Young Men on a Slow Boat to War

SORROWLESS TIMES
By James Herndon (1981)

By Ivan Doig

HE WAS 17 years old and one-eyed, and afraid that World War II was passing him by. He made his own ticket to that central event by joining the Merchant Marine and so, as a crewman of the tanker S.S. Malibu docked in the Panama Canal Zone, found himself ashore of a typical evening:

"The Explorer found Slim, Buddy, J.D. and Johnny in a bar attached to a tattoo parlor, along with innumerable others of the crew. They were in a period of comparative repose, drinking steadily but quietly, discussing the first five or six hours of shore leave and watching each other being decorated with hearts, eagles, anchors, panthers. The word spread that everyone was going to the Blue Moon, which was a real whorehouse...with a band, dancing, drinks, a madam, and upstairs rooms to take the girls up to. They all danced, drank, sang, took girls up. Parting, meeting later, some of them, back at the tattoo parlor, hearts, eagles, anchors, panthers, blood, ink, blue, red, green, rum.

From The Way It Spaced To Be, two decades ago, to 1985's Notes From a School Teacher, James Herndon has periodically provided America with unforgettable dispatches from the combat zone of education, the classroom. Those books were properly critically cuffed over, some reviewers actually noting Herndon's poker-faced wit and realist's incisiveness. But his 1981 wartime memoir, Sorrowless Times, in which he caught with ineffably profane precision what it is like to be a young man in a term of service with other fledglings who are nothing like you but yet identical in that uniformed servitude, made little stir. It is like ignoring Billy Budd just because Melville had already written Moby-Dick.

Herndon's tale of the Malibu pinballing around the Pacific, loading and unloading oil—need it be said, cost-plus was the compass of military expenditure—is sometimes told in prose as clean and fine as this:

"The ship lay eight days in repair dock, men working at its innards, its power shut down. Inert and ugly, it stirred the ocean water with shiny oil."

And sometimes in exhilarating jazzy riffs (before seagoing, Herndon played lead trumpet in a dance band) such as:

"Up in the messroom, couple of engine-room crew and disconsolate port watch of Navy gun-crew, had to stay aboard, that being the Navy way. Surprisingly, Red the bosun. All drinking coffee from white mugs except Red. Red always friendly, and knew everything. Hi kid.

"Come you aren't ashore, Red?

"Red drinking whiskey from white mug. Now he poured out half a cupful from a pint bottle, pulled out a flat, round can and shook black powder stuff into the mug, stirring it with his finger. He drank up about half of it.

"Little snuff? holding out the tin. No wonder Red knew everything."

In either mode, Herndon's ear is a sonar wonder. His couple of pages on the crew's reaction when they discover that the free dうngar ees the Navy gives them are in fact women's dうngar ees is something like a Hallujah Chorus of cursing. Somewhat more quotable, here is one of Herndon's shipmates on another matter of wardrobe:

"Look at them there pants, One-eye! Slim shouted. I'll take them pants back to that Panamian [sic] no-good bastard, and make him eat one half and stick the other half...

"The Explorer was looking at the pants. They looked great. Fine, beige, light, tropical-weave gabardine. They look great, Slim, he said. What's the matter, they don't fit?

"Matter? yelled Slim. Them is zoot-suit pants!"

FOR ALL its raunchy veracity, Sorrowless Times deals in larger truths as well. Better than in any other "war" book, fiction or non-, that I know of, James Herndon conveys the inexplicable epidemics of enthusiasm—catfishing in the Persian Gulf, jewel-buying in Ceylon—that grip such groups of time-serving youngsters. (I think of the carload of my barrackmates who took it into their heads to accompany a buddy in his nutty notion of driving home to Chicago, a 1,500-mile round trip from our Texas base, on a weekend pass. And did.) Herndon also is profoundly right about the basic discontent of being either young or in the military, or worst, both: you are perpetually handed only jobs, not work.

So, a sorrowless time passes, a young sailor called One-eye begins "getting his memory in order," a war winds down, uplifting as it does: "cost-plus was gone and led to something like dog-eat-dog." A book such as Herndon's vibrant account of the "long, skinny, steel world" of the Malibu is a vital serum (hearts, eagles, anchors, panthers, blood, ink, blue, red, green, rum) against Clancification, the high-tech confidence that war machinery, ours, anyway, is in the steady hands of military paragons. Herndon's contrarily honest testimony is what any enlisted man knows, has to know in self-protective cynicism: that some of the people running his world are okay and some are loonies. Surprisingly like real life, in short.

Note on Availability: "Sorrowless Times" is out of print; copies occasionally can be spotted in second-hand bookstores.
Bone-Deep 'in' Landscape

ALL BUT THE WALTZ
Essays on a Montana Family
By Mary Clearman Blew
Viking. 223 pp. $19.95

By Ivan Doig

I'VE BEEN looking over my shoulder for this book ever since I was old enough to realize that my boyhood Montana had girls in it as well. Growing up as one and not the other—how does that old ever-new question of gender turn our lives, change the eventual sum of us? Both of us born in the last months of the Depression's shadowcasting decade, Mary Clearman Blew grew up as rural as I did, just a couple of mountain ranges over the horizon from where I was trying to ponder the hard deal that our kind of life had given my mother and my grandmother versus the hard deal it was giving my father and maybe me. All But the Waltz is her summoning of the saga of women and men and their meld of family, so clear-eyed a memoir that it drills into, as Blew says of her genetic habits from her own grandmother, "some deeper source than memory."

"I am bone-deep in landscape," Blew writes of revisiting the Judith River country, the geographic-heart-of-Montana where homesteading wore apart her grandparents and cowboying fashioned her father. "In this dome of sky and river and undeflected sunlight, in this illusion of timelessness, I can almost feel my body, blood, and breath in the broken line of the bluffs and the pervasive scent of ripening sweet clover and dust, almost feel the sagging fence line of ancient cedar posts stapled across my vitals."

That gut-feeling for the land is matched in her incisive portraiture, member by memorable member, of both sides of her ranching family. Blew’s account in "awe and rage" of her father’s self-chosen death on the prairie is already something of a regional legend; for months after she first read it with quiet power at a 1984 conference on western myths, I kept hearing stunned admiration from male scholars and writers who’d been in the audience. (We had wanted to hear a woman’s voice on the vitals of western life, had we?) It is an unforgettable piece, all right, both in her father’s implacable act of cutting the rest of the family—i.e., the women—out of his life’s ending and Blew’s unblinking telling of his "acquiescence to that romantic and despairing mythology which has racked and scarred the lives of so many men and women in the West."

Like Mari Sandoz before her, Blew is terrific at offhand information about what it was like to get by in the American outback. "Lud brought Imogene [Blew’s aunt living alone at the isolated school where she taught] a gift of a .22 rifle and spent a Sunday afternoon taking turns with the pinging at tin cans. When she went to gather up the cans, he said, ‘Leave ‘em lay. Some people may as well know you got a gun and you can shoot it.’ " But where Sandoz’s classic Old Jules was a community epic of colonizing the West, Blew’s memoir is a now-necessary chronicle of what might be called uncolonizing, coming to terms with century-old illusions about wringing prosperity from the high dry plains.

