of the house and tinkled out the first two bars of Nola. Benjamin held stage in the front hall. He did his impersonation of Wrigley Field—arms arced wide, eyes bulging in fullness, **Hwaa!** out of his mouth the Hwaa sound like a crowd heard far away. The same again, this time in silence: his impression of any open date. Zimmerman stood on the radiator, hands in his pockets, thinking through his philosophy texts.
Grandma, and I herded the sheep on rented reservation land about ten miles from Browning, Montana. We lived in a battered trailer, which we moved every few days with our battered Jeep to follow the grazing sheep. The long ridges and coulees are endless there, and it took no effort at all for me to imagine a nearby hillside as the left field bleachers in Yankee Stadium.

The more important change was two new team members. A band of sheep without sheepdogs is like a doubleheader without umpires. So, soon after we had moved north to the new ranch, we obtained two pups, brothers, wobbly little concoctions of collie, shepherd dog, and whatnot. In a frenzy of imagination, we dubbed them Spot and Tip.

(We were pretty straightforward about naming dogs back then. A reddish mutt with a sort of Irish face was called Mike, I recall. My uncle's grumpy cowdog was aptly referred to as Growler. And when I was a tot and my family got a month-old German Shepherd to grow up with me, he was named Pup.)

My grandmother always was a softy for any manner of dog, and as Spot and Tip grew up, they learned not only how to work with sheep, but how to shake hands,
No two rooms in these ramshackle warrens had much in common except
their age and mood, and the principle seemed to fix itself onto
the residents as well. The forty or so of us living in Latham brought a mesh of tensions
inside the walls with us. Intense family hopes goaded at some, perhaps as
the first ever to have qualified for college, or the one to substitute for
a dead brother or a lost father, or to bear the lineage out of one ghetto
or another. Many were majoring in music, or speech or drama; the fevers
of performance already were cooking in them. Almost all were under the
necessity of a high grade average, to keep scholarship funds flowing.
All this gave the house a charged, crackly atmosphere, which
it was almost standard that roommates would fall into months of feud, or
simply wing past each other.

The university fielded the wrong place at the wrong time. When Northwestern's team in a television
game show called College Quiz Bowl, it was Latham House that hung the coach--
the Dean of Students--in effigy at the campus's busiest corner, and called phonéd
the Chicago Tribune for coverage. Annually
Each year as
the Greeks worked on elaborate floats for the Homecoming parade, our own
tradition was to hold a ten-second house meeting on the motion: to bell
with Homecoming. It passed with tumult and no debate until the year someone
put it up on
suggested we make a theater marquee. No theatre would rent to us, and we instead
swathed the front of the house in toilet paper. Instead. It was another Latham
standing policy to participate in no campus activity except intra-mural
sports, and in my sophomore year we fielded teams of such ferocious hopelessness
in tag football, a brawl with the team from the Episcopal seminary; in the
first basketball game, wholesale evictions—that styles of forfeit

Sometimes one or another of us would go in street clothes
to present himself to the other team, other times we would not show up at
all but insist to the intra-mural office that the other team had been at
the wrong place at the wrong time. By the end of the year, the Latham
intra-mural program had perfected itself out of existence.
scene has been braided to its moment by her looping writing. Ready for the Big Day: Dad and his brother Angus have donned their black ten-gallon hats for the camera, grins in place under their slicked hair, and bandannas fluttering at their necks like flags of a new country. The Wildest Bunch in W.S.S.—seven of them from Ringling and the Basin are ganged along the side of a car, handrolled cigarettes angling out of the men's mouths, my mother and her cousin small prim fluffs in the dark cloudbank of cowboy hats. Angus, in showy riveted chaps, slips an arm around the cousin. Dad looks squarely as ever into the camera from where he has tucked down on the running

Doig/42

others after that, whenever he was unfractured and in the saddle. Still putting a hand to the Basin homestead every so often with a couple of the other brothers, as if they couldn't quite let the sage hills take back that grudging patch of ranch.
had much in common except age and major.

No two rooms in these warrens were quite alike, and the principle seemed to carry over into roommates. The forty or so of us came together in a mesh of tensions: of fulfilling family hopes, of making the grades needed for a scholarship, of finding in a strange new region. A majority were majoring in music, or in speech or drama; the 00 of performance already were coursing in them. It gave the house a charged atmosphere. It was almost expected that roommates would fall into months of feud, or simply wing past each other. In my sophomore year, Zimmerman and I mumbled civilly to one another a few times a week, the rest of the time shared a comfortable obliviousness.

