IVAN DOIG "WINTER BROTHERS, A SEASON AT THE EDGE OF AMERICA"

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AUTHOR OF BEST SELLING BOOK
THIS HOUSE OF SKY
LANDSCAPE OF WESTERN MIND

IVAN DOIG

WILL DO READINGS FROM AND LECTURE ON
HIS SOON TO BE RELEASED

WINTER BROTHER
A SEASON AT THE EDGE OF AMERICA

This Free Program Is Sponsored By
Edmonds Arts Commission &
Washington State Arts Commission
At The
Wade James Theater 950 Main, Edmonds
8:00pm Wednesday, April 16, 1980
HOW TO PREPARE DOIG BOOK REVIEWS FOR THE RESERVE COLLECTION

1. If there is more than one collection of reviews about one of Ivan Doig's books compare both notebooks to ensure they both contain the same information. One becomes the original and the other can be used for reserve.

2. Arrange the reviews by the date the review was published.

3. Photocopy reviews as necessary. Don't put any originals in the notebook for reserve. Arrange one review per page, unless they are quite small.

4. Be sure the periodical or newspaper title and publication date are clearly noted on each review.

5. A significant amount of cutting and pasting may have to be done to make some reviews conform to 8 1/2" x 11" format. Loosely tape original to a blank piece of white paper, make a copy, cut the copy, rearrange it, copy it again and put the finished product in the notebook.

6. Arrange reviews and articles without a date after all dated material.

7. Place the reviews in the clear plastic sleeves provided for this purpose. Generally, each sleeve will hold two reviews placed back to back.

8. Type a small label for each sleeve with "Doig," the first word of the book's title and the sleeve number. Place the label in the upper right corner of the sleeve.
   Example: Doig for Doig's House of Sky.
   House
   15

9. Make a list of the periodical titles, date of publication and sleeve number. Place the list in the front of the notebook. See example.

10. Place the full sleeves in a notebook and type a label for the cover and spine. Use other notebooks for an example.
# BOOK REVIEWS:

**THIS HOUSE OF SKY**
by Ivan Doig

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Mustangs, barbed wire, and lyric

This House of Sky
Landscapes of a Western Mind
By Ivan Doig
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 314 pages. $9.95

From the High Plains
By John Fischer
Harper & Row. 161 pages. $10

Reviewed by Robert Gish

The fascinating thing about autobiography and its preoccupation with youth, aging, and the family of man is that there is no final ending as there is in life, in biography, or even most novels. The author of an autobiography is still living, growing, giving birth to the former and future self through what Jung called the "sper- matic word," and in the process somehow parenting both writer and reader. In autobiography, there are innumerable beginnings. But there is no end.

That is why the American West lends itself so readily to autobiographical writings. It lives and dies and is reborn as various individuals — including book travelers, pioneers of the page — pass through it, experience it, imagine it: The archetypes of youth and age, primitive and civilized, East and West, landscape as heaven and hell, hunting and hunted, Exodus and the promised land, questing for self identity, the cliched but still apt metaphor of life's "journey" — they all fit the geographical and ideational myth-reality known in various old, new, far, and near guises as the West.

Because of this, Ivan Doig's "This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind" just might enjoy much success. It should. For it's in many ways the equal of Hamlin Garland's "Son of the Middle Border," Wallace Stegner's "Wolf Willow," and Frank Conroy's "Stop-Time," three classic American autobiographies with which it variously mixes fact and fiction and sharsc art-

istic excellence. John Fischer's "From the High Plains: An Informal History" is an ordinary history-story, unique in that Fischer is an individual like the speaker in a dramatic monolog involved in revealing rather ironic things about himself. And he is not the organically conceived and written book that Doig's is. "This House of Sky" has all the poetry and lyricism, all the "blood being" of a mustang running on open range. "From the High Plains" is more than the stabled horse, plain but saddled for show. The vitality pulses in both of them in their concern for what it means to be a "Son of the Western Border..."

Ivan Doig's West is the Big Sky Country of Montana. And paralleling that "statehood" throughout is Doig's internalization of geography — metaphorically his state of mind, the roamings of an imagination through an autobiographical house of memory and dream as he faces his typewriter, family photos, and his own middle age. He muses about the people, sounds, and places in his mind's ear and eye: the mountains and valleys, his father and mother, grandmother, stepmother, his ancestors, the job attendant to sheep ranching. He looks back at his childhood bookworming, cafe- and tavern-hopping with his father, his adolescence, driving, heavy equipment, playing football, discovering girls; his years at Northwestern (where he majored in journalism). He recalls the time spent in the Air Force, his marriage, his editorial writing for Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers in Illinois, his decision to give up teaching — American frontier history at the University of Washington — to become a free-lance writer. But most he wonders about the death of a family responsible for his existence.

Doig's "wonderments" (dream and memory) provide the bases for the book's beautifully transcendent lyric quality and the means by which he eulogizes his mother, Bernella Ringer, dead of asthma at 31 — the event which in "stop-time" fashion frames Doig's consciousness, frames his first memories of being 6 and awakened by a father's voice saying, "She is dead...Ivan your mother is dead." These wonderments, also work toward the poignant eulogy for his dad, Charlie Doig, a top hand who knew sheep and men and Montana and was able to face life after his young wife's death because
Frontiersman’s adventures relived
‘Curiosity and gameens-for-damn-near-anything’

by Charles Aweka
north Times bureau

LYNNWOOD — Always a welcome sight, the Innis Arden author, Ivan Doig, stopped by the north Times office the other day, quietly beating the drums for his latest book, “Winter Brothers.”

Which is to say he dropped off a free copy.

Montana-raised Doig, who often looks as though he’s just stepped out of an L.L. Bean catalog, distinguished himself two years ago by writing “This House of Sky.” It never

SOUTH SNOHOMISH

made any national best-seller lists, but it was a National Book Award nominee.

Not bad for the former sheepherder, who went on to both Northwestern University and the University of Washington, where he earned a Ph.D. in American-frontier history.

This time the 41-year-old Doig delves into the U.W. archives to probe the mind and times of James Gilchrist Swan, a Washing-
ton frontiersman whose meticulous diaries span from 1862 to 1890.

Swan closely chronicled the coastal Indians of the Pacific Northwest and be-
came confidant, adviser and friend of some of them. A bird of passage, he abandoned his wife and children in Boston for a life in early Port Townsend. Rich in experiences, Swan was perpetually poor in pocket.

His imprint lay everywhere. Swan: artist, amateur ethnologist, author, bureaucrat, clerk, customs collector, homesteader, builder, amateur ethnologist, author, bureaucrat, clerk, customs collector, homesteader, amateur archaeologist, scholar, schooleacher on the Makah Indian Reservation. And, above all, Swan the unrelenting diarist.

“But Swan’s diary plainly masters him,” Doig writes. “Pulls his hand down onto each day’s page like a coaxing lover.”

Still, Swan manages to shroud his personal life in a measure of privacy. As Doig points out, “Swan’s diary and the list of people of them get scrupulous report; less so his interior . . .

“Unlike that other tireless clerk, Pepys of plague-time London, Swan does not confess himself every second sentence, daily jot down whom he last tumbled into bed with and is eyeing next, nor repent every hangover nor retake every jealousy. Much more assessor than confesser is Swan. Yet, yet his words do configure, make enough significant silhouette that I stare hard for the rest.

“No, the Swan style of diary-keeping . . . is not merely maintenance but more like architecture, the careful ungidy construction of something grand as it is odd. Swan works at these pages of his as steadily, incessantly, as a man building a castle out of pebbles.”

So too, does Doig build his pages — monuments to Swan — but in the end concentrating on the solid skill of the builder. There is a wealth of information here about a subject so close to home. Doig’s own thoughts begin to surface as he travels one winter to the foggy vistas where Swan once roamed with Swell, a young Makah chieftain.

Ivan Doig
Innis Arden author

Doig has his own vista in North King County — where he’s lived since 1974 — from which to explore:

“So it is that there is a route I walk regularly, a few hundred strides along this suburban valley, to the bluff above my house for a studying look northwestward, to where the Sound hangs off toward the Strait. Around that horizon, at 6 on the morning of February 13, 1859, Swan awakes aboard the schooner Dashaway to find the ship passing the lighthouse at Dungeness Spit, coming on the wind into these waters where he will spend the rest of his years.

Later we learn from Doig on a visit to the lighthouse that this is not merely the longest natural sandspit in the United States; it also happens to be the driest point on the West Coast north of San Diego.

Swan and Doig, brothers under the skin, stand in juxtaposition. Doig confesses that a birdless world, would be inconceivable, a “glaucoma” settling over an earthly pleasure. He frets over grosebeaks smashing into his many-windowed Innis Arden house and further finches at Swan’s accounts of how the Indian boys snaked red flowers with them from snails in order to impress the tongues of hummingbirds.

Other slaves linger in this 19th Century environment on the edge of the North American continent. The Indians hold them, too, Swan pens, although the custom of killing them and burying them with the chief when he dies seems to have been abandoned.

There are some fascinating references to familiar pursuits and places — cruising from Edmonds to Port Townsend on the Kaleetaan, hiking in the rain forest of Olympic National Park, pounding the boardwalk from Lake Ozette to the Cape Alava area, home of the whale-spearin Makah. The Makahs are not above spilling their own blood as well as the blood of other tribesmen. But still — and here Doig cannot resist throwing in a contemporary insight — ‘the killing capacity of Swan’s tetchy Makahs compares to that of a Trident as a jackknife to bubonic plague.’

Swan’s last great adventure — his swan song, as it turned out — took him to the Quinault Reservation. And, above all, Swan’s last great adventure — his swan song, as it turned out — took him to the Quinault Reservation.

Alas, these are no ordinary Indians. Scatter a few hundred thousand Haidas along the coast from Northern British Columbia to the mouth of the Columbia River, says Doig, arm them equal to the white settler, and white civilization might never have gained a foothold in the area.

He writes: “The Haidas from all I can judge would have warred implacably as long as we could have stood it, then negotiated us to a fizzle.”

Swan apparently was as adventurous as the dinner table as he was elsewhere. Among the delicacies he cooked was whale mince pie. He would have made a stab at baked skunk except that, according to his diary, when his host took it off the stove it was “smelt so unsavory” that both skunk and kettle got thrown in the river. As it turns out, Swan also has an unquenchable thirst for liquor.

He shows, Doig adds, unequalled “curiosity and gameens-for-damn-near-anything.”

At great length, Doig recounts Swan’s losses efforts to make Port Townsend the transcontinental terminus for the railroad.

Doig’s own world is not without calamities, he learn. He fails to repel an “attack of bulldozerphobia” in his beloved suburb. The area — our area, he sadly reports — is slowly being turned into “Los Angeles North.” There is empathy here, only a sense of uselessness.

“My effort was to narrow progress,” he concludes. “Swan’s was to lure it in his direction, but in the end we are each as futile as the other.”

Railroad defeat notwithstanding, Swan does leave his mark on the emerging city of Seattle. Requested to come up with an Indian name for a new city cemetery, he suggests Washelli, the Makah word for west wind. He also quoted from “Hiawatha” to show that the West as a region is the “region of the hereafter” and that Washelli Cemetery would mean the “cemetary of the land of the hereafter.”

Swan’s diary says the Indians can forecast the weather with remarkable accuracy. If the sky is clear and the stars twinkling brightly, they predict the next day will be windy. But if the stars shine tranquilly the outlook is for little wind.

The forecast for “Winter Brothers;” Sunny.
Book Review

Winter Brothers: A Season At The Edge of America
by Ivan Doig
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $10.95

But already I have seen from his sentences and mine that there are and always have been many Wests, personal as well as geographical.

In his first book, This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind (1978), Ivan Doig blended autobiographical reminiscence with an historical and sociological portrait of his home state of Montana. In strong, sweeping prose resembling the big-sky state he comes from, Doig detailed the major events of his first thirty years, everything from his school and sheep ranch experiences, (rendered as Jesse Stuart-style anecdotes) to the striking poetic descriptions of each of his parents' deaths. We learned simultaneously of Montana—its landscape and people—and of Ivan Doig.

In Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America, Doig (who received his Ph.D. in American frontier history at the UW) similarly interweaves his own self-portrait with that of one James Gilchrist Swan—a nineteenth century pioneer in the northwest—merging narrator and subject into a single, symbolic image of the American drive westward. Doig and Swan are the "winter brothers" of the book's title, pioneers of different eras, but, from Doig's perspective, men of the same quietness.

Swan left Boston (and his wife and children) in 1850, inadvertently following Horace Greeley's advice to "go west, young man." After a brief stay in San Francisco, he ended up on the Olympic peninsula, spending the better part of fifty years between Neah Bay and Port Townsend, living among such coastal Indian tribes as the Makahs and Haidas. Swan's various occupations included: "oyster entrepreneur, school teacher, railroad speculator, amateur ethnologist, lawyer, judge, homes­teacher, linguist, ship's outfitter, explorer, customs collector, author, small town bureaucrat, artist, clerk," and, most significantly, diarist.

Swan is Doig's "tale-bringer from the past," a sort of personal historian. Opening the pages of Swan's years, Doig writes, "is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swalloweres of flame, performance crowding performance." Fascinated with Swan's voluminous journals, Doig embarked on a journey into the past: trusting to the same journalistic skills with which in This House of Sky he traced his Scottish lineage and his childhood in Montana, Doig recreates the spirit and temperament of this prolific and somewhat querulous northwest settler whose forty year journals comprised over 2,500,000 handwritten words before his death, age 82, at the journal of 25,000." If ever Swan were forced, at points in the middle of the book, one may sense Doig's reverence for his subject, and miss, at the same time, the profoundly moving descriptions of This House Of Sky. Doig's writing here has neither the crystal precision of a McPhee's, for example, or the poetic grace of an Eisley's. Often, his metaphors seem attenuated, weakened: "the ferry goes along the center of their joined water like a zipper up a jumpsuit," "the expensive reach of bluff behind it, where the big old betrimmed houses rise like a baker's shelves of wedding cakes," "it can be seen clearest how abruptly close the Olympic range of mountains stands to this coastline: like gorgeously caped elephants about to go wading."

In this imagery, Doig demonstrates the stylistic strengths and weaknesses of Winter Brothers: a sincere love of his subject matter and the power of words to convey it, contrasted with a rough and scraggly prose which occasionally extends beyond the ideas Doig is expressing. Whereas in This House of Sky, Doig's writing exhibited the tension of carefully controlled emotion, in Winter Brothers he too often needs to fill out his portrait of Swan with what borders on overblown language. The real question is how well Doig will tackle fiction (he is apparently working on several novels) where his own imagination must create the structure around which he
Swan's mark still is visible, in diaries and on Neah Bay cliff

This is the third and final excerpt from Ivan Doig's new book, "Winter Brothers.

The book is based on the Seattle author's discovery of a remarkable diary: the 2,000,000 words (now encased in gray archival boxes at the University of Washington's Suzzallo Library) written by a pioneer settler, James Glidden Swan, between 1859 and his death in 1890.

The diary is nothing less than a meticulous record of everyday life on the rough-and-tumble Puget Sound frontier. It is something more, though: It also is Doig's reflection on that long ago-life and his way of examining what we have become today — and what, perhaps, we have lost.

by Ivan Doig
Special to The Times

DAY EIGHTY-NINE

Some time in the morning of the 18th of May of 1900, Swan lies in his room and listens for footsteps. They are slow to come, time needed for it to dawn on one or another downtown citizen of Port Townsend that the old man has not been seen to emerge to the street as usual.

Feet at last are heard and a knock questions through the door; then, silence all too much answer, the inquiring friend forces in to find Swan where the stroke has pinned him.

Life stays in Swan through that paralyzing day, but only half the night.

He is buried near the center of this graveyard west from Port Townsend's headland of houses, under a gray marble stone. Rust-orange letters have crept down into the cut letters but they can be read: PIONEER-HISTORIAN. JAMES G. SWAN. BORN MEDFORD, MASS. JAN. 11, 1818. DIED PORT TOWNSEND, WASH. MAY 18, 1900.

From here at the graveside my automatic line of sight is across the land Swan owned, to the dark hackled profile of Whidbey Island and beyond to the Cascade Mountains, but the view does have competition from the monuments all around, the urn-topped and pyramid-peaked markers of the merchants and ship's captains thrusting above his low box of stone.

The Port Townsend Morning Leader four days after Swan's death: "The friends of the deceased were permitted to take a last look at the venerable pioneer, and just before the casket was closed a delegation of Indians from Neah Bay appeared and asked permission to take a last look at their old-time friend and adviser. The Indians as they gazed upon the rigid features gave expressions of their grief in low moans and each affectionately patted the face of the dead man.

Swan's grandson in Massachusetts to the Port Townsend lawyer who notified him that debts would swallow Swan's scant belongings: "Of course the manuscripts & diaries can have no great money value... and I would hope they might be lodged in some library interested in the special subjects they relate to."

Ivan Doig

DAY NINETY

Winter's last dozen hours. Today the Sun crosses the line and it is the first day of spring. Swan wrote on this date, the 20th of March, in his lustrous year of 1880 at Neah Bay, then stepped outside to admire his bluff and view.

As we approach Neah Bay, midmorning sun making shadow-play with the trees and sea boulders along the shore of the Strait, I calculate where we will be when spring arrives tonight at 9:22: back aboard the Big ferry, south from Port Townsend by about an hour; near Point No Point, its lighthouse the ushering beam from Admiralty Inlet into Puget Sound; almost home.

Two sites ahead of us before then. One is the rock tip at Cape Flattery where Carol and I will be by midday to watch for whales in northward migration, out past Tatoosh Island. From our watching times elsewhere on this coast, other springs, we know that first the spouts will be glimpsed, small here-and-gone gazers in the water that are the gray whales.

Only those ridges of their backs — the wet island of which the Makah hunting canoes showed in on — rising in quick glinting view, until for an instant the great V of a tail is seen to lift, then plunge.

But before the whales, the stop at Neah Bay. Sometime amid this winter's constant scud of words the brief coastal news: oh yes, that time still exists, it's tricky to find but if you ask so-and-so at Neah Bay...

— we are left with the bayline sheet of rock.

The sun's brightness stops a stride or so short of the cliff. Shadowed sandstone swells as high as my chest, bulges and rounds there and then recedes as a sudden ledge, angled at about thirty degrees.

That afternoon in 1859 Swan stood atop something, likely a drifting log since reclaimed by the Strait, to reach this beveled shelf. The deep-cut letters J G S are level with my eyes, and above them rides the stone swan.

Tail fluted high to a jaunty point.

Neck an elaborate curve gentle and surely the most careless. Breast serenely parting the shadowed current of cliff.

As Carol inserts a roll of film into her camera I span my hand three times to measure the length of the bird, less than half that for its height. A bit more than two feet long, a bit less than a foot high, this swimmer of rock. Swan's diary entry for the afternoon of that long-past day is this: "Worked carving a swan on a sandstone cliff with my initials under it." — James Swan wrote in his diary. After 120 years, it still is there.

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Ivan Doig, author of 'Winter Brothers.' Inset, photo of James Gilchrist Swan and his Haida assistant, Johnny Kit Elswa, in 1883.

Ivan Doig gave up teaching to be a writer

by Larry Rumley

Times book editor

"Winter Brothers," Ivan Doig's latest book, is going into a third printing, justifying his decision some years ago to make a career of writing rather than teaching.

Prior to this, his autobiography, "This House of Sky," about growing up in Montana, was nominated for a National Book Award and was a Pulitzer Prize contender.

A graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Doig considered teaching journalism, switched to history, decided against an academic career and began writing. He was an editorial writer for a chain of Illinois newspapers, an assistant editor of The Rotarian magazine, and a writer of articles for a number of national publications. Eventually he earned a doctorate in history from the University of Washington.

"I credit my time at the U.W. with giving me a greater sense of being a Westerner," the author said.

His two recent books followed three less philosophical works: "News: A Consumer's Guide," written with his wife, Carol, who teaches journalism at Shoreline Community College; "Utopian America," an anthology of writings about utopian communities in this country, and "The Streets We Have Come Down," an anthology of writings about urban America.

"This House of Sky" was a sensitive account of life on a ranch with a sheep-herding father after Doig's mother died. "Winter Brothers" is Doig's report on James Gilchrist Swan, a transplanted Bostonian who, in 1859, abandoned his wife and children for life in the Pacific Northwest.

Doig has not written a biography, but an introspective study in which he relates his own emotions and perceptions to those of Swan, as he retraces the region Swan knew so well.

With Swan's copious diaries (1862-1890) as source material, Doig matched his own responses to Swan's and found himself and Swan quite compatible. He sees contrasts and similarities in their respective lives, and empathizes with Swan's need for privacy and living room away from urban centers.

As Swan had his territory in which to explore, to observe, to keep his voluminous notes, so Ivan Doig, from his North King County home, finds inspiration and balm, though encroaching suburbia threatens. A vista from a bluff near his home freshens his vision; the presence of birds brightens his spirits; the wealth of history available tags at the writer in him.

With the success of "Winter Brothers" (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) fairly evident, but this, too, has its base in historical incident. He explained:

"While researching Swan, I found a newspaper item about three Swedes who escaped their existence as indentured slaves under Russian masters in Sitka, Alaska, by stealing a canoe and making their way south. They made it to Willapa Bay."

Doig is fictionalizing it because, he said, "it seems the best way to approach it. The pace will be faster. My last two books have been more ruminative.

Whatever other differences may occur, one thing will remain constant: The historical background will be thoroughly researched and authentic.

(Continued on E 8)
White tribe of Port Townsend was a curiosity to the Indians

Port Townsend was depicted in an 1870 issue of New Harper's Magazine.

This is the second in our series town was noted for whiskey so

boats which with their thrashing side wheels can travel without

Their food ranges from disgusting - hard salted beef which the

Their views on whiskey are inconstant: some Port Townsend

So too their notions on sex: the white men are ostentatious about

These whites are showy as well about their dead, keeping the
till 20 or more for the sake of ceremony instead of putting them instantly to rest in

A good many whiteskins, particularly those along Port Town-

Above all this: they are a moody people, hard to predict, their community sometimes bois-

You might imagine, the myth already finding words inside your

(Excerpted from "Winter Brothers" by Ivan Doig. Published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Copyright 1980 by Ivan Doig.)

(NEXT: The end of the road.)
Port Townsend was depicted in an 1870 issue of New Harper's Magazine.

This is the second in our series of excerpts from "Winter Brothers," the remarkable new book by a Seattle author, Ivan Doig.

The book had its genesis in Doig's discovery of a set of "gray archival boxes" at the University of Washington's Suzzallo Library. Inside were thousands of handwritten pages - the diary of an early Washington pioneer, James Gilchrist Swan.

Swan, as discovered by Doig, was an amazing man: He was a frontier oyster hunter, customs official, teacher, explorer and Indian ethnographer - and yet he also found time between 1859 and his death in 1900 to write 2,500,000 words in a diary crammed with history, scientific observations and human insights.

Doig has written an equally ambitious book; one that contrasts his modern life with that of Swan's.

by Ivan Doig
Special to The Times

DAY FORTY-FOUR

So to Swan's next frontier address: Port Townsend.

Port Townsend always has lived a style of boom and bust and that record of chanciness is a main reason I cherish the town. In a society of cities interested most in how velve their skyscrapers are, Port Townsend still knows that life is a dice game in the dirt.

I have been in and out of the place as often as I could these past dozen years and I can almost feel in the air as I step from the car whether the town is prospering or drooping. Small shops will bud in the high old downtown buildings.

My next visit, they have vanished. A grand house will be freshly painted one day. When I glance again, peeling has set in.

Reputation here has waned a bit, too, at least from what I can determine by reading around in Port Townsend's past. Swan once writes that in its early years the town was noted for whiskey so strong it was suspected to be a vile compound of alcohol, red pepper, tobacco and coal oil.

The quality of Port Townsend's early inhabitants occasionally was questioned in similar tones, as when a transplanted Virginian assessed his period of residence: "Suh, when I first come here, this town was inhabited by three classes of people - Indians, sailors, and sons of bitches. Now I find that the Indians have all died, and the sailors have sailed away."

Those of us who grew up in small towns of such lineage ("Tell 'em" - the Montana rancher to me, sixteen-year-old ranchhand about to brave the community of Browning on a Saturday night - "tell 'em you come from Tough Creek, and you sleep on the roof of the last house") may become rare as mules in this citifying nation, but meanwhile a Port Townsend, adobe out on its end of the continent, reminds us of the vividness....

From its initial moment of settlement, which happened in 1851, the remarkable site has been Port Townsend's topic to boast, whenever not cussing it. As the first community astride the Strait of Juan de Fuca-Puget Sound water route, claiming a spacious headland with a sheltering bay along its southeastern side, Port Townsend looked to be a golden spot on the map.

But the promontory site turned out not as the dreamed-of stroke of geography collecting all in-bound ships but merely a nub of coast around which the lane of maritime commerce bent, like a rope pulleyed over a limb, and lowered cargoes onward to the docklands of Seattle, Tacoma, Everett and Olympia. Those cargoes still are going past.

The civic personality did not quite prove out as anticipated either. Huge aspiring Victorian houses and unexampled views across water shoulder side by side with the scruff and shagginess of a forest clearing. The town is divided between the abrupt waterfront (brinklike in more ways than one: Swan once reports to his diary that One Arm Smith the waterman fell through the privy of the Union hotel down onto the beach and injured himself severely & perhaps fatally) and the expansive reach of bluff behind it, where the big old betrimmed houses rise like a baker's shelves of wedding cakes. Downtown is divided again, between the blocks of brick emporiums of the 1880s and a straggle of modern stores which look as if they had been squeezed from a tube labeled Instant Shopping Center.

Swan's frontier Americans clumped themselves together into the barely-in-out-of-the-weather settlement they called Port Townsend. To the local Clallams and visiting Makahs, they must have seemed exotic as albino bears, this white tribe.

Their customs and rites of leadership are sporadic but frenzied. (Most memorable, at least by Swan's report, would have been the election of 1860: The Republicans burned a tar barrel in honor of the supposed victory of Abe Lincoln.) They have a fixation on honorific titles: officers from the army post near town always addressed as "Colonel" and "Major," those from ships on station in the harbor as "Captain" and "Lieutenant"; at the courthouse, it is "Judge" and, "Sheriff." (Swan himself in these years served for a time in charge of a municipal court and became thereafter on the streets of Port Townsend "Judge Swan." This they extend with guffawing generosity to the Indians, renaming the local Clallam chief Chetzemoka as "the Duke of York" and one of his wives "Queen Victoria."

This white tribe's 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. Swan early makes note of an Oregon tribe who shook their heads firmly when told the story of Christ's crucifixion. The Indians had enough trouble getting along with each other without borrowing conflict, they declared to the missionary; this Jesus matter was a quarrel the whites would have to settle among themselves.)

They hold as well a strange sense of territoriality, strong as that of wolves, 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 spyglass mounted on a tripod.

Their weaponry is potent and mysterious, and growing 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.)

Their boats are even more prodigious. Long schooners - the admiring Makahs have told Swan their word for them is barbeth'ld: house on the water — which morn at the sawmill settlements and take aboard what had been sky-touching groves of trees. Steam-
Speaking Out In
Rural America

A LOVE OF THE LAND, By Darrell
Sifford. Farm Journal. 272 pages. Illustrated. $11.85

FOR WHATEVER REASON, the
farmer's place in America is... letters usually related to
to technical manuals specializing in ag-
ticulture or novels in which the rural
setting is no more than a backdrop
for tragedy.

Perhaps it is because the life on
the farm, which calls for hard work
and long hours, doesn't germinate the
kind of isolated ruminations that are
the fodder of young writers.

A Love of the Land is an attempt by
"The Farm Journal," its publisher, to
focus on the image of the farmer. To
this end, it asked Darrell Sifford, a
columnist for the Philadelphia Inquir-
er, to embark on a 37,000 mile journey
that would take him to farms and
farmers across America.

Among those Sifford visits are his
father-in-law (a North Carolina tobac-
co grower), an Arkansas banker "with
a heart," a Russian immigrant rais-
ing hogs in Iowa, a one-time Wall Street
businessman raising corn in Minneso-
ta, an Arkansas cotton grower, a Cali-
foria grape grower and a potato
farmer in Idaho.

