

1883
Day seventy-six

Monday, the twentieth of August, 1883. As Swan packed his tin bins of fish for the retreat to Masset, I heard the report of a gun, and...an Indian named Kanow arrived...He has come to hunt sea otter and will return to Masset as soon as he kills any.

Double luck had just blown in. Kanow agreed to take Swan's specimens back in his canoe, and with one last northwest gust the wind and rain whirled away. Swan sat under sunshine for the first time in a couple of hundred hours and began to write the reversal of the Queen Charlottes' defeat of him. This unexpected arrival and the relieving of our canoe of the weight of the case of specimens which weighs as much as a barrel of beef--nearly three hundred pounds, he noted elsewhere--will make our canoe much lighter and as the Indians have been at work repairing her today, I hope we can make a start tomorrow early if the wind is fair. I have told Johnny to cook enough this evening so that we shall not have to go ashore tomorrow until we camp for the night.

4 # Broke camp and started at 5:20 AM, the twenty-first of August--south toward Skidegate Channel. This day's journey is a series of notations of shoreline points and rock formations, much seen but little investigated. Swan had his mind on speed, and the mended canoe glided on and on until at sundown we landed on Hippa Island. By far the lengthiest day of advance, this one: more than thirty miles, with about the same distance yet to go to reach the entrance of Skidegate Channel. Swan and Deans after a hearty supper

plopped to bed with the assurance from Edinso that they were the first white men to sleep on the island.

Deans might have foregone the honor. Their tents had been pitched in a patch of cow parsnips, and by morning the odor sickened him. However

4 # a cup of strong coffee made him feel better, and Swan rapidly ^{marshals} had the group into the canoe again. ^{have} They had very nearly paddled to Skidegate Inlet, in late morning, when mist shut down thick and the rain commenced...

(no 9) Edinso knowing of a camping ground at a place called Tchuwa, we pulled and paddled, now against wind and tide and finally made a landing at 1 P.M. on a pebbly beach composed of paving stones and shingle and so steep that one could hardly climb to the top which from the landing to the summit is at least a hundred feet. ^{find} Struggling to the top, they found a tent site under large evergreens, a perfect picnic ground in any Country but such a rainy one.

Swan sought out a small dry cave, sat down and wrote these notes... There was progress to report to himself: ...did pretty well today... But that night, a severe attack of neuralgia in my head which induced me to retire after taking my 9 o'clock meteorological readings...

4 # ^{sleeps} He ~~slept~~ until seven the next morning, which approached ^{travelling} ~~mid-afternoon~~ in his habits, and arose refreshed and feeling unusually bright which I attributed to the healthful influence of the fragrant spruce boughs which formed the groundwork of my couch. ^{is} Good health seemed rampant: Deans ^{is} was unnauseated, and Edinso's back ^{is} was better. Indeed, the chief ^{arises} was so jovial that he related many anecdotes and incidents of his early life. His main tale of the day was of how he had discovered the gold--white stones--which set off the Gold Harbor rush on the west coast of Moresby Island in 1849.

(no 9) (At Skidegate ^{later} Swan would learn that Edinso's historic prospecting had been performed by another Haida. A Munchausenism, he ^{here} edits into Edinso's fable.)

The weather grabbed ⁵ them again. Twenty-fourth of August: The rain

beat through the tent in a fine mist like an umbrella under an eave gutter...
while a small brooklet found its way under my bed.

As the soggy canoe party ^{sits} ~~sat~~ out the hours around the campfire, a stone exploded ⁵ in the blaze. Swan guessed ⁵ the detonation caused by water in a cavity of the stone which converted into steam. Not so the Edinso version:...it was the Spirits who were angry and had made the recent bad weather. He then threw a quantity of grease and some tobacco in the fire as a sort of peace offering.

Swan ^{makes} ~~made~~ an offertory of his own by stenciling a marker displaying the following legend.

James G Swan US National Museum & US Fish Commission Washington DC
with James Deans Indian Department Victoria BC Camped here Aug 23. 24.
25. 1883

Edinso chief of Massett Captain of canoe

Johnny Kit Elswa Skilla Tsatl Kundai Hanow SelaKootKung crew of canoe

I nailed this board to a tree where it will be a conspicuous object on landing, to any one who may be so unfortunate as to camp at this place hereafter.

4 # ——— Now only a matter of hours from Skidegate Channel, Swan and party ^{push off to} ~~made~~ a late start the next morning, 7 oclock instead of 5 which we should have done... Luckily we found the water smooth, and the canoe slid easily.

4 # Johnny had collected some spruce gum yesterday, and...all hands took a piece, and soon the jaws of the whole party were in motion...We found the gum an excellent thing to chew before breakfast, cleaning the mouth, strengthening the stomach and aiding the appetite.

Chawing along in the improved weather, the paddlers idled more than Swan wanted³, and at one point stopped~~ed~~ to shoot at seals...After a delay of three quarters of an hour without killing any we again started and lazily proceeded. As the pace of paddling dropped⁵, Swan's temper ^{climbs} ~~went up~~. By now had come^{up}...a light wind from the SW which was fair. ⁹ I asked why sail was not set. ⁹ The reply was, "by and by," and the Indians stopped to light their pipes.

Swan erupted³ to Edinso that I would not pay for any more time to be thrown away...Finally the men took to their oars to their own accord, and having set two sails, for the first time since leaving Massett, we began to advance...

Swan may have won the skirmish, but Edinso ^{takes} took the day. The canoeists entered~~ed~~ Skidegate Channel so late they ^{are met by} ~~met~~ the ebb tide, and ^{must} ~~were forced~~ to put to shore for the night. Idled away too much time, Swan grumps to his diary that evening. The better news is that delay is all he has suffered. I feel thankful that I am so near my journey, and is³ good health and that no^c accident has happened to us.