The chasm made the house into facing-but-distinct warrens of dim hallways, angled walls, ramshackle rooms. No two rooms were quite alike, and in the welter were a few leftover chunks of space which had been made into single rooms. Although the house personnel seemed scarcely to change, seniority came fast, and in my junior year, I could claim the tiny top-floor room called The Shoe, for its shoebox dimensions.
of marriage were the quiet, wandering ones they spent herding sheep in the mountains. Other seasons, Dad hired on and moved on as he had always done. Old age and the Depression were dislodging his mother from the Basin homestead she had come to so doubtfully forty years before; its eventual sale for a few dollars an acre closed the circle back to the landlessness the Doigs started off with. By then, Dad had found his way around that lack of footing. Notching up from the jobs as foreman, now he ran other men's ranches on shares, all the responsibilities and decisions his, and the profits divided between him and the owner.

By the time I was born in 1939, he was managing a cattle ranch owned by Jap Stewart's brother, beneath the south slope of Grassy Mountain. The years there made steady money, but my mother's asthma was clenching worse and worse. The final winter of World War Two, the three of us went to Arizona to try the climate there. It may have been that my parents would have moved there for good, once the war was over and they could have talked themselves into a new direction of life. But they had arranged to run sheep on shares the next summer, and so we came back and rode the high trail into the Bridger Mountains, one to her last hard breaths ever and the other two of us to the iron time after her death.

Dad and I had for ourselves, by the end of autumn in 1945, the stunted ranch which he had agreed to manage on shares, the improvement in mood earned by his keeping busy and my new tolerating of school, and a routine. Without the last,
College life is tribalism of a kind, and what it was like to live at Latham House in those four years came back to me when I read something of the aborigines of Australia's eastern seaboard. When the first white voyagers there noticed that the aborigines glanced out at beating in the great-sailed ship, gave scarcely a blink, and went with whatever they were doing. So vast was the apparition, apparently, that the tribal people assumed it was an apparition from the unknown, out of what they called "the dreaming," and so too strange for any effort of comprehension.
hellforsaken ranch . . . I got places I can go, Charlie . . .


And I can see my father, the jut coming to his jaw as it always did when he was ready for argument. Damn it, woman, d'ye think we can walk away from a herd of cattle? We got to stay until the calves are shipped. You knew what you were getting into . . . And always at the last, as he would rush from the house out to another of the ranch's endless chores:

Will ye forget it? Just forget it?

But nothing was forgotten, by either of them. They both had the habit of storing things up against one another. The time that you . . . I told you then . . . There was a calendar of combat, and either one would refer as far back as could be remembered.

If they had fought all the time, the marriage might have snapped apart quickly and neither would have been severely hurt. But they bickered in quick seasons. Weeks, maybe a month, would pass in calm. Saturday nights, we went to dances in the little town of Ringling. Dad and Ruth whirled there by the hour; often my Uncle Angus called the square dances, and I saw Dad in a circle of flying dancers while a voice so close to his cried: Promenade all! Sometime after midnight, I would stretch on a bench with a coat over me and go to sleep. I would wake up leaning against Ruth's shoulder as the pickup growled down the low hill to the ranch buildings. The low
For my father had begun to die.

PART 7

His death took seven slow years.
As a boy, I heard my father's favorite story a hundred times, and never enough:

It was along about 1934. Your mother and I were herdin' sheep at the old D.L. place. Jobs was scarce in those days. You had to take anything you could get. Well, a damned bear got to comin' in to the ranch there, killin' sheep. Boy, he'd kill 'em right and left. He'd always wait until after the moon went down, till it got good and dark. All the neighbors, there'd be some of 'em there pretty near every night with me, to try get that bear, but we never could.

Your Uncle Paul,
Not oldest boy—no, he came down there. The two of us was gonna spend the night in a old log barn there, the loft end of it was open. This bear'd just kill his sheep and leave 'em lay, that's the way a bear does. They don't like fresh meat, they like it after it gets spoiled. So we got one of the first sheep he'd killed, up on the hill, and drug it down there, to lure him down there under that loft. We both swore we never slept a wink, but that night the bear ate the whole sheep within 30 feet of us, and we never knew it.
We went on not havin' any luck that way. Generally all we'd see would be his eyes as he'd take off out of there in the dark.