What he finds is a rural business-
man who borrows money each year
to raise next year's crops, possibly not
complaining, as we do in the subur-
ban, "but he cannot live on the
farm," explains one rural doctor. "He
takes his family to the doctor when he
feels like it, not when he has a cold. He
goes to the doctor to get medication
and prevent complications. You can't
tell him to take two aspirin, drink juice
and go to bed for two or three days.
He can't go to bed. He's got to
be out in the bitter cold, rain or whatever
caring for his cattle. There's nobody
else to do it. You tell him to go to bed
and he looks for another doctor - or
else he goes to the barn and injects
himself with some antibiotic he's
bought for his cattle. And that really
can cause trouble, if he's allergic to
it."

The ex-Wall Streeter in Minnesota
says farmers make it on their own,
and in five years he has not "received
one dime" of help from the govern-
ment, even not a visit from a county
agent.

"I'm not complaining," he says,"but I'm saying that it's a myth that
the government does everything for
farmers. I didn't come here looking
for government help. But I was under
the impression that farmers always
were on the dole. Now I can tell you
that at least corn and soybean farm-
ing is totally at variance with that
idea."".

In Iowa, Robert Wilhelm, an immi-
grant, explains he raises only Ameri-
can Laconnes, a purebred pit that
originated in Canada, because "they
are vigorously more sturdy than
other dogs, and they need con-
crete."

"When come on now," the farmer
says, "for a while."

A Love of the Land certainly isn't
the last word about life on the
farm. For one thing, he finds only
success, happy marriages and good
food. One would think he has
come across a farmer who wasn't making
a go of it, who was dissatisfied with his
life. But it's not surprising, as report
who wants an adventure in rural America. A Love of
the Land can provide it.

Here are some other current se-
lections dealing with rural America:

SECOND PERSON RURAL: More
Essays of a Sometime Farmer, by
David B. Godine, publisher. Noel
Ferrin, a Dartmouth English professor
who calls himself a "mournful" farmer,
had produced his second collection of
essays on the pleasures, pastimes and
occasional discomfort of country liv-
ing. Even the most city-bound arm-
chair farmer will sav Ferrin's observa-
tions on such bucolic topics as
the pleasures, pastimes and occa-
sional discomfort of country living.

THE RANCHERS: A Book of Geo-
rations, by Stan Steiner. Knopf.
341 pages. Illustrated. $13.95. The
Ranches talks about proud and rugged people
who learn to live without fire. Discov-
ering the secrets of dry farming,
struggling against storm and drought,
and learning to cherish and respect
the land and life around them.

FROM A LIMESTONE LEDGE: Some
Essays and other ruminations about
country life in Texas, by John
Graves. 220 pages. Illustrated. $11.85.
The dust jacket explains it's about
cows, bees, goats, the satisfaction of
making and drinking wine, sniffing
tobacco and about the land-

Some notes on the margin:

Two Seattle-area women, Christy
Hunter and Patty Mead, have formed
a partnership called Genevieve Pro-
ductions (P.O. Box 2583, Seattle, 81811)
to produce a book for the "Seattle-
area running community" titled Running:
Space. The $5.95 paperback de-
scribes 18 places to run, ranging from
Everett to Tacom. with maps, mile-
age and directions.

Howard Drucker, author of Seattle's
Unsual Places and other books, will review his
book at 10 a.m. Tuesday at the Broad-
view Library, 12755 Greenwood Ave.
N. For information call 425-3900.

Ivan Doig, author of the highly
acclaimed This House of Sky (nomi-
nated for the National Book Award),
is author of Winter Brothers. A Story
at the Edge of America, which will be
published Nov. 17 by Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich. His newest book chronicles the life of
James Gilchrist Swan, a pioneer who
journeyed from Boston in 1839 to the
Pacific Northwest. It is based on
Swan's 2,500,000-word handwritten
diaries kept in the University of
Washington archives.
Strange how easy it is to stumble onto both good and bad things in life.
And since you probably are tired of hearing about the negative, let me tell you about something I find very worthwhile... the writings of a fellow named Ivan Doig.

A couple of years back my mother-in-law, (Helen Sellers Ross) mentioned that the husband of a lady she knew had just published his first book. Carol Doig was an instructor at Shoreline Community College where Helen worked in the Humanities Department.

So out of curiosity we started to read this new book with its thoughtful title, "This House of Sky". (Landscapes of a Western Mind)

Quoting here from the inside book jacket, "This haunting, magnificently written book introduces an important American writer." In my own words, "I heartily agree!"

It is a splendid book about what would seem should be a less than compelling story. Yet it is...

Again quoting from the book jacket, "Ivan Doig grew up in the rugged, elemental Montana wilderness with his father, Charlie, and his grandmother, Bessie Ringer. His life was formed among the shepherders and characters of small-town saloons and valley ranches as he wandered beside his restless father, Doig’s prose is as resonant of the harshness and beauty of the Montana landscape as it is of those moments in memory which determine our lives."

"What Doig deciphers from his past with piercing clarity is not only a raw sense of the land and how it shapes us, but also of the ties to our mothers and fathers, to those who love us, and our inextricable connection to those who shaped our values in the search for intimacy, independence, love and family."

"This powerfully told story is at once especially American and quietly universal in its ability to awaken a longing for an explicable past."

This it does, or certainly did for me...

Midway in the reading of this book our friends, Susie and Jim Poth of Seattle, joined us for dinner.

Thinking they should be aware of this new literary voice, I brought out the book. Not only had they both read it, Susie had (by accident) met Mr. Doig. Poths had just moved into their new home and were waiting for phone service installation. Susie in 'borrowing' a neighbor's line for an important call found herself in the study of author Ivan Doig. Small world.

Soon after we spent a very pleasant day hiking the beach and bluffs of Partridge Point beyond Ebey’s Landing on Whidbey Island.

The reason I mention this particular hike (we've been back since) is that Ivan Doig has recently published his second book, "Winter Brothers", (A Season at the Edge of America) and this area is a scene portrayed in this new writing.

He is telling of the ill fortune suffered by famous pioneer and settler Isaac Ebey (beheaded by a party of Tlinget Indians)... "Come look from this eminence of bluff now in the soft hour before daybreak and you will declare on Bibles that the Tlingit’s act of 122 years ago was the last sharp moment on this landscape. The island's farm fields are leather and corduroy, rich even panels between black-furred stands of forest. Tan grass which broomed the backs of my hands as I climbed the path up to here now whisks soundlessly against a four-wire fence line. The sky's only clouds are hung tidily on the southernmost Cascade Mountains at the precise rim of summit where the sun will loft itself. Yes: Rural America of the last century, your eyes say — or Westphalia, or Devonshire."

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

Though it is a rainy November evening I am back once again upon that bluff — to sunwatch through his words.

His first book "This House of Sky"... was a nominee for National Book Award and a contender for a Pulitzer Prize in 1978.

And, whereas, I have never been too much into the importance of winning prizes, those are heady levels of consideration.

Best of all is the thought Ivan Doig is here amongst us working at his writing craft, focusing on the magnificent Northwest corner of our land.

Through the coming winter evenings, with a fresh log upon the fire, thanks to Ivan Doig, I shall spend, "A Season at the Edge of America"...
In both of his books, Doig demonstrates a remarkable ability to bring monotonous details like breezes from one page to the next. This is mostly due to a deft use of italic — the number of quotation marks in either of his books can essentially be counted on the fingers of two hands.

The impulse that draws people westward is of major fascination to this writer; it is his own westward odyssey from Montana to Puget Sound that serves as the bridge between past and present. But when a fascination with his own story is allowed to eclipse the others, it becomes a bridge to nowhere, leading the reader to wonder why the journey was started in the first place.

And though the voices of father, grandmother and son blend eloquently in "This House of Sky," the voices of Doig and Swan seem to compete in "Winter Brothers," speaking in different tempos, from different times. There are times, though, in "Winter Brothers" when the dialogue stretching across the century succeeds: witness Swan's descriptions of bough-breaking storms on the Olympic Peninsula and Doig's own account of the winds that brought down the Hood Canal Bridge.

"Winter Brothers" has not drawn Doig the national attention that his first book did. But this new one is already in its third printing and is listed as selling second only to Carl Sagan's "Cosmos" in the Seattle book market.

"Regional readership has saved my skin," he admits. And he points to the lively regional publishing houses — particularly in the west and northwest — to be the vehicles for the writers who are just beginning. (Dan Levant's Madrona Books is one of them.) Doig, however, started out at the top: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich agreed to publish "This House of Sky" after 13 other publishers turned it down.

It took him six years to research that first memoir, returning to those landscapes of his early life, tape-recording scores of interviews with relatives and old friends, compiling 2,500 index cards of information and depending for description on his wife Carol's photographs of the cabins, ranches and dwelling places where his family spent its nomadic life.

As a youth Ivan Doig decided a rancher's life was not for him. After college, he was a magazine editor in Chicago and freelanced articles to national magazines, but tired of summing things up in neat, 1,600-word packages.

"As a craft, the limitations (of journalism) become evident," he says. "It's a guaranteed way not to make any money in life."

Writing in general, he acknowledges, is not a particularly lucrative profession.

"There's a lack of a middle class in writing. Some make great sums of money and many others are vastly underpaid; inflation makes it tougher and tougher. If there is to be a professional writing class in this country, we've got to be paid at least on the level of postmen and garbage collectors."

Recent changes in the laws affecting the publishing business have made publishers even more selective about the manuscripts they choose to make into books. The Internal Revenue Service no longer allows publishers to depreciate their warehouse stock — this is a significant blow to an industry that has traditionally inventoried works of lasting value. Doig indicated that the ruling could promote a sure-winner kind of mentality in which publishing houses are reluctant to take a chance on a new author or an established one taking new directions.

Ivan Doig's new direction is fiction: he is at work on his first novel. But Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich was apparently reluctant to give him as substantial an advance for his first novel as they did for his non-fiction — a reluctance that he says leads him to consider changing publishers.

The first-person narrative form Ivan Doig has mastered has resonance and depth; his vocabulary is rich, his images evocative; he speaks in a familiar, American, peculiarly western voice. In portions of these first two books, he has drawn too heavily on himself for material.

It will be interesting to see what will result when the writer is freed by fiction from telling his own story.
Mingling the voices of present and past
Review and interview with Ivan Doig

By JOAN CONNELL
Herald Features Editor

Ivan Doig is one of those writers who hunkers down close beside you; one whose clear, sure narrative can polish to gems the rocks of dailiness, like a mountain river running down to the Sound.

A native of Montana who now lives in Seattle, he holds both geographies in his narrative palm. Memory mingles with the present moment in his non-fiction writing, the best of which has been compared with that of Edward Hoagland and John McPhee.

Doig’s first story of himself, “This House of Sky,” tells of a motherless childhood, a stormy time spent with father and grandmother, herding sheep from ranch to ranch on the westward tilt of the continental divide. The freshwater recollections of the boy tumble and roll across time to gain expression in the saltwater memories of the man, who now lives at the water’s edge.

Memory is this man’s treasure, a box of polished stones from past places; he lifts the lid and fingers them, telling each one’s value. Listen to how he values it in a passage from “This House of Sky”:

Memory is a set of sagas we live by, much the way of the Norse wildmen in their bear shirts. That such rememberings take place in a single cave of brain rather than half a hundred minds warrened wildly into one another makes them sagas no less. By now, my days would seem blank, unlit, if these familiar surges could not come. A certain turn in my desk chair and the leather cushion must creak the dry groan of a saddle under my legs — and my father’s and his father’s. The taste in the air as rain comes over the city is forever a flavor back from a Montana community too tiny to be called a town. A man, the same alphabet of college degrees after his name as mine, trumps in a debating point during a party argument...

and deceit, that tantalizes. If, somewhere beneath the blood, the past must beat in me to make a rhythm of survival for itself — to go on as this half-life which echoes as a second pulse inside the ticking moments of my existence — if this is what must be, why is the pattern of remembered instants so uneven, so gapped and rutted and plunging and soaring? I can only believe it is because memory takes its pattern from childhood. And childhood is a most queer flame-lit and shadow-chilled time.

Evocations such as these won “This House of Sky” a nomination for National Book Award in 1978. And now Ivan Doig has produced a second book, “Winter Brothers,” published this fall by Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich.

This new book blends many strands of memory, as Doig literally follows the footsteps of James Gilchrist Swan, one of the first settlers to live and work and write about the Pacific Northwest.

Swan was drawn west from Boston in the 1850’s, soon settled around Neah Bay lived and worked with the Haida and Makah Indian tribes, teaching, trading and learning their lore. Swan has long been considered by historians as one of the best sources of information about white people’s incursions into the Olympic Peninsula. A scrupulous diarist, he kept daily logs of the experiences of 40 years: 15,000 entries, 2,500,000 handwritten words about Indian ways, politics, ship traffic, personal musings, the weather.

Doig, who has a Ph.D. in American frontier history from the University of Washington, said during a recent interview in Bellingham that he was less interested in Swan’s diaries as history than as literary material. He spent one winter reading Swan’s daily recollections; walking, in some cases, where Swan walked and finally blending Swan’s thoughts with his own. What results is a curious mix: folklore, history, biography, autobiography. The book is interesting, but
drifted loose into mid-January," I am transported to the Pacific shore beside him.

Though Doig prefers the Swan of Neah Bay (Swan's writing of the Indians has greater staying power), he holds affection for Port Townsend and he articulates it well. "Port Townsend always has lived a style of boom and bust and that record of chanciness is a main reason I cherish the town. In a society of cities interested most in how sleek their skyscrapers are, Port Townsend still knows that life is a dice game in the dirt. I have been in and out of the place as often as I could these past dozen years and I can almost feel in the air as I step from the car whether the town is prospering or drooping. Small shops will bud in the high old downtown buildings. My next visit, they have vanished. A grand house will be freshly painted one day. When I glance again, peeling has set it. This time I was in town only moments when I heard that a few of the vastest old mansions have been trying life as guest houses. That seemed promising, but now the state is requiring that every room be fitted with a metal fire door, and the mansion proprietors proclaim themselves staggered toward bankruptcy by the prospect."

The town and Swan are perfectly matched in Doig's eye.

As with any historic personage who gains posthumous popularity, mysteries inevitably remain and inconsistencies abound. Even Swan, with his volumes of comings and goings, does not escape. Doig writes of Swan one day carving his initials and the silhouette of a swan on a bluff at Neah Bay. He cites Swan's journal entry. Yet in 1937 when James G. McCurdy first resuscitated Swan's memory in his history of Port Townsend, By Juan de Fuca's Strait, McCurdy recounts the incident but gives the credit for the carving to a friend of Swan's who was an amateur stonemason. Which man did it? McCurdy is considered a reliable historian; generally, however, historians consider journals more reliable than reminiscences because they are in immediate record not a recollection. Yet Swan's entry says: "Worked carving a swan on a sandstone cliff with my initials under it." Who worked? We never will know for certain.

Occasionally, Doig finds shortcomings. In one instance, he chides Swan for not committing his emotional self to his diaries, but if put to the test Doig would have to admit that he too guards that side of his nature. But it matters little, for what we have is an invitation to join two people on a winter's journey. Neither of them can know the other, really; yet, transcending the time that separates them, Doig makes them the best of friends and, we, as readers, have the privilege of witnessing the celebration.

Until some publisher takes the noble commercial risk of publishing all two and one-half million words of his collected writings, James Gilchrist Swan has, after years of neglect, finally received his due. Swan would be as pleased with Ivan Doig as we are.
WINTER BROTHERS
A Season at the Edge of America
by Ivan Doig
Maps. 246 pp. New York:
Harcourt Brace Javanovich. $10.95.

Reviewed by Peter Simpson

Ivan Doig is a rising, young Northwest writer. He is attracted by quirky yet pulsating, foolish but vivid people and places, and we in Port Townsend can be thankful for what his appreciation has shaped.

In WINTER BROTHERS, Doig’s newest book, the Montana author offers an intellectual odyssey he spent with the diaries and journals of James G. Swan who--too long ignored--has fast become Port Townsend’s most historically illustrious and valued citizen.

Hiring Chief Chetzemoka in San Francisco in the early 1850s, Swan accepted the Klallam Indian’s invitation to visit Kah Tai (Port Townsend) where, except for a few years of teaching in Neah Bay, he kept his base of operations until his death in 1900. By nineteenth (and twentieth) century standards, Swan no doubt was a failure. Not unlike many today who are determined to remain in Port Townsend at whatever the economic cost, Swan took almost any job. He was, just as an example, a notary public, a U.S. Commissioner, a ship broker, a lawyer, a judge, a teacher, a writer, a real estate speculator. Each of those jobs would be full-time endeavors now, but then they were not. Swan is now best remembered as an ethnologist—an observer and writer of Northwest Coast Indian life, one of the few to record that culture in non-pejorative terms. His collections of Indian artifacts, of Northwest flora, fauna and marine life enriched the Smithsonian Institution for whom he undertook expeditions. He had two books published. But he made practically no money and in later years he was so broke that he sold his piano.

Eight decades later during the winter of 1978-1979 that most of us remember as the year the Hood Canal Bridge sank, Ivan Doig was instead absorbed in the two and one-half million words that Swan wrote in diaries and journals for more than forty years. Probably only two people have read the whole of Swan’s legacy. Lucille McDonald was the first, and in 1972 she turned several years of newspaper articles into an excellent but largely unheralded biography of Swan. Ivan Doig, who gained national attention in 1978 with the publication of his Montana memoir, This House of Sky, is the other. Though using the same source material as McDonald, Doig’s WINTER BROTHERS is no duplication of the earlier biography.

The outlines of Swan’s life are evident, of course, but Doig goes beyond, offering interpretations and making speculations. He questions Swan’s decision to virtually abandon his family in Massachusetts for the Northwest and ponders the scene when Swan announced to his wife Mattilda that he was going to California to seek gold. He is enchanted by Swan’s later unrequited infatuation for a young Port Townsend lady, and forgives him his May-December silliness. Though they are separated by 100 years, Doig suggests comparisons to and digressions in their lives, with Swan from New England and Doig from Montana. Clearly, there is a felt kinship (and, startlingly, there is a remarkable photographic resemblance). What Doig has created is a fleshier and warrier Swan, and the book crackles in what at times seems like dialogue between the two men, though Doig is careful to separate his speculations from the hard-centered facts of Swan’s life.

In noting Swan’s wandering in and out of careers and livelihoods, Doig suggests that he “must have been something like a jack in life’s deck, not a man of an instinct quite a king.” This characterization is not out-of-sync with the view of another writer, Norman O. Clark, that Swan’s life had been “a confusion of goals, sensitivities and values”, but it is a kindler, more understanding one, and it is not nearly so extravagant as Murray Morgan’s praise of Swan as a “renaissance figure in the rain forest.” One suspects that Swan, while he may have winced at the bull’s-eye accuracy, would have preferred Doig’s interpretation for it is not unlike Swan’s approach to the Northwest Indian: neither judgmental nor patronizing, but rather objective and compassionate.

In 90 winter days of the late twentieth century, Doig follows Swan through his 40 years of the nineteenth century Northwest meanderings, and he takes us with him in step-following treks to Cape Alava, Neah Bay, Dungeness Spit, the Victoria archives, Port Townsend’s Water Street and historical museum. We are accompanying a master of description.

He sees the Olympic Mountains as “gorgeously caped elephants about to go wading.” Elsewhere, “in continental outline, the United States rides the map as a galleon carpentered together from the woodyard’s leftover slabs.” Think about that for a moment and you may never look at a map of the country in quite the same way again.

He describes a tablecloth as “so Victoriana brocaded that it looks as if it would stand in place without the table beneath it.” I know just the cloth. And when he recalls a winter’s trip to the beach “amid a spring noon which has somehow
Winter Brothers
By Ivan Doig, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, cloth, 246 pages. $10.95.

I was talking recently with Shiela Nickerson, Alaska's poet laureate and a person of no mean writing talent, and I asked if she had seen this latest effort by our mutual acquaintance, Ivan Doig, of Seattle. "I'm reading it now," she said. "Very, very slowly. Rationing it. Trying to make it last." I knew exactly what she meant. I was doing the same thing. Winter Brothers is perhaps the most beautifully written book I've read in a decade.

Structured in diary form ("Day One" and "Day Two" through "Day Ninety") Doig's book surveys and quotes from and comments upon the remarkable diaries of one James Gilchrist Swan who over a period of 40 years in the mid-1800s chronicled the lives and times of pioneer northwesterners and the Indians whom the whites were dispossessing.

It's hard to say whose words I enjoy the more, Swan's or Doig's. I believe I opt for Swan, but just barely. Doig describes his own recent Christmas, and Swan's of a century earlier:

"Our car enters the freeway aqueduct of headlights streaming north to the city. We are to stop for Christmas dinner at the home of friends. On the table we can predict will be sauerkraut from her Baltimore, pecan pies from his Texas. Christmas Day of 1861 on the Strait, I read in the pages this morning, Swan set to work at this business of holiday dinner with similar seriousness. Duck stew and roast goose he produced for his guests, a pair of other batching pioneers, then brought out his gamble of the day. That autumn when a Makah canoeman had presented him a chunk of whale meat, Swan thoughtfully boiled it and chopped it, plopped in apples, raissins, wild cranberries, currants, brown sugar, salt, cloves, nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon, and a quart of rum, then crocked the works in a stone jar. Three months later he cautiously offers to his guests slivers of the baked result. Lifts a forkful himself, chews appraisingly for a moment. The eyes of the holiday trio light in elation, and they hurry on to further helpings of the whalemince pie."

And here are words from Swan's diary, describing the northwest Makah Indians he lived among, and greatly respected: "... The Makahs are fond of music... and, as many of the men have made voyages to San Francisco on lumber vessels, they have earned a number of popular tunes... I was astonished, on entering a lodge one day, to hear a party singing 'Oh Susannah' and 'Old Folks at Home,' accompanied by an accordian..."

"The Makahs, in common with all the coast tribes, hold slaves. ... In former times, it is said, slaves were treated very harshly... On the death of a chief, his favorite slaves were killed and buried with him... Latterly, this custom seems to have been abandoned, and their present condition is a mild kind of servitude...."

Getting back to food, a frequent subject in Swan's diaries, he had these derisive words to say about an old whaling captain named Purrington: "The captain was famous for cooking every thing that had ever lived. We had eaten of young eagles, hawks, owls, lynx, beaver, seal, otter, gulls, pelican, and finally wound up with crow; and the crow was the worst of the lot. The captain once tried to bake a skunk, but not having properly cleaned it, it smelt so unsavory when the bake-kettle was opened that he was forced to throw skunk and kettle into the river, which he did with a sigh, remarking what a pity it was that it smelled so strong, when it was baked so nice and brown."

Swan, according to Doig, was at one time or another during the years of his diaries engaged as oyster entrepreneur, schoolteacher, railroad speculator, amateur ethnologist, lawyer, judge, homesteader, linguist, ship's outfitter, explorer, customs collector, author, small-town bureaucrat, artist, and clerk. Small wonder that a man of such varied talents would make intriguing reading. One can only wish, after savoring Doig's appreciative summaries, that the reader, like Doig, had ninety days in which to digest the whole Swan collection. Perhaps not, however. Perhaps the blend of the best of Swan and the best that is Ivan Doig produces a result more satisfying than either would produce separately.

Backroads of Washington
By Archie Satterfield, Rand McNally, cloth, 176 pages, photo illustrations (some in color), maps. $16.95.

The trouble with this book is that I haven't even enjoyed winter yet and already Backroads of Washington has me looking forward to next summer when, with perhaps a long weekend or two to spare, I can duplicate a couple of Satterfield's backcountry excursions.

No less than 48 automobile tours, in virtually every section of Washington state, are routed and written up in this guidebook. Notes Satterfield in his introduction: "For several months while preparing this book, my family and I went on numerous car trips ranging from one day to a week or longer, avoiding the Interstates whenever possible. We visited places we hadn't seen in several years as well as many places we had never been before. We often drove 30 or 40 miles on old blacktop without seeing another car, and these backroads were frequently through beautiful areas less than an hour from cities. We drove on old highways with trees growing so thick overhead that we could hardly see the sky, and we drove on flat dirt roads past ranches and farms and between wheat fields without a sign of habitation from horizon to horizon."

Leafed between the tours are colorful historical sketches on everything from the first ascent of Mount Rainier to an account of miners attacked by "ape men."

One of the most interesting photo series in the book is the tour through Lewis County on pages 152-153. Shades of the thirties and forties, there's a reincarnated Burma Shave lineup which reads:

"They missed the turn
Car was whizz'n
Fault was her'n
Funeral, his'n
Burma Shave"

See you on the road, perhaps on the tour between Nighthawk and Loomis, or on the way from Tiger to Tonasket, or along the Mima Mounds.

Marilyn Bills lives in Juneau.
Ivan Doig tracks Swan along the broken Northwest coast, compelled initially by a question relevant to his own transplanted identity as well as Swan's. Why are such men as he and Swan and countless others drawn from the security of home, family, job and status to risk discomfort, loneliness and anger on the unruly brink of a young nation? It was a question Swan never troubled to ask, and as his diaries unfold within Doig's journal, its importance dims.

By the last days of his winter with Swan, Doig's world of freeways, suburban settlements and Trident missiles faded like stage scrim before the richness of history.

Seasons ended with a change of light, diaries with a blank page. For punctuation, the Port Townsend Morning Leader recorded Swan's death and the arrival of a delegation of Indians from Neah Bay, "to take a last look at their old-time friend and adviser. The Indians, as they gazed upon the rigid features, gave expressions of their grief in low moans and each affectionately patted the face of the dead man."

A simple, loving ceremony of touch. Eighty years later, Ivan Doig performed that ceremony again with this journal of a season with his winter brother.

Carol Van Strum, a writer and editor for CoEvolution Quarterly, is at work on a book for the Sierra Club.
My Own West
by Ivan Doig

NEW SNOW, two inches of dry fluff. The entire forest has been fattened by it, everywhere a broad white outline put onto all branches of trees and brush. The effect comes odd against yesterday’s green and gray of the forest, like a white blossoming gone rampant overnight.

I intend as mild an afternoon as can be spent aboard snowshoes. Whop around on the slope above the National Park buildings at Paradise, watch the weather seethe around the summit of Rainier nearly two miles above. When my thigh muscles make first complaint about the pontoons at the bottom of my legs, ease off the fluffy ridge, try to keep the car from becoming a bobsled on the white-packed road down to Longmire Lodge and coffee and pie; then the forest’s miles back to the cabin, and dusk and deer.

But halfway above Paradise I wallow onto rodent prints stitching a path in and out of the stands of firs. Fate has jotted in the snow. No choice but to become a tracker. Along tilts of slope, over drifts, up, down, across. After several minutes I glance back from the tiny pawprints to my wake in the snow. It is what a whale might churn up in hot pursuit of a minnow.

Shameless, I plow on, occasionally deserted the tracks for the pleasure of creating my own dodoes in the white. I discover that the south face of every fir I pass is gray-white with ice: frozen melt at the very end of the branches, in fat cellular conglomerates sectioned by the green fir bristles. Grenades of ice. A sudden thaw would put me under bombardment. Doves of peace—no, gray jays ambling through the air to me, pausing just off my shoulder as if kindly offering to search my pockets for any loaves of bread which might be burdening me.

The jays sortie off to elsewhere and time drifts out of mind after them, replaced by attention to the weather atop Rainier, lowerings, rising, brightenings, darkenings. As though the mountain when it ceased being a volcano of fire became a cauldron for weather. Like all else in this region of the Cascades, this casual slope I am on, still not far above Paradise and its visitor center and lodge, points quickly up toward Rainier as if in astonishment at how the glacier-draped mound looms. I was surprised myself, far back along the highway when arriving to the cabin, how the lift of the mountain made itself felt even there, the road suddenly jerking into rising curves.