4# ——— ^{the twenty-sixth of August} Next morning, ³ Swan determinedly had everyone in the canoe before day-break and by half past eight they ^{are} ~~were~~ pulling in at the Skidegate Oil Works... ...and were very kindly received by Mr. William Sterling the superintendent, who at once ordered a nice breakfast for us...and Mr. Alexander McGregor his partner who offered me a room in his house to write in and to spread my bedding making me more comfortable than I have been at any time since leaving Massett.

4# ——— Swan's mood now, after the watery three weeks of exploration, is a

mix of triumph and relief, glad that I have ended this tedious and perilous
journey from Masset to this place without accident. Old Edinso has purpose-
ly delayed our travel...but I felt safe with the old fellow as he is very
skillful in handling a canoe. ^{He} Swan ^{of success} next hurries a letter off to Baird
at the Smithsonian...20 days on the trip...head winds and rain all the time...
With the exception of the temperature being mild--54° the weather has been
like the winter weather off Cape Flattery...

^{he even} In the mellowness of the moment, Swan allows
Edinso to use his tent and tells Johnny Kit Elswa to give the Indians the
balance of the rice which was enough for a good meal, a lot of biscuit, tea,
sugar and some bacon.

^{in a day or so,} By the time Edinso sets off up the coast to Masset, however, Swan is
back to inscribing him as the biggest old fraud I ever have had dealings
with and has been told by Johnny that when Edinso was about leaving he stole
one of the stone water jugs I had bought at Massett...Johnny asked him what
he meant by taking it, and the old villain said I gave it to him. Johnny
took it away...He also told me that at one of the camps, the men threatened
to leave and walk back to Massett if Edinso did not start. He told them
that the more days they could add to the trip the more money they would get.
They say the old man's lame back was all sham.

said it was always practiced...as long ago as the most ancient legends
make any mention. Formerly the Indians procured the wool of the
mountain sheep which was spun into fine threads which were stained
with some black pigment either pulverized charcoal and water, or with
lignite ground in water on a stone, as at present, then with needles
made of copper procured from the Sitka Indians, these fine threads
were drawn under the skin producing indelible marks. When white men
came they learned the art of tattooing with steel needles from sailors
on board the vessels, and have adopted that plan since...here the old
woman became tired and went home.

How elliptical--literally--the past becomes. Stingess culls from
what may have been an evening-long legend an answer for Swan. ^{Who} ~~He~~ chooses
as much of it as he thinks worth cramming into his diary pages. At a
hundred years' remove, I select lines from his and frame them in trios
of editing dots. From her Haida tradition to Swan's white tribe
to my even paler version. The logical end of the process signaled
by my ellipses,

I suppose, might be for the lore of Haida tattooing to compress down
to something like a single magical speck ^{of print,} perhaps the period after the
news that Stingess has got tired of all the chitchat, and gone home.
But I've heard it offered that a period is simply the shorthand for
the dots of an ellipsis. That a story never does end, only can pause.
So that would not complete it either, the elliptical transit from
Stingess to Swan to me to whomever abbreviates the past next.

that whatever their thousand daily pretences, cats all are secret
Chesires.

To Swan of Port Townsend now, another here-again-gone-again countenance. His effort to woo the railroad was mostly told in spare pages of the ledger diary he had used at Neah Bay--evidently a special effort to keep straight the skein of blandishments being tried on the Northern Pacific executives. The Graveyard Spit interlude was set down in a pocket notebook, and the several years that follow it are an entire era of pocket diaries: lines jotted instead of composed. Scrawled small as they are, these entries will be day upon day of decipherment. But beyond doubt, worth it. I lift pages to the start of 1869 and find:

Stormy day. Commenced to occupy office on the lower floor of old Post Office building Pt Townsend, as the office for Commissioner of Pilots. US Commissioner. Notary Public &c rent \$5 pr month

I check the final night of 1874 and learn:

One Arm Smith & I worked this PM sodding Bulkeley's grave & planting shrubbery around it.

Even for Swan, these seem broad ^{enough} ~~brackets~~ ^{endeavor.} of ~~enterprise.~~

Marilyn--

It may take a bit of crowding, but please type these so they come out no more than 3 pages.

The other two pages are separate ones, each from a different place in the ms; please just retype them as they are.

Day fifteen

The strop of this weather on the days, each one made identically keen, tingling. Rainless hours after rainless hours glimmering past, it has dawned on me how extraordinary is this dry cold time, as if I were living in the Montana Rockies again but without the clouting mountain-hurled wind. There is a bright becalmed feel, a kind of disbelief the weather has about itself. Other years, by now I might have shrugged almost without noticing into our regional cloak of rain-and-cloud, the season's garment of interesting texture and of patterned pleasant sound as well. "Rain again," a friend growls. "Right," I say and smile absently, ~~and~~ ^{ing}listen for the booooo and whooooo of foghorns out in the murk of Puget Sound. But through yesterday morning, the temperature hung below freezing for four days and nights in a row, the longest skein of its kind I can remember here at the rim of the Sound. I bury our kitchen vegetable scraps directly into my garden patch each evening as immediate compost, and the shovel brings up six-inch clods of frozen soil, like lowest-grade coal.

But what speaks the weather even clearer is today's renewed presence of birds. This morning kindled into warmer sun than we have had and already, Carol minutes gone up the hill to teach her first class of the day, just to be out in the fresh mildness I have walked up to the top of the valley. Clouds were lined low across the southern reach of the Olympics while clear weather held the northern end, the Strait country. The view west from me was bannered in five blues: the water of Puget Sound in two shades, azure nearest me, a more delicately inked hue farther out; the foreshore of the Olympic Peninsula in its heavy forested tint;

the mountains behind their blue dust of distance; the clear cornflower sky. Such mornings shrug away time. Vessels on the Sound--freighter, tug harnessed to barge, second freighter, the ivory arrow that is the Edmonds-to-Kingston ferry--seemed pinned in place, and I had to watch intently before my eyes could begin to catch the simultaneous motion of them all, inching on the water. Then as I turned home, the flurry. Robins in fluster at the mouth of the valley, abruptly dotting suburban fir trees and frost-stiff lawns. Motion double-quick, headlong. Airful of flying bodies, a vigor in orbit around fixed beauty of Sound and mountains.