WHICH IS not to say All But the Waltz is a seamless read, given the decision to tell 11 pivotal episodes of a plentiful family ("It was a mild surprise in those days to meet someone I was not related to") in separate essayistic chapters; the stage keeps being reset, characters reintroduced. But since Blew’s ultimate theme is how bumptiously a family is seasoned together, maybe particularities and crotchets simply cropped out into the structure of this book. In fact, taken singly, two of the richest chapters are the ones most removed from her immediate family—a fine, morally complicated tale of a Christian commune of Hutterites eloping their ranch neighbors just as hard as the ranchers once elbowed the Indians, and a vividly imagined vignette of Blew’s uncle-by-marriage literally welding a route for himself up out of Depression poverty.

All But the Waltz blazes best, though, in its final pair of chapters, where Blew turns from her father’s laconic lineage to her maternal grandmother and namesake, Mary Welch, in bad times in 1922 and then to herself in marital straits 60 years later. The first Mary had to do the coping for a family of five after homestead disappointments shrewed her husband—"his nose and chin drawing together and releasing his eyes into a jerky life of their own." When the author found herself in a marriage gone awful, the memory-and-more of that durable grandmother stayed with her all the way to the graveside of a dangerously skewed husband:

"The wind snarls at the grass and roars in the canopy they have pitched over the open grave, and I remember another cemetery ridge a long time ago, and another dry-eyed woman named Mary ... No, it never ends."

Now may Mary Clearman Blew see, here in her own bone-honest pages, that her life also has been full of nerver beginnings and that All But the Waltz is the freshest of those. This is a brave book and an enduring one.
Bone-Deep in Landscape

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Book World

Self-Portrait Of a Landscape Artist

ANSEL ADAMS: An Autobiography
By Ansel Adams
with Mary Street Amindor
New York Graphic Society. 400 pp. $50

By Ivan Doig

As a Pilgrim to Yosemite, it is a familiar story to remember how the parking lot was known to me, and how I stood to know the streets of our primary natural monuments. It loomed in the background weathered repose amid its half-circle of students and cameras, it wore a Stetson hat like it knew how, and there was no other eminence upon the American earth that this could be but Ansel Adams.

A singular grizzled grace is our image of the late and hallowed photographer-environmentalist, and Adams takes his customary workmanlike care to preserve that in these pages. Posthumously—he passed to history at age 82 in April 1984—the Adams profile still looms formidably here, from the silver-spoon San Francisco child who plagued the household by asking "Does God go to the toilet?" to the famous photographic craftsman who answered when asked if he felt a heightened consciousness at the instant of shutter click, "I practice Zone, not Zen." But he also tellingly remarks, "Relatively few really know me, but millions know the folk hero they think is me." It would take a confessional barn-burner of a memoir to change our view of Ansel Adams the stalwart yet sensitive Sierraman, and this isn’t that.

What Ansel Adams: An Autobiography does nicely manage to be—it’s a tribute to the book’s quiet but beautiful balance of design

Ivan Doig is the author of "English Creek," first in a trilogy of novels about the American West, and the memoir "This House of Sky."

The Man Behind The Masthead

RALPH INGERSOLL: A Biography
By Roy Hoopes
Athenaeum. 441 pp. $19.95

By Eleanor Randolph

In the summer of 1937, Henry Luce—"the gin-jer-eyed baby tycoon," as a New Yorker writer would later describe him—made the general manager of Time Inc. an offer virtually nobody could refuse. Especially in the middle of the Great Depression.

Luce promised $1 million in Time stock to Ralph McAllister Ingersoll if he would stay with the company for another five years, energetically pushing his brand of disinformation, creating no ideas and the cults that go with them. He helped change the world view of some of the best and most controversial journalism of the era.

But Ingersoll, a fascinating but bizarre man who knew, loved or feared with many of the great and famous of this century, turned Luce down.

"What the hell do I want with a million dollars?" Ingersoll said, thereby setting the stage for his liberation from Luce two years later at age 38, to the dismay of his friends, his father and his psychiatrist.

Ingersoll, who died in March at the age of 60 and who cooperated with journalist Roy Hoopes for this intriguing biography, then went on to create PM—"a futuristic newspaper that published many of the intellectual giants of a gigantic era but never quite conquered its internal wars between the pro-communists and the anti-communists who divided the staff."

This book, thick with gossip about such luminaries as Lilian Hellman, Ernest Hemingway, Clare Boothe Luce and Harold Ross, is basically the story of a man more important to the history of journalism than he is famous, at least today, almost 40 years after he resigned as editor of PM.

Eleanor Randolph, however, (Continued on page 14)

FALL CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Desert Island Reading: Katherine Paterson, Noel Perrin, Natalie Babbit, Jim Trelease and Daniel Pinkwater choose their favorite children's books. (Continued on page 15)
Asen Adams

Continued from page 1

prosperous lumber business." In fuller and more interesting perspective, William J. Adams was a baron among early cut-and-run timbermen who took down the magnificent virgin forests of Puget Sound, once vowing when a competitor outdrew him: "We will get even as sure as there is a God in Israel." Also, there probably was more to Anscl Adams’ thoughts than is in here about the rise of pictorial magazines such as Life, which proffered to artistic photographers a mass audience previously undeceived if then frequently truncated or scrapped the photo essays they did on assignment. And his (and everybody else’s) role during the Sierra Club’s internecine combat in its David Brower era needs an incisive neutral observer. If we, and Asen Adams, are lucky in his eventual biographer, a more complicated and compelling soul may emerge from under the shadow of that Stetson.

M

EANWHILE, anecdotes have to sustain us, and they do. With wonderful amibillity Adams lets Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O’Keeffe steal the scene whenever they show up. Tales are told of dozens of fine photographers and other artists—and a hilarious one about the mobile mogул of Darryl F. Zanuck. Here in his latest public words Adams is permanently angry at only a chosen few— fellow photographers William Mortensen ( exponent of allegorical portraiture that Adams deemed “fuzzy-wuzzy”) and Edward Steichen (“As a friend said, ‘He has the ability to make women cry and he revels in it.’”) and President Ronald Reagan, former employer of James Watt. The Post may have won a PR moment in 1983 by actually sitting down with Adams, the symbolic environmentalist, for 5 minutes, but Adams now gets to aim an earful at posterity: “I was negatively impressed with Reagan’s failure to discuss or challenge my opinions at every turn ... The flow of bile from the Reagan administration is a blot upon our history of literacy.”