Inventorying the arc of mountains which surround Rainier, themselves lofty but less than half the giant peak’s three-mile height, I come onto the thought that the geographical limits of my Northwest winter are Tatoosh and Tatoosh. Tatoosh Island offshore from the outermost perch at Cape Flattery, the Tatoosh Range of crags in view to the south here at the crest of the Cascades, jagging white up through the high-country fabric of forest. Looking into a place-names guidebook, I found that the derivation could be from the Chinook jargon word for “breast” or the Nootkan word for “thunderbird.” Divvy the deriving, I decide: give these cleaved profiles their due, let the thunderbird have the island.

Bulletins from below. Thighs are threatening open rebellion. Snowshoes still want more country. Tatoosh-tatoosh tatoosh-tatoosh the webs sing into the snow as I go onto a fresh drift.

STRANGE, to be again in a lodging of entirely wood. Under the rough brawn of ceiling beams and amid the walls’ constellations of pine knots. Almost two decades of suburban wallboard intervene from when ranchhouse and bunkhouse nightly surrounded me with board walls.

What is it about a cabin within a forest or beside a shore that sings independence from the common world of dwellings? Something more
than hinterland site or openly outlined strokes of beams and rafters; some inherent stubbornness against ever being thought an ordinary house shouts through as well. Cabination or antidomicility or some such rebellious shimmer of the atoms of wall-wood; a true surmise of cabins would have the term. I simply know that cabin-y distinctness says itself and I step across the threshold as if going into some chamber of a far year. The broad central room of this cabin, for instance, trades adamantly back and forth between the family who spend summers and weekends here and the abiding forest outside. A wall beam aligns the china plates which sit on it as if they were shiny droplets on a branch; beneath runs a long bank of mullioned window, the small panes fondling separate bits of the forest as if they were scenes on porcelain. On another wall is the cabin item that interests me most, a crosscut saw. Blazon of sharpened steel, the crosscut is a remarkably elegant tool to have inspired its epithets: "misery harp" the least profane description Northwest loggers had for it as, sawyer at either end, they ground the blade back and forth through Douglas fir or red cedar. Having the winter virus of measure-and-count I've learned by yardstick that this slice of forests is six and a half feet long, by careful finger that it has sixty-eight beveled sharpnesses interspersed with sixteen wider-set prongs which make space for the sawdust to spill away. A giant's steel grin of eighty-four teeth and as innocent and ready in this cabin amid these woods as a broadsword on a Highlands castle wall.

Sawed wood—firewood—decides my site when I am here inside the cabin. I settle at the kitchen table, close by the cookstove which must be fed each hour or so. Today out of the mound of mail which has been building on my desk I finally have winnowed the letter from Mark, in his faculty office in Illinois—we may be the last two American friends who write regularly and at such length to one another—and the quote which he found during his research on mid-nineteenth-century frontier missionaries. The Reverend John Summers, reporting from Benton County, Iowa, in July of 1852:

"A young man recently left for California, who for two years has been very anxious to go, but during his minority had been restrained by the influence and authority of his parents. They offered, for the sake of diverting him from his purpose, to furnish him the means to travel and visit the Eastern cities. He decided the idea. He would not turn his hand over to see all that could be seen in the East, but he must go to the Utopia of the New World; and he has gone."

Gone west and cared not so much as a flip of his hand to know any of that lesser land behind him. In all but flesh, that young Iowan was my grandfather, my great uncles, my father and his five brothers, me. After my Doig grandparents sailed from Scotland and crossed America to a high forest-tucked valley of the Rocky Mountains, nobody of the family for two generations ever went to the Atlantic again. When I journeyed off to college I was spoken of as being "back east in Illinois." My father adventured to Chicago once on a cattle train and twice to visit me. My mother, after her parents moved from Wisconsin to the Rockies when she was half a year old, never returned beyond the middle of Montana.

This westernness in my family, then, has been extreme as we could manage to make it. We lived our first seventy years as Americans on slopes of the Rockies as naturally, single-mindedly, as kulaks on the Russian steppes. (Nights I have noticed that my square bearded face reflected in the desk-end window could be a photographic plate of any of those muscled old Scotsmen who transplanted our family name to the western mountains of America. If we have the face we deserve at forty—or thirty-nine and some months, as I am now—evidently I am earning my way backward to my homesteading grandfather.) My own not very many years eastward, which is to say in the middle of the Midwest, amounted to a kind of instructive geographic error. (Instructive, literally: Montana as evaluated at Northwestern University in Evans, 1957: "youse guys," confides my new college friend from the Bronx, "youse guys from Mwawntana talk funny.") The journalism jobs in the flat-horizoned midland turned my ambition in on itself, impelled me to work the salaried tasks for more than they were worth and to slice the accumulating overflow of ideas into pages of my own choice. Also, hap-

Ivan Doig's first book, This House of Sky, was nominated for a National Book Award. Winter Brothers, from which this article is adapted, was published in November 1980 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
Doig Found 'Brother' — and a Good
Book — In Diaries of Northwest Pioneer

WINTER BROTHERS: A SEASON AT
THE EDGE OF AMERICA, by Ivan Doig
'69 (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, N.Y. &
London, $10.95)

"Some men and women are never
part of the time they were born into and
walk the streets or highways of their
generations as strangers." That's the
sort of thing Doig might have written
about James G. Swan, the Puget Sound
frontiersman into whose life he jour­
ned in this volume. Instead it was
written of Doig in the New York Times
Book Review.

Perhaps it may explain why Doig
recognized Swan as "brother" and kept
being drawn back to his century-old
journals after a chance encounter with
them in the UW Archives while a grad­
uate student in history. Swan, like Doig,
was an avid observer and recorder of his
world—from a point somewhere off the
mainstream.

When Doig's first book This House
of Sky was published and climbing the
best-seller lists, he returned to Swan's
"lineage of frontier ink" in Suzzallo
Library and spent a winter immersed in
the "40-year wordstream" that Swan
had left behind. It was a prodigious
undertaking. Swan had left not only his
"day-upon-day sluice of diary words"
detailing everyday life on the Puget
Sound frontier, but several books, fre­quent
newspaper articles and "a spell-

binding cataract of mail" to the Smith­
sonian.

All this Doig pores through and
ferrets out the gems—adding many of
his own. He also spends the winter criss­
crossing Puget Sound, retracing Swan's
footsteps, "traveling between his time
and mine." Doig's interests are as eclec­
tic as those of Swan.

Swan was something of a drifter,
mostly between Port Townsend and
Neah Bay, holding various semi-jobs of
some official sort or another: Indian
schoolteacher and physician, notary
public, ship broker, customs inspector,
artist.

"The only skill of hand lacking in
Swan was the ability to clutch a dollar," writes Doig. "Curiosity and gameness­
for-damn-near-anything hung deeper in
him than in anyone else I have ever
encountered." His artistry and lan­
guage ability made him a natural to
bring the white man's version of educa­
tion to the Makahs at Neah Bay, and he
spent as much of his time among them as
among "the white tribe" at Port Town­
send. At the age of 65 he set out in an
Indian canoe to explore the Haida
villages of northern British Columbia,
finding in them "a profound academy of
artists."

Swan never became a well­
known name in the region's history, but
he might now.

EVEREST: THE WEST RIDGE, by Thomas
Hornbein, Prof., UW School of Medicine (The
Mountaineers, Seattle, $17.50). This new
edition of a now classic first-ascent tale was
issued in tribute to the late Willi Unsoeld,
Ph.D. Phil. '59, who died two years ago in an
avalanche on Mt. Rainier. In 1963 Hornbein
and Unsoeld climbed Everest on a route dis­
missed as hopeless by all previous expedi­
tions. Knowing there was no way back, they
then went on to traverse the mountain for
the first and only time. After reaching the
summit they had to survive a bivouac at
28,000 feet with no food, shelter or oxygen.
Unsoeld and Hornbein were part of the same
expedition from which, three weeks earlier,
Jim Whittaker of Seattle had become the first
American to stand at the top of the world.
The book is not only a first-rate adventure
story but is illustrated with 48 pages of re­
markable color photographs.

POLITICIANS, JUDGES, AND THE PEOPLE:
A STUDY IN CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION by
'56, and Frank P. Weaver, Law '28 (Green­
wood Press, Westport, Conn., $18.95). The
book describes a fascinating and important
chapter in American political history. In 1973
the people of Washington state, angered by a
salary increase for elected officials, mounted
an unprecedented initiative drive to roll the
salaries back. Sheldon is professor of political
science at Washington State University.
Judge Weaver sat for more than 19 years on the
Washington State Supreme Court.

SWITCHBACKS, by Andy Holland '33 (The
Mountaineers, Seattle, $6.95). Holland loved
the woods, even after he found out that forest
rangers had more to do than "hunt, fish and
trap." When he entered the Forest Service in
the '30s, trails were built for fire fighters, not
hikers; students like himself were regarded as
"babes in the woods" by the uneducated but
woods-wise mountain-man types that
peopled the Service then. But he learned
much from them. He writes with wry humor
about his "learning experiences" living alone
in the wilderness and of ingenious ways of
coping with materials at hand before the days
of the outdoor equipment boom. His book
covers 50 years in Mt. Baker National Forest.
Holland, who eventually gave up woods life
for high school and community college

teaching, is now retired.
The Washington State Library Commission is pleased to present the 16th Annual Governor's Writers' Day Open House honoring Washington authors for their important contributions to our cultural life.

Especially honored are the award winners selected by a distinguished jury. The 1981 jurors were Mary Ellen Benson, Olympia, creative writing instructor, book reviewer and publications officer, University of Puget Sound; Mae Benne, Seattle, member of the faculty, University of Washington School of Librarianship, who specializes in children's literature; Candace Dempsey, Seattle, art critic and book reviewer; and Leroy Soper, Seattle, head of trade books, University Book Store. The fifth juror, Robert Bruce Hitchman, local historian and president of the Washington State Historical Society, died before the meeting of the jury.

Music courtesy of Dusty and Kay Rhodes.
Songs with guitar.
May 17, 1981, 1-3 pm
Governor's Presentation of Awards  2:30 pm
Washington State Library
Olympia, Washington

Writers' Awards

Norm Bolotin, Seattle
Klondike Lost: A Decade of Photographs by Kinsey & Kinsey
Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., Anchorage

Clifford Burke, Anacortes
Printing Poetry: A Workbook in Typographic Reification
Scarab Press, San Francisco

Ivan Doig, Seattle
Winter Brothers: A Season on the Edge of America
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York

Daphne Enslow, Bainbridge Island
Hazel’s Star
Succor Creek Press, Seattle

Caroline Fairless, Seattle
Ham bone
Tundra Books, Plattsburgh, NY

Bill Holm, Seattle, and
George Irving Quimby, Seattle
Edward S. Curtis in the Land of the War Canoes
University of Washington Press, Seattle

Richard Hugo, Missoula, MT
The Right Madness on Skye
W. W. Norton & Co., New York

Ann Rule, Kent
The Stranger Beside Me
W. W. Norton & Co., New York

Victor B. Scheffer, Bellevue
Adventures of a Zoologist
Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York

Lisa Thomas, Kirkland
So Narrow the Bridge and Deep the Water
The Seal Press, Seattle

Edwin Van Syckel, Aberdeen
They Tried to Cut It All
Friends of the Aberdeen Public Library, Aberdeen

Special Awards

Special Award to David Barnes, Seattle, for photography in Seattle, published by Pacific Search Press, Seattle

Special Award to Patricia L. Conroy and Sven H. Rossel, both of Seattle, for the translation of Tales and Stories by Hans Christian Andersen, published by the University of Washington Press, Seattle.
Additional Listing

THE FOCUS CHANGES OF AUGUST PREVICO

August Previco is a young black resident of the “Robert E. Lee funny farm” as he puts it, whose imaginative attempts to escape are relentlessly foiled. With numbing gallows humor, Worsley tracks the daily schedules of the inmates, their rivalries, sexual exploits and caretaking tasks. August defies his labeling, attributing his troubles to the mental duality imposed on him by his “bad spirits.” During his brief sprite to freedom, he is swept up by a colorful mêlée of marginal people who differ from August only imperceptibly. August’s excursions into the so-called real world are part of a tortuous travelogue through the opaque mental pathways of a pitiable young man.

Mysteries

SERGEANT VERITY AND THE SWELL MOB
Francis Selwyn. Stein and Day, $10.95 ISBN 0-8128-2727-9

Sergeant Verity grapples with Victorian England’s cunning crooks again in Selwyn’s fifth bravura performance, a thriller with raunchy humor and infinite complexities. The straight-arrow detective is embroiled in the affair of the Shah Jahan Clasp, a priceless ornament once owned by a Delhi potentate. The jewel is among objects stolen by Stunned Joe but missing from the loot when he’s arrested, double-crossed by partners Sealskin Kite and Old Mole. Released from prison, Stunned Joe regains the clasp but gets hold of the Clasp, turns it over to Verity and thus puts the sergeant in his most dangerous spot. The master crooks kidnap and plan to murder Verity’s beloved wife, and the story whirls into pulse-racing twists as the sergeant tries to find the villains’ hideout in time to save Mrs. Verity, in a frenzied search that means flouting his superiors and jeopardizing his career.

NONFICTION

WINTER BROTHERS: A Season at the Edge of America

A century ago James Gilchrist Swan left Boston to travel as far west as he could—to Cape Flattery, Washington. He was schoolteacher to Makah Indians, amateur anthropologist (his book “The Indians of Cape Flattery” is still the primary source of the Makahs), collector for the Smithsonian, land speculator, town official, artist, explorer and, periodically, town drunk.

Above all, he was a diarist, recording 40 years’ activities in the Olympic Peninsula and Port Townsend. When Doig, author of “This House of Sky,” dipped into the unpublished diaries, he felt a kinship with Swan and resolved to keep a journal through one winter, contrasting their lives. Doig’s diary serves as a vehicle to introduce the remarkable Swan and a bridge for his adventures. “Winter Brothers” is a unique portrait of the Northwest frontier.

THE BEST KEPT SECRET: Sexual Abuse of Children

The sexual abuse of children is finally receiving publicity and Rush’s book is additional ammunition against the crime. According to statistics, little girls—even infants—are the most frequent targets of rape or seduction by adult males. The exploiter is often a father, other close relative or trusted friend—protected by either or both parents for fear of scandal or losing the family breadwinner. In the sole instance where Rush may invite controversy, she rather understates the harm done to small boys who are sexually abused. Otherwise, this text is a forceful depiction of an atrocity which the author traces to ancient laws designating females as property and blames pornography, modern advertising and entertainment in all media for encouraging the war on pedophilia, Rush asserts, requires a change in social conditioning. [November 17]

MINNIE PEARL An Autobiography

Coauthor Dew lends a professional touch to Pearl’s life story but has not, fortunately, stilled the voice of the comic beloved by audiences at the citadel of Country & Western music, Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry. Pearl reveals frankly that the career that has made her popular for 35 years and a member of the CMA Hall of Fame was not part of her plan. At age 70, she looks back to her childhood as Sarah Ophelia Colley, fifth daughter in a proud Southern family at home in Centerville, Tennessee (pop. 500). Colley’s ambition was to become a dramatic actress, after graduation from college, and she served a long apprenticeship before she became the darling of the Opry. With her good-humored views, the author is a delight to read but impressive in somber moments when she recalls the fate of tragic colleagues like Elvis and the unforgettable Hank Williams. Many photos illustrate the book.

Science Fiction

BENEATH AN OPAL MOON

This fourth in the Sunset Warrior Cycle proves, as did its predecessors, that the success of Van Lustbader’s mainstream bestseller “The Ninja” is no fluke. The hero this time is not the Sunset Warrior himself, but his comrade, Moichi Anai-Nin. Moichi’s investigation of a torture-murder and his rescue of Aufeya, a beautiful outlawer, from a deadly slave market, plunges him and the warrior-princess Chisai into a maze of intrigue. It takes them far from the bustling port of Shanghi-sei where the story begins, to the haunted land beneath an outland moon. The greatest challenges to their fighting abilities await them, and beyond looms the mysterious Sardonyx, whose subtle gnomes connue revenge and lust for power. An unusual future-Oriental milieu, a richly descriptive prose style, crackling action and exotic martial arts are combined to produce some of the freshest and most entertaining science-fiction adventure extant.

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY
Ivan Doig:

Looking for a Kindred Soul


Ivan Doig’s first book, This House of Sky, struck me, as it did others, as a fine, strong account of growing up in Montana, a book that could be ranked with Wallace Stegner’s Wolf Willow or Norman Maclean’s A River Runs Through It or James Welch’s Winter in the Blood. When you get down to hard counting, there are not many books set in the American West that a grown-up would want to read. Most carry the marks of a muzzy mysticism that has the effect of making the landscape the central character, to the detriment of anything that might be interesting about the humans living there: or else a story set in the West goes about retracing the familiar gestures of the Western myth, those gestures so fixed in the amber of stereotype that even a movie audience in Tokyo knows what to expect. But Doig gave in to neither the muzziness nor the myth in This House of Sky, and he produced an autobiography that can stand with the best of Western writing.

Doig moved from Montana, or he probably wouldn’t have been able to write This House of Sky: now he lives in Seattle, and in his new book, Winter Brothers, he goes about establishing his relation to another world, as lost to him as the world of his father and grandfather in Montana. The “brothers” in this book are Doig himself and James Gilchrist Swan, a Bostonian who came west to settle in Neah Bay and Port Townsend in 1852. Swan was a prodigious diarist with a sharp and watchful eye; Doig has read through millions of Swan’s handwritten words, not only to find out who Swan was, why he came west and what he found, but also to answer some questions Doig has about himself. Doig opens the book with this: “His name was James Gilchrist Swan, and I have felt my pull toward him ever since some forgotten frontier pursuit or another landed me into the coastal region of history where he presides, meekly as a usurer’s clerk, diarying and diarying that life of his, four generations and seemingly as many light-years from my own. You have met him yourself in some other form—the remembered neighbor or family member, full of years while you just had begun to grow into them, who had been in a war or to a far place and could confide to you how such vanished matters were. The tale-bringer sent to each of us by the past.”

In a winter of reading Swan’s diaries and writing about them, sometimes revisiting the sites he has been reading about, Doig recreates Swan’s life, becomes his brother in a westering of the mind. Even though Swan’s fascinating life is well-chronicled—besides the diaries, Swan also wrote journalism and official reports and a pioneering work in anthropology—Doig often has to deal with the gaps, with Swan’s reticences. Swan was, for example, declared an “habitual drunkard” by Port Townsend authorities, but none of that finds its way into the diaries—except as missed entries during a spree. Doig, then, “reads” Swan’s life, as a novelist has to do in creating a character, and Doig uses himself as a character too, tracing for us the growing shapes and recognitions about Swan’s life he gathers through the winter.

This scheme for the book—shared geography, seen at different times by Swan and Doig, Doig’s imagination serving as the bridge that connects—is generally successful. But it also opens the way for self-conscious musings, of the sort that the more-or-less chronological telling of This House of Sky did not. Given the stagy contrasts of the scheme—Doig driving to get somewhere reached by Swan in a canoe—it is probably inevitable that Doig would invite his readers to consider Big Questions. But Doig resists that impulse more often than he gives in to it, and I’m thankful for that.

Read Winter Brothers. In doing that, you can put yourself in relation to an amazing and interesting man, as Doig has done for himself and now for us. In 1859, Swan, an artist as well as schoolteacher and most westward pioneer on the American mainland, carved a swan on a sandstone cliff near Neah Bay, chiseling his initials under it. In 1979, Doig goes to see it and finds it barely marked by time. It’s fair to say that Doig has made that swan, that Swan, live for us.

Jack Brenner

Dr. Brenner is currently writing a book about fiction in the American West.

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If You Know

The Answer

From Page H-1

streak of bokum in him, which begins at his wallet."

By the end of his second month, Doig knew "Swan
has failed at two major tasks, teaching to the Makah
children and butlering for the transcontinental railroad
... is a spree drinker ... is mildly forgetful, having a
tendency to leave behind a book or spare pair of pants in
a hotel room ... is not a chronically sojourn man, but
laughs at the frontier's humor" — The captain was famous
for cooking every thing that ever lived. We had eaten of young
eagles, hawks, owls, lynx, beaver, seal, otter, gulls, pelican,
and, finally wound up with crow; and the crow was the worst
of the lot. The captain once tried to bake a skunk, but not
having properly cleaned it, it smell so unsaferly when the bake-
kettle was opened that he was forced to throw skunk and kettle
into the river ....

He also learned Swan "loves song," tried several
"dogged stints at churchgoing," that "he can get very full
of himself, particularly when his own evidence on a
matter is contradicted," and, primarily, "that all the
regularity in him is channeled down his right arm into
his pen."

One might say a good deal of Doig is channeled the
same direction. Although he has been a "non-fiction
writer all my life," he has also been "tinkering toward a
novel." During the writing of Winter Brothers, he "stumbled
across" a single newspaper article from the winter of
1882/3. Makah Indians out hunting whales found three
men starving in a canoe, Swedes who had escaped their
seven-year terms of indentured service to the Russians in
Sitka, Alaska, because of "ill usage and tyranny."

Doig is now working on a fictional account of their
1000-mile journey. Last summer he went to Juneau and
Sitka, and, although the novel "needs more research,"
Doig hopes to complete the book by the end of next year.

After that, he foresees two more novels, both set in
his native Montana, a short one dating to the early 20th
century and a longer book that will have its beginning in
the 19th century.

With two books finished, one in progress, and two
more waiting, clearly the West, and particularly the
Northwest, has a major writer in its midst. Doig says he is
"pretty happy with the language and structure" of
Winter Brothers, and his only real regret is that the
weather made it impossible for him to retrace the voyage
Swan took in 1883 to the Queen Charlotte Islands on
behalf of the Smithsonian Institution.

"The winter season characterizes this area," Doig says
of the Northwest. Swan found a good deal of rain here,
Question's Easy if You Know the Answer

By IRENE WANNER
Special to The P-I

SOME SAY YOU can tell a lot about people from the places they live and work, that you can tell a lot about writers from their words, but they are really saying the question is simple once you know the answer. Take Ivan Doig: his home north of Seattle is sheltered by a row of evergreens and a split-rail cedar fence, protected from city life but near enough to brush up against it on a Saturday night.

The room in which he writes is painted a clean white, its walls lined with shelves, maps, a big desk and two manual typewriters, closets and cabinets for files. A Japanese float of green glass catches light from the windows, a black-faced puff of fleece—one lone and small sheep—stands among papers and pencils, and Doig rests his elbows on a long table that stretches down the middle of the room, comfortable in his working place, surrounded by words.

He is a compact, firm fellow with a bushy red beard, who somehow puts you at ease even as he radiates intensity. On the shelf behind him, among the other books, are This House of Sky, hardback and paperback, and now, Winter Brothers: A Season of the Edge of America (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $10.95), a book that weaves 90 days of Doig’s life with the 19th century pioneer records of James Gilchrist Swan.

Like Swan, who wrote two and a half million words over 40 years in the West but said little that was personal or revealing about himself, Doig’s writing tells us something of his works and days, but not necessarily who he is. “I’m a diarist, too,” Doig says, “and I don’t know if I’m any more confessional then he.” He will say he “worked like a bastard” on the second book and is “pleased to get it out two years after This House of Sky.”

This House of Sky was completed in early 1976 and Doig had to ask himself what next? Although he had a PhD in history from the University of Washington, he did not want to teach. The “money was never really there” in freelance writing for magazines, but from articles he had tried and failed to write about Swan, who “refused figurehead,” Doig began to think in larger terms.

His first book “hit the right editor” at the 13th publishing house to see the manuscript, and a contract was arranged on the basis of a 25,000 word sample. In November 1976, Doig had no manuscript, only ideas of writing something “exploring westernness” and going “back in time.”

He talked with his editor in New York and, based on his strength and that of This House of Sky, was given an advance to write “of Swan and me and those constant diaries. Day by day, a logbook of what is uppermost in any of the three of us.”

The weight of so many words made choice a heavy duty. “Opening the pages of Swan’s years,” Doig writes, “is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swallowers of flame, performance crowding performance.”

Wherever Swan went, his pen was sure to follow. Doig is quick to say, he did not “discover” Swan’s diaries, letters, and logs, that Lucile McDonald’s articles and book, Swan Among the Indians, get “first gratitude.” To follow that flow of ink, Doig also consulted archives in the University of Washington libraries, the Jefferson County Historical Society in Port Townsend, Victoria’s British Columbia Provincial Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, as well as artists and historians.

On the first day of winter, Doig began to write a daily log. He felt “an urgency to spend this winter” with Swan, his winter brother, and traveled to those places Swan had lived and visited — Neah Bay, Dungeness, Port Townsend, Victoria, the coastal waters and shores of the Northwest — in the years from 1859 to 1900.

Unlike This House of Sky, which Doig worked on from 1972 to 1978, Winter Brothers developed quickly. Some days an entry was complete; other days Doig checked notes, went back to observations made during his travels, revised or rewrote. Like This House of Sky, and Thoreau’s Walden quotations were added, cut, or shifted later. The entire manuscript was revised twice to let Doig fill out Swan’s personality and to delete things that did not fit, “me observing something extraneous.”

The book kept “winnowing itself,” Doig says. It was “technically difficult.” Each day had its schedule, 1000 to 1200 words in the morning, four or five typed pages, often triple spaced to allow for editing.

Doig is meticulous, with a poet’s care for sounds, sense, and rhythms. And, like a poet whose stanzas must begin and end well, he often had to “rework leads” and last lines, so that “every day I had to do two something goods.”

He wanted to know Swan from Swan’s words. As Doig read the diaries, he pieced together a mosaic of someone not simply “promenading the coast or aiming himself into the bottom of a bottle.” Swan dreamed of progress and had “a little bright
Thoughts Regarding Winter Brothers
by Joan Walkinshaw, Producer

When one works with an on-camera personality who happens to be a resolute Scotsman with a dry wit, amusing moments are bound to occur. Ivan Doig, second generation Scot, was not about to become a "personality kid" while reciting excerpts from his book, Winter Brothers, in our latest film for KCTS9.

As we filmed Ivan in the center of the street in Port Townsend, I asked him if he could possibly appear a bit more natural. "How can I seem natural?" he asked. "I'm really not used to standing in the center of the street on a cold rainy day reciting lines from my book."

Yet Ivan was completely himself throughout the filming and it is for this very reason he did such a remarkable job. He is offbeat, surprisingly relaxed, and an excellent conveyer of his own prose. In this film based on his book—a book reviewers have called "a classic," "a masterpiece," "a versatile and daring feat of writing"—Ivan carries the show.

Winter Brothers intertwines the diaries of James Gilchrist Swan, a colorful early settler on the Olympic Peninsula, with Doig's own journal. The result is a book which records the daily growth of a strange and powerful bond between the long-dead Swan, or "coastal nomad," and the sensitive modern writer, Ivan Doig. Winter Brothers has a complex construction as it shifts back and forth in time. In creating the film, we had an almost insurmountable challenge in our opening scenes: how to reveal to our viewers that this is a film about a book which includes diaries from yesteryear. I hope—after many edits and re-edits—that we have finally come up with an opening which not only draws in the audience, but also gives them some idea of what is happening in this complex plot structure.

In his book, Ivan used the landscape to link his own experience to that of the pioneer Swan. Of his writing, one reviewer said, "Doig weaves Swan's words into his own narrative...yet it is his own beautiful writing, original and filled with poetic imagery revealing the true romantic that makes this a grand book."

And it was the potential of combining Ivan's writing with photographer Wayne Sourbeer's intimate and intuitive perceptions of landscape and place that first inspired this film and makes the program such an aesthetically exciting experience.

The book reviewer for the New York Times wrote of Winter Brothers, "...it is a gorgeous tribute to a man and a region unjustly neglected here-to-date." We trust the film based on this exceptional book justly captures the essence of Ivan Doig's tribute to our beautiful Northwest as seen by two sets of eyes 100 years separated.

Airs Wednesday, November 24, 8:30 p.m.

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Excerpts From Winter Brothers

DOIG: Four decades of Swan's diaries, some two and a half million pen words. Opening these pages of Swan's years is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swallows of flame, performance crowding performance.