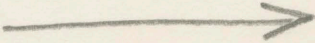
Soon after, a jay cry, like rods of some terrible substance being briskly rasped against each other. Then framed in the desk-end window, popping from place to place along the bank beneath the valley slope's evergreens, a tiny brown flying mouse which proved to be a wren.

These past iced days, I have tried to picture this valley's birds, up somewhere in innermost branches, fluffed with dismay and wondering why the hell they didn't wing south with their saner cousins. It occurs I live in this suburb for its privacy, the way it empties itself during the workday--people evaporated off to office, school, supermarket--and delivers the valley to me and the birds and any backyard cats. I suppose I could get by without the cats, or trade them for other interesting wanderers, maybe coyotes or foxes, but

A birdless world, the air permanently fallow, is unthinkable. To be without birds would be to suffer a kind of color-blindness, a glaucoma gauzing over one of the planet's special brightnesses. Bushtits must bounce again out there on the thin ends of birch branches like monks riding bell-ropes. A fretful nest-building-robin--we always have one or two nattering in the trees at either end of the house--must gather and

gather dry spears of grass until the beakful bristles out like tomcat whiskers. Towhees, chickadees, flickers, juncos, occasional flashing hummingbirds; seasonal grosbeaks who arrive in the driveway and, masked like society burglars, munch on seeds amid the gravel. Besides Carol and the pulse of words across paper there are few everyday necessities in my life, but birds are among them.

And Swan, with his name which the Indian woman at Shoalwater had said is like our word Cocumb, a big bird: birds perpetually avaiate across his horizons. Time upon time I marker incidents of birds in his pages. This forenoon, the tenth of July of 1865 at Neah Bay, I saw a kingfisher fluttering in the brook and supposed he had a trout which he could not swallow. On going to him I found he had driven his bill into an old rotten stick with such force as to bury it clear up to his eyes...hard and fast. I took him with the stick to the house and called Jones & Phillips to see the curiosity. It was with difficulty that his bill was pulled out again. Two years previous, in the same week of July: I discovered a dead Albatross on the beach yesterday which had a large dogfish which it had swallowed partially



A typed final draft from this
version, Dec. 14, '79

Day seventy-three

The Hoh ranger, stocky and red-mustached, recites for us the
statistics of the February ~~xxxx~~ windstorm. Ninety trees were blown
down across the first nine miles of ~~hiking~~ trail. Twenty-two more

barricaded the road we have just come in on from the coastal highway.

Here at the Hoh campground, ~~when the wind was at its~~

wildest, the ranger heard seven trees topple within a total of five
seconds.

I try to imagine the blizzard of wood--tons of cudgel falling
at every eyeblink--and ask the ranger what he did during it, ~~try to~~
hole up somewhere? ^{of try pull hole in after him} "Wasn't ~~any~~ nothing to do, just drink a little
wine and listen to them fall."

If the Alava trail is a miniature Roman road and Dungeness Spit
a storybook isthmus between saltwater and glacier ice, these Peninsula
rain forests, the Hoh the most northerly of four, are Atlantises of
nature, communities of myriads of life which thrive while enwrapped
in more than twelve feet of rain per year. Their valleys are fat
troughs ~~westward~~^{eastward?} to the Pacific, in from the ocean the rainclouds
float, are elevated by the terrain beginning its climb to the Olympic
summits, and let down their rain. ^{moisture} It produces a whopping north-woods
jungle, a kind of Everglades grown to the height of fifteen-storey
buildings. Here in the Hoh, for instance, Sitka spruce are the
dominant giant trees, and they measure big around as winery vats
and, ~~at~~^{up} more than 200 feet, ~~twice as tall as cathedral spires.~~

The power and loft of the Sitkas, however, are merely the might
above the rampant details of the rain forest, like crags over delicate
valleys. ^{here} Nature tries a little of everything green--000 varieties of
moss, sprays of fern (more). The fascination of the rain forest is
that all flows into and out of all else. An

embankment with a garden of fir seedlings and ferns sprouting from it will turn out to be not soil, but a downed giant tree, its rot giving the nurture to new generation. Moss-like epiphytes grow up tree trunks, and from the epiphyte mat grows licorice fern, daintily leafing into the air sixty feet above the ground.

ooo
mosses,
mushrooms
& shellfish

no 4

Alders and broad-leaf elm are adorned with club-moss, their limbs in wild gesticulation draped with the flowing stuff. So laced and lush is this ecosystem that we walk ^{our soil under} through it ^{today} without making a footfall, only scuffs.

Make no
footfall, just
a scuff.

Carol has said ~~to me~~ that these Olympic rain forests, and the rough coast to their west, provide her the greatest calm of any places she has been: that she can walk ⁱⁿ this rain forest and just ^{only} be walking in this rain forest, moving in simple existence. Surprising, that, because neither of us is mystic. Perhaps, efficient practitioners that we are, we simply admire ^{def} the fit of life systems in the rain forest--the flow of growth out of growth, out of death...

think
we are
stately
mystic.

^{Memories of}
I do not ease off into beingness as she can. Ideas pop to mind.

^{leaf}
I remember that Callenbach's young foresters ^{of} in Ecotopia would stop in

^{into its bark,}
the forest to hug a fir and murmur ~~to it~~ Brother tree... This Hoh forest

is not a gathering of brothers to humankind, but of elders. The dampness

^{me} in the air tells ^{has read of a} another story, of the visitor riding through the

redwood forest in the first years of this century. He noted to his

guide that the sun was dissipating ^{chilly} the fog from around them. No, said

the guide, ^{no,} The trees is drinkin' it. That's what they live on mostly.

When they git done breakfast you'll git warm enough.

There is this as well: the river seduces my attention from the forest.