This one evening, Berneta and me and the neighbor, Mrs. Christison, were sittin' there in the front room of the house. It had big windows, and the house sat up on a knoll, we could see down to where the sheep was bedded in just below. We didn't corral 'em, we didn't dare; that bear'd get into 'em and pile 'em up, and kill half of 'em at once. So I heard the sheep bells aringin' and I looked out the window, and here comes the whole band, right towards the house. That bear was after 'em. I grabbed the rifle -- didn't have a very good rifle, either, just an old broken-down one I had loaded and sittin' there -- and went back through the dining room through the kitchen and sneaked out the back door. I got behind the bunkhouse. Then there's a creek there with heavy willows, I was gonna get on the edge of them and sneak around behind the bear. I thought I'd sure fix that boy this time.

I got about halfway to the brush and I looked up and here he had a sheep cut out right against the house wall. There's a pole fence come up and nailed right onto the corner of the house, and that sheep was tryin' to dodge to get away from, and he was trying
to catch her there. The radio was agoin', and Berneta and Mrs. Christison were standin' there in the window just like that, watchin'.

I cut down on him with that old rifle, and he went WOOF. I don't know if I hit him or not, but I changed his mind anyhow.

Well, he either had to come toward me or go right back through the middle of the sheep, so here he comes toward me. He got, oh, about sixty feet from me, and he was gonna around the edge of the sheep then. I cut down on him again, and I know I hit him that time.

He let another WOOF out of him, and he was mad now. Here he comes. He had his old head turned sidewise. I could have counted his teeth there in the moonlight.

I never give it a thought to run. Anyhow, he got up, oh, pretty close, I'd say about here to that window, six feet or so. I was tryin' to shoot him between the eyes. He had his head turned a little bit, and I got him right -- you know a bear's head is, his ears are up towards the top of his head -- I got him right the side of the ear there. It went down through his neck and all the way into his lungs. That took the WOOF out of him.

That took the WOOF out of him. Set him back on his haunches,
and he made a pass at me, and I ducked him as he come around or
he'd of ripped me in four pieces. Just as he went by I jammed the
gun again his ribs, right behind his shoulder there, and pulled her
off. WOOF, he says, and away he went.

That took the fight out of him. He had to go about 30 feet
there till he hit a brand-new four-wire fence with cedar posts.
He tore out about a hundred yards of that fence when he hit it.

He went across the creek into the brush, and boy, he was cuttin'
up in there, groanin' and growlin' and tearin' up the brush. I
looked up and here's Mrs. Christison and Berneta, standing right
on the bank above me. They'd been there all the time while I was
shootin' at him. And one of 'em had a lantern. I don't know what
they were gonna do with that lantern.

Mrs. Christison had this other old gun that was in the house.
She says, "You got any shells left?" I says, "Yeah, I got some in
my pocket -- that'd been the last shell I had in the gun when I
put it again him there.

"Well, she says, Mrs. Christison says, "Let's go in and get him."
"You can go in and get him," I says, "I've had enough of him."

So we waited a little bit. It was all quieted down in there,
and I knew he's either dead or gone. So we went down the creek a little ways, there's a bridge there, and come up where the brush wasn't so thick. He was layin' there in a heap of brush, dead.

I didn't get scared; never gave a thought to run when that bear was comin' at me. I shook all night afterwards, after it was all over.

A hundred times told, and always that last lilt of wonder in his voice that he could be both hunter and hunted.
to be said. Yet the doctors were finding nothing alarming, he had more than enough reason for mild lung discomforts from the breakage in those horseback accidents of his...and years of smoking.

In the spring of 1965, a few days before Carol and I were to be married in Evanston, my father and grandmother once again stepped down from a train—and I stared in alarm not at him but at her, pale, wobbly and smiling grimly. I discovered she had had pneumonia—Wouldn't let me tell you about it, said she was coming to your wedding irregardless, Dad explained unnecessarily—and been told by her doctor not to make the trip. She gave this report her pursed look and said: Well, I'm here, ain't I? I'll get along okay. And inevitably she did, recuperating almost minute by minute as was her custom, proving herself right to have come and drawn on the pleasure and excitement of it all. Against the wan look she had brought with her, Dad of course had strengthened—nervously watchful over her, and at the same time beguiled by the happy flow of wedding dinner and ceremony and reception. There was a special exuberance among us that a lifelong friend of Carol's family, a stroke victim in a wheelchair, had been able to come and share in it all. His voiceless courage, I think now, rang through those days, and added to the thankfulness of the time. He's never gave up, Dad said in admiration. No,he hadn't, I answered vacantly, my mind playing across a hundred things besides a man's capacity against affliction.
Want to see Dad yesterday. Was rather disappointed to see him not feeling better than he was. Ivan is pretty worried about him. He doesn't have much strength. When he walks to the bathroom and back he's just about all in. And now he's losing his appetite says he just can't eat. The doctor hadn't seen him since Wednesday. But likely got to see him last night any way I hope so as that worried him too. The nurses gives him an IV every night. Which seems to help him. He got your card all right and enjoyed getting it.