SWAN: The grandeur of the scenery about Cape Flattery...the wild and varied sounds which fill the air, from the dash of water into the caverns and fissures of the rocks, mingle with the living cries of innumerable fowl...all combined, present an accumulation of sights and sounds sufficient to fill a less superstitious beholder than the Indian with mysterious awe.

DOIG: There is a kind of border crossing allowed us by time: special temporary passage permitted us if we seek out the right company for it, some guide such as Swan willing to lead us back where we have never been.

SWAN: Mr. Fitzgerald of Sequim Prairie, better known as "Skip," walked off the wharf near the Custom House last night and broke his neck. The night was very dark and he mistook his way...Mr. Tucker is very ill with his eye, his face is badly swollen. This evening I got Kichook's Cowitchan squaw to milk her breast into a cup and then I bathed Mr. Tucker's eye with it...Yesterday my cat killed all my chickens so this morning I shot the cat.

DOIG: Swan was born two decades or so before my own great-grandfather, but more and more I feel that we dwell in a community of time as well as of people.
Winter Brothers:
an intimate view of our region,
seen through the eyes of
two men generations apart.
Windsinger

by Jean Walkinshaw

Windsinger got off to a staggering start. First, as a Northwest native and film producer who draws vitality from this area, it was hard to imagine going elsewhere to make a wilderness/nature program. However, the story about Gary Smith, a back country ranger in Utah, his Sierra Club Book, Windsinger, and his album by the same name, was too hard to pass up.

Then, Wayne Sourbeer, the photographer with whom I had worked for twelve years, left the station, and the thought that anyone could replace him was beyond my comprehension.

Finally, soon after we were funded, it became questionable whether or not the subject of our program, Gary, would have the strength to do the show due to his multiple sclerosis (M.S.)

The Windsinger project originated eight years ago when KCTS9 General Manager Burrell F. Clark suggested I meet Gary Smith while he was in Seattle selling his book. Gary and I hit it off right away; I liked the songs he wrote and sang, as well as the down-to-earth characters in his book. It took eight years to get the proposal funded; the Pacific Mountain Network awarded us a grant, but, by that time Gary could neither walk nor play electric wheelchair — he had become almost totally disabled due to M.S.

When I arrived in Southern Utah, to do a preliminary audio interview with Gary, I found him very down. He wasn’t sure he could get to Canyonlands — where he planned to tape the program — even in his handicapped van and electric wheelchair, but he was game to try. So after the interview, I returned to Seattle, got contracts drafted, purchased traveler’s checks, and packed nine large boxes of equipment.

Two eager young men were assigned to the project: Bill McMillin, videographer and David Ko, audio man. We were scheduled to leave on a Monday.

But late Sunday evening, Gary called and said he could not leave the next day as planned; he would have to wait until his health was better. I seriously considered dropping the whole project but realized I could not let Gary down. Thus, with our boxes of equipment packed, we anxiously awaited word from Gary. Four days later, we got it.

Gary arrived in Green River, his energy restored, his unfailing whimsy and sense of humor going strong. For the next five days he made outrageous remarks as he roared around Canyonlands in his electric wheelchair. We kept gasping for breath as we tried to keep up with him! The weather could not have been prettier, the desert flowers were at their height, the moon full, the sunrises and sunsets brilliant and the scenery stunning. Few vistas can surpass Grandview Point. Few rivers run as wild and free as the Colorado does through the park, and nowhere else on earth are there so many red rocks hewn into spanning arches and monumental shapes.

Videographer Bill McMillin proved to be a real wizard. He was incredibly dedicated, fast, and had a fine artistic eye. We literally worked from sunrise to sunset and the video equipment, though heavier and more cumbersome than film, did not slow us down.

I had planned to start and end the program with one of Gary’s most upbeat and lyrical song, The Redtail Hawk. We did the opening sequence for the song in southern Utah, but decided to shoot the last part of the song in northern Utah, near Gary’s home. Gary told me that near his house, which is in a lovely valley rimmed with mountains, he had a “Power Spot” — a pastoral plateau beneath a snow-capped peak. A Navajo Indian had visited Gary when Gary was having a bad time physically, and had taken him to this spot at sunrise to greet the sun and to gain power and direction from “Mother Earth.” Gary frequently went there. So at 4:30 A.M., we met Gary at the spot and there, dipping behind the mountain, was the full moon and across the valley the rising sun, and to top it all off, out came a redtail hawk and circled around us! Magical moments are rare any time in life, but to catch that early dawn on video, and to share it with all of you, is even more special. Watch Windsinger. You are sure to find Gary Smith an inspiration, and the music and scenery a thrill.

Windsinger was produced by Jean Walkinshaw for KCTS9. Videographer: Bill McMillin; Field Audio: David Ko; video supervisor: Maggi Briggs; video editor: Ernie Sauerland; post-production audio: Bill Fast. The program was made possible in part by a grant from Pacific Mountain Network.

Airs Wednesday, Dec. 14, 8:00 p.m.

Winter Brothers

Following Windsinger, KCTS9 encores Jean Walkinshaw’s Winter Brothers, a magnificent evocation of the Pacific Northwest and its history. Winter Brothers is based upon the historical narrative of Northwest writer Ivan Doig — a book reviewers have called “a classic,” “a masterpiece,” and “a versatile and daring feat of writing.”

The special program interweaves the diaries of James Gilchrist Swan, a colorful early settler on the Olympic Peninsula, with Doig’s own journal. The result is a book which records the daily growth of a strange and powerful bond between the long-dead Swan, or “coastal nomad,” and the sensitive modern writer, Ivan Doig.

In his book, Doig used the landscape to link his own experience to that of the pioneer Swan. Of his writings, one reviewer said, “Doig weaves Swan’s words into his own narrative…yet it is his own beautiful writing, original and filled with poetic imagery revealing the true romantic, that makes this a grand book.” The crisp, descriptive passages of Doig as he traces Swan’s footsteps to wild beaches, coves and rain forests of the Peninsula, provides a strong foundation for the film.

Winter Brothers is a KCTS9 production funded in part by grants from the Washington Commission for the Humanities and the Seattle Arts Commission. Producer: Jean Walkinshaw; cinematographer: Wayne Sourbeer.

Airs Wednesday, Dec. 14, 8:30 p.m.
ON THE COVER

“I Winter Brothers” author Ivan Doig (left) weaves a bit of history and philosophy together as he wanders the Olympic Peninsula recounting the life of James Swan, right.

Movie team’s Swan song a beauty

By ALLEN WEINER

Ivan Doig’s story “Winter Brothers” was born for the screen.

In the Seattle author’s 1981 book, made into a 30-minute film for Channel 9, Doig philosophizes, critiques and weaves poetry about 19th century life in the top left corner of the United States.

“Are we drawn West,” he asks of man’s journey to the Northwest frontier, “or are we deposited here like spores?”

The film, to air at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, is a masterpiece, a blend of expressive narrative and visual beauty.

“Winter Brothers” is the brainchild of the filmmaking team of Jean Walkinshaw and Wayne Sourbeer, two consistent local Emmy winners. Sourbeer’s photography has never been better — alive with color and perspective, a perfect match for Doig’s eloquence.

The author said he prepared a script for the film before he met with the filmmakers and an advisory board, required because of the grant money involved. He estimates that close to three-quarters of his original words remain in the final product. He had harbored some doubts about making a film “by committee.”

“Most authors would have thrown up their hands with everyone telling him what to do,” Walkinshaw said in praise of Doig. “Ivan was wonderful to work with.”

Doig comes off as a tale-spinner who wanders along the Olympic Peninsula — along the same turf his “winter brother” James Gilchrist Swan did — blending observation with reminiscences. “Why must rivers have names,” he asks as a white-capped stream rushes by. “I guess for the same reasons gods have names.”

Local actor Robert B. Loper stands in as the voice of Swan, a New Englander by birth. Swan went West in the 1800s and settled among the Indians acting as a whaler, teacher and chronicler of events.

“Swan loved gossip,” Doig said fondly. Judging from the reams of notes and diaries the author has reviewed (some 2½-million words the author estimates), he’s a leading expert on Swan.

Late in his life, Swan fell in love. The object of his affection was 16-year-old Becky Roberts, some 38 years his junior. While it was a romance destined for failure, Doig sums up the experience: “Emotional paroles are due those who are alone.”

The 30-minute film is full of historical references. Walkinshaw said the details were gathered from as far away as the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Carefully selected illustrations — drawn by Swan — add to the visual delight and reveal insights into Swan’s character.

Walkinshaw hopes “Winter Brothers” will attract an audience outside the Northwest. She said that after the film is shown locally, it will be offered to the national Public Broadcasting System.

“Winter Brothers” marks an end for the Walkinshaw-Sourbeer team. Sourbeer has decided to leave Channel 9 and work independently for a time. Walkinshaw will stay with the local public TV station and work with independent filmmakers.

A final Walkinshaw-Sourbeer project dealing with Western art, scheduled to air in 1983, is in the final stages of post-production.
The Most Asked Questions
By Viewers About Sneak Previews

"Do Gene and Roger really dislike each other?"

No. However, both Gene and Roger are extremely competitive people. In addition to their Sneak Previews duties, they each review movies for Chicago newspapers, Gene for the Chicago Tribune, and Roger for the Chicago Sun-Times. These two papers are very competitive, and because people read the papers for entertainment as well as information, and because movies are popular entertainment, the competitive atmosphere of the papers combines with the natural competitiveness of Gene and Roger to produce a highly-charged relationship. All this aside, Gene and Roger respect each other, and have been known to share an occasional chuckle or two.

"Where is the theater where you produce Sneak Previews?"

In the studios of WTTW in Chicago. Each week the people who work on Sneak Previews assemble our own movie theater in Studio B, a theater built especially for the show. Great pains are taken to maintain the movie theater atmosphere, and several area theaters were used as models for the Sneak Previews set.

"Do Gene and Gene really see all of those movies?"

Positively. While Sneak Previews is in production, Roger and Gene may see as many as three movies in a single day.

"How did Gene and Roger become movie reviewers?"

Gene Siskel started out in the newspaper business as a reporter. He wrote for the Chicago Tribune’s Neighborhood Section, and when the chance came to write about movies, he took it. Roger Ebert started out as a feature writer for the Chicago Sun-Times, and six months after he started, the paper’s film critic retired, and Ebert got the job. Both Gene and Roger point out that at the time they began reviewing movies, those jobs were not in as much demand as they are now.

Airs Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. and Mondays at 11:30 p.m.

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Winter Brothers: Walkinshaw Sourbeer’s Next Film
By Jean S. Walkinshaw

James Gilchrist Swan, a colorful early settler on the Olympic Peninsula, reported in his diary, “Arm Smith the waterman fell through the privy of the Union Hotel down onto the beach and injured himself severely and perhaps fatally.”

Swan’s voluminous diaries have been brought alive in Ivan Doig’s superb book, Winter Brothers. This material might have lain dormant in the Archives of the University of Washington had not Doig chosen to weave excerpts from the diary with an eloquent journal of his own. Through the help of KCTS 9 and a grant from the Washington Commission for the Humanities, Wayne Sourbeer, filmmaker, and I producer, will adapt Swan’s daily accounts of his life with the Makah Indians and Ivan Doig’s unique and pungent writing to film.

It is a new departure for Wayne and me. We have never before worked with a prepared script, and it is difficult to cut a 250-page book, which in turn includes excerpts from over two and a half million pen-written words of Swan’s diaries, all into a half-hour film. But that is the challenge of any topic one covers for television—condensing, highlighting, choosing, balancing, and, in the end, editing down to the essence.

It has been a delight thus far to develop the script with Ivan Doig. It is hard to believe he is so amenable when we say, for instance, “Are we keeping enough of the close stuff in?” or “I like that description of the rain forest on page 110.” Better than the one you chose.” Or “That’s too long—shouldn’t we cut it in half?” Can you imagine the inner control it must take on Doig’s part to let his painstakingly written prose be slashed like that? And he does it with equanimity and understanding.

The most salient characteristic of Doig’s book which caught our fancy, initially, was his descriptive passages. He has an intense, acute, spare and imaginative way of putting words together such as “I’m pulled to James Swan as a westerner, and a stayer here along this continental edge which drew us both. I feel that we dwell in a community of time as well as of people.” Or another example. “The Makahs would push out to hunt in the sea behemoths with methods and tools they had honed to stiletto keenness. Their canoes were swift high prowed blades of cedar.

It is indeed going to be an immense challenge to combine film with such evocative combinations of words so that the whole is better than the parts. Sourbeer is known for his stunning interpretative visuals. It will be exciting to see his footage evolve as it starts to support, expand, and enhance (if possible) such pithy and descriptive prose.

This winter at Neah Bay we will want to capture an ocean storm, a windswept beach, an early morning sunrise, a low light filtering through the trees, the Olympic Mountains in all their magnitude. Sometimes it takes weeks of waiting to get just the right filmic effect. Ivan Doig has graciously consented to give us a week of his time in January to shoot the parts in which he will appear. For once, we hope the weather will be miserable so we can catch that melancholy, rainy-damp gray feeling of the Olympic Peninsula in Winter.

Probably the most frustrating demanding of all aspects of a film is editing it down to twenty-eight minutes and forty-six seconds. It seems almost barbaric that we must keep to the ruthless limit—time. But that’s TV land. Whole sequences we have worked over will end up on the cutting room floor, because we want to carry the film. We have taken months of editing and re-editing, will be dropped to favor breathing space, music or simple sounds of nature on the audio track.

We are excited by the challenge of this production, we feel very grateful to KCTS 9 and the Washington Commission for the Humanities for giving us this opportunity. We will do our best to keep Ivan Doig’s quality of inventive surprises throughout, thus dealing with history in a new and engaging way. The dailiness of Swan’s diaries, and the brilliantly combined words of Ivan Doig reflecting the kindred spirit felt between the two men, 100 years apart, make a unique basis for a film. It should not only be a lasting document to be used in classrooms, libraries and interest groups, but also a visually rich, involving and appealing program.

Editor’s Note
The Jean Walkinshaw/Wayne Sourbeer team has produced a number of documentaries for Channel 9, including the award-winning The City is Ours, which was accepted by PBS for national broadcast, and Japan/Northwest Winter Brothers airs this spring.

Pictured here are Ivan Doig, author of Winter Brothers, and James Gilchrist Swan (inset).
The voluminous diaries of James Gilchrist Swan, a colorful early settler on the Olympic Peninsula, might have lain dormant in the archives of the University of Washington had Ivan Doig not chosen to weave excerpts from them into an eloquent journal of his own, Winter Brothers. Supported by a grant from the Washington Commission for the Humanities, film maker Wayne Sourbeer and I, producer, will carry Swan’s daily accounts of his life continued

Jean Walkinshaw, producer at KCTS-TV, and Wayne Sourbeer have received five Emmy awards from the Seattle Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.
with the Makah Indians and Ivan Doig’s penetrating writing to another discipline, that of film.

We have never before worked with a prescribed script. It is difficult to cut a 250-page book that includes excerpts from over 2.5 million pen-written words from Swan’s diaries into a half-hour film. Condensing, highlighting, selecting, balancing, and ultimately editing material to its essence is, however, the common challenge of covering any topic on television.

It has been a delight developing the script with Ivan Doig. He continues to be amenable when we tell him, for instance, that we prefer a different description of the rain forest rather than the one he selected, or that certain material needs to be reduced by half. It must take enormous inner control to let painstakingly written prose be slashed like that, yet Doig does it with equanimity and understanding.

Doig must also contend with a committee of scholars, for every funded project of the WCH must have an advisory committee of humanists and community representatives. While Mr. Doig has not worked with such an advisory group before, Wayne and I have, successfully, on three previous projects. We have confidence that it will not interfere with the creative process, but rather be invaluable as a resource for visual materials and historic photos, as a review forum for our rough cuts, and generally as a supportive element.

We were initially drawn to this project by Doig’s magnetic use of the language in Winter Brothers. His imagery is intensely alive, spare, and imaginative. For example, he describes the tools of the Makahs as “honied to stiletto keenness,” and their canoes as “swift, high prowed blades of cedar.” Sourbeer is known for his stunning interpretive visuals and it will be exciting to see his film footage evolve as it supports, extends, and tries to enhance such inspired prose.

This winter at Neah Bay we will be shooting an ocean storm, a windswept beach, an early morning sunrise, a low light filtering through the trees, a clear view of the Olympic Mountains. It may take weeks of waiting for the right climatic effects. Doig will be with us for a time in January while we shoot those parts in which he will appear. For once, we hope the weather will be miserable so that we may catch that melancholy, rainy, damp, gray feeling of the Peninsula in winter.

The most frustrating and demanding of all aspects in film production is editing material to the national standard of 28 minutes 55 seconds. It seems almost barbaric to have to conform to that ruthless limiter of time. Only one-eighth of the film that is shot will be used. Whole sequences will end up on the cutting room floor. Precious words that have taken months of editing will be dropped to favor breathing space, music, or simple sounds of nature on the audio track.

We are excited by the challenge of this production and we are very grateful to KCTS and the Washington Commission for the Humanities for providing this opportunity. We will do our best to preserve Doig’s inventive narrative and to present history in a new, engrossing way. The dailiness of Swan’s diaries and the brilliantly combined words of his chronicler, Ivan Doig, provide a unique basis for a film. It promises to be not only a lasting document for use in classrooms and libraries, but also a visually rich, involving, and appealing program for a broad television audience.

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A Season at America's Edge

Book Review by Mark Muro

Restlessly searching but separated, often with no one to talk to and little to read, early Americans must have been somewhat ill at ease with their out-on-a-limb experiment in self-reliance. Lacking any literary tradition of their own, their curious efforts to get a grip on the self and the circumstances are often preserved in diaries.

James Gilchrist Swan, among the first non-natives to spend a lifetime on Puget Sound, chose the medium of the journal to reflect life in transit and exploration. Jettisoning a young family and comfortable existence in Boston, Swan followed the feverish impulse to move west. From 1858 until his death in 1900, he inhabited the Olympic Peninsula, beaching his canoe in Neah Bay or Port Townsend. Trekking about as loiterer, Notary Public, drunk, author, woodcarver, schoolteacher, friend and student of the Makah Indians, explorer, correspondent and collector for the Smithsonian Institute, sketcher, unsuccessful lover, misfit entrepreneur, and mostly as perpetual journal-scribbler, Swan indefatigably recorded the early Northwest.

Winter Brothers is Seattleite Ivan Doig's memoir of a kinship with Swan that grew out of the millions of words this remarkable pioneer left behind. Doig was raised on a rough succession of sheep and cattle ranches in Montana's high country and in those stark, one street towns with a post office, store, and three saloons. Like Swan, Doig chose to follow the impulse to move west, to Seattle where its more "workable" winters favored a better environment for journalistic pursuits.

After twenty years of magazine writing, Doig published in 1978 his first book, This House of Sky, a collection of memories of his youth with his father in Montana. Surprised to find himself nominated for the National Book Award for this publication, Doig was acclaimed "a powerful new American writer."

Winter Brothers is an unusual linking of historical investigation and authored reflection. Doig recreates Swan's experiences by tracing the path recorded in thousands of pages of journal. In the process, Doig moves to a new understanding of his own life and of what it means to be a westerner. For the ninety days of winter between 1978-1979, he repeats Swan's travels, shares his observations, and wonders about the mind behind the words, always braiding their century-separated lives together until they become one, winter brothers. The book itself is another diary, a log that grows as Doig's embrace of his adopted kin grows. Doig's thoughts, Swan's life, and the natural surroundings become fused.

Winter Brothers is a wintry sort of book. It belongs to the wet, inturned season when nights are long and there is plenty of time to let thoughts roam. Time seems suspended; thoughts float back and forth across a century; scenes and words fade into the passage sharply realized, and then mist in Doig's own reflections. The foggy, drizzling winter is always beautifully present to induce daydreaming readiness for this time travel and introspection. Page-turner. Winter Brothers is not; Doig knows we cannot move too fast in our sluggish, droopy winter.

Doig calls his writing a "cottage industry" employment, and the result is what we might expect from a home craftsman, skilled tirelessly thumbing through browned pages with patient, archivist's enthusiasm. Winter Brothers is well conceived and well made. Every piece is carefully set in its proper position, the seamless lovingly shaved smooth. The wit is quiet, the words understated and homely, yet precise and evocative.

Doig has a great ability to compress meaning into the details of the natural surroundings. Always sensitive to weather and view, Doig evokes the Northwest with such an intimate touch that we actually re-experience it. For instance, when he speaks of "patches of fog snagged in the treetops," or "the unassinstant Northwest rain simply hanging there in the air like molecules made visible," we know exactly what he means. Throughout, Doig coaxes on impressionistic links with the surroundings, as the following excerpts illustrate:

The little stream that dives under the boardwalk runs very loud and susdy from lapping across downed trees. Where the water can be seen from under its head of foam, it ripples dark brown, the color of strong ale.

[The bluejay] cocks his head in disdain, screams twice, bursts off into the hemlock and sets the lower branches dancing almost before its blue sheen has blazed on my retina. What a vacancy a jay leaves in the air.

Though he says he is not a mystic, Doig affirms a haunting connection between our present lives and all that has gone before and that which surrounds us. Winter Brothers is an astonishing effort to make sense out of a whole region in both history and geography, even as modern development seeks to claim it. With vibrant and keenly felt consideration, Ivan Doig brings the sense of space and time into a wonderful new perspective.

Mark Muro is Assistant Editor of The Harvard Crimson. He has appeared in Argus and The Weekly. His poetry appeared in the Fo issue of Puget Soundings.

Winter Brothers by Ivan Doig. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

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western reservations. But Swan was no ordinary Indian Office appointee; he appears neither to have profited financially from the experience (as many appointees did), nor did he zealously pursue a mindless policy of changing people's lives. To be sure, he served as the resident school teacher, but most likely he learned from the Makah as much as he gave in return. Moreover, when he departed Neah Bay to resume his old habits in Port Townsend (including being declared "an Habitual Drunkard"), Swan was "gratified and surprised at the manifestation of feeling on the part of the Indians at my departure ... these friendly expressions on their part are more grateful to me than the approval of others." Doig, too, regrets the move: "I want not to see Swan step from Neah Bay ... toward from the ultimate point of the Wests, Cape Flattery." But Swan removes to Port Townsend in 1866 and makes the town his permanent residence for the remainder of his long life until his death in 1908.

In addition to his lengthy chronicles, Swan carried on a correspondance of nearly thirty years with Spencer Fullerton Baird, second in command at the Smithsonian Institution. Swan proved to be a faithful and avid collector of nearly everything for the Smithsonian and a remarkably accurate ethnographer—all for no reward save the occasional praise he received from the diligent professor Baird. Swan evidently developed a fair competence with the Makah dialect and Doig tells us he had the curiosity and penchant "to follow language into culture." His 55,000-word 1870 Smithsonian publication, The Indians of Cape Flatters, remains to this day the seminal ethnographic description of the Makah.

Swan's other important contribution to the Smithsonian was an impressive fact-finding expedition among the Haida peoples of Queen Charlotte Islands (at the age of sixty-five). This Swan, Doig understands, is "a being of our continental edge, rimwalking its landscape and native cultures," a man whose "riggings of curiosity and gameness—for damn-near anything, hung deeper in him than anyone else."

Despite a quirk of difference here and there, Swan and Doig are remarkably compatible winter brothers. The contemporary brother reflects:

And today I have spent hours studying the Olympics rather than Swan's past. I don't mind much; Swan undoubtedly did the same . . . But I do not find him ever exploring into the so-near fortress of peaks. Enough of Boston evidently remained in Swan that he would admire mountains with his eyes rather than his feet.

William G. Robbins is Professor of History at Oregon State University.
The Alumni Bookshelf

Doig Found 'Brother' — and a Good Book — In Diaries of Northwest Pioneer

Winter Brothers idea grew out of Doig's chance encounter with diaries of James Swan in UW Archives. Left, archivist Richard Berner with some of Swan's pocket diaries of life on Puget Sound frontier. Above, 'Crew in Whale's Belly,' from Swan's notebook of Haida Indian art.

WINTER BROTHERS: A SEASON AT THE EDGE OF AMERICA. by Ivan Doig '69 (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, N.Y. & London, $10.95)

"Some men and women are never part of the time they were born into and walk the streets or highways of their generations as strangers." That's the sort of thing Doig might have written about James G. Swan, the Puget Sound frontiersman into whose life he journeys in this volume. Instead it was written of Doig in the New York Times Book Review.

Perhaps it may explain why Doig recognized Swan as "brother" and kept being drawn back to his century-old journals after a chance encounter with them in the UW Archives while a graduate student in history. Swan, like Doig, was an avid observer and recorder of his world—from a point somewhere off the mainstream.

When Doig's first book This House of Sky was published and climbing the best-seller lists, he returned to Swan's "lineage of frontier ink" in Suzzallo Library and spent a winter immersed in the "40-year wordstream" that Swan had left behind. It was a prodigious undertaking. Swan had left not only his "day-upon-day sluice of diary words" detailing everyday life on the Puget Sound frontier, but several books, frequent newspaper articles and "a spell-binding cataract of mall" to the Smithsonian.

All this Doig pores through and ferrets out the gems—adding many of his own. He also spends the winter criss-crossing Puget Sound, retracing Swan's footsteps, "traveling between his time and mine." Doig's interests are as eclectic as those of Swan.

Swan was something of a drifter, mostly between Port Townsend and Neah Bay, holding various semi-jobs of some official sort or another: Indian schoolteacher and physician, notary public, ship broker, customs inspector, artist.

"The only skill of hand lacking in Swan was the ability to clutch a dollar," writes Doig. "Curiosity and gameness-for-damn-near-anything hung deeper in him than in anyone else I have ever encountered." His artistry and language ability made him a natural to bring the white man's version of education to the Makahs at Neah Bay, and he spent as much of his time among them as among "the white tribe" at Port Townsend. At the age of 65 he set out in an Indian canoe to explore the Haida villages of northern British Columbia, finding in them "a profound academy of artists."

Swan never became a well-known name in the region's history, but he might now.

EVEREST: THE WEST RIDGE. by Thomas Hornbein. Prof., UW School of Medicine (The Mountaineers, Seattle, $17.50). This new edition of a now classic first-ascent tale was issued in tribute to the late Willi Unsoeld, Ph.D. Phil. '59, who died two years ago in an avalanche on Mt. Rainier. In 1963 Hornbein and Unsoeld climbed Everest on a route dismissed as hopeless by all previous expeditions. Knowing there was no way back, they then went on to traverse the mountain for the first and only time. After reaching the summit they had to survive a bivouac at 28,000 feet with no food, shelter or oxygen. Unsoeld and Hornbein were part of the same expedition from which, three weeks earlier, Jim Whittaker of Seattle had become the first American to stand at the top of the world. The book is not only a first-rate adventure story but is illustrated with 48 pages of remarkable color photographs.

POLITICIANS, JUDGES, AND THE PEOPLE: A STUDY IN CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION by Charles H. Sheldon, Educ. '52, MA Pol. Sci. '56, and Frank P. Weaver, Law '28 (Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn., $18.95). The book describes a fascinating and important chapter in American political history. In 1973 the people of Washington state, angered by a salary increase for elected officials, mounted an unprecedented initiative drive to roll the salaries back. Sheldon is professor of political science at Washington State University. Judge Weaver sat for more than 19 years on the Washington State Supreme Court.

SWITCHBACKS. by Andy Holland '33 (The Mountaineers, Seattle, $6.95). Holland loved the woods, even after he found out that forest rangers had more to do than "hunt, fish and trap." When he entered the Forest Service in the '30s, trails were built for fire fighters, not hikers; students like himself were regarded as "babes in the woods" by the uneducated but woods-wise mountain-man types that peopled the Service then. But he learned much from them. He writes with wry humor about his "learning experiences" living alone in the wilderness and of ingenious ways of coping with materials at hand before the days of the outdoor equipment boom. His book covers 50 years in Mt. Baker National Forest. Holland, who eventually gave up woods life for high school and community college teaching, is now retired.
Ivan Doig is the most significant writer to address himself to regional Northwest themes since the mid-1960s and the productive genius of Don Berry and Ken Kesey. And like Berry and Kesey, Doig has developed a unique and personal literary style and a gifted flair for ironic humor. His two important books, This House of Sky (1978), and now Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America (1980), have earned the author wide acclaim as an important western writer. The praise is richly deserved.