^{no} This time of year, before the glacier melt begins to ~~pour~~ pour

from the Olympic peaks, the water of the Hoh is a ^{painfully} lovely slate blue, gloss.

a moving blade of ~~perfect~~ ^{sheen} delicate ~~polish~~ ^{These Peninsula} The boulder-

stropped, the fog-polished Hoh. Question: why must rivers have names?

Tentative answer: for the same reason gods do. These Peninsula rivers,

their names a rough poem of several tongues--Quinault, Quillayute, Hoh,

Bogashiel, Soleduck, Elwha, Dungeness, Gray Wolf--are as holy to me

as anything I know.


One mightiness of the forest does take my mind from the river.

For comparison's sake, I veer to take a look at the largest Sitka

spruce along

this valley bottom. The Park Service has honored it with a sign--

16'4" diameter, 180 feet high--but now the sign is propped against the

prone body of the giant. The tree lies like an extracted tunnel.  a long rounded building,

the Sitka
Clambering onto its upper surface, I find that ~~it~~ has burls--great

warts on the wood--bigger around than my body. For all that, I calculate that it is barely larger, if any, than the standard 19th-Century

Highpockets
tree ~~and~~ and his calendar crew are offhandedly devastating in my

writing room.

Evening, and west to Kalaloch through portals of sawed-through windfalls, to the campground beside the ocean. ~~Mountain~~ In fewer than fifty miles, mountain and ocean, arteried by this pulsing valley.

Marilyn-
redd back
D10
describe
diaries
thru 1898

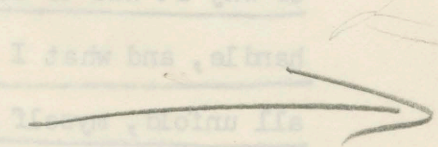
Days eighty-five, eighty-six, eighty-seven

F 1 1893

the first of February of 1893.

This has been a stormy cold disagreeable day, snow falling all day. The worst day this winter. I have felt much depressed with the many deaths of friends since New Years. Felix Dobelli lies dead at the Undertaker and Capt Sampson died last Sunday and Mrs Morrison is very low. My turn may come soon.

4#



The diaries of the 1890's. Common tan pocket notebooks for the decade's opening year, ~~inauspicious~~. But for 1891, an elongated Standard diary with maroon leather covers and gilt page edges. Notebooks again for 1892. Then beginning with 1893, five volumes in a row with Excelsior Diary in gilt script across a maroon cover. 1894 is longer and slimmer than the other Excelsiors, but the group is more uniform than any other of Swan's sets of years.

For Swan and ~~the~~ ^{his} town, the decade itself is not at all so ~~bright~~ orderly, and red ink the more usual coloration than maroon. Port Townsend had boomed at the end of the 1880's. Seven thousand population, ~~and had fixed streetcar lines~~, streetcar lines, an electricity plant fed with slabwood; the big downtown buildings which still stand, three- and four-story dowagers of stone and brick, were built then. Naturally, railroad hopes had freshened. A line called the Port Townsend Southern, the first mile laid by the townspeople ^{themselves}, caught the attention of eastern railroad men--officials of the Union Pacific, this time--and drew ~~their~~ ^a promise of completion to Portland. The acreage Swan ~~had~~ bought west of town in 0000 at last looked as if it would pay off; an offer of \$100,000 had been made to him, he wrote his daughter Ellen. Swan had bet as well by investing in a fish-processing plant, and Franz Boas was salaried him to do some artifact-collecting for the ~~the~~ ^{famous} Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

Then, with the depression of 1893, financial fizzle for both Port Townsend and Swan. Again no railroad, again no profit from the long-held land.

4#

Whether the dull day, the eleventh of January, 1894, or as
a precursor of bad news

I have felt remarkably dull and low spirited. The times
are very dull, taxes are due and no money to pay them and
I feel as if I have lost all.

But there are thousands of people worse off, and I
have good health. I have much to be thankful for, but
I feel very despondent.

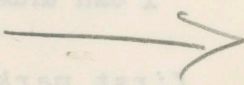
4#

→

of his predecessor, as of his editorial board, and by the way
who was remembered for heading off to the back of each building,
a dab of copy in one hand and a note in the other, and by the way
he arrived there would have picked up editorialists from other papers
until his own page filled exactly. My own stock with Dave Folie
associated when he learned that I was carrying on a courtship in
Chicago, 1890 was away: One more grandeur of the big town, is she?
I was convinced so. She was Carol Miller, whom I had met in
when we both were in teaching and consulting jobs during summer
journalism sessions at New Western a few years before. A bit
steady-eyed woman of definite opinions and clear-headed balance, Carol
now had traded in an East Coast newspaper job for a magazine editorship
in a Chicago suburb. He no more just as I had begun job-shopping
beyond Decatur. I already was finding that I lacked the instinct
for the kind of work that I had been doing in the East.

←

As when he explored the west shore of the Queen Charlottes,
Swan now is going into territory where I, as a modern winterer,
cannot follow. Just once have I experienced the lack of money
which plagues Swan now--sixteen years ago, as I arrived back to
Montana out of the Air Force, stepping off the train at Ringling
with two dollars, both of them borrowed--and mine was only a moment,
tiniest fraction of ^his new chronic brokenness.



4#
Stormy day, the twenty-sixth of December, 1895, remained at
home and dyed my pilot jacket

which had become faded and rusty I used diamond navy blue
dye and tomorrow I can tell how I have succeeded. The
next day:

no# D-27 Pressed out my navy jacket and it looks as good
as new. The old pantaleons which I dyed and pressed
a few days ago, and this fresh dyed jacket make my friends
think I have just bought a new suit of clothes. I am
much pleased as now I can renovate my old clothes
with but small cost...

4#
Nor can I truly share the fact of age as it works now on Swan.
of 1896 and 1897,
I can watch his reports of it in the diary pages, how the ~~the~~ wide
days of Northwest summer seem to mean less to him now, and the
coastal
days of winter become newly treacherous--Snow showers this evening.