For all his environmental spokesmanship that cropped a career of outdoor life, Adams well knew what would give him his own mark in our history. The photographs, the hauntingly luminous photographs. Here in their half-century panoramas, Adams’ pictures have never spoken better for themselves, and thus for him. Of this book’s 277 illustrations some 120 are Adams’ nature compositions, and along

Ansel Adams with lesser-seen ones his classics shine anew here— "Moonolith, The Face of Half Dome”, "Mount Williams... from Manzanar”, "Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico”; and that astounding eye-symphony, "Winter Sunrise, the Sierra Nevada, from Lone Pine,” with the Sierra peaks whitely sunlit and teased by cloud tendrils, the dark undulation of leftover night shadowing below them, and below that a spectral line of trees and the lone tiny grazing horse which somehow lends resounding magnitude to all else.

“My vision established its own groove,” writes Adams, “as I know I have been derivative of myself for fifty years.” He indeed seems to have decided early, and I think rightly, that photoderm’s interpreter of the Sierra Nevada’s magnificence was plenty to try to be in one lifetime. A recent critic tut-tutted Adams’ trademark exactness in portraying nature— “a poet more of light than of personalities.” What, are we so far gone down the narcissistic path that the face of Half Dome counts for less than human physiognomy? But Audubon, baby, if you ever hope to get the cover of “People” you’re gonna have to lay off the birds and whip out some portraits of, well, you know.) Anscl Adams caused us to perceive what we should have known was there, but didn’t know how to see. Early in these pages he recalls an instant from boyhood, on a summer afternoon when he was setting the table for supper.

“The persistent fog had lifted and the warm sun streamed into the dining room through the west-facing windows. . The light was unforgettable.”

Exactly.
Eighteen Million Honeybees Can’t Be Wrong

A COUNTRY YEAR
Living the Questions
By Sue Hubbell
Random House. 221 pp. $17.95

By Ivan Doig

I WONDER if I am becoming feral,” Sue Hubbell speculates equably amid her pages of coyotes, opposums, chiggers, black rat snakes and other creatures she neighbors with in her adopted rural life. “Wild things and wild places pull me more strongly than they did a few years ago, and domesticity, dusting and cooking interest me not at all.”

By remarks that dimple now and then in this extremely likable book, she is fitlyish, smallish, an ex-librarian, the survivor of a discombingutating divorce (“I was out to lunch for three years”) and either owns or is owned by 18 million honeybees in the Missouri Ozarks. By the evidence of her every sentence, this pensive beekeeper is also a beautifully blossoming writer. How about:

“There is a magnificent dappled brown and gold house spider changing her skin today in a corner up above the wood stove”—the deft shove of eye-rhyme there in “above” and “stove,” the perfectly apt yet arresting description of molting as “changing her skin.”

Or: “When I drove up in front of the barn the night was full of eyes. Eyes floating in the night, almond-shaped eyes everywhere, looking toward me, golden, gleaming eyes, eyes reflected in the headlights with no other body parts visible. Eyes surrounding me. Eyes. I turned off the headlights and quietly got out of the pickup. I was in the middle of a herd of deer.” That single-word sentence

someone at the publishing house, too, quite possibly the sales force, because in an unusual move just before publication, the scheduled title Living the Questions: A Country Year became vice versa. With a justice that so earnest and little-forgotten and like an author rarely is granted, however, this book has been given an exquisite design by Cynthia Krupat, and its press-run of 12,500 copies is at least twice what a luminary first book usually gets.) Hubbell’s bees, most pleasantly omnipresent in her censuses of the creekside hill where she lives, behave in ways still majestically inexplicable to her after a dozen years of attentive beekeeping.

Likewise most of the other creatures that inhabit her 41 brief essays in a kind of breviary of spring, summer, autum, winter, and in a nice touch, spring once more: the inch-long frogs, for instance, who one night, and only one night, decided to march up Hubbell’s windows by the thousands, “waiting in patient ranks to move up to the lighted surface of the glass.” Midway in the book she quotes cosmically again, a physicist’s apercu that “we live in a world that is not only queerer than we think but queerer than we can think,” and this time she more than convinces us.

WAT THOUGH, of the ultimate “chemical bundle” inhabiting those 90 life-teeming Ozark acres, the denizen called Sue Hubbell! Because any of us who are or have been rural cherish our own foibles and like to look down our sunburned noses at other people’s, a book of this sort has to undergo my “yeah, but” test:

Yeah, Hubbell has to resort to a chainsaw for harvesting firewood on her woodlot, but I still detest that blind, shrieking, motorized omnivore. Yeah, “she is diplomatically wise to regard as local charm the small-town mechanic’s irremediable ritual of grumble, gos-

sip and gab before sidling up to a repair job, but across 30 years of periodically dealing with that ilk I still always feel a monumental urge to bill him for my time.

But yeah, Sue Hubbell does pass, by miles. Even when her topics or ways of going about things are nowhere near my own, she wins me to them with her felicity and calm conviction. Some of the best prose of our generation has come from our Three Samurai of the far places—Edward Hoagland, Peter Matthiessen, and John McPhee, brilliant journeyers writing for us of Nepal and the Sudan and Northern British Columbia and Alaska and upmost Maine.

Now it’s our equal good fortune to be gaining an order of observant home-based writers—Ann Zwinger in Colorado, Kim Williams in Montana, Jack Nisbet in the state of Washington, Gretel Ehrlich in Wyoming, others and others—who report keenly on living in nature’s neighborhoods. With this first book, Sue Hubbell joins them fully ordained.

The writer she most reminds me of, to her credit, is none of the above, but Aldo Leopold in his great 1949 book of the rhythms of the land, A Sand County Almanac. That classic of ecology was by a human who suggested “thinking like a mountain.” Hubbell, too, is gifted with the ability to step off from the humanly habitual—”There has always been a part of me that stood aside, watching, commenting”—and yet keep her own equilibrium: “a life is as simple or complicated as the person living it…”

What is wanted next from her is, happily, on her list of “wantings.” On a first morning of spring, after she has slept outdoors in celebration of this freshest season, “I want indigo buntings singing their couples…” I want to read Joseph and His Brothers again. I want oak leaves and dogwood blossoms and fireflies…” I want to write a novel.” Do, and soon.
Spy
high

Master of the genre spins another winning tale of lies and betrayal

"A Perfect Spy"
by John le Carre
Knopf, $18.95

by Frank Moore

There is a line from Sir Walter Scott that often comes to mind when reading the novels of John le Carre: "Oh what tangled webs we weave when we first practice to deceive."

Le Carre's latest book, "A Perfect Spy," is no exception. As well as being a novel of international intrigue, it is also a study of how one becomes a spy - that is, how one learns to lie and deceive until it is second nature, until one becomes a "perfect" spy. The novel opens with Magnus Pym, an agent for "the Firm" (British Intelligence) who runs a spy network in Czechoslovakia, held up in a coastal boarding house in south Devon. He has just disappeared from Vienna, from his wife and son, and from the Firm.

Pym's father also has just died, and he is free of his dominating father's influence. He also plans to write both his son and his controller in the Firm (an agent with the unlikely name Jack Brotherton) to explain his actions over the past 30 years. It is an attempt to justify himself and to stone for his sins (the language of religion is part of the jargon of the espionage community).