Doig brings all of his impressive talents to bear in his most recent effort—a provocative and thoughtful trek through the diaries and correspondence of one James Gilchrist Swan, an 1850s emigrant to the Puget Sound country. Doig travels in the company of Swan’s diaries from Port Townsend to Neah Bay and adjacent places for three winter months of reflection and observation. And they are astute and sentient observers both—Swan as an impressively copious chronicler a century before our time and Doig with his personal and retrospective account of Swan’s diarying and his perceptions on damned near everything else.

A distinctive and sensitive feel for the land pervades both This House of Sky and Winter Brothers—a brilliant portrayal of the harsh Montana mountain country in the former and a graphic description of the storm-swept upper Olympic Peninsula in the latter. Moreover, Doig, like Swan, is no trimmer or complainer—he unabashedly exults in this misty corner of the continent; he finds beauty in the dampness and moss-shrouded trails of the Olympic back country and a majestic beauty in the Pacific storms which regularly batter this edge of the continent.

Yet these two, chronicler Swan and latecomer Doig, are a strange mix. The one the product of antebellum New England; the other with roots in west central Montana’s sheep country. But the blend between writer and subject goes well—the incessant compiler and recorder from Boston and the reflective Montanan who offers a refreshing new approach and mood to regional literary expression. The result is a considerate and solicitous look at a unique individual, James Gilchrist Swan, and a discussion of his place (and Doig’s) as part of the American West.

As with other writers of regional and western topics, Doig is intrigued with the westering impulse of European Americans. He recounts the story of one man who “went west and cared not so much as a flap of his hand to know any of that lesser land behind him.” Swan, of course, is central to Doig’s speculation, as are his Doig ancestors, whose “westernness,” he suggests, “has been extreme as we could manage to make it. We lived our first seventy years as Americans on the slopes of the Rockies as naturally, single-mindedly as kulaks on the Russian steppes.” Then, to Swan for insight. Locating “the place to invest his life meant, as it has to me, finding a West.” And Swan is a kindred spirit: “Swan’s Wests come recognizable to me, are places which still have clear overtones of my own places, stand alike with mine in being distinctly unlike other of the national geography.”

There is no bombast or opportunism for either Swan or Doig in their adopted homeland. Their West is not a calculated, market-oriented one, but an undefinable West of continuing mystery, experience and inquiry. Why does the West take “hold of a James Swan, or an Ivan Doig,” he asks, and then ruminates from notes kept during a wilderness backpacking trip: “The West of America draws some of us not because it is the newest region of the country, but because it is the oldest, in the sense that landscape . . . more resembles the original continent.” And the mountains and ocean of Doig’s particular West figure in the equation: “They . . . are virtually the last pieces of earth we have not someway tamed, transformed. Although we are striving.” Fortunate for Doig that his West is not the newest frontier—Wyoming—where the landscape is literally being rent asunder in the feverish quest for oil shale and coal deposits.

The West is also instructive: that is, for those who take the time to reflect and observe. Ivan Doig finds a personal sense of connection here—“my becoming less heady than before, long and more aware that I dwell in a community of time as well as people.” And “it seems to me that the westernness of my existence . . . is some consequence of having to do with that community of time.” This leads to his fascination with Swan, “a westcomer, a stayer,” who “has gone before me through this matter of sitting oneself specifically here: West.”

Doig ponders the issue of Swan’s prodigious diarying habit—forty years of “day-upon-day sluice of diary words: why?” And Swan’s interests were truly catholic: “So much interested himself, inside the cover of books and wherever his glance fell upon the coastline, that boredom seldom seems to have found him.” Swan’s diary was his constant companion, plainly mastering him, pulling “his hand down onto every day’s page like a coaxing lover.”

In part to escape the temptations of alcohol, Swan spends five years living with the Makah Indians at Neah Bay. His duties were the traditional tasks that colonial bureaucrats carried out on most
than hinterland site or openly outlined strokes of beams and rafters; some inherent stubbornness against ever being thought an ordinary house shouts through as well. Cabining or antidomicity or some such rebellious shimmer of the atoms of wall-wood; a true outsider of cabins would have the term. I simply know that cabin-y distinctness says itself and I step across the threshold as if going into some chamber of a far year. The broad central room of this cabin, for instance, trades adamantly back and forth between the family who spend summers and weekends here and the abiding forest outside. A wall beam aligns the china plates which sit on it as if they were shiny droplets on a branch; beneath runs a long bank of mullioned window, the small panes fondling separate bits of the forest as if they were scenes on porcelain. On another wall is the cabin item that interests me most, a crosscut saw. Blazon of sharpened steel, the crosscut is a remarkably elegant tool to have inspired its epithets: "miserable harp" the least profane description Northwester loggers had for it as, sawyer at either end, they ground the blade back and forth through Douglas fir or red cedar. Having the winter virus of measure-and-count I've learned by yardstick that this slider of forests is six and a half feet long, by careful finger that it has sixty-eight beveled sharpness interspersed with sixteen wider-set prongs which make space for the sawdust to spill away. A giant's steel grin of eighty-four teeth and as innocent and ready in this cabin amid these woods as a broadsword on a Highlands castle wall.

Sawed wood—firewood—decides my site when I am here inside the cabin. I settle at the kitchen table, close by the cookstove which must be fed each hour or so. Today out of the mound of mail which has been building on my desk I finally have winnowed the letter from Mark, in his faculty office in Illinois—we may be the last two American friends who write regularly and at such length to one another—and the quote which he found during his research on mid-nineteenth-century frontier missionaries. The Reverend John Summers, reporting from Benton County, Iowa, in July of 1852:

"A young man recently left for California, who for two years has been very anxious to go, but during his minority had been restrained by the influence and authority of his parents. They offered, for the sake of diverting him from his purpose, to furnish him the means to travel and visit the Eastern cities. He decided the idea. He would not turn his hand over to see all that could be seen in the East, but he must go to the Utopia of the New World; and he has gone."

Gone west and cared not so much as a flip of his hand to know any of that lesser land behind him. In all but flesh, that young Iowan was my grandfather, my great-uncle, my father and his five brothers, me. After my Doig grandparents sailed from Scotland and crossed America to a high forest-tucked valley of the Rocky Mountains, nobody of the family for two generations ever went to the Atlantic again. When I journeyed off to college I was spoken of as being "back east in Illinois." My father adventured to Chicago once on a cattle train and twice to visit me. My mother, after her parents moved from Wisconsin to the Rockies when she was half a year old, never returned beyond the middle of Montana.

This westernness in my family, then, has been extreme as we could manage to make it. We lived our first seventy years as Americans on slopes of the Rockies as naturally, single-mindedly, as kulaks on the Russian steppes. (Nights I have noticed that my square-bearded face reflected in the desk-end window could be a photographic plate of any of those muscular old Scotsmen who transplanted our family name to the western mountains of America. If we have the face we deserve at forty—or thirty-nine and some months, as I am now—evidently I am earning my way backward to my homesteading grandfather.) My own not very many years eastward, which is to say in the middle of the Midwest, amounted to a kind of instructive geographic error. (Instructive, literally: Montana as evaluated at Northwestern University in Evanston, 1957: "youse guys," confides my new college friend from the Bronx, "youse guys from Mawntana twalk funny.") The journalism jobs in the flat-horizoned midland turned my ambition in on itself, impelled me to work the salaried tasks for more than they were worth and to sluice the accumulating overflow of ideas into pages of my own choice. Also, happen-
"Truth is not anchored to the ground by driven piles," the immigrant declared. "It can float and take to the air; it is light and lovely and delicate. It is feminine as well as masculine. It is often gentle, and, sometimes, it can even make a fool of itself—but when it does it calls down God (who protects weak creatures), and suddenly its foolishness becomes a blazing, piercing light." Comparisons with H.B. Singer are inevitable. Other stories are about grief, an ape at sea and a funeral. A kind of marvelous music runs through them all. (Delacorte, $10.95)

**WINTER BROTHERS**

by Ivan Doig

Doig's first book, *This House of Sky*, was a particularly harsh account of life in Montana, one that left strong images of lives spun out in painful toil against a mean Nature—a Nature that finally overwhelmed all but a lucky few. His new work was set in motion by the diaries of J.G. Swan, an 1850 pioneer who went from Boston to the Pacific Northwest, where he traveled for 40 years. Doig spent a winter reading and making notes on Swan's remarkable writings, which are punctuated throughout with Indian lore and legend. "During the spring, when the flowers are in bloom and the humming birds are plenty, the boys take a stick smeared with slime from snails and place it among a cluster of flowers...if a humming bird applies his tongue to it he is glued fast. They will then tie a piece of thread to its feet and holding the other end let the birds fly, their humming being considered quite an amusement." This kind of thing dismays Doig, but Swan brought alive a primitive, magical, wondrous land and people of a century ago. (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $10.95)

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**it became a singer.**

model goes through before it goes into our line. So it can go into any car. Withstand all of the above. And always live to sing about it.

**PIONEER**

The Best Sound Going.

In large measure Ivan Doig shares these pages with James Gilchrist Swan, whose reputation today is difficult to ascertain. We can still find The Northwest Coast (1857) in a paperback edition, but Swan’s other books brought him hardly any fame and absolutely no fortune. And it is a melancholy fact of historical literature that no more than a few dozen readers have explored Swan’s unpublished writings and can feel Ivan Doig’s profound respect for the depth of Swan’s integrity, humor, and intelligence. Swan was preeminently the recorder, the keeper-of-the-log of his own long life, a writer of skill, exactness, and grace, a diarist of the most singular dedication and diligence. To know Swan from his daybooks and his diaries is to know a voice of quiet, yet steadfast decency, and no one can hear it without feeling that in Swan this decency was somehow denied a significant role in regional history, that Swan himself was somehow misused, even abused, and finally undone.

For those who share this feeling, passages such as this one are almost unbearably poignant:

My first birthday in the new century . . . 82 years old. May this new Era bring new prospect and may I live to see its so glorious promise unfold. . . . 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 . . . does the time seem so long as it is. And the Indians I formerly knew are gone. . . . 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 . . . 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. . . . (pp. 238-39)

These words are no less poignant because, as Ivan Doig tells us, “Swan did not write those words. I have written them for him, or rather, for both of us, this dusk of winter and of his life” (p. 239). Thus, toward the end of this remarkable book, the contemporary diarist has lived for a season with Swan’s words and deeds, has traveled in Swan’s footsteps, has recreated the circumstances of Swan’s life to the extent they can today be recreated, has searched for Swan’s soul “through the fifteen thousand days and two and a half million words of his diaries” (p. 240) and feels at last so confident in his understanding of his “winter brother” that he can speak in Swan’s voice.

This is a bold presumption, yet sufficiently effective. If one wants to write seriously about a sense of place, about the quality of place that can move serious people to commit their lives to the rhythms of rain, tide, sea, and forest—if one hopes to explain why the West can lay claim to a Swan or a Doig—what a beautiful approach this is, what a splendid conception! In wandering with Swan from Shoalwater Bay to Port Townsend to Neah Bay to the Canadian islands, in laying his own diary alongside Swan’s, Doig can travel with him as a citizen in “a community of time” until he knows him as a brother with whom he can ponder the question of why they have chosen to “invest” their lives “in one place instead of another” (p. 4). Doig takes inspiration from Swan, who in a way prompts Doig’s exploring his own sense of identity and direction. The repeated references to Swan’s experiences and the long quotations from Swan’s diaries become a kind of discipline through which Doig can advance the poetic autobiography of which This House of Sky (1978) was so eloquent a beginning.

But while “winter brotherhood” is the recurring motif that gives this book coherence, both the style and the substance of the two diaries nevertheless demonstrate the vast distance between the two writers. Ultimately two strikingly different images appear. Swan: straightforward, clear, objective, in Doig’s words “meticulous as a scribe’s clerk” (p. 3), a man whose grip upon sanity itself seems dependent upon the precision of his logging the hour of dinner, the preparation of the food, the tide, the wind—and the total absence of anything personal or introspective or demonstrative of any moral authority. Then Doig: casual, impressionistic, ambiguous, i.e., poetic, always self-consciously the stylist, the master manipulator of metaphor and simile, of the harmonics of syntax and voice, always deeply introspective and personal, always sensitive to irony, always reaching for moral authority.

Thus Swan, typically, shows us life in the Pacific Northwest:

Some of the Indians have purchased umbrellas at Victoria and today there was quite a display on the beach. This is quite an innovation on their old style of warding off rain with bear skin blankets and conical hats . . . work trimming shrubbery, training rose bushes and transplanting currants, blackberries and gooseberries. . . . (p. 93)

I lay this alongside Doig’s telling me that the Alava Trail is a “miniature Roman road—pass (which of course it is not), that Dungenee Spit is a “storybook isthmus” (which distorts the uniqueness of place), that the rainforests are the “Atlantises of nature” (p. 212) (which don’t understand), that Cape Flattery is “the poop deck of the continent” (pp. 72-7) (which is journalistic flapdoodie), and I feel that the clichés of the contemporary poetic come off second best.

But an even more obvious recognition of the distance between them is that Doig, for all his poet’s talents, knows that he is too young, too healthy, too affluent, too gregarious, too dependent upon love and fellowship, too sure of success ever to follow James Swan through the seasons of his quiet anguish—his forlorn drunkenness, his brittle old age, his pervasive poverty, his alienation from wife, family, society, his terribly predictable loneliness.

What, then, is Doig’s achievement? If he does not fully clarify an enduring enigma, he does bring to it a great deal of light, and it is a very warm light indeed. In turning to James Swan as a brother-in-spirit, Doig shows again that he is keenly sensitive to the spiritual dimensions of regionalism. And when he writes that the very names of the peninsula rivers—Quilault, Quillayutte, Hoh, Bogashiel, Elwa—are “as holy to me as anything I know” (p. 214), he shows that he knows where the mysteries begin.

NORMAN CLARK
Everett Community College
we looked over Pic-Tour Guide Map's latest supplement to their Cascade Map series. Pic-Tour's specialty is in aerial photographs and the several that are offered in this St Helen's Supplement are indeed fascinating.

St Helen's and Spirit Lake are each given large before-and-after photo coverage. Next for collectors of volcano stuff, or for collectors of the Pic-Tour series. Write Pic-Tour, 29118 23rd Ave S, Federal Way WA 98003 for information.


Standing near the summit of Hubbart Peak on a spring day in 1889, prospector Joseph Pearsall focused his field glasses on a wall of mountains lying almost due north. Virtually the entire mountain face sparkled red and gold in the afternoon sunlight.

Intent on following up on his discovery, Pearsall bushwacked up Silver Creek and crested a ridge somewhere in the vicinity of present-day Poodle Dog Pass. What lay before him was a valley so full of mineral riches it would rewrite Cascade mining history. Pearsall had discovered Monte Cristo. And so the dream began.

Over the next thirty years a veritable flood of prospectors and seekers of wealth invaded the south fork headwaters of the Stillaguamish and Sauk Rivers in search of riches. Perhaps the oddest part of the Monte Cristo tale lies in the fact that much of the gold, silver, and copper sought in the mountains is still in place.

With an exciting text and many historic black and white photographs, author Philip Woodhouse tells the story of what happened so long ago in one small pocket of the Cascades. Drawing on his expertise as an engineer, historian, and writer, Woodhouse brings the Monte Cristo era back to life in words. Much material is excerpted from ancient editions of the Everett Daily Herald in documenting the book.

Because the history of Monte Cristo is so closely linked to the development of the Everett and Monte Cristo Railway and the growth (and, in some cases, the eventual decline) of such towns as Everett, Snohomish, Granite Falls, Robe, and Silverton, the book has become a major contribution to the written history of Snohomish County.

Like many gold rush sagas of the American West, Monte Cristo meant fortune for few and ruin for many. The stark fact of reality was that the value of gold on the open market never did cover the high cost of ore extraction. Long harsh winters, rugged terrain, and continual rail washouts caused by floods in the Stillaguamish River spelled certain doom for the Monte Cristo mining operation.

Woodhouse's book makes for fascinating reading as it traces Monte Cristo history from its discovery by prospector Pearsall to its present-day status as an alpine wonderland. Several illustrations, maps of the major mining claims, a thorough chronology, and an appendix of place names accentuate the text and photographs. Northwest hikers would do well to read this excellent book this winter before pounding up Monte Cristo's trails next summer.—BK


I must confess: I am an admirer of Ivan Doig. After reading his first book, This House of Sky, I could hardly wait for the arrival of his second, Winter Brothers. My anticipation was only increased after I heard him, nearly a year ago, read excerpts from Winter Brothers.

Now the book finally sits on my own bookshelf. I have not been disappointed. Its words enchanted me for several rainy winter evenings in front of the wood stove.

In his wonderful prose, Doig tells two stories at once. One, the tale of James Gilchrist Swan, using parts of Swan's own diaries which were kept during the years 1860 to 1900. During these years, Swan lived among the Makah and Haida Indians and in the new towns along the northern coast of the Olympic Peninsula. He worked at a plethora of jobs—schoolteacher, lawyer, judge, clerk, customs collector, and more. "None of the spectrum" writes Doig, "having shown his true and lasting occupation: diarist."

Swan's diaries have collected treasure of old-time adventure and Peninsula lore, and we are interested reading just by themselves.

But it is Doig's writing that holds all the parts together. The second story in Winter Brothers is Ivan Doig's own tale of following in the footsteps of Swan, visiting the villages and towns, up the rivers and along the wild coastal beaches, at once changed and unchanging from Swan's time of more than 100 years ago. Doig, as a boy himself already familiar with the Peninsula, takes us right along with him on his journeys.

All the places Swan visited, I visit, too, and we Pacific Northwest hikers nod in recognition at his vivid descriptions of places and feel familiar to our own wanderings.—A

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A chronicle of a chronicle of a time in the wilderness


This is a difficult book to categorize. I am tempted to call it a chronicle, although it would be more exact to call it a chronicle of a chronicle. James G. Swan was one of those extraordinary American renaissance men of the Nineteenth Century. He settled in the Pacific Northwest in 1852 and, for a short sojourn to Washington as a Senator's aide, remained in or around the Washington Territory until 1900. In 1859 he began keeping a journal, the volumes of which survive today in the University of Washington library and which measure over two million words in length. Ivan Doig spent a recent winter reading Swan's journal. The book he fashioned from his reading, "Winter Brothers," is a very personal account of his reactions and reflections on Swan's life and writing, itself written in diary form.

The pages of "Winter Brothers" are laced with excerpts from Swan, who came from a proper Boston family, visited London, married and had children but felt drawn to travel westward. A stint as a merchant seaman left him in San Francisco for a few years, but he gravitated northward to Shoalwater Bay in what is now Washington State, working first for an oyster company and staying on to write a book entitled "The Northwest Coast: Or Three years' Residence in Washington Territory." It wasn't until 1859, when Swan relocated to Neah Bay, that his diaries actually began, much of which are devoted to descriptions of the seagoing Makah and Haiden Indian tribes of the Territory. At one point Swan attempts to give formal instruction to the Indians, but for the most part it is they who teach him. His journal is a fascinating account of pioneer life, written by a man of eccentric charm and broad curiosity.

Doig is a resident of the Puget Sound area in Seattle, a devoted Westerner who is thoroughly acquainted with the history of his region, ever taken with both the spectral beauty and harsh tests of endurance the landscape provides for him. While it is true that "Winter Brothers" is part history, part travelog, part memoir (both Swan's and Doig's), it is also true that the book attempts to be more. It is from the affinity the author feels for Swan that the theme of this book emerges. Doig writes, "Why does the West take hold of a James Swan, an Ivan Doig?" I'm not sure that such a question can truly be answered, but neither is Doig.

This is a book unlike most modern books, something more like an ancient idyll. Doig's style of prose is ornate and lyrical, his verbs often soft, his sentences tending to run the route of drifting curlicues that move around rather than toward the subject. He describes entering a wilderness cabin, ever preoccupied with the relationship of time and place—"What is it about a cabin within a forest or beside a shore that sings independence from the common world of dwellings? Something more than hinterland site or openly outlined strokes of beams and rafters; some inherent stubbornness against ever being thought an ordinary house shrouds through as well. Cabination or antedomicity or some such rebellious shimmer of the atoms of wall-wood; a true surmiser would have the term. I simply know that cabin-y distinctness says itself and I step across the threshold as if going into some chamber of a far year."

For stylistic counterpoint Swan makes an almost perfect "brother" indeed, if to be a brother is (as I suspect) to be similar and at the same time opposite. On the 11th of June, 1855, Swan wrote just another stanza of his so very American, so very succinct epic:

"Yesterday my cat killed all my chickens so this morning I shot the cat."

ROBERT MICHAEL GREEN
Westerners, natives in particular, are fortunate that Seattle writer Ivan Doig is busy carving out a unique new genre of books based on the reflections of his own life.

Autobiographical would be a description to save a few words, yet Doig, transplanted from his native Montana some 14 years ago, gives us more. He has the wonderful talent to transform the prosaic into a unique new art form that should satisfy even the most jaded reader of fiction.

"This House of Sky," winner of critics' acclaim and a nominee for the National Book Award, was Doig's account of being raised with herds of sheep while being guided over the prairies and his early life by his father and grandmother, joined in a realistic assessment of their lives.

But for those who visualize Montana as a reclusive, frontier-type of place to work and write, Doig, his prowlike red Scotsman beard pointed west, reminds of those who grew up and worked there, bodies pared by cold winters, summer dust and skin-wrinking winds.

On the coast, on Puget Sound, where his wife Carol teaches, Doig has found a new, predominately southwestern wind that sweeps the last mote of true Western feeling.

To capture this, Doig has written "Winter Brothers," subtitled, "A Season at the Edge of America," the writer's interpretation of Port Townsend pioneer and diarist James Gilchrist Swan, a fascinating and versatile character who chronicled the last 40-odd years of his long life into a remarkable 2.5 million words.

Doig, a journalist who decided to complete a doctorate in history, found Swan's diaries and became intrigued with the man's detailed recording of the Puget Sound frontier.

Despite his own lengthy journals, Swan remains a somewhat enigmatic figure since he, of course, tells us only what he wants us to know. At least about himself. Of the Makah Indians, dwelling in cross-cultural confusion on Neah Bay, he tells much more.

Doig has done something interesting but not unique. For a winter he passed through the life of Swan, directly experiencing the locales where the diarist lived, moved with the Indians and shared the gray mists and fog by the sea where harvests of food came with the tide.

Swan left his wife and children for the frontier out of curiosity and a desire for fortune. A native of New England, like so many early Pacific Northwesterners, he was motivated by education and service and was, essentially, and what is now a cliche', a "Renaissance man."

He built a schoolhouse for the Makahs on Neah Bay, lived there for long periods, partly out of love, partly to get away from booze which, intermittently, branded him an "habitual drunkard" in Port Townsend.

Swan's interests were eclectic. He provided material for the Smithsonian Institute, sending specimens of Indian life throughout the years, and late in life made a fascinating canoe voyage through the Queen Charlotte Islands where he collected Haiku Indian artifacts and, with an old Indian chief, visited sites historical to the tribe and never seen by white men.

Swan is never patronizing to the Indians, he is their defender and later becomes their benefactor, substituting the tribal family for his own. In Port Townsend, he becomes a dubious city father, like the rest dreaming of the days the railroad would come and create a metropolis and a Wallace for everyone.

The dream, of course, is not realized. Yet Swan dreams on, remarkably optimistic until, in his 80s, death takes him quietly away, his diaries filled until almost the last declining moment.

Doig finishes the story, but only briefly. Through the preceding pages his responsibility has been to honestly weave Swan's words into his own narrative, and this is done with such beauty and grace, occasionally humorous and never maudlin, that Doig may have created a new form.

It is his own beautiful, true original and filled with poetic grace revealing the true romantic. But make this a grand book and inures Doig's future as a major Northwest writer, not a major author nationally.

An example: The strip of the weather on the days, each one brought identically keen, tingling Rainless hours after rainless hours glistening past, it has dawned on me how extraneous this dry cold time, as if I were living in the Montana Rockies again without the clouding mountain-hushed.

Yet it is Swan's: 'The eleventh January, 1860. 'Cloudy and calm. This is my birth day 42 years old. I trust this the remainder of my life may be passed more profitably than it has up to this. Some investigation is good for birth days.'

"Swan Song" of some 2.5 million words; "Winter Brothers" is a masterpiece by two men joined in the past.
And insights during a winter he's spent reading Swan's diaries, covering much of the same ground and was visited by Swan and concluding that he and the pioneer shared the same westerling spirit. The book is part meditation, part intellectual inquiry, part biography and, unfortunately, part wishful thinking in an attempt by Doig to know why some travelers in America are forever drawn toward the setting sun. Says Doig of the search for connections he is sure, exist between Swan and himself:

"It is a venture that I have mulled these past years of my becoming less headlong and more aware that I dwell in a community of time as well as of people. That I should know more than I do about this other mysterious citizenship, how far it goes, where it touches.

"And the twin whys: why it has me invest my life in one place instead of another, and why for me that place happens to be western . . . ."

Doig has answered that question far more eloquently in a wonderful memoir, *This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind.* The earlier book, a National-Book-Award nominee in 1979, is a sensitive remembrance of Doig's youth in Montana and his decision to leave the grindstone routine of ranching, the existence at the mercy of mauling weather, the endless starting-over from one calamity or another for residence in Seattle and a writing life.

What makes a Westerner is implicit in *This House of Sky.* When Doig tries to treat that question more directly in *Winter Brothers,* he is not nearly so successful, though it must be said that his selections from the Swan diaries offer a glimpse of a fascinating character who not only had time to become an expert on the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, providing the Smithsonian Institution with a considerable amount of knowledge, who continued to perform in the East of taking "on the world's whiskey as a personal challenge." He also had a sense of humor. Recalling an old whaling captain who would eat anything, Swan writes: "... the captain once tried to bake a skunk, but not having properly cleaned it, it smelt so unsavory when the bake-kettle was opened that he was forced to throw skunk and kettle into the river, which he did with a sigh, remarking what it pity it was that it smelled so strong, when it was baked so nice and brown."

The difficulties Doig has in answering his two whys are twofold. One of them he can do nothing about: Swan's lack of confessed spirit. While the diaries provide a thorough portrait of the external events of pioneer life, they do little to enlighten us about Swan's mind and emotions. In order to understand the pull of the West, it is necessary to know the interior landscape of those who inhabit it. How did Swan feel about leaving his wife and children — with whom he maintained contact over the years — for the westering life? What did he think of being so far away from his origins that it took several weeks for word to reach him that his mother had died? What were his deepest feelings when an Indian friend was killed? The diaries do not significantly address these questions, nor does Doig, who feels such close kinship with Swan, sufficiently speculate.

The second difficulty is that Doig doesn't give us much of his own interior life. That he shouldn't is difficult to understand. He is no frontiersman jotting notes on the fly, but a professional writer who has chosen himself as a subject. As Joan Didion says, if you are going to write about yourself, you've got to give them something. She means an honest expression of the self even if it is unpleasant, unflattering or embarrassing. You must become your own fully rounded character. What Doig gives us about his life at the edge of the continent may be honest, though it is not very interesting and offers little more understanding about the West than the usual bromides: big, beautiful and sometimes bad.

Still, *Winter Brothers* is a worthy book for what it reveals in the diaries of Swan. While Doig is contributing to write, "... but I know that America's forebears tend to be briefer than the original estimates," Swan is recording, "Yesterday my cat killed all my chickens so this morning I shot the cat."
Headed West: Why they went, why they stayed

One of the persistent themes in the literature and history of America is the notion of fleeing to the frontier, where whatever social, or more likely, psychological shackles that have bound the escapee fall away and he is free to re-invent his life. The most engaging spokesman we have had for this idea is Huckleberry Finn. Back from his raft trip down the Mississippi to what he imagines are the clutches of civilization, Huck reckons he will have to "light out for the territory," to find again the unfettered fullness of life he has known during his adventures on the river. Out of his own unique understanding, the fictional Huck speaks the longings of thousands of real wanderers who went to the territories in search of something they might not even have been able to define, much less realize.