I slipped down on the crossway and sprained my right thumb. How he
records, as ever, the letters sent and received, whom he has called
on, met on the street, borrowed two dollars from, but all the while
the incidents of his life becoming smaller and smaller, a walk around
town chronicled as a canoe trip to Neah once had been. →

ahead
to

I see, and am moved by, the way Swan begins to be shared among his coastal friends. The women who were the Roberts sisters of Swan's smitten sentences of twenty years before, Dolly Biondi and Mary Webster, take turns with Sarah Willoughby, wife of the Makah Reservation agent during Swan's last trio of years at Neah Bay, in ~~shearing~~ ^{again} his stories, seating him to the table: Dined at Mrs Websters on Stewed chicken, mushrooms and huckleberry pudding--delicious. His landlord forgives him his office rent, the family of Jimmy Claplanhoo--Jimmy has fledged into Capt James Claplanhoo in the diary, owner and skipper of a schooner of his own--provides frequent visits from Cape Flattery and an occasional gift of a suit of clothes. Study as I ~~do~~ ^{may}, however, I know I do not grasp this process, silent as spiderspin, which is happening to Swan here and which is called age. My belief is that we cannot truly see ourselves as we will be when old--perhaps dare not--and so are unable to imagine into the oldness of others. All I can learn for certain from Swan, and it ~~may~~ ^{may} be plenty, is that now some of his days are better than other of his days, but no day is easy.

Yet if such information must be secondhand until ~~if I reach~~ ^{encounter} age myself, it would not be Swan's wordstream if it were not also clear as ^{a diary pen can make it,} possible. On the first of April of ^{Swan's eightieth year, he} 1898, ~~Swan~~ ^{he} begins to use an old but unfilled pocket diary, a mustard-colored Standard published for ~~the year~~ 1890. Generally ~~Swan~~ ^{he} remembers to add the tiny loop of ink atop the 0 of 1890 to transform the year, but when he doesn't, it is as if his entries ebb back and forth between the years:

June 28, 1898

The twenty-eighth of June:

Weighed myself on Joe Gates scales Weighed 143 pounds the lightest I have weighed in some time My long sickness pulled me down but I am getting better slowly.

4#
The twelfth of July:

Mr Springs of Everett was here to day and talked against Port Townsend, said ~~nail works would not be established here as nails can be brought here cheaper than the iron to make them, and if the rail road is completed it will do no good as vessels will all load at Seattle and a lot more such rot.~~ I told him if the road is completed to here, that trains of cars can bring their grain direct to Port Townsend as well as to Seattle or Everett, but he would not admit that ~~but~~ did say Port Townsend would improve after rail roads are built to Port Angeles.

I told him he is an old fossil & he had better remain in Everett as it is an evidence of ignorance and bad taste to go into a town and run it down before its residents. He is a regular crank and is fit for such a place as Everett.

4#
Aug. 2, 1898

The second of August:

Have felt very much depressed all day. Think there is to be a change of weather.

4#

8
Aug 7, 1898

The seventh of August:

I did not go to church, as it seemed that everything was wrong about my clothes and I did not get ready to go out till 12 oclock noon.

4#
The twenty-fourth of August:

A lot of Quilliute and Makah Indians arrived today and camped at Point Hudson They are going to pick hops I went down to the beach to see them. They all knew me and were glad to see me. It looked like old times to see so many Indians on the beach.

4#
The eleventh of September:

Commenced a letter to my daughter Miss Ellen M Swan The letter I received from her on the 7th I burned as it was a very disagreeable one.

4#
The fifteenth of September:

Mrs Webster gave me a bagfull of doughnuts for bringing her mail from the Post Office to her however I took the doughnuts to Mrs Biondis and her sharp perceptive faculties soon found out the contents of the parcel and she soon had an impromptu course of hot coffee cake and doughnuts we enjoyed them.

~~Oct 10, 189~~

The tenth of October;

Dr Brooks O Baker examined me for vertigo which has

troubled me at intervals since last January. He said it

proceeds from heart weakness and gave me a prescription of

his own preparing, of which strychnine forms one of the

ingredients Commenced taking Dr Bakers medicine this

afternoon.

4#

The thirtieth of December:

Have had quite an attack of vertigo this evening.

*Mantlyn -
need back D10*

Day eighty-eight

My first birth day in the new century, the eleventh of January,
1900. 82 years old. May this new Era bring new prospect and may
I live to see its so glorious promise unfulfilled....I have been reading
evenings in my diaries and it seems singular to see half my life
therein...50 years ago I left Boston and 41 I began my daily journal
but yet my early years at Neah Bay are fresh to my mind Only when
I recall the deaths of so many friends Prof Baird Maj Van Bokkelin
friend Webster Bulkley & storekeeper Gerrish my own dear son Charley
last year,

does the time seem so long as it is. And the Indians I formerly
knew are gone Swell Duke of York old Edinso Capt John
only Peter alive...Ellens letters and the little sums she sends
are all I have ^{now} to tide me over to improved times My wish is
that Pt Townsend will yet take its rightful place as the most
magnificent city of the west and that my burden of debt will pass
from me. As the Poet John G Whittier writes "for all sad words
of tongue or pen The saddest are these, it might have been!"
But if it is ordained otherwise I have other remuneration in life my
collecting for the Smithsonian Institution the Makah memoir The
Northwest Coast my expedition to the Queen Charlottes Archipelago the
knowledge of Indian ways and language which
otherwise would have been lost for future generations, I would not
trade for more worldly wealth. For if I have not prospered greatly
in my western life yet I am greatly prosperous in what I have done....

Swan did not write those words. I have written them for him,

or rather, for the both of us, this dusk of winter and of his life.