Because he has disappeared, it is assumed Pym may have defected, so he is being pursued by the Firm, by Jack Brotherton, by the Americans and also by Axel, his counterpart — and friend — on the other side. Meanwhile, from Pym's safe house, his letters become a memoir, telling the story of his life, from boyhood to manhood to spy. They also tell the story of his tangled relationship with his father, Rick, a notorious con man, in what one-time spy le Carre has acknowledged is his most autobiographical writing to date.

The plot shifts back and forth from the search for Pym — including interrogations of his wife, lovers, friends, associates and former schoolmates — to the story of his life, with the inevitable deal with them as moral imperatives is what finally concerns le Carre. It also is what gives his novels the added dimension that takes them beyond mere thrillers to the realm of literature.

Magnus Pym's dilemma is in his attempt to reconcile loyalty to two friends — Axel of the other side and Jack Brotherton of the Firm — without betraying either. Ironically, the dilemma was created by Brotherton, and grim humor is what is left after the irony is realized.

By switching back and forth between biography and the all-out search for Pym, le Carre sustains the suspense until the final pages. In his longest novel, Suspense, realistic characters — Miss Dubber, the boarding house landlady, is a gems — and tangled webs of loyalty and deceit weave together to create another fine novel from the master of international intrigue. le Carre does it again.
"Triumph" does just that if you like Roman sagas

by Ernest K. Gann

by Herbert Sundvell

W

ith "The Triumph," Ana-
cortes-based writer Ernest K. Gann has written a sequel to his novel "The Antago-
nists," which was the basis for the popular television miniseries "Ma-
sada." In this latest, Gann calls upon his considerable expertise in the history of the Roman Empire.

Popular historical fiction usually attempts a balance between imaginative romance spiced with sex, political intrigue mixed with adventure, and historical accuracy. "The Triumph" offers all these elements, with a focus on the lives of the philosophers and religious movements of the time.

In the year 2,000, a new power rises in the East. Plutarch, a minor character, and we hear of Philo and Epictetus, the writings of Pliny and of the strange Christian belief.

For the lovers of period detail, there is much to fascinate. Several sections of Domitilla's attire give a glimpse of her clothing. Eating habits and diets of various classes are given space, including the fact that vinegar and water was the staple beverage of the common man.

Of course, there are passages on sex habits — normal and otherwise — as well as an afternoon spent at an amphitheater to observe the "ad busta" — the gawking and clawing of humans by various animals.

But basically, "The Triumph" is a romance in Roman wrapping paper. It's a story that entertains. Others will find it too contrived and superficial.

Herbert Sundvell teaches writing at Highline Community College.

"Triumph" presents Pyn's story as a way for the audience to understand the complexities of life during this time. The storyline follows the lives of two central characters, Plutarch and Domitilla, as they navigate the political and religious landscape of the time.

Throughout the book, Pyn explores themes of love, faith, and power. The story is rich with historical detail and provides a captivating glimpse into the world of ancient Rome.

The book is available at local bookstores or online. For more information, visit the author's website or follow them on social media.
To: Ivan Doig  

DO16  

Please fill out and return by fax to 202-334-5059. Thank you.  

Mary  

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Attn: MARY MORRIS
Dear Marie--

Herewith, the "Writing Life" piece on characters. It may be something I'd like to expand on some day--what's the Post's leeway in leaving me future rights to my own stuff?

A bit of travel advisory, when it comes time to get together by phone as you mentioned: I'm in the thick of the last of the Prairie Nocturne booktour Dec. 2-5 and will be out of reach (Tucson!) Jan. 21-28. Otherwise, I'm pretty much reachable.

Regards,
When I was about as tall as my father's elbow as he judiciously bent it in the nine taverns of our town in Montana, I saw a lot of character on display. Among his distinctive Western aspects—he'd been a homestead kid, bronc buster, sheepherder, short-order cook—he was a haymaker: a haying contractor, a kind of freelance foreman, who would hire his own crew and put up ranchers' hay crops.

Those small-town saloons where I was lucky enough to sit with him were his hiring halls and, as he would sound out a hayhand on whether he had ever handled the reins of workhorses, quite a sizing-up ritual went on. So, it was back there, as I subversively hoped that my elder would make a rare bad guess and hire some breezy faker whose team of horses would run away with him the instant he climbed onto the hay rake (instead of the solid, silent type invariably named Swede), that I developed an abiding interest in the trait called character and its even more seductive flowering into a plural form, characters.

But nothing beats the imagination like the real world. I shall always envy the advantages my dad had by operating there in barstool reality. There was the time he could not resist hiring a guy known as Raw Bacon Slim, a moniker no editor will ever let me invent. Nonetheless, the realm of each novel I attempt has to be populated from somewhere. By rough count, I figure I've now employed 360 characters in seven works of fiction. I grant that there are scenes in War and Peace and Moby-Dick in which a cast that size occupies a single page (and that doesn't count the armies and the whales), but my bunch have been sorting themselves out, down through their generations and across landscapes from New Zealand to Stika to Harlem, as steadily as I've been able to herd them for the past quarter-century. Fathering and, for that matter, mothering entire populations of books probably is beyond reasonable explanation even by someone who earns a living by making it all up, but now that I am starting the process for the eighth time, I can say, at the very least, that I begin by handing out three things: names, noises and noses.

First names first. Or as I go about it, first names before last—way before.

What to call each of them, the sudden citizens who need passports onto my pages? The literary slate is not blank. "Ishmael" of course is taken, "Emma" the shared property of the long-established firm of Austen and Flaubert, and so on, up to the perils of trespassing into the spooky Kingdom of "Carrie." The mouth magic, though, that identifies each of us to the rest of humankind constantly renews in the alphabetic combinations we are forever tinkering with, in the inexhaustible prop shop called language. And so, to an extent that startles my academic questioners, my characters' names tend to be determined more by linguistic chimings than, say, mythological implications or the nearest phone book.

"America. Montana. Those words with their ends open." Thus mused my narrator, Angus McCaskill, in Dancing at the Rascal Fair as he and a lifelong chum set forth from Scotland in 1889 to take up homesteads in the American West. Not accidentally, that same aspirated final vowel representing promise, hope and boundless opportunity also characterizes the romantic prospects
whom Angus and other yearning hearts meet in that book and its successors: Anna, Marcella, Leona, Lexa and, to add a slightly chestier note of unconformity, Mariah. The men of these women’s lives tend to come with final consonants: Isaac, Jick, Alec, Mitch and, in another round of unconformity, Riley.

Naturally, generational attention must be paid. The lovestruck young couple I married off beside the splashy waterfall in the lobby of the Holiday Inn in Billings, in the course of the 1989 doings of Ride With Me, Mariah Montana, had to be named Darcy and Jason—not, say, Anna and Isaac.