Not all pioneers headed West fueled by unarticulated desire. Some went heeding the advice, liberally available in the middle of the last century, of editorials such as Horace Greeley: "If you have no family or friends to aid you, and no prospect opened to you there, turn your face to the great West, and there build up a home a fortune."

James Gilchrist Swan had a family and friends, but he went West anyway, leaving them behind in Boston. In 1850, Swan, spurred probably by the kind of reasons Huck Finn would understand, and moved almost certainly by the lure of fortune, landed in San Francisco. He roamed California, went to Hawaii, sailed up the Pacific Coast to Shoalwater Bay north of the Columbia River, took a sojourn to Washington, D.C., and in 1859 drifted ashore at the westernmost edge of what would become in his lifetime the state of Washington. For 40 years — until he died in 1900 at the age of 82 — Swan faithfully kept a record of his experiences as, in Ivan Doig's words, "oyster entrepreneur, schoolteacher, railroad speculator, amateur ethnologist, lawyer, judge, homesteader, linguist, ship's outfitter, explorer, custom's collector, author, small-town bureaucrat." None of these terms, however, says Doig, explains Swan's consistent occupation: writing down the occurrences of his life. His 2½ million words make him one of the more remarkable diarists of the frontier.
Best sellers

FICTION
The Covenant, James A. Michener
Firestarter, Stephen King
Side Effects, Woody Allen
The Key to Rebecca, Ken Follett
Unfinished Tales, J.R.R. Tolkien
Rage of Angels, Sidney Sheldon
The Fifth Horseman, Collins and Lapierre

NON-FICTION
Cosmos, Carl Sagan
Crisis Investing, Douglas R. Casey
The Sky's the Limit, Wayne Dyer
The Coming Currency Collapse, Jerome Smith
Merv, Merv Griffin
Nothing Down, Robert Allen
Goodbye, Darkness, William Manchester

Doig's 'Winter Brothers' described as book by TWO masters of writing, observation

By JOY HAMLETT
Readers' Advisor
Great Falls Public Library

Montana people will not be as enchanted by Ivan Doig's latest "Winter Brothers" as they were by his "This House of Sky." Locality is one reason.

Doig concentrates on the Northwest coast this time and Point No Point, Port Townsend and Neah Bay

James G. Swan

Swan, "the tale-bringer sent to each of us by the past," had lived.

Swan's tales are fascinating for he also was an observer, a ruminator and an excellent writer. One wonders if all of his generation were trained to write so precisely. I think not. I agree with Doig's conclusion that "...it has most to do in both our cases with a preference for gossamer possibilities such as words, rather than hard and fast obligations such as terms of employment."

Whatever the motivation, Swan's 2.5-million handwritten words, covering four decades, are an invaluable source of information about the Northwest. His diaries, and Doig's book, would touch the heartstrings more if he had revealed more of the inner Swan. From other sources we learn that he drank excessively, not always but periodically, and that he fell in love with an 18-year-old choir member when he was 57. He refers only obliquely to these events. The last diaries are the most touching when, in old age, peevishness and distress poke through.

Doig admits that he could not follow Swan in two areas, poverty and old age, since he had not yet experienced them. He says, "All I can learn for certain from Swan, and it may be plenty, is that now some of his days are better than other of his days but no day is easy."

"Winter Brothers" then is a book by two masters of writing and observation. The prose, too rich for a steady read, is ideal for pondering and reading again and again.

(Editor's note: Doig, who grew up in Montana, lives in Seattle and has a Ph.D. in American frontier history.)
Winter Brothers
By Ivan Doig
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich $10.95

by Geoffrey Cowley

A talk with
Ivan Doig

RANDT MORGAN conducted the fol-
Striking characteristic of Northwest Indian art is that it often lets two or more figures occupy the same space simultaneously. Haida artists, for example, have no qualms about carving four animals into the same piece of stone, or portraying one creature as both a wolf and a whale. Ivan Doig’s new book, Winter Brothers, is an attempt to craft a narrative on a similar principle; it incorporates two men’s diaries into one essay with the hope of forcing their lives into a single image. The two diarists who thus become “winter brothers” are Doig himself, and James Gilchrist Swan, one of the first white men ever to spend a lifetime in the Pacific Northwest. Winter Brothers is a curious blend of historical investigation and personal confession—a book intended not only to reconstruct a 19th-century pioneer’s experience of the Northwest, but also to give Doig a fuller understanding of his own. It generally succeeds at both; by using the landscape to link his own experience to that of the pioneer, Doig gives new currency to the past and discovers new ways of perceiving the present.

The book is structured as a daily record of Doig’s three-month journey through Swan’s diaries. One of the things Doig does during those three months is to tell us Swan’s life story as it emerges from the thousands of handwritten pages he is reading. The process by which Doig reconstructs Swan’s experience is interesting in itself, for it involves actively reimagining, not simply recounting, what happened during the fifty years recorded in Swan’s diaries. Swan is a prolific assessor of his surroundings, but he rarely says anything about himself; figuring out what was really on his mind on a given day becomes, for Doig, a matter of interpreting the tone in which he records something else, or assigning significance to a silence.

Doig manages to turn Swan’s journal entries into an engaging and readable story, but that is only half of what he attempts. His interest in visiting the past is not simply to observe it; he also wants to participate in carrying it forward. So rather than devoting himself entirely to telling Swan’s stories, he incorporates them into his own.

Doig’s own story is about learning to see his surroundings as they must have appeared through Swan’s pioneer eyes. He retraces Swan’s steps up and down the Olympic Peninsula to see what remains unchanged. He also looks for tangible signs of Swan’s existence, and he finds a few. Near Neah Bay he finds a saw that Swan spent an afternoon carving into a sandstone cliff in 1859. In Seattle, he finds Washelli Cemetery. When the City of Seattle established the cemetery, Swan suggested naming it “Washelli.” A Makah word that means “west wind” and suggests “region of the hereafter.” The name glows to this day from a pink neon sign facing Aurora Avenue.

We’re told that Doig’s attraction...continued on page 3
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to Swan stems from a desire to understand the force that drew him westward. Doig is impressed by the fact that, as a young man, Swan willfully abandoned a comfortable life in Boston in order to spend the rest of his days in the untamed Northwest, "reinventing its landscape and its native cultures."

Swan's story begins in 1859, as he leaves his wife, two children, and a way of life unsuited to his spirit, to head west on a schooner bound for San Francisco. Following a year of San Francisco dockside life and a brief trip to Hawaii on a potato boat, Swan joins a small band of madcap oysterers and moves north to Shoalwater Bay, where he spends three years "stretching ever more distance between himself and the 220 years of New England rectitude in his family line."

During the years at Shoalwater, Swan befriends the Chinook and Chehalis Indians, drinks a good deal of rye whiskey, and eats not only salmon and crab but also beaver, crow, owl, and skunk.

By 1859 he has moved up the coast, further north, further west, to the tip of the Olympic Peninsula. Except for occasional visits, Swan spends the rest of his life, the next forty-one years, on the north shore of the peninsula between Neha Bay and Port Townsend. He lives among the Makah Indians—a hearty seagoing people who hunted grey whales from hand-crafted canoes—learning their customs and their language, collecting their art, and recording their legends.

A westerner himself, though only from Montana, Doig regards his own decision to settle here as evidence of a quality he has in common with Swan. He quotes himself from an earlier diary:

Perhaps the choice of place is in our body chemistry simply as other patterns of taste are, regulating me to dislike brussels sprouts, the color pink, and square miles of "pavement. . . . The west of America draws some of us not because it is the newest region of the country but because it is the oldest, in the sense that the landscape here—the fundament, nature's shape of things—more resembles the original continent than does the city-nation of the Eastern Seaboard or the agricultural factory of the Midwest.

This shared impulse toward the west provides a significant link between two men separated by a century, but Doig's attempts to link himself to Swan on the basis of shared personal qualities often seem overly self-conscious. The observation that he and Swan are "bearded watchful men both" is, for instance, one that we could have been left to make for ourselves. And when Doig quotes a review of his first book (This House of Sky) from The New York Times Book Review in order to suggest that he, like Swan, is one of those people who are "never part of the time they were born into" and who "walk their generations as strangers," he begins to sound a bit self-indulgent.

Doig's sentimentality about his beard and

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Fortunately, though, Winter Brothers does more than sentimentalize the personal similarities between the two men characters. It also leads to a new apprehension of the geography they share. When Doig surrenders himself to the task of reconstructing Swan's life, and to reimagining the Northwest in light of Swan's experience of it, he leads us to a new understanding of what it means to live here. The Indian lore recorded in Swan's diaries leads us back to a world where the sun rises every morning by bouncing stars off his head and trampling darkness under his feet, where rainbows are anchored to the earth by potentially dangerous claws, and where meteors manifest the luminous spirits of dead chiefs.

In the Northwest that emerges from Swan's diaries, no detail of the landscape is insignificant—everything is charged with life and meaning. A wet rock exploding in an Edisto campfire is evidence of an angry spirit. When the aurora borealis glows in the northern sky, the Makahs know that their Alaskan relatives—"a race of little men, very strong, who are dressed in skins" and "can dive down into the sea and catch a seal or a fish with their bare hands"—are building bonfires to keep warm. The crown on the blue jay links humanity to the birds, and links the Makahs to their past:

The Makahs explained to Swan that the blue jay was the mother of a rascally Indian named Kwathie. She had asked him to fetch some water, saying that she wished he would hurry, because she felt as if she were turning into a bird. Kwathie ignored her and went on making the arrow he was at work on. While she was talking she turned into a blue jay and flew into a bush. Kwathie tried to shoot her, but his arrow passed behind her neck, glancing over the top of her head, ruffling up the feathers, as they have always remained in the head of the blue jay.

Needless to say, the Northwest has changed considerably during the 130 years since Swan first encountered it; concrete and steel have overrun the ground that was then alive with giant fir and spruce and cedar. But rather than mourning what has changed since Swan wrote his diaries, Doig learns to see what remains through the eyes of a pioneer. The west may be less western than it was, but westernness remains an accessible state of mind. Doig recovers it, and hence his fraternity with Swan, by reminding himself that in watching the gulls fly across the horizon he is witnessing life exactly as Swan saw it.

Swan's westernness, his capacity to live and think in relation to the immediate conditions of a place, is, as it turns out, not easily downed by chain saws and bulldozers. Whether our eyes are focused on a craggy western horizon or on a pink neon cemetery sign, it can govern what we see.
AN INTERVIEW WITH IVAN DOIG
continued from front cover

Doig: I wish I had little bottles of ingredients sitting all around me so I could pour them into every book. The late Robert Kirsch of the L.A. Times called my father an American hero. My father could never have dreamed of that sort of thing. And I was surprised by that, too. I don't think of it as a heroic book, and I certainly didn't set out to write it that way. But I did try to focus on the people and their language as closely as I could. It's a book I worked on by sentence time and again across those years. If I did it right, there's something happening in just about every sentence, and I think that's what carries it.

Morgan: Winter Brothers is a very different book—a 90-day diary of your thoughts juxtaposed with the diaries of a 19th century West Coast pioneer. Isn't it an odd subject for you to have chosen?

Doig: It perhaps was. I have always been taken with James Swan's diaries, though—the sheer accomplishment of forty years of day-by-day notations on his life. And I wanted a chance to do some traveling and thinking back and forth between Swan's time and ours. So he seemed to me a kind of guide—a character by which I could try to get at some thinking about the West.

Morgan: Did you ever consider it a literary risk?

Doig: Yes, very much so. And the book wrote itself much differently than House of Sky. It kept changing and becoming, really, until February of this year. Twice after I thought I was finished with it, I found myself saying, "Well, this really doesn't belong here," and then I'd jerk things out. And other things got amplified. The problem I was most aware of was how not to lose the reader as I did all that shifting back and forth in time, to find a pace which would carry the reader along and yet not befuddle him. So I was seeking a tension and balance. It's a much more technically risky book, I know, but I wanted to see what I could do with it. And I had a contract for it, so it was one of those rare chances in my life.

Morgan: You had a contract before you really got started?

Doig: Yes, I had a $15,000 advance on it—probably the easiest advance I'm ever going to get. I was given extraordinarily free rein by Carol Hill. She never asked to see a prospectus or anything. It was just a few sentences described over lunch. Eventually, out of conscience, I did her a one-page prospectus and then sent in the first 100 pages that were (as usual, with my manuscript samples) fairly shaky. Again, she sent more money and said, "Go ahead and finish it, then we'll talk about editing."

Morgan: Is there any indication yet as to how Winter Brothers will be accepted?

Doig: It's surprising me. It's gone through its first printing of 10,000. The size of that printing shocked me. Harcourt has done another 2,500 as a second printing. I got a call from the regional sales rep today who told me Pacific Pipeline here in town has taken 800 of those. It's still six days and some minutes till publication date yet; so the book is traveling rapidly through its first 12,500.

Morgan: Do you think much of that is a dividend from This House of Sky?

Doig: I'd say House of Sky's skirts are broad and long and brocaded and everything else. Yes, it's traveling extensively on the strength of the first book.

Morgan: What are your long-range hopes for Winter Brothers?

Doig: There's an enormous "sophomore jinx" in this publishing business, and if there's any single major thing Winter Brothers can do for me, it would be to get me past that.

Morgan: "Sophomore jinx"?

Doig: Well, take a case such as mine where you write what is really your first trade book. It's a National Book Award nominee and probably the strongest emotional story I will ever have to tell. So people say, "That's a wonderful highwire act—what's he going to do next?" I've been a professional writer for twenty years now, and I was not really haunted by what I was going to do next. But the question was to try to beat the game if I could and have a second book which would not have reviewers moaning and groaning.

Morgan: How do you top This House of Sky—or how do you write something even comparable to it?

Doig: I hope whatever books I do will be notable for their language as much as anything else involved in them. In one sense, Winter Brothers was a dice shoot. If it didn't get me past the "sophomore jinx," then I had tried a book I wanted to try. And I can always rationalize that it was such a hell of a wonderful technical job that none of those blind reviewers saw me pull all those cards out of my sleeve.

Morgan: You say you've been writing twenty years. What's your daily routine?

Doig: I start writing at 7:30 in the morning and work until about 11:30. I try to write between 1,000 and 1,200 words a day, five days a week. In the afternoons I will revise or do research. I don't let myself get more than a day or so off my quota. If I simply can't do more than 600 words one day, I'll hack out 1,200 the next. It turns out that the quality of the words the first time around is not all that important. The more vital thing is to get something down on paper.
Morgan: How did you develop the discipline?

Doig: It started back in journalism school at Northwestern. Then my first job was as an editorial writer for a chain of Illinois newspapers where I generally wrote four editorials a day and made up the editorial page in the afternoon. I also juggled magazine articles for almost ten years as a free lance, and I learned pretty quickly that nobody is paying you to sit around—something you can get away with at salaried jobs. I had to have things out by learned was journalism. Wolfe and Gay Talese and John McPhee was magazine pieces. My wife, first think, have of building toward that book.

Morgan: Were you able to improve the quality of your writing under those pressures?

Doig: Yes, I did an article at pretty much the same level of skill, I think, whether it was $35 for the Seattle Times Magazine or $350 for Parents. I was also doing my magazine freelancing at a time when Tom Wolfe and Gay Talese and John McPhee were reinventing magazine work. There was a greater freedom in what you could do with magazine pieces, and I think I learned a lot from that.

Morgan: When did you shift to writing books?

Doig: I was working on books at the same time. My wife, Carol, and I co-authored a journalism textbook and I put together two textbook anthologies in that same period. I was also beginning work toward what became House of Sky. January of 1972, I think, was the first conscious diary entry I have of building toward that book.

Morgan: How long did that project take?

Doig: It was six and a half years from the first diary entry. Within that span of time there was between two and two and a half years of full-time writing.

Morgan: What is the appeal of the Northwest as a place to write?

Doig: Well, certainly a lot of it is landscape. I seem to need or at least want to live around mountains—and, as it's turning out, around coastline here as well. I greatly enjoy going back to Montana, and I think those visits will set off that writing in me. But for whatever reason—much of it climate—I prefer to live here. I get more work done here, feel more comfortable day by day.

Morgan: And yet you're cut off from the publishing industry out here. Are there advantages in that?

Doig: Yeah, I think there are vast advantages. I'm even told so by East Coast writers I hear from. I've been trying for a Guggenheim for the last three years in a row, so I've been in correspondence with people like Geoffrey Wolff, Michael Arlen, Edward Hoagland, and Peter Matthiessen—people who've agreed to recommend me. And there's a kind of chorus that comes from writers back there, saying, 'You're really well off in Seattle, you're better off out of this.' I find it personally more efficient—and I guess more efficacious as well—to be kind of holed up here.

Morgan: Is there a community of writers here you keep in touch with?

Doig: No, and I think that's individual idiosyncrasy. I know fewer writers in Seattle than I do in Missoula. Whatever real writing chums I have (the exception being Archie Satterfield, with whom I have lunch about every two months), the guys I'm in closest touch with are the 'Missoula Gang,' as they are called in the dedication of Winter Brothers: people like Richard Hugo, Jim Welch, Bill Kittredge, A.B. Guthrie, Norman Maclean. I see them once or twice a year, we have a hell of a good time together, an evening of gossip and catching up, and go back to our typewriters. And that's about right for me.

Morgan: So getting together with other writers is not that important?

Doig: For me it's not. I tend to wonder, though, if those of us who are writing out here don't tend to hole up a bit more. The climate gives us a chance to do that. You go to Missoula and it's the opposite. The energy flows high-deep in the streets back there, and it's dumbfounding to me how people get as much writing done as they do.

Morgan: Does the Western landscape also help to bring out the creativity?

Doig: Yes, in me it starts the language perking. Again, I'm kind of a technician about all this. I can't simply lie back and let it wash over me. For example, just returned from Montana where I went out with a friend for three days under the Rocky Mountain Front. The Rockies were just looming over us—these mile-long reefs with dramatic canyons spiked in between each one of them. Stuning, enormous country. But while I indeed feel the enormity and grandeur of it, at the same time as a writer I keep thinking, God, how can I catch that??
Question's Easy If You Know the Answer

By IRENE WANNER
Special to The P-I

SOME SAY YOU can tell a lot about people from the places they live and work, that you can tell a lot about writers from their words, but they are really saying the question is simple once you know the answer. Take Ivan Doig: his home north of Seattle is sheltered by a row of evergreens and a split-rail cedar fence, protected from city life but near enough to brush up against it on a Saturday night.

The room in which he writes is painted a clean white, its walls lined with shelves, maps, a big desk and two manual typewriters, closed cabinets for files. A Japanese float of green glass catches light from the windows, a black-faced puff of fume - one tone and small size - stands among papers and pencils, and Doig rest his elbows on a long table that stretches down the middle of the room, comfortable in his working place, surrounded by words.

He is a compact, firm fellow with a bushy red beard, who somehow puts you at ease even as he radiates intensity. On the shelf behind him, among the other books, are This House of Sky, hardback and paperback; and, now, Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America Glar-
court Brace, 1989, a book that weaves 90 days of Doig's life with the 19th century pioneer records of James Gilchrist Swan.

Like Swan, who wrote two and a half million words over 40 years in the West and said little that was personal or revealing about himself, Doig's writing tells us something of his works and days, but not necessarily who he is. "I'm a diarist, too," Doig says, and "I don't know if I'm any more confessional than he." He will say he worked like a bastard on the second book and is "pleased to get it out two years after This House of Sky.

This House of Sky was completed in early 1988 and Doig had to ask himself what next? Although he had a PhD in history from the University of Washington, he did not want to teach. The "money was never really there" in freelance writing for magazines, but from articles he had tried and failed to write about Swan, who "refusedfigureheadhood," Doig began to think in larger terms.

His first book "hit the right editor" at the 13th publishing house to see the manuscript, and a contract was arranged on the basis of a 25,000-word sample. In November 1973, Doig had no manuscript, only ideas of writing something "exploring wilderness" and going back in time.

Doig talked with his editor in New York and, based on his strength and that of This House of Sky, was given an advance to write "of Swan and me and those constant diaries. Day by day, a logbook of what is uppermost in any of the three of us."

The weight of so many words made choice a heavy duty. "Opening the pages of Swan's words, Doig writes, "is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swallowers of flame, performance crowding performance."

Wherever Swan went, his pen was sure to follow. Doig is quick to say he did not "discover" Swan's diaries, letters and logs, that Leslie McDonald's articles and book, Swan Among the Indians, got "first gratitude. To follow that flow of ink, Doig also consulted archives in the University of Washington libraries, the Jefferson County Historical Society in Port Townsend, Victoria's British Columbia Provincial Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, as well as artists and historians.

On the first day of winter, Doig began to write a daily log. He felt an urgency to spend this winter with Swan, his winter brother, and traveled to those places Swan had lived and visited - Neah Bay, Dungeness, Port Townsend, Victoria, the coastal waters and shores of the Northwest - in the years from 1850 to 1900.

Unlike This House of Sky, which Doig worked on from 1972 to 1978, Winter Brothers developed quickly. "Some days an entry was complete, other days Doig checked notes, went back to observations made during his travels, revised or rewrote. Like This House of Sky and Theodore's Warden, quotations were added, cut or shifted later. The entire manuscript was revised twice to let Doig fill out Swan's personality and to delete things that did not fit, "me observing something extraneous."

The book kept "winnowing itself," Doig says. It was "technically difficult." Each day had its schedule: 1000 to 1900 words in the mornings, four or five typed pages, often triple spaced to allow for editing.

Doig is meticulous, with a poet's care for sounds, sense, and rhythms. And, like a poet whose stanzas must begin and end, he often had to "reway leads," and "play the" every day I had to do two something goods.

He wanted to know Swan from Swan's words. As Doig read the diaries, he pieced together a mosaic of someone not simply "promenading the coast or sitting himself into the bottom of a bottle." Swan dreamed of progress and had "a little bright
**If You Know**
The Answer

From Page 11

streak of bolivia in him, which begins at his wallet.

By the end of his second month, Dog knew "Swan has failed at two major tests, teaching to the Shoshone children and betting for the transcontinental railroad... is a spree drinker... is mildly forceful, having a tendency to leave behind a book or spore pair of pants in a hotel room... is not a chronically Joey man, but laughs it the frontier's humor" — The captain was famous for saying every thing that ever lived. We had eaten of young eagles, hawks, vultures, lynx, bears, and, after, gulls, pelican, and, finally sowed up with rope; and the rope was the word of the lad. The captain once tried to make a drink, but not having properly cleaned it, it smelt so uncertainly when the laddle was opened that he was forced to throw drink and knife into the water..."

He also learned Swan "loses cach," tried several "dugong stints at church going," that he "can get very full of himself, particularly when his own evidence on a matter is contradicted," and, primarily, "that all the regularity in him is channeled down his right arm into his pen.

One might say a good deal of Dog is channeled the same direction. Although he has been a "non-fiction writer all my life," he has also been "tinkering toward a novel." During the writing of Winter Brothers, he "skimmed across" a single newspaper article of the winter of 1852. 3 Shoshone Indians out hunting whales found three men strolling in a canoe. Sweden, who had escaped their seven-year terms of indentured service to the Russians in Sitka, Alaska, because of "ill usage and tyranny.

Dog is now working on a fictional account of their 1000-mile journey. Last summer he went to Almanac and Sitka, and, although the novel "needs more research," Dog hopes to complete the book by the end of next year.

"After that, he foresees two more novels, both set in his native Montana, a short one dating to the early 20th century and a longer book that will have its beginning in the 19th century.

With two books finished, one in progress, and two more waiting, clearly the West, and particularly the Northwest, has a major writer in its midst. Dog says he is "pretty happy with the language and structure" of Winter Brothers, and his only real regret is that the weather made it impossible for him to retrace the voyage Swan took in 1853 to the Queen Charlotte Islands on behalf of the Smithsonian Institution.

"The winter season characterizes this area," Dog says of the Northwest. Swan found a good deal of rain here, but it did not dampen his spirits. Dog reflects the same persistence, the same love of the West, as his winter brother.
no authority to make them disgorge any other plunder called it sufficient.

Swan next carried the matter of Swell’s death to the federal Indian agent for Washington Territory. Met inconclusion there. Sent a seething letter to the newspaper in the territorial capital of Olympia… an Indian peaceably passing on his way home in his canoe, laden with white men’s goods… fouly murdered… too good an Indian and too valuable a man… to have his murder go unavenged… agents of our munificent government have not the means at their disposal to defray the expenses of going to arrest the murderer.

And at last canoed once more along the Strait to accompany Swell, still nailed up strong, to burial at the Makah village of Neah Bay.

At Neah, Swell’s brother Peter came and wished me to go with him and select a suitable spot to bury Swell.

I did as he desired — marked out the spot and dug out the first sand.

And this further: Peter also brought up the large Tomanawas boards — the Makahs’ cedar tableaus of magic which would stand as the grave’s monument — of Swell’s for me to paint anew.

Whale hunters, coastal analists, slaveholders, art fan-ciers, the Makahs also were a people who chafed more than a little under the pale regime of frontier bureaucrats wanting to refashion the tribe’s life. Swan is once more at Neah Bay — his sixth stint there so far — when in the autumn of 1861 the Makahs, after six actionless months by the territorial officials, decide to exact their price for the death of Swell.

Once resolved upon, their vengeance on the Elwhas begins to be brewed, savored. Conference, more conference, the Elwha village sketched on the sand, a plan of attack argued out. As Swan watches and jots, Neah Bay’s largest canoes are worked up into fighting trim; the outsiders blackened, interiors daubed a fresh red. Lord Nelson, with his blood-colored battle decks, would have nodded approval. Bow and stern of each canoe are embellished with green spruce limbs. On long poles are lashed faggots of pitchy wood to torch the hapless Elwhas’ lodges. Guns, knives, spears, clubs, bows are hefted judiciously, made ready.

At last, the nineteenth of September of 1861, two hundred and two days after Swell’s death, the war party mulls together in final encouragement on the Neah Bay beach. Some speeches, a few dances, and then laden to their decorated canoes and head east the sixty miles to deliver holocaust to the Elwhas.

Twelve canoes, with eighty warriors, they aim up the Strait past Swan like a volley of arrows on the water. His account of the scene was published in a territorial newspaper, and so has been primped and extended beyond the usual.

I stood on top of the rocks at Webster’s point and saw them pass… Their green headdresses, black faces and brown arms, flashing paddles and beautiful canoes, urged to their utmost speed, presented a scene at once novel and interesting. I watched until a projecting point hid them from view.

Then the waiting, the war spirit still boiling in the Makah village. Women and children, seated on the tops of their houses, were beating the roofs with sticks and uttering the most piercing shrieks I ever heard. Every day at sunrise and sunset they performed these savage matins and vespers…

Ivan Doig gave up teaching to be a writer

by Larry Rumley
Times book editor

“Winter Brothers,” Ivan Doig’s latest book, is going into a third printing, justifying his decision some years ago to make a career of writing rather than teaching.

Prior to this, his autobiography, “This House of Sky,” about growing up in Montana, was nominated for a National Book Award and was a Pulitzer Prize contender.

A graduate of Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, Doig considered teaching journalism, switched to history, decided against an academic career and began writing. He was an editorial writer for a chain of Illinois newspapers, an assistant editor of The Rotarian magazine, and a writer of articles for a number of national publications. Eventually he earned a doctorate in history from the University of Washington.

“I credit my time at the U.W. with giving me a greater sense of being a Westerner,” the author said.

His two recent books followed five less philosophical works: “News: A Consumer’s Guide,” written with his wife, Carol, who teaches journalism at Shoreline Community College; “Utopia America,” an anthology of writings about Utopian communities in this country; and “The Streets We Have Come Down,” an anthology of writings about urban America.

“This House of Sky” was a sensitive account of life on a ranch with a sheep-herding father after Doig’s mother died. “Winter Brothers” is Doig’s report on James Gilchrist Swan, a transplanted Bostonian who, in 1859, abandoned his wife and children for life in the Pacific Northwest.