I'm going over again tomorrow to see him on the bus.

Ivan thanks for the money. We have plenty to go on with. What I mean we're not short. I called up Foster the other day to see if he would charge the door for me but he said he was too busy. I ask him what he charged and he said $4.50 an hour. We'd better just keep the old door. I think we'll get Mrs. Gratz to paper the ceiling for us. She charges a dollar and a half an hour. And she's a good hand at it. Well dear ones guess this is going to be all for this time. Glad Carol that your folks are enjoying themselves in Florida. So here's hoping you are both fine so Bye with lots of love and kisses Your loving grandma
were strangers in the saloon, or one of Dad's friends had pressed
a dime into my hand and steered me off to play a tune while he
said something I shouldn't hear. Months on end, I spent the bonus
dime every time to play *Good Night, Irene*. The record would slide
out of hiding and flip into place, I would press my nose against
the jukebox glass to see the needle hit, and then I would feel the
sound strum out. Sometimes I live in the countrie, sometimes I
live in town... A lot of times, men would turn sideways along the
bar to listen to the sad chorus. Sometimes I take a great
tonight, to jump into the river and drown...
For once, in all the years, I knew the exact words to say: I always wanted for Dad to visit Scotland, to go back where his folks came from.

He never could because of his health. Now you can take his trip for him.
THE LAND, THE TREES

...a species which grows to immense size; very commonly 27 feet in the girth, six feet above the surface of the earth, and in several instances we have found them as much as 36 feet in the girth... they frequently rise to a height of 230 feet, and one hundred and twenty or 30 of that height without a limb...

--Captain Meriwether Lewis,
February 4, 1806, describing the Sitka spruce

The storms track in from the Pacific on collision course first with the Olympic Mountains and the Coast Range, and then with the longer jut of the Cascade Range north to south through the states of Washington and Oregon. We can't say for sure what at least one writer has alleged: "The first thing reported about the Northwest Coast was rain." But anyone familiar with the dousing which this rumpled corner of the country undergoes in a cycle of the seasons might agree that rainfall should have been high in the reports of the earliest European mariners who cruised this coast. We do know with more precision how impressed the explorers were with the vast growth fed by this damp North Pacific weather -- the dark-green forests
was through with cigarettes. He had quit smoking. His nerves jumped, he looked thin, but his appetite was improving and he hoped to go back to work.

In November,

I saw him next at Thanksgiving, when he and Grandma came to spend the weeks from Thanksgiving through New Year's with me—and to meet Carol. Dad had to take the stairs to my apartment a landing at a time, but otherwise seemed spry. Quickly he and Grandma took over the walking chores of grocery shopping and doing the laundry. They met my friends. Dad was in near-awe of Professor Baldwin. The Baldwins invited us for Christmas dinner, and it was a rich moment for me to watch in one room this group—Ben and Jeanne Baldwin and their bright children, Dad, Grandma, Carol—who held for me every facet I prized in life.

In the spring, when Carol and I were to be married in Evanston, they arrived again from Montana—and my attention went to Grandma, pale, wobbly, smiling grimly. She had had pneumonia—wouldn't let me tell you about it, said she was coming to your wedding irregardless, Dad said unnecessarily. As was her custom, she recuperated almost minute by minute, and in the because Carol and I were each an only child, festival of marrying—I think now there was somehow a sense that this was the one last time this festival of all families and friends could gather—there was an exuberance which overrode all else. Also, a friend of Carol's sight family, a stroke victim in a wheelchair, had come, and the bright courage of him enduring his voiceless entrapment with such bright courage made anything less seem entirely without consequence.