Except for Jick McCaskill, who narrates two of my novels and fairly cheerfully accepts having been “dubbed for the off card.” the jack that shares only the color of the jack of trumps,” nicknames are a spice cabinet in my fiction rather than a raw-bacon larder. Mostly I sprinkle them on minor characters. Good Help Hebner, whom you may bet isn’t. Birdie Hinch, reputed chicken thief. But who knows? There may yet be a story in a Borgesian fact observed while hanging around my dad’s hayhands: that in a crew of eight to 10 men, two or three are likely to have the same first name and nicknames therefore become primary. Waiting somewhere is that Double W ranch crew I long ago created in English Creek which boasts Mike the Mower, Long Mike, and Plain Mike.

So, name affixed, what noise in the world must a character make not only to march, cavort and sing rowdily on the page but to stand up over time? Which is to say, what is the voice, the characteristic sound or memorable mannerism, of the person?

Please meet, as I am only now doing, Oliver, widowcr father of three in my next book. All I know of him so far is what my narrator tells me on the second page of manuscript: “Father had a short sniffing way of laughing, as if anything funny had to prove it to his nose first.” That’s a start in giving readers something to remember Oliver by.

Occasionally, all the organ stops can be pulled out: The aforementioned Good Help Hebner has a bray that “would blow a crowbar out of your hand.” But generally small auditory touches count most effectively toward larger character dimensions, I believe. Perhaps a word that a character owns, unobtrusively but consistently, throughout the story. Monty Rathbun in Prairie Nocturne still says “piana,” bunkhouse-style, when he is standing next to the swank instrument in Carnegie Hall. And to all practitioners of fiction, there is forever the example of that first draft of A Christmas Carol in which Scrooge scoffs at the holiday with a mere “Humbug!” and then Dickens reconsiders and dabs on the single-syllable bit of voice polish that has kept his crotchety naysayer alive and unforgettable for 160 years, “Bah!”

If mien comes out on the page as vocals, physical appearance presents the melody line. As the example of Oliver indicates, noses—problematic as they are for the novelist who has already reached into a bin for several books’ worth of them—have to be faced. Also eyes, ears, hairline, the whole physiognomy and beyond that, lo, the soul.

Sheer economy is sometimes best. In Typhoon, all we ever know or need to know about the waiting wife of the magnificently phlegmatic sea skipper, MacWhirr, is the little that Joseph Conrad tells us: “The only secret of her life was her abject terror of the time when her husband would come home to stay for good.”

Conversely, in The All of It, Jeannette Haen’s compact marvel of storytelling, the fullness of description is glorious: “Kevin: with his straight, light, soft hair (the merest breeze would randomly part it); his blue eyes that tended easily to water over; the mould of his features expressive more of determination than of intelligence; his nimble-jointed body (he could go up a ladder and come down it with a crazy ease that drew smiles).” That’s only half of the descriptive paragraph, but already you feel you’ve known this loose-made Irish farmer for, well, half your life.

Call me analog, but I believe memorable fiction is best served by physical magnitudes rather than minimalist digits of dis and data. Archival photos, turns of phrase (“slim as a clarinet”) that simply pop to mind, revelatory glimpses across a room—the supply of characteristics leading
toward character is as broad as a writer’s experience and as deep as he cares to delve. Of course, some rules, or at least strictures of common sense, apply: I never use my friends; and relatives, I say, are best saved for memoirs. Nor, except in minor roles, do I employ actual historical personalities—in most cases, they carry too many awkward truths to wear a fictional guise convincingly. But virtually all else is fair game. Case in point: Recently I was in a Montana establishment not unlike those my father frequented on his hiring forays, when in came a startlingly long-faced leathery rancher. As soon as I was decently out of sight of him, that face entered my notebook: “long thin nose, wrinkles running down cheeks; like a copper coin a bit melted.” Oliver, could you come here for a moment? ■
The Writing Life

by Ivan Doig

When I was about as tall as my father’s elbow as he judiciously bent it in the nine taverns of our town, I saw a lot of character on display. Among his distinctive western aspects—he’d been a homestead kid, broncbuster, sheepherder, short-order cook—my father was a haymaker: a haying contractor, a kind of freelance foreman, who would hire his own crew and put up ranchers’ hay crops.

Those small-town Montana saloons where I was lucky enough to tag along with him were his hiring halls, and as he would sound out a hayhand on whether the man had ever handled the reins of workhorses, quite a ritual of sizing up went on. So, it was back there as I subversively hoped for my elder to make a rare bad guess and hire some breezy faker whose team of horses would run away with him the instant he climbed onto the hay rake, rather than signing up a solid silent workman probably named Swede, that I developed an abiding interest in the trait called character and its even more seductive flowering into a plural form, characters.

I shall always envy the advantages of imagination-stretching that my dad had by operating there in beerstool reality. There was the time he could not resist hiring a guy known as Raw Bacon Slim, the type of moniker which no editor will ever let me invent for one of my fictional beings. Nonetheless, the realm of each
novel I attempt has to be populated from somewhere. By rough count, I figure I’ve now employed 360 characters in seven works of fiction. I grant that there are scenes in War and Peace and Moby Dick where there seems to be a cast that size occupying a single page (and that doesn’t count the armies and the whales), but my bunch have been sorting themselves out, down through their generations and across landscapes from New Zealand to Sitka to Harlem, as steadily as I’ve been able to foreman them for the past quarter century. Fathering and for that matter mothering entire populations of books probably is beyond reasonable explanation even for someone who earns a living by making everything up, but now that I am starting the novel-making process for the eighth time, in my case I can delineate that I begin by handing out names, noises, and noses.

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"Kevin: with his straight, light, soft hair (the merest breeze would randomly part it); his blue eyes that tended easily to water over; the mould of his features expressive more of determination than of intelligence; his nimble-jointed body (he could go up a ladder and come down it with a crazy ease that drew smiles)..."
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###
THE WRITING LIFE
By Diane Middlebrook

The biographer of Anne Sexton, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath has advice for her colleagues: Dream on.

During the years I spent working on a book about the marriage of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath, I had several dreams about each of them. One qualifies as what I will call the Biographer’s Dream.

Here is the dream. At a party in a large London flat built like a railroad car, with all rooms opening off a single long corridor, Ted Hughes emerges rapidly from one of the rooms, hair floating around his face, brandishing a guitar. He strides to the end of the corridor and slumps good-naturedly into a chair, where the main door now stands open. Several people follow and flop onto the floor alongside him. I leave the party and am outside, seated in a waiting car, when I notice Hughes approaching. He gestures for me to lower the car window. I do. Does he need a lift? He doesn’t. I become conscious that I am dreaming and then, fully conscious, annoyed that the dream didn’t last long enough: What did he want? What was he going to say?

I, too, dislike it; as Marianne Moore said of poetry—‘hearing about other people’s dreams is like hearing about so much “fol-de-rol.”’ What an unpleasant moment is introduced by the conversational gambit “Let me tell you about a dream I had the other night.” Listening to someone describe a dream is like being at dinner with a foreign bore who is struggling ineffectively, in bad English, to impress you. Dreams do not cross easily into words. They are fundamentally unshareable, except with psychoanalysts.