Doig has not written a biography, but an introspective study in which he relates his own emotions and perceptions to those of Swan, as he retraces the region Swan knew so well.

With Swan’s copious diaries (1862-1890) as source material, Doig matched his own responses to Swan’s and found himself and Swan quite compatible. He sees contrasts and similarities in their respective lives, and empathizes with Swap’s need for privacy and living away from urban centers.

As Swan had his territory in which to explore, to observe, to keep his voluminous notes, so Ivan Doig, from his North King County home, finds inspiration and balm, with green spruce limbs.

(Continued on E 8)
Doig, Ivan
WINTER BROTHERS:
A Season at the
Edge of America
Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich $10.95
11/17 SBN: 15-197186-2

Two years ago Doig dazzled us with This House of Sky, a luminous memoir of his Montana boyhood. "I had some knack then for living at the edges of other people's existences," he wrote, etching the scabbed countryside and its thrifty inhabitants in rich prose. This new book finds the discretionary Westerner again sharing the life of another: James Gilchrist Swan (1816-1900), a Boston-born drifter with frontier talents and a gifted diarist of the late-19th-century Northwest.

And while part of Doig's mission here is simply to introduce us to Swan-the-diarist, he is also determined to share his own feelings as the "Winter Brother" who discovers Swan and is somehow held by him, sharing Swan's westward urgings. So Doig sifts through the 40-plus volumes of Swan's writings a record, from the 1850s on, of the transformation of the Puget Sound region and sees Swan's life in irregular counterpoint to his own. This approach does have its problems: Swan was no Pepys, and his reporter style ("he has," says Doig, "arithmetic in his eye") combines with Doig's less glittering prose to give this book an odd coloration very different from that of This House of Sky. Moreover, the two men's lives hardly interact neat—since "opening the pages of Swan's years is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swallowers of flame." In fact, Swan's experiences include stints as oyster entrepreneur, Indian schoolmaster, customs inspector, Smithsonian correspondent, and ethnological registrar. (The Indians of Cape Flattery, 1870, remains the standard reference on the Makahs; his survey of the Queen Charlotte Islands was also highly esteemed.) And there's a darker side to Swan, too—boots of drunkenness (excluded from the diaries), occasional gloom—and some familiar pioneer spirits, "railroad fever" among them. Above all, however, he was a precise, untiring recorder, often at the heart of the action; and Doig, the habituated sojourner here as before, readily retraces his steps—in a strange and special historical/literary/personal mosaic.

Gavron, Daniel
WALKING THROUGH ISRAEL
Houghton Mifflin $12.95
11/3 SBN: 395-27777-9

Outside of the cities, away from the luxury and incivility, there is another Israel—maintains Israeli journalist Gavron—which is "the real Israel," still. But as a demonstration that "pioneering and idealism" persist in the countryside, Gavron's 1978 trek from northernmost Metulla to southernmost Eilat, recorded here, cannot be judged a great success: too many social ills turn up, attributable to complacency and prejudice—the intolerance of natives for newcomers with different ideas, the contempt of European Jews for oriental Jews with alien lifestyles. Nor does Gavron's walk compel interest on its own: his descriptive powers (of people or places) are very limited: actual occurrences are rare; and we hear all too often, meanwhile, about his aching calves and sore feet. But what will, finally, recommend the book to some and put off others completely is Gavron's habit of detouring into biblical history, Jewish history, and Israeli history at every appropriate spot on the map, whether or not he actually visits the site. The reader perfecrly accumulates considerable background knowledge—much of which coalesces, however, into a comparison between the aggressive pioneering of the first, second, and third aliyahs (waves of immigration), on the one hand, and the pragmatism, the willingness to compromise, of both biblical figures and early Zionist leaders. So the discussions are not without purpose: along with Gavron's choice of a route—within the 1948 borders—and his attention to social ills, they are meant to show that Israel's claim to further territory is both unfounded and unwise, that the Israelis might better apply their vaunted audacity and enterprise to putting their own house in order. And he does turn up some pertinent examples of latter-day pioneering (especially in the Negev), of stirrings among the oriental Jews, even of established kibbutzim (communes) and moshavim (cooperatives) not entirely spoiled by success. But it's another of his conclusions that may strike the reader strongest: the smallness of a country that can be walked, slowly, in a mere month; the intimacy of a country where Gavron—from living here and there, from periods of military service—knows someone almost everywhere. If the book doesn't quite instill optimism, then, it
Northwest history comes alive in diary

(Continued from E 1)

Elwha. Two or three Indians followed this and then another grim trophy, held in the same manner as the first.

Swan learned that the war party had lucked upon the hapless pair of Elwhas hunting seals at Crescent Bay, the precise site of Swell's murder.

When blood was most ready to answer blood, the two were simply targets of opportunity. Having shot and beheaded them, the Makahs noted the alarms being shrieked by several Elwha women who had watched the ambush from a distance, held a rapid council, and decided revenge had been sufficiently done.

In all of this Swan takes greatest interest, so much so that he makes the mistake of spectating too close to the song circle which has formed around the severed heads. After they had finished their war song, I heard my name called, and thinking I was in the way of some of their operations was about moving off, when I was again summoned in a manner that left no doubt in my mind but that I was wanted.

The Makahs gesture Swan into the circle, beside the heads. Cowbetsi and an Indian who is to interpret to Swan face him. Cowbetsi orates to Swan that they killed the Elwhas because the territorial Indian agent did not settle the matter of Swell's murder. A line of fact indisputable.

Swan responds gingerly that the Indian agent at the time has been removed from office, consequently he could not come as he had promised, but that he had not lied for I knew that he fully intended to have done just what he had promised to do; that Mr. Simmons was a friend of Swell's and they all knew — a careful veer here — I was a friend also.

"Yes," said Cowbetsi, "we know you are our friend, and we are friends of yours."

Swan emits a degree of relief when I was assured of the fact; but I thought that their friendship was of the kind that might induce them, should I give offence, to stick my head on top of a pole for a memento. He stands stock silent through a victory dance performed while four Makahs point guns at the heads and his general vicinity, and does not give offense. Only the two trophy skulls of the Elwhas go up on poles above Neah Bay like queer jack-o'-lanterns.

Excerpted from "Winter Brothers" by Ivan Doig. Published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., Copyright 1960, by Ivan Doig.

(NEXT: A look at early Port Townsend.)
From a settler’s diary springs a remarkable communion

by Ivan Doig
Special To The Times

DAY ONE

It is the 18th day since Swell was shot and there is no offensive smell from the corpse. It may be accounted for in this manner. He was shot through the body and afterward washed in the breakers - consequently all the blood in him must have run out. He was then rolled up tight in 2 new blankets and put into a new box nailed up strong.

Swell was a chieftain of the Makah tribe of Cape Flattery, that westmost grow of this coast. He also was Swan’s best-regarded friend among the coastal tribes of Washington Territory, a man Swan had voyaged with, learned legends from.

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Speaking Out in Rural America

Michael Conant
P.1 Book Editor


For whatever reason, the farmer's place in American letters usually is relegated to technical manuals specializing in agriculture or novels in which the rural setting is no more than a backdrop for tragedy. Perhaps it is because the life on the farm, which calls for hard work and long hours, doesn't permit the kind of isolated ruminations that are the fodder of young writers.

A Love of the Land is an attempt to change such a view. "The Farm Journal," its publisher, to focus on the image of the farmer. To this end it asked Darrell Siford, a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer, to embark on a 30,000-mile journey that would take him to farms and farmers across America.

Among those Siford visits are his father-in-law in North Carolina tobacco country, an Arkansas planter "with a heart," a Russian immigrant raising hogs in Iowa, a prep school Wall Street businessman raising cows in Minnesota, an Arkansas cotton grower, a California grape grower and a potato farmer in Idaho.

What he finds is a rural businessman who borrows money each year to raise next year's crop, closely knits families, is fundamentally Protestant and who take their religion seriously. Americans who like football, bowling, openness and dawn till dusk labor.

"A farmer today," explains one rural doctor, "is one who must milk the cows twice a day seven days a week, whether he feels like it or not. If he gets a cold, he goes to the doctor to get medication and prevent complications. You can't tell him to go back to the farm and drink juice and go to bed for two or three days. He can't go to bed. He's got to be out in the bitter cold, rain or whatever caring for his cattle. There's nobody else to do it. You tell him to go to bed and he looks for another doctor - or else he goes to the barn and injects himself with some antibiotic they bought for his cattle. And that really can cause trouble, if he's allergic to it.

The ex-Wall Street who farms in Minnesota says farmers make it on their own and in five years he has not "received one dime" of help from the government, not even a visit from a county agent.

"I'm not complaining," he says, "but I'm saying that's a myth that the government does everything for farmers I didn't come here looking for government help. But I was under the impression that farmers always were on the dole. Now I can tell you that at least corn and soybean farming is totally at variance with that idea.

"In Iowa, Robert Willman, an immigrant who raises only American lambs, a purebred pig that originated in Canada, because they gain weight more quickly, they have broad chests that reduce the risk of respiratory disease, they have wide, flat feet.

"Aw, come on now," the author says, "Wide, flat feet? Since when did that become an advantage?" Well, since farmers started raising pigs in doors in pens floored with wooden slats and concrete. With wide, flat feet the Lambs don't slip between the slats.

Siford's A Love of the Land certainly isn't the last word about life on the farm. For one thing, he finds only serious, happy marriages and food. One could think he might have visited a farmer who wasn't draught to go of it, who was discontented with his life. But for readers who want an adventure in rural America, A Love of the Land can provide it.

SECOND PERSON RURAL: More Essays of a Sunflower Farmer by David R. Godine, publisher, Nora Perez, a Dartmouth English professor who calls himself a "homebody," has produced his second collection of essays on the pleasures, pastimes and occasional discomfort of country living. Even the most city-bound armchair farmer will savor Perez's observations on such domestic country codes of behavior, wood splitting, and the artistry of pigs. The author's multiple loves - his work as an international Harper's 594 trator, even his manners pigs - are described in prose that has the tang of fresh cider and goes down as easy as maple syrup over toast.

THE RANCHERS: A Book of Gene­ rations. By Stan Steiner. Knopf. 241 pages. Illustrated. $13.95. The Ranchers talks about proud and rugged people learning to cope with drought, discovering the secrets of dry farming, struggling against the wind and cold, and learning to cherish and respect the land and life around them.


Speaking Out in Rural America

MICHAEL CONANT
P.1 Book Editor

In a series of to a Man Line

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is able to

The Life of A Raymond Sa­

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vour...
A Winter's Tale On Puget Sound


By MARK MURO

FROM THE BEGINNING, Americans have been a bit ill at ease with their great out-on-a-limb experiment in self-reliance. Restlessly searching and solitary, often with no one to talk to and little to read, they spent much of their time trying to decide where the hell all their rimwalking and trail-blazing was leading.

Our literature is full of curious efforts to get a grip on the self and circumstances. Thrown to their own devices, turned in on themselves, lacking any real literary tradition of their own, early Americans typically wrote diaries, journals of life as transit and exploration.

Such a diarist was James Gilchrist Swan, one of the first whites to spend a lifetime on Puget Sound. Jettisoning a young family and comfortable life in Boston, Swan followed the feverish impulse to scrap it all and go west. From 1855 until his death in 1900 he inhabited the Olympic Peninsula, beaching his canoe in Neah Bay or Port Townsend most of the time, trekking about as loiterer, notary public, drunk, author, woodcarver, schoolteacher, friend and student of Makah Indians, explorer, correspondent and collector for the Smithsonian, sketcher, hokumist, unsuccessful lover, misfit entrepreneur, and most of all, perpetual journal-scribbler.

Whatever else he was, or wasn't, he indefatigably recorded the early Northwest. Winter Brothers is Seattleite Ivan Doig's memoir of his imaginary bloodbrothership with this remarkable pioneer, a bond formed through the millions of words he left behind.

Doig, like Swan, is a westerner to Puget Sound. Raised on a rough succession of sheep and cattle ranches in Montana's high country and in stark, one-town towns with a post office, filling station, store, and three saloons, he felt drawn farther west—to Seattle with its more "workable," "soft-tones," winters, a better environment for a young journalist. After 20 years of magazine writing, Doig published his first book, This House of Sky, in 1978, composed of memories of his early Montana life with his father. Doig was surprised to find himself nominated for the National Book Award and acclaimed a "powerful new American writer."

In his new book, an unusual linking of historical investigation and authorial reflection, Doig imagined Swan's experiences by living his own life in close contact with the thousands of pages he studied. In the process he attained a new understanding of his own life and what it means to be a Westerner.

For 90 days in the winter of 1978-79, Doig holed up with Swan's words in the most intimate of relationships, becoming his great admirer. As Doig writes of Swan's friendship with a young Makah chieftain, Such a growth of regard sometimes will happen when two people are cupped together in a single ship, stronger than differences of blood can ever be.

Doig closely repeats Swan's travels, shares his observations, and wonders about the mind behind all those words, always patiently braiding their century-separated lives together until they become one. The book itself is another diary, a log that grows as Doig more closely embraces his adopted kin from another century.

The fascination of the rainforest is that all flows into and out of all else; here I can sense how the Haidas, whom Swan went among in their own clouds of forest, could produce art in which creatures swim in and out of each other, the designs tumble, notch together, uncouple, compress, surge. The flow of growth out of growth, out of death.

As Doig and Swan come to occupy the same mental space, Doig's book takes on the same fertility and resonating complexity of the rainforest ecosystem. "Winter Brothers, perhaps call them."

IT IS A WINTERY SORT OF BOOK. It belongs to the wet, unturned season when nights are long and thoughts roam. Time seems suspended; minds float across a century back and forth, scenes and words fade in, become sharply realized, and then mist into Doig's own reflections. The foggy, drizzling winter is always beautifully present, inducing a daydreamy readiness for time travel and introspection. It is Doig's favorite season, and he knows one can't move too quickly in our sluggish, droopy atmosphere. A page-turner Winter Brothers is not; it needs plenty of time to grow up around one.

Doig calls his writing a "cottage-industry" employment, and the result is what you would expect from a tireless home craftsman. Winter Brothers is well conceived and well-made. Every piece is carefully set in its proper position, the seams lovingly shaved smooth, every link subtly interconnected to the larger piece. The wit is quiet, the words understated and nuanced, homely yet precise and evocative, all subordinated to the interest of furthering the overall integrity. Intrigued, we soon want to stay up late with this retiring, lumberjack-shirted fellow thumbing through browned pages in his patient, archivist's enthusiasm. One might easily settle in as another

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Ivan Doig in Montana.
Doig's distinction

Columbia is our Mason-Dixon line

Different Times: People back East tend to lump all of the Northwest together, but 'taint so. Catherine Weldum found an excellent description of the differences between Washingtonians and Oregonians in Ivan Doig's recent book, "Winter Brothers." The transplanted Montanan, who now makes his home here, puts it thusly: "A basic division begins at the Columbia River; south of it, in Oregon, they have the sounder citizens, we in Washington the sharper strivers. Transport 50 from each state as a colony on Mars, and by nightfall the Oregonians will put up a school and a city hall, the Washingtonians will establish a bank and a union." Well put.

A group of Swedish Hospital employees took a block of seats at a recent Supersonics game, but missed seeing Dennis Awtrey. He was out with a bad back and resting comfortably — in Swedish Hospital.

The sun yesterday probably told you that the groundhog saw his shadow and we're in for six (more) weeks of winter. Since we haven't had much of a winter this year, I decided to call the keeper of the official weather groundhog, Jimmy. The gentleman's name is Erich Lenz and he lives in Sun Prairie, Wis., self-proclaimed Groundhog Capital of the World. Erich said Jimmy saw his shadow because it was a nice, sunny day in Sun Prairie, "But it's awful cold," Erich added.

Folk Times: Three people who combined for a lot of pass yardage at Whitworth in the late '50s were Denny Spurlock, the quarterback, and his two receivers, Bill Cole and Dick Moultrie. Cole gained small-college All-American recognition and went on to the Denver Broncos. Dick was on the phone the other day to get Cole's number in Tempe, Ariz., where he now lives, and confessed: "I was the better receiver — Bill just got the publicity." Dick was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys, so he may have something, even though he was kidding.

With all those United Way commercials sponsored by the National Football League, our Montana correspondent, retired S.P.D. officer Bear Keane, asks: "Are we putting all our bags into one ask it?"

KING Radio has a new employee in a new position: Sara Cram as "program producer." She'll be in charge of collecting and preparing the material for KING's on-air personalities (and you thought deejays made all that stuff up). If Sara's last name sounds familiar, that's because she's the daughter of a sometime TV weatherman and QFC pitcher, Bob Cram.

Howard Leendertson has come up with the perfect T-shirt for the East Side. It says: "He who dies with the most toys wins." Early betting is on Graham Fitz.

Back-p

by Patrick Malone
Knight News Service

Low-back pain. No ease is so comm
eglected, so malignant treated.

Four out of five suffer significant back pain in their live leading cause of lost productivity and worker's compensation claims.

Doctors can find treatments for back pain in only 10 to 20% of all cases. Most of the cases that go away in a few weeks of treatment at all. They abound with cures that are impressive but don't always work.

"The public is being led to believe an enormous way," L. Nachemson, a Swedish surgeon who is leading figure in the back-pain research.

Back-pain suffers are operated, over-drugged, manipulated, according to Nachemson and other medical researchers.

There also is a third type of back-pain sufferer who is their symptoms are simply or subconsciously caused, giving an undeserved legitimacy to those with genuine back problems.

Because back pain is a quantified, and a disease that lacks the research money and disease like cancer, has been devoted to causes of back pain but not in a serious manner.

Alex deG

Alex deGrassi, headline shows at 7:30 at the Advance THEATER, 1153 J and d'Osoche, a dollar is on the bill.

Advance tickets are available at Concerts event.
tory, but difficulties in researching the story decided him to scrap the project, change some names, give his imagination its head, and strike out on his own. The result is a truly wonderful novel. It tells of Francisco Manoel da Silva, a poor adventurer from Bahia who makes a huge fortune in the slave trade; is appointed Viceroy of Ouidah, Dahomey's port city; and then, after falling out with his royal patron, is stripped of his treasure, ending up a half-mad beggar on the streets of the town he once lorded it over. Mr. Chatwin, as readers of "In Patagonia" will remember, has a powerfully visual and aural style; sights and sounds crowd his sentences to the point that the book almost breathes. The narrative of da Silva's rise and fall may be full of ironies and surprise turns and of outre incidents, but the real excitement is in the prose.

GENERAL

Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America, by Ivan Doig (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $10.95). In 1850, James Gilchrist Swan, restless, adventurous, and thirty-two years old, left his native Boston and a wife and two children for California, spent a year or two there, and then settled down for what turned out to be the rest of his long life (he died in 1900) in the uttermost Puget Sound area of what was then the Territory of Washington. He occupied himself there in a rich variety of ways—home­steader, assistant customs collector, engineer, lawyer, teacher at the Makah Indian reservation, Episcopal chorister, amateur anthropologist, collector of Indian artifacts for the Smithsonian Institution, drinking man (twice jailed as a habitual drunkard), author of numerous scientific monographs, and, most conspicuously, diarist to rival Pepys. Mr. Doig tells us that he came across Swan's diaries (a score or more of notebooks, totalling two and a half million words) in the University of Washington library and fell at once under that strange man's spell. In this book, he traces Swan's career by way of the diaries (and other sources), follows—where he can—in Swan's distant footsteps around the Northwest, and rumi­nates on similarities he discovers in Swan's nature and his own. His fasci­nation with Swan is easy to understand, for Swan was an engrossing diarist—gossipy, humorous, vividly descriptive, seemingly determined to put the whole of his experience into writing—and the book is a fine one.

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IT ALLS

33

diarist—gossipy, humorous, vividly descriptive, seemingly determined to put the whole of his experience into writing—and the book is a fine one.
Westering Journals

By RAYMOND A. SOKOLOV

James Gilchrist Swan ran away from proper Boston in 1850, left his wife and two children and, after a voyage round Cape Horn, eventually settled in our country's upper left-hand corner, on the Washington coast. Ivan Doig left Montana roughly a century later, collected a Ph.D. in American frontier history and made his home, as Swan had, on America's wet, westernmost shore.

Mr. Doig began to write about this "edge of America" in magazines and in a previous book, "This House of Sky." Then, in the "grey archival boxes at the University of Washington Library," he discovered the diaries in which Swan had scribbled two-and-a-half million words between 1859 and his death in 1890.

How Swan found the time to write is an awesome puzzle, considering that he filled his life with scads of "careers," from exploration to Indian ethnography, to teaching, to oyster wholesaling, to artifact collection for the Smithsonian. And he also took substantial time out from this panoramic industry for very serious drinking. Yet, besotted or not, Swan wrote — wrote with a loose-jointed, gabby verve and high intelligence about frontier life.

One winter, he shared a house with a whaling captain who tried to bake a skunk, but neglected to clean it properly, with the result that "it smelt so unsavory when the bake-kettle was opened that he was forced to throw skunk and kettle into the river, which he did with a sigh, remarking what a pity it was that it smelled so strong, when it was baked so nice and brown."

Fascinated by such stuff, Ivan Doig read deeply in Swan's diaries, looking for companionship in his own "westering" adventure on the flanks of the Olympia Range, by the waters of Puget Sound. Swan had tramped where Mr. Doig now hikes with his wife, Carol, and though the life on that land had changed enormously, Mr. Doig felt a mystical brotherhood with Swan, which he has exemplified in this double diary, matching passages culled from Swan with parallel moments from his own life.

For 50 days, the space of a recent winter, he interspersed his own journal entries with appropriate snippets from Swan's vast memoir. Sometimes the exercise is forced; sometimes it pushes Mr. Doig into overwriting. But the occasional patches of dulness or lightheartedness should deter no one from devouring this gorgeous tribute to a man and a region unjustly neglected hitherto. The reader has the pleasure of encountering two contrasting styles and two angles of view, both in dazzle.

"The west of America draws some of us not because it is the newest region of the country but because it is the oldest, in the sense that the landscape here—the fundamental, nature's shape of things—more resembles the original continent...." First in the mesmerizing The House of Sky (Booklist 75:2 $1.78) and now in Winter Brothers, Ivan Doig has come to be a kind of modern troubadour singing eloquently of a uniquely western state of mind, of the Huck Finn-ish impulse to "light out for the Territory." In this combination essay, biography, and oral history, Doig finds a kindred spirit in one James G. Swan (1818-1900), a fellow northwesterner whose voluminous diaries provide an eyewitness report on the settling of Puget Sound. Quoting extensively from the diaries, he traces Swan's multifaceted career as a teacher in Indian schools, a schools official, and a collector of artifacts for the Smithsonian. Most telling, however, is his exploration of similarities between Swan and himself and on the melancholy fact that in today's world "westernness is going to have to be a direction of the mind." Another unclassifiable but totally involving book from a most impressive writer. B0.

Hanley, Clifford. The Scots. 1980. 224p. illus. Times Books, $12.50 (0-8029-0496-1). Experienced writer Hanley takes a core sample of the Scottish national characteristic, and while a tidy and compact portrait does not emerge, one idea does: the Scots resist simple definition. Hanley profiles noble and ignoble Scots of the past, explains the differences between the Highlands and the Lowlands, dips into the history of golf, describes the making of haggis, extols the virtues of Scotch whiskey—in short, constructs a patchwork quilt out of the various fabrics of Scottish experiences and states of mind. Bibliography and index. WBB.


"The annals of archaeology record no other site owned outright by one man and excavated and reconstructed largely out of his personal fortune." The site was, of course, Knossos on the island of Crete, where ancient Minoans erected a luxurious, multilevel palace complex. The man was Sir Arthur Evans, whose keen archaeological instincts and inexhaustible energy held the world enthralled for a quarter of a century while he directed excavations, reconstruction, and restoration of the chief monument of this unique Aegean civilization. Against the backdrop of Edwardian enthusiasm for the new, Horwitz portrays Evans as a supremely confident (and able) researcher and as a man whose altruism was flawed by an increasing proprietary attitude toward his "hiss" Minoans. As an experienced field archaeologist, Horwitz adds an invaluable dimension of authority, gracefully joining the romance of biography and archaeology. The final chapter is a concise review of scholarly debate on the identity of the Minoans and on what caused the sudden death of their highly developed culture. Bibliography. To be indexed. JNE.


The author of Meeting in Potsdam (Booklist 71:790 Ap 1 75) follows the proceedings of the Paris negotiations, January to June 1919, that were intended to fasten a lasting peace on Europe after the horrors of World War I. Mee utilizes a perspective that is both personal and political—mixing the tone of a society-page column with that of a history lesson—as he reconstructs the complex political and cultural forces that fashioned the peace. This is a must-read for anyone interested in European history in the late 1910s. WBB.


"Our folklore was the antithete used by our parents and our grandparents and our great-grandparents to help us counteract the poison of self-hate engendered by racism." These forceful introductory words foreshadow the overall strength of Morgan's book. She has written down the legends passed from one generation of her family (southern black) to the next, legends that were related orally and served as a way of teaching the lessons of life—practical wisdom to help individuals create within themselves a firm but quiet sense of pride. Morgan supplies extensive factual background on her family as motivation for the stories, which have a simple yet appealing eloquence. Notes. No index. WBB.

794.1 Scotland—Civilization; National characteristics, Scottish (CIP) 80-5152

80-16240

794.53 Greece—Civilization; Modern—Biography (OCLC)

80-36853

793.31104 Chicago—Description—1915—History—Chicago—Social life and customs (CIP) 80-17624
the Smithsonian Institution, as author, entrepreneur and politician, he would spend the remainder of his years, recording "with simple stub­ born dullness" the events of life on the westernmost edge of the American frontier.

One hundred thirty years after Swan's journey round the Horn, Seattle writer Ivan Doig spent a winter poring over the voluminous diaries consigned to the depths of a library archive after Swan's death early in 1903. From his immersion in the 2,500,000 words Swan had written, Doig emerged with a 90-day diary of his own voyage through Swan's life. Doig's journal of his days, interspersed with a biography of Swan and passages from Swan's writing, records the daily growth of a strange and powerful bond between the long-dead "coastal nomad" and a sensitive modern writer.

"At first they can only have been curiosities, griffins met with in town, to one another, then... exchangers of lore, then... friends," Doig writes in his first week, of Swan's growing friendship with Swell, a Makah Indian, in 1859. "Such a growth of re­ gard sometimes will happen when two people are cupped together in a single happenstance season of closeness— aboard a fishing boat, in a line of townsfolk and all whose lives he touched in passing.

Ivan Doig tracks Swan along the broken Northwest coast, compelled initially by a question relevant to his own transplanted identity as well as Swan's. Why are such men as he and Swan and countless others drawn from the security of home, family, job and status to risk discomfort, loneliness and anger on the unruly brink of a young nation? It was a question Swan never troubled to ask, and as his diaries unfold within Doig's journal, its importance dim. By the last days of his winter with Swan, Doig's world of freeways, suburban settlements and Trident missiles fades like stage­ scrim before the richness of its histo­ ry. On a promontory at Dungeness and over the doomed Hood Canal Bridge, "the old wind, in the old anger" thrashes the same waves Swan's Makah friends threaded with their graceful canoes, hurl's its sodden baggage on the same implacable Olympic Range that seemed always within Swan's view.

Doig's sense of his own transplanted identity is unchanged, however. As the arrival of a delegation of Indians from Neah Bay, "to take a last look at their oldtime friend and adviser. The In­ dians as they gazed upon the rigid features gave expressions of their grief in low moans and each affectiously patted the face of the dead man.

Correction

Fiber artist Corky Haase discusses "Innovations The Wear" at the Ma­ chine Knitters Club meeting Wednesday, Jan. 14, at 7:30 in the Shaw­ nigan Library, not tomorrow, as was re­ ported in Sunday's Etcetera Column.

Ivan Doig, by Frederick Olsen

A simple, loving ceremony of touch. Eighty years later, Ivan Doig per­ forms that ceremony again with this journal of a season with his winter brother.