The archival diaries end with 1898, the volumes for 1899 and 1900

held ~~by~~ in a private collection, but the entries have been dwindling

anyway, Swan ~~recently~~ lamenting ^{his father's} the situation to his daughter Ellen, ^{his failing grip.}

~~9-4, S to Nellie, S 27, 1897~~

My hand and wrist are still painful and I have to write slow. I don't think this is so much of a Rheumatic affection as it is the pen paralysis from over exertion writing, but as I had the same trouble a year ago I hope this may pass off eventually. But it is ^cvery annoying to me to have such ^continual pain in the cords of my hand when I attempt to write. I have been trying a little instrument called the "Electropoise" which my cousin Edward kindly sent from New York. It sends a gentle current of electricity to the part affected but it is too much bother for me to use it properly.

Swan hooked to an electrical rheumatism gizmo rather than a pen is Swan become an old bewildered stranger to himself, I am afraid. From that eighty-second birthday of his, where my imagination takes over the telling, he has four months and a week to live.

But I discover an odd thing as this companion of my winter begins to fade from life. There at the first days of this century, Swan comes into view to me in a strong new way: as if a gray-instead-of-tawny cat suddenly has padded into ~~profile~~ sight at the forest edge.

Swan has endured into time which touches my own. A little more
than a year from that eleventh ^{morning} ~~day~~ of 1900, my father will be
born at the homestead in Montana. The grandmother who will share
in raising me, and ^{be the one to begin noting} ~~begin to note down~~ our family winters, already
is a seven¹-year-old farmgirl in Wisconsin.

(In history's less personal terms, put it this way: Swan

~~He~~ was born when James Monroe inhabited the White House and
Napoleon was yet alive, and now he is almost to Theodore Roosevelt's
America, and Einstein already is thinking the world into a nuclear
future.)

Connection of lifespans

is added to our shared places, our intermingled wests.

So much of Swan, I still do not know, even after studying
him through the fifteen thousand days and two and a half million
words of his diaries. In his lamplit times alone in the schoolhouse
tower at Neah or the narrow office at Port Townsend, for instance,
what urges of the night worked in him, moving behind his brow, under
his thatch of beard, between his legs. Or why, like me, he

to invest his life at ^{all} chose this edge of America over ~~any~~ other--although I think it has most to do, in both our cases, with a preference for gossamer ^{such as words,} possibilities rather than hard-and-fast obligations. Or why he would admit into his pages ^{whatever} ~~any of his~~ ^{he had} peeves, but no hatreds; details of infatuation with a choirgirl, but none of the fact of it; hints of whiskey, but never direct confession of too ^{many bottles.} ~~much~~ of it. Unlearnable, those beneath-the-skin frontiers. Even the outer ones leave questions, for I believe now that no one winterbook--no book--can find nearly all that should be said of the west, the wests. Profundities of ^{westerning} ~~place~~ there undoubtedly are, but do they count for more than a liking of mountains and of ^{hearing} a waitress ~~saying~~, There you go...?

Yet somehow the ~~the~~ scenes of this winter, and of Swan's seasons, do flow together, much as ^{beings mingle in} ~~as~~ one of those great carvings of the Haidas. ("They weren't bound by the silly feeling that it's impossible for two figures to occupy the same space at the same time.") Perhaps atoms ^{merge} ~~fly~~ out of the landscape into us. However it happens, the places are newly in me. Whidbey Island, ~~where~~ gulls go balleting along the roofs of wind. Dungeness Spit, days there glossed with sea ducks and crowned with an eagle. The Capes, Flattery and Alava, their surfs bringing in perpetual cargoes of sound. This suburban valley, at its mouth the greater gray-blue water valley, Puget Sound. The cabin at Rainier, summing all these sites by being abode for a dweller rather than a citizen.

The patterns explore their way back and forth between centuries as well, and I see with less surprise than I would have three months ago that a torpedo test Swan watches in the Port Townsend harbor will become Trident nuclear submarines in Hood Canal.

That his dream of railroad along one shore of Puget Sound ~~has~~^{must} bend and become a transportation megalopolis along the opposite shore. That his introduction of the alphabet in the Neah Bay

schoolhouse in 1863 has led to a federal grant for the preservation of the Makah language. That no more than Swan knew of such ~~events~~^{eventuating}

can I know what is ahead for my west. And there, in that specific realization, rill of ~~pattern~~, I suppose is the truest bond of pattern I have to you, Swan, old coastal nomad, remembrancer of so many diary pages, canoeist of yestertime. Winter brother.

OK-
Merlyn

as ~~than~~ anyone on the coast north of San Francisco, connections in the Bay city, money in his family, understanding of the Indians, a temperament for the climate. ~~But when the beds~~ The oysters beckoned for the taking, ^{were} said to lie like rich reefs, "in layers of two to three feet in thickness." They were more than palatable; Swan himself noted that they rivaled English Channel oysters, having the same strong, coppery taste. But when the beds of Willapa oysters made an eventual industry--between 1870 and 1876, well over a half million bushels were shipped to San Francisco--and a few fortunes, Swan was years gone.

It can be seen now that he spent his few years here on exactly the wrong shore of Willapa Bay. On this eastern side, there is no longer a trace of Bruceport, the erstwhile "settlement" of Swan and Russell, and the other earliest oystermen, except for a commemorative highway plaque. But across the ^{quite} water is another matter. ~~entirely~~ There the Long Beach Peninsula, another of the geographic whimsies of the Washington coastline, stretches between the Pacific and Willapa Bay like a narrow but tremendously long and crowded picnic table. Modern pushy members of the family--the motel towns, Long Beach, Ocean Park, Oceanside--are gathered along the coastal side with their belly buttons out to the sun and their neon trinkets glinting ~~widely~~ off, one another, while away at the north inland end drowns the gray-gowned maiden aunt of the mob, Oysterville.

Had Swan poled across the bay from Bruceport to settle at Oysterville and work the oyster business from there, he might

well have made it to prosperity. The village--it actually is less than that, simply a handful of handsome rangy houses of the last century, on wide lots opening out to Willapa Bay and the dark bristling ridges beyond--seems these days to exist ~~entirely~~ ^{solely} on memory and cozy isolation, but it had its era of oyster bonanza.