The Biographer’s Dream is the exception. In consulting with other biographers, I have come to think of it as a dream-genre of its own. Visual, spatial and dynamic, it presents an image of the writer’s relationship to the materials of a book in progress, as another example can show. The biographer Lyndall Gordon, while still a graduate student at Columbia University, writing the doctoral dissertation about T.S. Eliot that became Eliot’s Early Years, tells us about a dream similar to mine. At an old-fashioned cocktail party, she sees Eliot surrounded by a crowd of people. She is close enough to accent him. She wants to ask a vitally important question—not a personal question, but a query about the date of something he has found in his papers. She is still working up the courage to speak when Eliot is swept away by the movement of the crowd. Gordon explains, “I was a South African girl on my own, in New York, working in great isolation at the time, and in great fear. Eliot had forbidden a biography to be written. I would have to pursue this work without anyone’s permission.”

There is elegant precision in the way Diane Middlebrook speaks—a clarity of expression that reflects a lifetime at podiums, discoursing on Ovid or Cavalli-Sforza, making the case that the poetry we read can be as defining as our genes. A professor emerita at Stanford, she has taught literature for 30 years. Had you asked her at the beginning of that career whether she wanted to be a writer, she would have answered in the negative. No. She did not consider her Yale dissertation a pinnacle of achievement. She found critical writing a bore.

But lest you are led to believe, in this ongoing series, that writers are forged only from the crucibles of their own lives, read the words of Middlebrook, whose writing career literally was delivered via the mail, in a letter, on her 41st birthday. Until then, she had been dedicated to running Stanford’s Center for Research on Women. The letter was very clear, very succinct, from a young editor named Jonathan Galassi: Would she care to meet the daughter of Anne Sexton with regard to the possibility of writing a biography? Her first encounter with the poet’s daughter did not bode well. Linda Sexton appeared for lunch at the Ritz in a fur coat and ruby ring. Middlebrook came “in a spectacular leather suit, the only real suit I had.” The women eyed each other suspiciously. “I can’t stand the way scholars write,” Sexton sniffed. “And I’m not your mother’s fan,” said the professor. But by the end of lunch, they both knew she would do it. Six years later, Middlebrook was handed another windfall; Anne Sexton’s psychiatrist gave her all 312 tapes of the poet’s psychotherapy sessions. “I had the unique experience of hearing my subject talk on, not only about the anguish of her depression but about the most everyday issues, right there in the privacy of my own room.” In 1991, when Anne Sexton was published, a brisk controversy ensued about the ethics of using a patient’s records. But on Book World’s pages, Joyce Carol Oates called the biography “sympathetic . . . intelligent . . . at times harrowing.” “The New York Times” said of it: “A wonderful book, just and balanced.”

Women and depression continued to fascinate Middlebrook. In 1998, she published Suits Me: The Double Life of Billy Tipton, the story of a female jazz musician who passed, at 19, to live as a man. “He was from Spokane,” Middlebrook says, “a relatively small town for such a huge deception. It seemed so improbable.”

This month, Middlebrook will publish her third biography, the biography of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath titled Her Husband. In it, she argues that the poets’ marriage was essential to their creative geniuses, even though it was a volatile and ended in suicide. Middlebrook may credit her life as a writer to serendipity, but her career as a professor has been the product of long, diligent application. She was born in Pocatello, Idaho, the daughter of teenage parents. Her father eventually became a pharmacist; her mother, a nurse. Her grandmother changed the course of her life when, on Middlebrook’s 6th birthday, she gave the girl a library card. Her love for books led her to Whitman College and then to graduate work at Yale.

Since then, she has spent her entire career at Stanford. Now married to Carl Djerassi, the scientist who developed the birth control pill, she will soon embark on a new project: a life of Ovid. When asked how on earth she will get the energy to write the definitive life of 312 confessional tapes on this most ancient of poets, she answers brightly: “Oh, there’s plenty of material out there. He is, after all, one of the few authors—who for 2000 years—has never been out of print.”

Marie Arana

Diane Middlebrook | Out of the Groves of Academe
Continued from page 8

everything they can to rescue, excavate and cele-
brate these traditional forms of art. Indeed, a few
pages later Johnson contradicts himself when he
attacks the “academic industry” that has grown
up “obstinately to protect native art and culture,
but in effect to attach it to a progressive and po-
litical agenda of white scholars.”

Frankly, Johnson is not much of a guide when
it comes to non-Western cultures. He devotes
about as much attention to the whole history of
Asian art (if we exclude the ancient Near East)
as he does to the development of the British water-
color. In addition, more often than not his dis-
cussions of architecture, which take up a good
part of the book, tend to be at least as pedantic as
the tourist guides he helped near just about every
site he describes.

This is where responsible editing could have
made a dramatic difference. Johnson’s true forte
is his unbounded enthusiasm for the art of real-
ism in painting and sculpture. He is a part-time
painter himself, and his descriptions come alive
and often sparkle with genuine insight when he
allows himself to become ecstatic in admiration
of the many works scattered throughout history
that he considers to be exemplary expressions of
the eternal truths of nature. Every time he en-
counters or uncovers one of these, or when he al-
ways himself to dwell extensively on artists such
as Jan van Eyck, Albrecht Dürer, Donatello, Ra-
phael, Rubens, Titian, Vermeer, Velasquez, Turn-
er and many others, Johnson’s prose begins to
glow.

I haven’t been so inclined to agree with Johnson that realism,
and in particular 19th-century realism, has been
dealt a raw deal by the apostles of modernism.
The extreme dualist mindset of Western culture
Johnson himself is a perfect example) seems in-
capable of recognizing the equal value in the
approaches of divergent or opposing systems of
representation. Thus, in order to champion experi-
mentation in art, most 20th-century critics felt
compelled to trash realism as roundly as Johnson,
in revenge, wants to trash modernism.

To be fair, Johnson himself determined to
rehabilitate the fullest possible complement of
the thousands of superb realist painters who
(not “Buisson” as the book has it), artists whose
work is still treated with benign contempt even
by most French scholars, but who, for once,
reached serious attention in the splendid 1953 ex-
hibition “Impressions of Realism” curated by
John House and exhibited at the South Bank
Centre in London and the Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston.

The negative aspect of Johnson’s reliance on
this wide range of essentially still centerist ded-

tures is that on page after page he cites works
that are not reproduced in the book and that are
accessible only to those who happen to have the
catalogues to the various exhibitions or collec-
tions he cites. For a nearly 600-page volume that
purports to be a general history of art, 300 illus-
trations are a puny and grossly inadequate num-
ber, and most readers will be forced to take John-
son’s judgments far too often on faith. (Most of the standard textbook art
histories include between 700 and 800 illustrations.)
Moreover, the absence of any bibli-
ographical information in a book such as this,
which relies heavily on relatively esoteric sec-
donary sources, is inexcusable, no matter how
much the author tries to excuse it by pleading
lack of space, particularly in light of his own all
too often repetitive volubility.