In the autumn came our trip to Montana, Carol's first, and again there seemed little wrong with Dad. I found he had done some work on the Ringling house—the planked boardwalk around back to the woodhouse and the outhouse—probably with the thought of Carol's visit impending. And in high spirits about this new daughter-in-law, he seemed more joyous than I had ever seen him.
where the railroad snaked through, was a youngster's worst dream. All day, for one square meal, the privilege of an apple at bedtime, and a few dollars a week which he had to pass along to his mother, Dad did a man's share of ranch work; then mornings and evenings, he slogged through the chores of chicken-feeding and hog-slopping and kindling-splitting which a country child grows up hating.

It got worse. The soldier son was put on a ship to France, and now every day Dad was sent off on the mile and a half trudge down the railroad track to the Sixteen post office, to fetch a newspaper so the fretful parents could read through the list of battle casualties. One footsore trip after another, Dad cussed to the crossties that he hoped to hell the so-and-so would be on the casualty list today so this everlasting walking could stop.

But the soldier son survived, and it was Dad who nearly died in that last year of World War One. It was like him to call down bad luck on somebody else, then go through worse himself. In the early winter of 1918, he had set out on a day of deer hunting with a cousin, one of D.L.'s strapping sons. Both came down with pneumonia. For weeks they lay delirious in the ranch houses their fathers had built a mile apart. On the first night of December, Dad's fever broke, and the cousin died.

Those two had started out even when they put their first
In March, 1972, a little less than a year after Dad's death, she suffered a heart attack. I flew to Montana to do the cooking and housework for the first week out of the hospital. To keep her busy but seated, I took along the index cards for the book Carol and I had just completed. She alphabetized cards by the hour for me, but just so far. After a word's first two letters, she would simply say: I don't just see how this goes.

to Caldwell-Caen-Candy into Caen-Caldwell-Canby was beyond her.
Strenuous Life of the Tammany District Leader

NOTE: This chapter is based on extracts from Plunkitt's Diary and on my daily observation of the work of the district leader.—W.L.R.

The life of the Tammany district leader is strenuous. To his work is due the wonderful recuperative power of the organization.

One year it goes down in defeat and the prediction is made that it will never again raise its head. The district leader, undaunted by defeat, collects his scattered forces, organizes them as only Tammany knows how to organize, and in a little while the organization is as strong as ever.

No other politician in New York or elsewhere is exactly like the Tammany district leader or works as he does. As a rule, he has no business or occupation other than politics. He plays politics every day and night in the year, and his headquarters bears the inscription, "Never closed."

Everybody in the district knows him. Everybody knows where to find him, and nearly everybody goes to him for assistance of one sort or another, especially the poor of the tenements.

He is always obliging. He will go to the police courts to put in a good word for the "drunks and disorderlies" or pay their fines, if a good word is not effective. He will attend christenings, weddings, and funerals. He will feed the hungry and help bury the dead.

A philanthropist? Not at all. He is playing politics all the time.

Brought up in Tammany Hall, he has learned how to reach the hearts of the great mass of voters. He does not bother about reaching their heads. It is his belief that arguments and campaign literature have never gained votes.

He seeks direct contact with the people, does them good turns when he can, and relies on their not forgetting him on election day. His heart is always in his work, too, for his subsistence depends on its results.

If he holds his district and Tammany is in power, he is amply rewarded by a good office and the opportunities that go with it. What these opportunities are has been shown by the quick rise to wealth of so many Tammany district leaders. With the examples before him of Richard Croker, once leader of the Twentieth District; John F. Carroll, formerly leader of the Twenty-ninth; Timothy ("Dry Dollar") Sullivan, late leader of the Sixth, and many others, he can always look forward to riches and ease while he is going through the drudgery of his daily routine.

This is a record of a day's work by Plunkitt:

2 A.M.: Aroused from sleep by the ringing of his doorbell; went to the door and found a bartender, who asked him to go to the police station and bail out a saloonkeeper who had been arrested for violating the excise law. Furnished bail and returned to bed at three o'clock.

6 A.M.: Awakened by fire engines passing his house. Hastened to the scene of the fire, according to the custom of the Tammany district leaders, to give assistance to
He was everlastingly weak now, could scarcely have put breath on a mirror. To put it simplest, he was suffocating—drowning in mere air whenever he was away from the pure oxygen of the metal bottle.
Chief for Research in the national office at Washington, D. C. He was prompt to proclaim the new complexities of federal forestry: "The problems of forestry today concern not so much the lack of knowledge about single uses and single commodities; they concern not fully understanding the interrelationships of multiple uses -- water and recreation or timber, wildlife, and livestock."