The site, I suppose, was too far from activity for Swan; in the end, he always was drawn to a busy port. Yet Oysterville encapsulates exactly the sort of frontier gentility Swan seems suited for. I can see him there in one of the toplofty houses, spending an hour each morning on the accounts ^{ledger} of his oystering enterprise and two hours on a monograph about the local Indians, his second wife--a sea captain's widow, say, from Astoria, and bearing more than incidental resemblance to Matilda--summoning him to noontime dinner of clam chowder and lightly baked salmon and wild strawberry shortcake, then in the afternoon a long-bearded crony or two from the Bruceport days dropping by ~~in the afternoon~~ to spin tales. (Perhaps the single most comfortable line in Swan's thousands of diary entries is an evening he records simply as telling stories and eating apples.)

But I also see him, this time in actuality, on his fortuneless side of the bay in 1868 when he is concluding his visit to the Bone River claim by pening an absentee

OK -
Harkness

or from the animals that seem to take their roles in many households, is respectful truce, whereby we gaze ~~mildly~~ ^{mildly} at one another across some line fixed in the air between us. That, of course, is never the set of terms the other side wants. Solo evidently has seen through me at once to the secret agent against dogs, and will bay the alarm through all eternity.

One more round trip we make, Solo yawping determinedly whenever my hand isn't stroking him. I face the issue. ⁴ "Solo, goddamned if I'm going to spend four days petting you. Go home."

He wavers, somewhere between another aria of barking and a demand for further ransom of petting.

"Get-the-hell-outa-here."

Off Solo scampers through the ghostly alders, looking ~~mildly~~ ^{faintly} regretful about having overplayed me. The silence that arrives along his retreating tracks fills the forest, reaches instantly down from the upthrust of fir trees and the hover of the mountain, ^{vast Rainier,} somewhere above their green weave. After the unquiet introduction, an avalanche of stillness.

I am here for stillness. For pause in this winter at Swan's heels, and, ^I suppose, in my own strides across time. Coming to this underedge of snow country is a brief reflective climb back to my first life in the West, the Montana life. I grew up in powerful winters of white, amid stories of even mightier ones: the

012
Marlyn

with white's
white humans
at that
~~This white tribe's~~
~~their~~ sacred notions focus not on the earth and its forest
and its roof of sky, but on obscure ^{ancient} quibbles among humans. ^(White humans, at that.) As
early as his Shoalwater days, Swan made note of the chief of an
Oregon tribe who shook his head firmly when told the story of
Christ's crucifixion. The Indians had enough trouble getting along
with each other without borrowing conflict, he said; this Jesus matter
was a quarrel the whites would have to settle among themselves.)
^{so well} They hold ^{strong as that of wolves,} a strange sense of territoriality, basing it on invisible
boundaries: not the borders of common sense where you know yourself
liable to ambush from another tribe, but seams on the earth somehow
seen through ^a spyglasses mounted on a tripod.

potent
Their weaponry is ~~powerful~~ and mysterious, and ^{growing} ~~getting~~ more so
all the time. (Lieut Hanbury US Topographical Engineer called on
me today he is engaged on steamer Celilo taking account of force
of current at various points on the Sound for the purpose of
ascertaining if it is practicable to make use of torpedoes as a
means of harbor defence.)

Long
Their boats are even more prodigious. } Schooners which moor at
the sawmill settlements and take aboard what had been ^{sky-touching} ~~entire~~ groves
of trees. Steamboats which with their thrashing sidewheels can
travel without the wind.

Their food ranges from disgusting--hard salted beef which the
sailors call "mahogany horse"--to marvelous: molasses, rice, coffee.

Their views on whiskey are inconstant: some Port Townsend
whites irate about the Indians sharing in it at all, others making

a commerce of the liquid fire. (Thomas Stratton brought a bottle of whiskey to me which he took from a Clallam Indian this noon under the wharf of the hotel. The Indian said he got it at Sires saloon and it was lowered through the floor to him.)

So too their notions on sex: the white men are ostentatious about preferring women of their own skin, yet Port Townsend has a growing population of half-breed children.

They are showy as well about their dead, keeping them about for ~~an entire~~ day or more for the sake of ceremony instead of putting them ^{instantly} to rest in the earth.

^{a good many} Most of them are several baths per ^{annum} ~~month~~ less clean than the Indians. (Especially less so than the Makahs, of whom Swan at Neah recorded that whenever a grimy task, such as flensing a whale carcass was completed, they at once scoured themselves in sand and surf and came out clean and bright as so many new copper tea kettles.)

Above all, this: they are a moody people, hard to predict, their community sometimes boisterous, sometimes ^{dead} silent. The day, make it, that Swan and the other townspeople learned that the iron wagons of the railroad would not be coming: watch them from the eyes of Chetzemoka the Duke of York, how the bearded men cluster and mutter and slump away to their houses, how the street stands emptier than empty after them, how even the whiskey voices in the saloons cannot be heard.

Day eighty-four

Swan to Baird:

S to B, Mar 22, '84

I think that your attention has not been called to the fact that

there is a balance due me of \$1,147.82...Those Englishmen in Victoria

cannot understand why I could not have closed my accounts with them

at the close of the year 1883... Baird.

And Baird to Swan:

B to S, Oct. 12, '83

I notice what you say about coming east some time with
your Haidah Indian, and overhauling the collections, and
putting them properly in order. I have no doubt that
it would be of great advantage to us, but the question is
as to the means to compass it....

Familiar shuttlecock, which the corresponding pair has been carrying on since Swan's completion of the Makah memoir two decades earlier. But Swan ~~now~~ ^{arriving} is coming to the time of his life when the familiar begins to evaporate. Over the next few years, he does a few dabs of local collecting for Baird and the Smithsonian, tries every so often to pry up some support there for another Queen Charlottes journey, then on the twentieth of August of 1887, the diary entry with a black box drawn around:

The news comes today of the death of Professor Baird
who died yesterday at Woods ~~Hell Mass~~ ^{Hole Mass}--I set my flags
at half mast in token of my respect for his memory.