The reviewer, a writer and editor for Coolculation Quarterly, is at work on a book for the Sierra Club.
Book Review

Winter Brothers: A Season At The Edge of America
by Ivan Doig
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $10.95

But already I have seen from his sentences and mine that there are and always have been many Wests, personal as well as geographical...

In his first book, This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind (1978), Ivan Doig blended autobiographical reminiscence with an historical and sociological portrait of his home state of Montana. In strong, sweeping prose resembling the big-sky state he comes from, Doig detailed the major events of his first thirty years, everything from his school and sheep ranch experiences, (rendered as Jesse Stuart-style anecdote) to the striking poetic descriptions of each of his parents' deaths. We learned simultaneously of Montana—its landscape and people—and of Ivan Doig.

In Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America, Doig (who received his Ph.D. in American frontier history at the UW) similarly interweaves his own self-portrait with that of one James Gilchrist Swan—a nineteenth century pioneer in the northwest—merging narrator and subject into a single, symbolic image of the American drive westward. Doig and Swan are the "winter brothers" of the book's title, pioneers of different eras, but, from Doig's perspective, men of the same mettle: "westcomers and stayers"—and writers.

Swan left Boston (and his wife and children) in 1850, inadvertently following Horace Greeley's advice to "go west, young man." After a brief stay in San Francisco, he ended up on the Olympic peninsula, spending the better part of fifty years between Neah Bay and Port Townsend, living among such coastal Indian tribes as the Makahs and Haidas. Swan's various occupations included: "oyster entrepreneur, school teacher, railroad speculator, amateur ethnologist, lawyer, judge, homes­ teacher, linguist, ship's outfitter, explorer, customs collector, author, small town bureaucrat, artist, clerk," and, most significantly, diarist.

Swan is Doig's "tale-bringer from the past," a sort of personal historian. Opening the pages of Swan's years, Doig writes, "is like entering a room filled with jugglers and tumblers and swallowers of flame, performance crowding performance...." Fascinated with Swan's voluminous journals, Doig embarked on a journey into the past, trusting to the same journalistic skills with which in This House of Sky he traced his Scottish lineage and his childhood in Montana, Doig recreates the spirit and temperament of this prolific and somewhat querulous northwest settler whose forty year journals comprised over 2,500,000 handwritten words before his death, age 82, at the century's turn.

Structuring his book as a winter's journal of 90 daily entries, Doig brings Swan to life by interweaving his own perceptions of the Pacific Northwest with those of Swan's dry, detailed diaries. Swan's prose is careful, precise, and emotionless, whether describing Indian myths, the climate, or the death of his very close Indian chieftain friend:

This is the eighteenth day since Swell was shot and there is no offensive smell from the corpse. It may be accounted for in this manner. He was shot through the body and afterwards washed in the breakers—consequently all the blood in him must have run out.

He was then rolled up tight in 2 new blankets and put into a new box nailed up strong.

Where Swan is reticent, Doig is effusive, fleshing out these daily journals, zigzagging back and forth in time and space to illuminate both their lives. By the end of Winter Brothers, the identities of these boon companions—separated by more than a century—merge into one portrait: artistically, Doig compares this to "the way that beings mingle in one of those magical 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.'"

Ivan Doig felt the "pull of wanderlust" and in the '60s came to the Northwest. Pacing the daily shrinking wilderness of the Olympics and the Cascades, seeking some lesser version of what Swan had found only 130 years before, Doig brings to Winter Brothers the important corollary concern for a vanishing wilderness, a modern perspective which gives an ominous depth to Swan's caustic descriptions of relations between the coastal Indians and the encroaching white men at the end of the 19th century. His melancholy over what has happened to our world is very often self-evident, as in this passage:

The bulldozers are carving out housing sites. On any scale the slope they are swathing was no hillside of grandeur: scrub alder, madrona. But amid Seattle's spread of suburbs it made a healthy green lung, and its loss is one more nick toward changing the Puget Sound region into Los Angeles North....

As one who left the east coast quite some years ago, travelling west out to the continent's rim, finally stepping off the spinning geographical wheel here in Puget Sound, I found Doig's story especially compelling. Joining these winter brothers was an inevitable and grand experience. If I have problems with the book, however, it is only because Swan's story lacks a certain vitality which might have sparked Doig's best writing. As it is, the relationship between the two pioneers grows tenuous, almost forced, at points in the middle of the book; one may sense Doig's reverence for his subject, and miss, at the same time, the profoundly moving descriptions of This House of Sky. Doig's writing here has neither the crystal precision of a McPhee's, for example, or the poetic grace of an Eisley's. Often, his metaphors seem attenuated, weakened: "the ferry goes along the center of their joined water like a zipper up a jumpsuit. ...", "the expensive reach of bluff behind it, where the big old betrimmed houses rise like a baker's shelves of wedding cakes. ...", "it can be seen clearest how abruptly close the Olympic range of mountains stands to this coastline: like gorgeously caged elephants about to go wading."

In this imagery, Doig demonstrates the stylistic strengths and weaknesses of Winter Brothers: a sincere love of his subject matter and the power of words to convey it, contrasted with a rough and scrappily prose which occasionally extends beyond the ideas Doig is expressing. Whereas in This House of Sky, Doig's writing exhibited the tension of carefully controlled emotion, in Winter Brothers he too often needs to fill out his portrait of Swan with what borders on overblown language. The real question is how well Doig will tackle fiction (he is apparently working on several novels) where his own imagination must create the structure around which he might work his journalistic magic.

Doug Baldwin
Winter Brothers
A Season at the Edge of America
by Ivan Doig

A lyrical evocation of the Pacific Northwest by an author whose first book, *This House of Sky*, was a nominee for a National Book Award and a contender for a Pulitzer Prize.

Ivan Doig's previous book, a magnificently written account of the author's coming of age in rugged, elemental Montana, was one of the most acclaimed books of 1978. In *Winter Brothers*, he has again produced a stunning tour de force as he explores the pioneer impulse that drew settlers to the Pacific Northwest over 100 years ago, as it did him in more recent years. Using the hitherto unpublished diaries of an unconventional Bostonian who in 1850 fled civilization to find freedom in the wilds, Doig crosscuts history by interpolating excerpts from a winter diary of his own. With insight he reflects upon the parallels and contrasts in the two lives, the feel of winter on the coast, and the need men have to flee the larger society to exist along a lonely, frontier edge.

IVAN DOIG, who lives in Seattle, has a Ph.D. in American frontier history.

252 pages LC: 80-7933 November $12.95
Port Townsend
settler's diaries
basis of book

by Charles Aweek
north Times bureau

INNIS ARDEN — Author Ivan Doig isn't resting on the laurels of "This House of Sky," his regional best-seller about people and places in Montana.

Doig, who has lived here since 1974, will read excerpts from his second book, "Winter Brothers, A Season at the Edge of America," and lecture at 8 tonight at the Wade James Theater in Edmonds.

Devotees of Doig, however, will have to wait until later this year, possibly fall, before the book hits the stands. Once again, the publisher is Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

The basis for Doig's book are the voluminous diaries of James G. Swan, a Bostonian who came West during the California gold rush in the pre-Civil War days and settled in the Port Townsend area. Doig ran across the diaries while studying for his doctorate in United States history at the University of Washington.

Doig discussed the book in his spacious study last week.

"The book is my looking at these diaries," the author said. "Much of the book is traveling in my day in search of Swan."

One of the trips takes Doig, the westerner of the moment, on the ferry from Edmonds to Port Townsend, seeking insight into Swan, the 19th Century westerner. Downtown Port Townsend, the author observes, is largely unchanged from the Port Townsend of Swan's day.

Swan's diaries span 40 years and contain much detail on life of the times.

"The diaries really kind of entranced me," Doig said. "You'd be going along and you'd find a pressed plant or a flower he had put in 100 years ago."

Swan, who died in 1900 at the age of 82, saw Port Townsend boom twice and fail both times. He was well-qualified as a commentator, having had a number of occupations and jobs. In Boston, Swan was a clerk for a shipping company. He later entered the oyster business in Willapa Bay, wrote a book on the Northwest coast published in 1857, served as

Water rates going up

north Times bureau

EDMONDS — Water rates are going up May 1 in the Olympic

Ivan Doig
To lecture tonight

secretary to Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens, was a justice of the peace, counsel for Hawaii, and collected artifacts and natural-history specimens for the Smithsonian Institute.

"He once sent in a whale skull," Doig noted.

A goodly part of the diaries refer to Swan's life among the Makah Indians on the Olympic Peninsula. During the Civil War he took at Neah Bay on the Makah Reservation and the Indians took him with them to Cape Alava. What now is known as the boardwalk trail from Lake Ozette to the cape was, in those days, an Indian hunting trail. No boards.

Doig said Swan "seems to be the first white man to see Lake Ozette."

Swan became close friends with a young Indian chief named Swell. The chief, a fancy dresser, provided Swan with information on the Indian's whaling industry. Swan reciprocated by painting a running horse on Swell's canoe sail.

The diaries contain Swan's comments on Mount Baker letting off steam — but no lava — and the reaction to the mortal wounding of President Garfield.

In the early 1880s, President Hayes came calling on Swan in Port Townsend, but Swan was off with the Indians in Neah Bay, and the two missed one another.

"That was kind of the story of Swan's life in a way," Doig said. "Recognition and all that. He was always off some place when it was ready to receive him."

Doig's book on Montana was nominated for a National Book Award in 1979 and has sold 16,500 copies so far.
Additional Listing

THE FOCUS CHANGES OF AUGUST PREVICO
August Previco is a young black resident of the "Robert E. Lee funny farm" who retards...as he puts it, whose imaginative attempts to escape are relentlessly foiled. With numbing gallow humor, Worsley tracks the daily schedules of the inmates, their rivalries, sexual exploits and caretaking tasks. August defies his labeling, attributing his troubles to the mental duality imposed on him by his "bad spirits." During his brief sprint to freedom, he is swept up by a colorful melange of marginal people who differ from August only imperceptibly. August's excursions into the so-called real world are part of a dreamlike travagoue through the opaque mental pathways of a pitiable young man.

Mysteries

SEWERGE VERITY AND THE SWELL MOB
Francis Selwyn. Stein and Day, $10.95 ISBN 0-412-2727-9
Sergeant Verity grapples with Victoriaan England's cunning crooks again in Selwyn's fifth bravura performance, a thriller with raunchy humor and indefinite complexities. The straight-arrow detective is embroiled in the affair of the Shah Jahan Clasp, a priceless ornament once owned by a Delhi potentate. The jewel is among objects stolen by Stuning Joe but lost when he's arrested, double-crossed by partners Sealskin Kite and Old Mole. Released from penal servitude, Stuning gets hold of the Clasp, turns it over to Verity and thus puts the sergeant in his most dangerous spot. The master crooks kidnap and plan to murder Verity's beloved wife, and the story whirls into pulse-racing twists as the sergeant tries to find the villains' hideout in time to save Mrs. Verity, in a frenzied search that means flouting his superiors and jeopardizing his career.

Science Fiction

BENEATH AN OPAL MOON
This fourth in the Sunset Warrior Cycle proves, as did its predecessors, that the success of Van Lustbader's mainstream bestseller "The Ninja" is no fluke. Here the hero this time is not the Sunset Warrior himself but his concubine, Mohri Anami. Mohri's investigation of a torture-murder and his rescue of Atuya, a beautiful outlander, from a deadly slave market, plunge him and the warrior-princess Chipsai into a maze of intrigue. It takes them far from the bustling port of Shangxian, where the Bend region of the same name beneath an opal moon. There the greatest challenges to their fighting abilities await them, and beyond them the mysterious Sarukans, whose sudden appearance brings both misfortune and power. An unmissable future-mental milieu, a richly descriptive prose style, crackling action and exotic martial arts are combined to produce some of the freshest and most entertaining science-fiction adventure extant.

NONFICTION

WINTER BROTHERS: A Season at the Edge of America
A century ago James Gilchrist Swan left Boston to travel as far West as he could—to Cape Flattery, Washington. He was schoolteacher to Makah Indians, amateur anthropologist (his book "The Indians of Cape Flattery" is still the primary source of the Makahs), collector for the Smithsonian, land speculator, town official, artist, explorer and, periodically, town drunk. Above all, he was a diarist, recording 40 years' activities in the Olympic Peninsula and Port Townsend. When Doig, author of "This House of Sky," dipped into the unpublished diaries, he felt a kinship with Swan and resolved to keep a journal through one winter, contrasting their lives. Doig's diary serves as a vehicle to introduce the remarkable Swan and a bridge for his adventures. "Winter Brothers" is a unique portrait of the Northwest frontier.

THE BEST KEPT SECRET: Sexual Abuse of Children
The sexual abuse of children is finally receiving publicity and Rush's book is additional ammunition against the crime. According to statistics, little girls—even infants—are the most frequent targets of rape or seduction by adult males. The exploiter is often a father, other close relative or trusted friend—protected by either or both parents for fear of scandal or losing the family breadwinner. In the sole instance where Rush may invite controversy, she rather understates the harm done to small boys who are sexually abused. Otherwise, this text is a forceful depiction of an atrocity which the author traces to ancient laws designating females as property and blames pornography, modern advertising and entertainment in all media for encouraging the war on pedophilia, Rush asserts, requires a change in social conditioning. Author tour.

MINNIE PEARL An Autobiography
Coauthor Dew lends a professional touch to Pearl's life story but has not, fortunately, stiffed the voice of the comic beloved by audiences at the citadel of Country & Western music, Nashville's Grand Ole Opry. Pearl reveals frankly that the career that has made her popular for 35 years and a member of the CMA Hall of Fame was not part of her plan. At age 70, she looks back to her childhood as Sarah Ophelia Colley, fifth daughter in a proud Southern family at home in Centerville, Tennessee (pop. 500). Colley's ambition was to become a dramatic actress, after graduation from college, and she served a long apprenticeship before she became the darling of the Opry. With her good-humored views, the author is a delight to read but impressive in somber moments when she recalls the fate of tragic colleagues like Elvis and the unforgettable Hank Williams. Many photos illustrate the book.
Ivan Doig: 
Looking for a Kindred Soul


Ivan Doig's first book, This House of Sky, struck me, as it did others, as a fine, strong account of growing up in Montana, a book that could be ranked with Wallace Stegner's Wolf Willow or Norman Maclean's A River Runs Through It or James Welch's Winter in the Blood. When you get down to hard counting, there are not many books set in the American West that a grown-up would want to read. Most carry the marks of a muzzy mysticism that has the effect of making the landscape the central character, to the detriment of anything that might be interesting about the humans living there; or else a story set in the West goes about retracing the familiar gestures of the Western myth, those gestures so lived in the amber of stereotype that even a movie audience in Tokyo knows what to expect. But Doig gave in to neither the muzziness nor the myth in This House of Sky, and he produced an autobiography that can stand with the best of Western writing.

Doig moved from Montana, or he probably wouldn't have been able to write This House of Sky; now he lives in Seattle, and in his new book, Winter Brothers, he goes about establishing his relation to another world, as lost to him as the world of his father and grandfather in Montana. The "brothers" in this book are Doig himself and James Gilchrist Swan, a Bostonian who came west to settle in Neah Bay and Port Townsend in 1852. Swan was a prodigious diarist with a sharp and wardenful eye; Doig has read through millions of Swan's handwritten words, not only to find out who Swan was, why he came west and what he found, but also to answer some questions Doig has about himself. Doig opens the book with this: "His name was James Gilchrist Swan, and I have felt my pull toward him ever since some forgotten frontier pursuit or another landed me into the coastal region of history where he presides, meticulous as a usurer's clerk, diarying and diarying that life of his, four generations and seemingly as many light-years from my own. You have met him yourself in some other form—the remembrance—Doig often has to deal with the gaps, with Swan's reticences. Swan was, for example, declared an "habitual drunkard" by Port Townsend authorities, but none of that finds its way into the diaries—except as missed entries during a spree. Doig, then, "reads" Swan's life, as a novelist has to do in creating a character, and Doig uses himself as a character too, tracing for us the growing shapes and recognitions about Swan's life he gathers through the winter.

This scheme for the book—shared geography, seen at different times by Swan and Doig, Doig's imagination serving as the bridge that connects—is generally successful. But it also opens the way for self-conscious musings, of the sort that the more-or-less chronological telling of This House of Sky did not. Given the stagy contrasts of the scheme—Doig, driving to get somewhere reached by Swan in a canoe—it is probably inevitable that Doig would invite his readers to consider Big Questions. But Doig resists that impulse more often than he gives in to it, and I'm thankful for that.

Read Winter Brothers. In doing that, you can put yourself in relation to an amazing and interesting man, as Doig has done for himself and now for us. In 1859, Swan, an artist as well as schoolteacher and most westward pioneer on the American mainland, carved a swan on a sandstone cliff near Neah Bay, chiseling his initials under it. In 1979, Doig goes to see it and finds it barely marked by time. It's fair to say that Doig has made that swan, that Swan, live for us.

Jack Brenner

Dr. Brenner is currently writing a book about fiction in the American West.

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BEST-SELLERS

Fiction

"The Covenant" by James Michener. Epic novel about South Africa's tumultuous history.

"The Origin" by Irving Stone. Fictionalized biography of Charles Darwin.


"The Key to Rebecca" by Ken Follett. Espionage during Rommel's campaign in North Africa.

"Came Pour the Wine" by Cynthia Freeman. Career woman from Kansas finds eventual fulfillment in Manhattan.

Nonfiction

"Cosmos" by Carl Sagan. Brilliant exploration of earth's place in the universe.

"Winter Brothers" by Ivan Doig. Seattle author finds affinity for James Swan, regional pioneer.

"Money Dynamics for the '80s" by Venita Caspel. Investment counseling for the present decade.

"Mom's House, Dad's House" by Isolina Ricci. A study of child custody.

"Color Me Beautiful" by Carol Jackson. Seasonal beauty hints by noted consultant.

(This list of best-sellers, for the week ending November 22, was repor-
ed by selected Seattle-area stores.)

Doig establishes a spiritual kinship with Washington pioneer.

"Winter Brothers" by Ivan Doig. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. $10.95.

by Lucile McDonald

In a curious blend of two personalities and their literary output Ivan Doig has presented a view from today of the life and 19th Century writings of pioneer James G. Swan. Like this reviewer, Doig became deeply involved in the early Washington historian's and ethnologist's diaries and letters, but there our similarities ended; I spent a year researching and writing a biography and Doig passed a similar period putting himself in Swan's shoes (and in his mind), following his footsteps wherever possible and recording his impressions.

Besides the 15,000 days recorded in Swan's diary, reposing in the University of Washington Library's archives, other collections of his unpublished writings are available nearby. It is possible to become so engrossed in the man that one can easily relive the years he was in Washington, his steady diary lines—then bringing emissaries from the field of the first people—such as we have not been around in the years since. He seems a kind of lur and bonus, a dividend for me.

When Swan achieves his goal and desire and goes exploring in Queen Charlotte Islands, I do not get there, but there instead along the loneliest part of the Washington coast, so that can experience some of the sensations and liken them to Swan's.

Thus the two writers, one terminus and one long dead, merged in this book. Reading an experience, hard to describe but very rewarding.
He finds inspiration in obscure archives

"Some men and women are never part of the time they were born into, and walk the streets or highways of their generations as strangers."

—Wright Morris

By DIANE WRIGHT

Heerald Staff Writer

Author Ivan Doig is not a stranger to his generation. But his work does set him apart — as much as the men and women in the Wright Morris quote he treasures. In his quiet north Seattle home, sheltered behind a formidable windbreak of pines and hedges, he ranges through time and place, fingering memories of real and figurative ancestors.

Doig spins his stories from a study that looks as efficiently laid out as a small public library, dipping into the past like a Wellsian time traveler. What the two men do share is words, and "Winter Brothers" reflects Doig's abiding interest in the more obscure byways of history. It's an interest that surfaced most dramatically in "This House of Sky."

"The storytelling I heard from my father and other people in small towns always enthralled me," he says. "Sky swept through a panorama of Western characters, rodeos, square dances, sheep and cattle ranches. It actually began in Scotland and in a London basement, the year his wife Carol had a sabbatical leave from her job as a journalism teacher at Shoreline Community College."

That was in 1972, the year after his father died of emphysema.

"I spent a lot of time with him during the last years of his life," Doig says. "Going back to his old territory, a lot of things coalesced. I'd written about him briefly before — I did an article about his rodeo days for a magazine once. But at some point in my diary, there is an entry: 'Started book about where I come from.'"

For nearly 20 years he'd been a professional writer at somebody else's call. He slugged through four editorials a day for a newspaper chain in Decatur, III., edited Rotarian magazine, finally became fed up with the Midwest and moved to Seattle. While working on his doctorate at the University of Washington, he did the day-to-day work of a journeyman freelancer, writing everything from articles for Modern Maturity to regional history for Pacific Search magazine.

"It took me the better part of a year to wean myself off magazine writing," he says. "The most I ever made as a freelancer was $10,000 a year. I'd spend three weeks on a story and be paid $250."

Thanks in part to a wife who cheerfully hired herself off to teach school every day instead of browbeating him into taking some angina-producing corporate post, Doig had that most precious commodity, time. Time to explore. Time to become a literate.

That's what he is now: a reformed newsmen who gives his past in newspapers and magazines their exact due — credits for establishing discipline, debits for wasting so much of his life. As Carol, herself a freelance writer, puts it: "I have a file of yellowing articles in the closet that nobody cares about but me. But this is for posterity." She remains, as she puts it, "Fan Number One," reading his books in manuscript and making comments. But as she demurs, "The level of his writing has gone so far beyond, I can't follow what he's doing technically."

The acclaim for "This House of Sky" began to snowball in the autumn of 1978 with a rave review in Time magazine. Others followed suit. The Saturday Review, The New Yorker. So persuasive was Doig's prose style that critics lapsed into poetic figures to describe the book. "Mr. Doig was not mistaken in his choice of writing as a career," wrote Wright Morris. "He is scrupulous with words, writes a lily and supple sentence, alive with images that often crackle." And "He reinforces our diminishing conviction that there is something special in the American experience."

"It is a stirring experience — joyous, poignant, and loving," added the New Yorker. By Christmas, more than 15,000 copies were sold. Even more amazing were the responses from fellow Montanaans, a kind of "This Is Your Life" roll call from folks Doig hadn't seen in years. "I was getting calls from people who had been to a dance with my parents in 1929," he says. In less than three months, his career had changed completely. "I no longer was a magazine writer, someone trying to write a book," he says. "That autumn of '78 is unique. There'll never be a time in my life like it again."

Now he was faced with what he calls "the sophomore jinx." How could his second book measure up? He remembered materials he had come across while doing his dissertation at the University of Washington. In the flour-scent-lit archives of Suzzalo Library, he'd been directed by the librarian to a series of diaries that might have information about his dissertation subject. It was then that "Winter Brothers" was born.

Those notebooks, with their marbled covers, held the key to Doig's next book. The academician turned his eye on the jottings of a self-taught explorer, and was immediately plunged into another century.

"What I am now doing is the part of the diaries that's been seductive," writes Doig. "Opening the pages of Swan's life is like entering jugglers and tumblers' flame, performance once."

Every day Doig sat in the dim basement went home to woolen ruminate.

"I live in this subterranean way the way it empties its day — people evaporate, supermarket — valley to me and the lard cats."

In this environment Swan from the obscure he became a kind of conducting us through Swan's life, illuminating process.

And despite the dis space and temperature worked.
Once again, the book's prose brought out poetic streaks in the reviewers. Even Swan came in for praise. Raymond Sokolov praised Swan's "Loose jointed, gabby verve and high intelligence about frontier life."

The book subsequently attracted the attention of Channel 9 filmmakers Jean Walkinshaw and Wayne Sourbeer, who will begin filming a half-hour adaptation of the book in January for airing later in the year. Doig and the crew will retrace some of Swan's travels around the byways of Port Townsend, the breezy promontory of Neah Bay, and other locations. Doig will serve as script advisor and also may narrate the film. "I'll be in there sticking up for the words," he says.

At the same time, he's three-fifths into his next book. Though it is Doig's first experiment in fiction, the book takes a true story as its point of departure.

Doig has the item posted on his wall — an 11-inch account in the Olympia Transcript, circa 1873, about three Swedes who were found floating in a canoe, starving and delirious. They'd come 1,000 miles down the coast from Sitka in mid-winter to escape indentured servitude to the Russians. "It seemed like such a striking incident to me. I'm just going to get them down the coast. In my version, the question is: Will they make it?"

Meanwhile, Doig continues observing cats and the cocktail hour, hiking, grubbing in his garden for potatoes, making trips to Montana, leading with Carol what the English might call an eminently civilized life. "So much of my work is focused into the past," Doig notes. "My writing routine doesn't have much to do with the day-by-day world. It relies on the hours I have to put into it. I'm kind of removed from the contemporary swirl."
One piece of leg the lawmakers gate partment of fisheries The same bill, in the hopper last year, by a lot “political” move. Currently the fis "fishlike” salmon, bo herring, salmon trout, etc, and game work on song birds A Gallaghan work meaning the reputation of bei else in the world Wh nging raising a new sti ng technique, Gall aghn’s work with the winters at Sekur d blackmouth and ta sport. At any rate, ma the trend toward “political football.” T more or less control each side of the sta on the part of the commissioners, in tu license mony and be supposed to operate Fisheries, on th e. A director is place of the new governor feels the f governor’s policy. In effect what r or so, is that the dir "strking” the game. S econd, the writer must own experts recon Sportsmen hav Back in 1932 they g game under state co. Every now; an old painted sign About the only covered by civil serv give rise to what “bureaucrats.” These are working in the w minor bureaucrats, I “bureaucrats” who are they supposed to The in the past 10 decisions of the sportsmen simply d than one outdoor w write a letter or mal sm. I’ve worked a Now I’ve come and “bureaucrats” swee rug and go merril y for this to happen, b game department. Else why does the c ing the day? Eveni If you think I departmen t to work, Or the coum So, would i solution of the regi tor as apposite. If vote for someone el be elected twice to office as a dir in the last 20 years. Some plump jobs w them more eager t A lot of econo m. There’s a lot of especially salmon an lake. We’ll be herin you in the future. Which is what w
One Man’s Journey Through Another Man’s Careful Chronicles

By Carol Van Strum

“IT was my wish that somewhere there should be a memorial of it all...for our like will not be there again.”

—Tómas O Crohain’s Blasket Islands autobiography

During the year 1841, a young shipping clerk from the Boston docks embarked on a business trip to Liverpool and subsequently, some time after his return, was married. Neither event was extraordinary for that era. Neither would be noteworthy years later, except that during the same year, clerk James Gilchrist Swan also began a diary. Of the two experiences that marked 1841 for him, it was the voyage to Liverpool which “jarred Swan’s writing hand into motion” to fill 30 pages with details of his ship’s journey. His first diary ends with his return to Boston.

Nine years had passed, two children had been born, and unrecorded marital conflicts had separated him from his wife before Swan took up his pen once more. Again, it was a voyage which inspired him to write, this time around Cape Horn and up the Pacific coasts of two continents to San Francisco. Following a brief jaunt on a potato schooner bound for Hawaii, he spent the next few years dockside as a clerk in San Francisco, his work varying little from his days in Boston. Few qualities beyond a decided propensity for the bottle and the pen distinguished James G. Swan during these years. Then, in 1852, lured by a smooth-talking oyster entrepreneur (compared by Swan to Baron Munchausen), he moved up the coast to the rich oyster beds of Shoalwater Bay, north of the Columbia River. His introduction to the Chinook and Chehalis tribes of the area inspired an interest in Indian ways and awakened a dormant linguistic skill that were to shape his uncommon future.

Nine years later, after writing the first book to be published by a resident of the newly formed Washington Territory and serving a term as aide to the territorial delegate to Congress, Swan landed on the Olympic Peninsula. In this remote corner of the nation, he began his last diary, a daily chronicle that would record nearly half a century of change. Here, as schoolteacher, self-taught doctor and arbitrator for the Makah Indians, as collector and historian for See BOOK WORLD, B2, Col. 1

INSIDE STYLE

Style Plus: The royal family vs. Farewell party for Television and...