Again, editorial intervention could have cut
this drivel drastically on Johnson’s verbiage, which
frequently demands an inordinate amount of sta-
tina and patience from his readers. What is
more, the obvious speed with which he cobbled
his weighty tome together has led to errors that
would have benefited from the attention of a
competent copy editor. These range from simple
spelling errors to numerous odd and unnecessary
linguistic, factual and even arithmetical flubs. We
refer, for instance, to “the years sixty 1890-
1920,” and the price of the world’s most expen-
sive painting, van Gogh’s “Dr. Gachet,” is quoted
in pounds where it should have been dollars.

Sometimes strange, ghostly figures float in
and out of the text, presumably leftover referen-
ces to artists deleted from the final version, leav-
ing the reader to his or her own devices in figur-
ing out who these fugitive characters might be.

In talking about Karl Bodmer’s portraits of
American Indians, for in-
stance, Johnson remarks that
the artist’s “full-length of
the chief, Maker of Roads,
does, to stand alongside Lew-
is’s Sheikin as a masterpiece of
exotic portrayal.” I assume that
Johnson here has in mind the
British mid-19th-century painter of oriental
scenes John Frederick Lewis, but since this par-
ticular Lewis does not appear again either before or after that oblique mention, your guess is as
good as mine.

A good editor might also have persuaded
Johnson to think again about the inclusion of
such a vile incendiary aside, not further elaborat-
ed upon, as his remark that Hitler “remained
contaminated” by degenerate art was the fruit of
Bolshevism, which he equated with “international
Jewry.” This conclusion had an element of
truth at the time. Such ugly innuendo has no
place in what is being presented as a “New Histo-
ry.”

Johnson would have done well, here and throughout the book, to heed his own dic-
tum: “Ideology is not necessarily the enemy of
art but it tends to become so when applied relent-
lessly and obsessively.”

Bram Dijkstra’s most recent book is “American Expressionism: Art and Social Change,
1920-1950.”

IN BRIEF | Venus de Milo Disarmed

So, what about those missing arms? When the marble statue was intact, did Venus stand on
the shoulder of Mars, the god of war, or did the goddess of beauty and love stand besides
Theseus, king of Athens, slayer of the
Minotaur? Gregory Curtis’s fasci-
nating new book, Disarmed: The
Story of the Venus de Milo
(Knopf, $24), refutes, among oth-
ers, Jean-Gaspard-Felix Ravaissen’s
influential theories (mentioned above), which still linger among art historians.

Curtis’s quest led him to the ex-
cavation site on the Greek island of
Milos (a k a Melos or Milos), situat-
ed halfway between Athens and Crete. There, in 1820, a French en-
sign named Olivier Voutier saw a

Venus with Tongue in Cheek

peasant in the process of uncover-
ing what would become one of the
most famous statues in the world.

The author provides a full account
of how the French purchased the
statue on a ship bound for Constan-
tinople, the capital of the Ottoman
Empire. Upon seeing the statue for
the first time, the French man
who made the purchase exclaimed,
“What superhuman beauty, what
sweet majesty, what shape divine.”

Curtis’s narrative reads like a
mystery, introducing a number of
brilliant characters such as Salo-
mon Reinach and his arch rival,
the German archaeologist Adolf Furt-
wangler. After the statue arrived at
the Louvre in several pieces, a cru-
cle of evidence was gathered by the
inquisitor’s name was deliberately
placed so that the “experts” could
impress Emperor Napoleon III with
the claim that the statue was a
very significant discovery. Furt-
wangler destroyed this mendacious
motive and the importance of the
other pieces found at the excava-
tion site, including an arm holding an apple.

Paul Johnson, by the way, dis-
misses the phenomenon of the
Aphrodite of Melos (as he more ac-
curately refers to it) as “something akin to a pop song that becomes
popular through endless repeti-
tion.” Indeed countless copies of
Venus are available worldwide.
There are also famous spoofs, which Curtis mentions, that en-
hance the statue’s notoriety: a
painting by Magritte, Salvador Da-
 li’s sculpture that serves as a chest
of drawers (the breasts do pull out), “Venus with Tongue in Cheek” and a slew of adver-
sies using Venus to sell their products.

—Kunio Francis Tanabe
The writing life

A journalist who has been writing all his life still cannot think of himself as "a writer."

The dirty little secret of some nonfiction writers like myself is that we have stood at the helm of two of the most influential news organizations of the past half-century. So when he refers to his "day job" and heading "to the office in the mornings," he is hardly speaking of the kind of work most writers do to put dinner on the table. How does he find the time? In the past 15 years, he has managed to juggle his career and write three critically acclaimed books: The Wise Men (with Evan Thomas, 1986), Henry Kissinger (1992) and Benjamin Franklin (2003).

He was born and raised in New Orleans, the son of an engineer and a real estate agent. As a boy, he never imagined he'd make a living as a writer or editor. But one day, when he was still a student at the Newman School, he went fishing with a classmate, strolled along the magnolia-lined banks of the Bayou Lafourche, wandered into a picturesque cottage that belonged to his friend's uncle, and found himself sitting on a porch, talking about books. The uncle was Walker Percy, who had recently won the National Book Award for his first novel, The Moviegoer. Isaacson returned again and again, continuing his conversation with the novelist, spurred by curiosity. But books seemed a remote dream. When he went to Harvard in 1970, it was to study history and politics. Books—and porch conversations about them—would not really matter for another decade.

Isaacson spent his summers at the New Orleans Times-Picayune, reporting on stories, reading Faulkner and Tennessee Williams. When the editor of the Sunday Times of London, Harry Evans, came to Harvard in 1972 and spoke passionately about the volatile state of the world and the centrality of the news business, Isaacson turned his sights on a career in journalism. He gathered his clips, sent them to Evans and asked for a summer job. By 1973, he was in London, interning for Evans, sparked by the excitement of reporting. It was, after all, not long after the press confronted the U.S. government about the Pentagon Papers, when this newspaper began to unearth serious revelations about the War in Vietnam and the folly of the Vietnam War.

He graduated from Harvard in 1974, enrolled as a graduate student of philosophy at Oxford and continued to work for the Sunday Times, covering stories in Morocco, Scotland and Rhodesia. By 1979, he was back in the United States, reporting for the New Orleans States Item. His career after that took a near-vertical trajectory: He was hired by Time as a writer in the national section, promoted to national editor in 1985, then made head of Time, Inc., 10 years later. In 2001, he was hired as chief executive of CNN. Today he is president and CEO of the Aspen Institute.

But to get back to the porches. While still a young writer for Time, summering in Sag Harbor, he and his colleague Evan Thomas strolled by the porch of Alice Mayhew, Simón Schuster's famed book editor, and fell into conversation with her. The two 29-year-olds described their interest in the post-Wall Street collapse and the "best and brightest" eminences of the Vietnam War who had sprung from it. "I've always wanted to publish a book called The Wise Men," Mayhew said. "You write it and I'll publish it." The result was a remarkable group portrait of six friends, all policymakers—Dean Acheson, Averell Harriman, George Kennan, John McCloy Jr., Charles Bohlen and Robert Lovett—who plotted America's rise from isolationism to global dominance. The book, which has sold more than a million copies, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for history and became a national bestseller. It was a defining moment in his career, and it set the stage for his future success.