The Smithsonian itself passes from ~~him~~ ^{Swan} next. By the end of 1889,
~~he~~ ^{she} has written: Professor Baird's death was a great blow to me from
which I have not recovered. There is a new deal and no sympathy in
Washington. A new king has arisen over Egypt who knows not Joseph.

the
These half dozen years from ~~Swan's~~ Queen Charlottes achievement
to that disgusted sign-off of the Smithsonian emerge from the diary
pages to me as written echoes. ~~the~~ Line upon startling line, the
pen's skritch-skritch now murmurs reprise of Swan's earlier Port
Townsend life. Dolly Roberts has married a naval lieutenant and
become Dolly Biondi, but Swan is drawn to another well-made young lady:

D 10, 1884

Learneds
no 91 Grand opening ball at ~~Learneds~~ (?) Opera House. Took
Harriet Appleton and danced for the first time in my life
at a ball Had a good time & got home at 2 AM.

He is back at the usual sheaf of paperwork jobs; his letterhead
recites Attorney at Law and Proctor in Admiralty United States Com-
missioner Commissioner of Oregon for the State of Washington
Notary Public Hawaiian Consul and ~~and~~ ^{are} there matters in the
ungirdled Port Townsend style:

~~performing as U.S. Commissioner:~~ Capt Moore of US Rev Cutter Wolcott
came this morning to ask my advice about his Chinese steward who
smuggled some opium on board when the Cutter was last in Victoria,
and yesterday he brought it ashore in the Captain's ^{soiled} ~~soiled~~ linen
and attempted to sell it to the steward of the Rush, now lying in
port. There were 8 pounds of this opium which he seized & confiscated
and now has the Chinaman in Irons. I told Capt Moore that I thought
if he kept the Chinaman in irons for 10 days, it would be punishment
enough as the loss of the opium worth \$100 added to being 10 days
in irons would be a sufficient ~~and~~ vindication of the law and ~~and~~ ...I
~~them off from my cover-stroke by within~~

did not think it necessary to put the Government to the expense of
a trial.

no 91 *jaunt*
He visits to Boston and family another time, goes to Matilda's
grave, with more sentiment than scruple of fact plucks a geranium
leaf as a memento of my dear wife.

McD
199

no9 He occasionally visits Neah Bay, ^{or} ~~but more often~~ ^{will} Neah Bay visits

him:

S 1, 1889

no9 Sch Lottie arrived from Neah this morning. All Jimmys family came up on the schooner. I took Jangi to Peysers store and gave him a complete outfit. He returned to the vessel as proud as an eagle. Swan remains ~~xxx~~ ready, ^{at the nudge of a pen} ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{sub,} to share with ^{any} ~~correspondents~~ his Indian lore:

N 30, 1884

no9 Recd letter from Mrs Mary B Leary Seattle requesting me to give her an Indian word suited for the new City Cemetery--I suggested "Washelli" the Makah word for west wind, and quoted from "Hiawatha" to show that the west is the "region of the hereafter," and that "Washelli Cemetery" would mean the "Cemetery of the land of the hereafter."

His palate is as enthusiastic as ever:

Dec. 31, 1884

Capt Dalgardno called on me this evening and we celebrated New Years with a pitcher of punch stuffed olived ³ and potted duck and felt much refreshed.

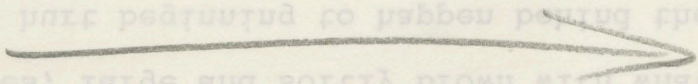
And so is his sporadic thirst for alcohol, for again, on the first of June of 1885, there is another court order adjudging and decreeing that "James G. Swan is an Habitual Drunkard..." Again, too, Swan evades ^{telling} the

^{the particular} matter ^{reporting instead:} ~~xxx~~ to his diary. This morning I eat a hearty breakfast of salt cod and potatoes which caused a violent fit of indigestion.

check:
June 21
1885

Yet something new does speak within the diary lines, ~~now~~, and it is that Swan the pioneer is shading into Swan the Pioneer. I have seen this happen before, among the two Montana generations older than mine: homesteaders or cowboys or sheepmen who endured decades enough that longevity began to intensify their outline, as a tree against an evening sky will become more and more darkly stroked, ~~time~~ ^{more} distincter than reality. Part of the process is simply to have outlived the other figures from your time, and Swan definitely has been doing so; his pages at times read like a visitation book as he makes calls on sinking Port Townsend acquaintances. Part of it as well is to have honed a skill, and Swan has become rightly recognized for his knowledge of the coastal native cultures; as President Hayes had done in 1880, the famed anthropologist Franz Boas pays his respects in July of 1889.

(Their introduction ^{occurred} ~~was~~ in Victoria: Met Dr Franz Boaz and went with him to see a lot of Haidas which had just arrived. They were all drunk but civil.) And part of the capping of the P of the notion of "pioneer" simply is--what else would it be in Swan's case?--literal: he joins and is an enthusiastic member of ^{an old-timers'} ~~the first comers'~~ group called Washington Pioneers. He ~~amply~~ qualifies. Washington Territory was not created until a full year after Swan sailed into Shoalwater Bay that ^{late} autumn of 1852, and now, the eighteenth of November of 1889 at Olympia:



The eighteenth of November, 1889, at Olympia:

This is the Inauguration day when we become a State.

The town is crowded to excess The pioneers met at
Columbia Hall and each one had a nice badge furnished...

At 10 AM we marched out and took our places in the
grand procession. First the Tacoma Band, then the Pioneers
headed by E C Ferguson President, James G Swan Vice
President, Frank Henry Secretary, & Geo A Barney Treasurer.
Then followed some 50 or 60 Pioneers, men & women Then
the Military, more bands the Governors members of the
Legislature and citizens generally. ~~It was the biggest~~
~~turn out ever seen in Olympia.....~~