A reorganization of research began under Buckman. In 1971, four projects at Fairbanks, Alaska, were melded into a single interdisciplinary team -- entomology, botany, silviculture, and forest management all represented on the study of the forest ecology of the Alaskan interior. Since then, many of the Station's scientific projects have been retroed into research work units which combine several areas of expertise (for the current roster of research, see page 00).

The experimental areas the Station had drawn on for decades also began to show new approaches. In late 1974, the handsome set of headlands and estuaries midway along the Oregon coast which had been the Cascade Head Experimental Forest became the country's first scenic-research area. Even before that, in 1972, an inventory of the federal government's research natural areas in Oregon and Washington -- there are about 60 of them, under various agencies; the Station administers 29 -- had been published.

Alaska was given larger research emphasis. The global scramble for natural resources has coincided with
Watching a father die is seeing the past and the future move.

Dad died for seven years, the emphysema killing him slowly and steadily.

He changed from the father I had known to a shell of walking death -- or rather, a shell so frailly near to death that he lacked the breath to walk. His face hollowed away. The backs of his hands became ridges of bone and vein. He lived not by day and night, but by moments at the oxygen tank. He caught pneumonia so many times we lost count. Weeks in the hospital would clear up his lungs and steady his shallow breathing. He might spend a month, two months, at home and then pneumonia and the hospital again.

He hated the labor of breathing, the constant hint of drowning.
We knew only that breath was coming harder and harder for him. A dozen paces uphill, and he would stop to make the harsh blowing breath through his mouth.
We became a memo guerrilla, arguing points in detail with both agency men.

I met myself stoning it to B. met office as 7 prison visitors. I put up poster & walled it in never let happen; what did we a long snipe match of memos.

We worked in the campaign against Goldwater; Lyndon Johnson was spoken of as the lesser weevil in our house. We were so much alike it startled both of us.

I dated the publisher's college-age daughter twice, looked at the perplexities of that, and backed off.

Leaving Chicago--rock on windshield--Carol thought shot--Same to you, Chicago.

The Rotarian gave me what I wanted: the chance to do everything on a magazine.

Which 1 of us said it; the same brown shoe may have been voter.

One or the other—or both—said: what are we doing here?

I agreed with the drop-outs, but thought they splashed too much.

Two sets of lives now, half a continent apart, and a world between. C and I sent the bylined articles we wrote, G'ma jumbling them into a scrapbook, Dad thrusting them onto all visitors.

Writing tricks at TR; freelancing at same time. No one edited me; my style galloped.

perpetual half out of existence

Hobomus paperas

caging & flats, darned & rammed

[tons vs. farms, it was man/n/cr done up a tractor seat]

France 7 words

I was proven 26 + CDs ran than I was have carried.
Baseball was not even something we played at school. Softball was our game, I think because girls and teachers often filled out our skimpy teams, and that ilk doesn't share a boy's passion for a genuine major league hardball.

No, baseball was descriptions in the familiar voices of Al and Art. The Yankees won year after year and the National League waged its annual free-for-all because Al and Art told us how it happened. "Bottom half of the ninth inning. Cleveland needs two runs to tie the Yankees, three to win. Doby, Rosen, and Luke Easter are the batters. Don't go away."

Don't go away! Al, would I go away from the greatest drama ever to play between a boy's ears? Art, I thrill even to your every digit as you cheerfully report the day's attendance along about the third inning.

Don't go away? Where would I go, anyway? There is nothing outside our trailer but a few thousand sheep and a horizon of tan grassland. The huge battery radio my father and I huddle around from the first pitch until the last roundup of other scores is the only game in the universe.
Late on a Saturday night in White Sulphur Springs, you could stop every few steps along either side of Main Street and hear somebody klax in a saloon. In from the ranches for 50 miles around came the cowboys, anyone was eager to blow it, the hay hands, shepherders who had been alone for months would be drinking themselves crazy to try catch up with the rest of life. Jokes, stories, even songs.

I roam the town, perhaps as far as hot water well. Or I would try to sleep on the seat of the pickup, shoving the gearshift up so I'd have room to lie and pulling a coat over me. Dad would tell me where he'd be next, and maybe the bar after that, and if I couldn't sleep, I would get up and track him down again.

At one point, Dad was a close friend of the barber who had a tiny shop next door to the OO -- the first man I can remember with a mustache, a small crisp white one -- and we spent a lot of time in the OO then.

The drinking was beer and beer and beer and beer. At least at my father's elbow, you could stand all night and never see whiskey pass anyone's lips.
Across the Sixteen country and other of the sheep ranges, there could be seen cairns about the hight of a man. Shepherders' monuments, they were called, and monuments they were, to boredom. I would bet that most of those cairns were built before noon, before lunch could be eaten and the sheep laze to a water hole.

Once or twice I can remember a two-day rain, which was all the rain we could imagine, and the loss of two noons in a row was befuddling.
the hotel lobby, a wide high window had been installed on the outer edge of this prow-like jut to take advantage it, then you could dare the taste of the sulphur spring water.

One of my classmates, Kirkwood, downed the water as if it were lemonade. His grandfather, a nasty-faced character who indeed gave every sign that he might live forever, had convinced Kirkwood that the stuff was an elixir for a person's insides. After Kirkwood had slurped down a cupful, I would reluctantly sip away. What bothered me even worse than the taste was the rancid look of the spring. Sulphur water has a way of layering its minerals into a kind of putty on stones and clay and even the underwater strands of grass, and the spring always was coated with this sickly whitish curd, as if something poisonous had just died in it. And yet, nowhere else had anything like this place, and so the slough and its ugly water drew us.

White Sulphur had other lures I thought must be the only ones of their kind in the world—the giant carcasses of buildings to be poked into. Late in the last century, when the town had figured it might grow, a few grand buildings had been put up, and they had not yet fallen down entirely. Near the sulphur slough stood the remains of the Springs Hotel, a long box of gingerbread-work and verandas which had been built for resort-goers who came to take the waters. I seem to remember that whatever was left of this building was so treacherous none of us would go out on its floor more than a few feet from the smaller window which showed a line of floorboards which
I try to think myself back into that other boyhood, to feel
from the skin inward what it would have been like to grow up in
that mountain basin, in a large fatherless family, with winter
holding the country five months of a year and bankers in wait
for it the rest of the time. My own growing up had its odd skeins,
but my father's boyhood crooked off at angles almost beyond my
imagining.

First of all, for one thing, the Tiernan Basin was a ghetto. No matter that
the high walls which held them in
the people were only a handful, or that the canyons around them
were weathered granite cliffs instead of brownstone; they were
immigrant, poor, spoke dialect, had endless children, and clutched
together in mawrow confines to try to make a living. Like any
the Basin mostly
ghetto, it ran on memory and hope rather than current income.
hung at the corners of the settlers' minds,
The backdrop of Scotland was always there, and the notion that
reminding everyone
provide job enough,
reminding that the home country could not support them. And
shooed from a rookery
in from those brain corners like birds forced to fly came the
hope that this Montana land

and bestowed all
Before, death had made hasty swipes at him. This time it fastened
onto his chest and rode him day and night. He could breathe only as if
he were trying to stave off drowning—the deep, clutching graps at breath,
chest swelling, the air blowing through his lips in his haste to draw
more in. His life was ending before his existence, and I watched helplessly
as he drained away.
sex attractant, or pheromone, which lures the tussock moth; putting out a synthetic attractant in traps may provide an early-warning system to signal the growing infestation of a forested area.

By the end of 1975 -- a half-century since the wonder-worker of the gooseberry bush dropped by to see what the Station's name meant -- the PNW Forest and Range Experiment Station had a complex family tree of current and past research. Sorting out the lineages might produce some of these conclusions:

--An agency is pushed and pulled by the times. It has to be, or history leaves it drowsing into oblivion. Decade by decade, though never in quite so tidy a time span, the PNW Station has felt the Depression, three wars, the growth of environmental concerns, and the burgeoning of science in the nation's everyday life.

--The bloodline of an agency is its people. The decades of research by a Leo Isaac yield not only a body of skills and data, but a model of human capacities. In the eras of the six Directors who have headed the Station can be read, not surprisingly, some guiding notions of each man: Munger's brisk administration, and just as brisk an emphasis on the great Douglas fir species; Wyckoff's delegation of authority amid the many demands of war; Hall the biochemist focusing on methods of better using the forest's wood; Cowlin the economist presiding over the growth of
The rider took one look at the Doig steer and began to realize what he was in for. He tied the saddle every direction he could think of and got on. Before the afternoon was over, the steer had scraped and torn the corduroy pants to tatters, and the rider had to borrow a pair of jeans to go home in.