What advice does he have for writers? "Three things make a good nonfiction book: great academic scholarship, great literary flair, and great journalistic curiosity," he said. "I don't know about the first two, but the third is definitely my strong suit." He has the journalism thing down in spades.
TERRORISTS SUCCEED IN NEW YORK CITY. CAPTILISMS CAPTURE IN SOME OF ITS MOST MOVING AND MEMORABLE LANDMARKS. AN UNQUALIFIED SPIRIT THAT IS AT ONCE WORLDS AND MUNDANE INFORMS NEW YORKERS' DAILY LIVES. IN GOOD ECONOMIC TIMES AND BAD, THROUGH EMOTIONAL PEAKS AND LOWS, THE CITY SOLDIERS ON. IF PROOF OF THIS REALITY WERE REQUIRED, IT CAN BE FOUND IN THIS QUARTER OF NEW BOOKS, ONLY ONE OF WHICH MAKES AN OVERT REFERENCE TO THE HORROR OF SEPTEMBER 11.

JUNIOR'S PLACE

In Great Fortune: The Epic of Rockefeller Center (Vi-king, $29.95), Daniel Okrent explains how an iconic office building came into being. Okrent, a former editor with Time Inc., has composed a grand operatic tale about how the city's most ambitious building project was conceived, executed and occupied. The leading role (I hear him as a baritone, rather than a tenor) is played by John D. Rockefeller Jr., the dif-ferent son of oil robber baron John D. Rockefeller Sr. His wealth and prominence, coupled with his determination to create a public space (his vision was to make Rockefeller Center "the meeting place of all the people of New York City"), led to the project's success. Guided by effi-cient subordinates, Junior took over land that started out long ago as a physician's garden, wound up in the hands of Columbia University, and was home to ramshackle houses, speakeasies and brothels when Junior leased it in January of 1928. The original idea was that it would be the site of a new home for the Metropolitan Opera, paid for by patrons who re-presented the city's power. Paradigmatically, it became in stead the site of two great 20th-century pop-culture phenomena: Radio City Music Hall and RCA, the first of the great broadcast networks and was paid for by Rockefeller and his mortgage lenders.

Okrent gives Junior his due. "Ask people which Rockefeller built Rockefeller Center, and ... most will conjure up the survival skills of the old oil monopolist who gave dimes to children," he writes. "Yet only did Senior have absolutely nothing to do with the creation ... there isn't any evidence that he even once set foot there." Thus "Junior's one great claim to business success" is one "that the popular imagination does not honor."

Great Fortune explains in a carefully researched, deft mosaic of anecdotes and personality sketches how Junior and his associates managed to build a city within a city, disdained by critics early on but eventually revered by them and the public at large. It was the first multipurpose urban center and, compared with those that came later, including Lincoln Center and the World Trade Center, by far the most harmonious.

The stories that Okrent weaves into his narrative—about the machinations of outsized power brokers such as Columbia president Nicholas Murray Butler, financier Louis Kahn, architect Raymond Hood, real estate boss John R. Todd, Radio City impresario Roxy Rothafel and Junior's as-sertive second son, Nelson, the future governor—are what make this book so entertaining.

Here is the story of how Hood, acknowledged by his peers to be "the most talented architect of his generation, was making his living designing radiator covers" shortly before land ing the commission of a lifetime; how Todd's minions went about renting out "4 million square feet of new office space at a moment when more than 3.5 million feet in midtown lay as vacant as the empty tombs of the great keystone campaign promise"; how Nelson, the Rockefeller most appreciative of modern art, along with his mother, Abby, approved Diego Rivera's scandalous communist-tinted frescoes for the RCA Building and then had them destroyed; how Rockefeller used his vast political influ ence to avoid taxes, getting the land under the Music Hall "assessed at a lower rate than the land beneath a theater in Jamaica, Queens."

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Where Okrent's stylish writing might be best described as rococo, Neal Bascomb's is straightforward. Higher: A His- toric Race to the Sky and the Making of a City (Dou-bleday, $26) is very much what its subtitle says: a captivating chronicle of a "historic race." In posing the question of how the Empire State came to be the tallest building in New York, Bascomb, a journalist, editor and publisher, makes it clear that the answer was neither maximization of space and rental income nor happenstance. Rather, the great height was the result of clashes of titanic egos, fat-cats who were also self-made men. Each went to remarkable lengths to top the others.

The initial contest pitted as rivals two architects who once had been partners, Craig Severance and William Van Alen. With the crack construction forces of the Starrett brothers at its side, Severance's Bank of Manhattan Building at 40 Wall Street set speed records climbing toward the heavens, while Van Alen was inspired to create what many now regard as the ultimate Deco masterpiece, the Chrysler building. Bascomb describes the race as if he were a war cor-respondent, relating the marathons of battalions of work ers, secret battle strategy, deliberate lies, plans redrawn at the last minute.

The second competition featured two pioneers of the auto industry. After Walter Chrysler had led Van Alen to lift the lid on his building at 42nd St. and Lexington Ave. to 1,046 feet vanquishing 40 Wall St. by 121 feet, he was helpless to stop the next contender. GM's former director John Jacob Raskob,

SIZE MATTERS

Regardless of their hubris or their subsequent fates, the men behind the skyline bequeathed to us a remarkable visual syn onym for the story of America. The Colossus of New York: The HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY (Palgrave, $29.95), an oversize coffee-table book, diagrams the city's vertical thrust with a clever graphic—a dial with a red "thermometer" that lets you compare the height of the Empire State, Chrysler, RCA and other New York buildings to that of the World Trade Center's twin towers.

WANDERING IN THE PERFECT CITY

Colson Whitehead's The Colossus of New York: A City in Thirteen Parts (Doubleday, $19.95) is a small but dense, pitch-perfect collection of essays, in which the skyline becomes a sentient being while multiple human voices, each utterly authentic, speak against and in concert with "so many arrogant edifices." The recipient of a MacArthur "genius" fel lowship, Whitehead is the author of two acclaimed novels, The Intuitionist and John Henry Days. The Collossus of New York is quite simply the most delicious 13 bites of the Big Apple I've taken in ages. Voices jump from first to second to third person, from singular to plural, and all are instantly recognizable—they are tart and sassy, insecure andsubjegated, belonging to you, me, the guy on the park bench over here or the subway savant over there.

Numerous passages relate to the theme of the other books, for example, walking across Brooklyn Bridge, Whitehead writes, "let's pause a sec to be cowed by this magnificent skyline." Or, as he observes during Rush Hour: "Elementary geometrical forms run amok. Architects lay psyche in steel and concrete. Birth of first-born, bye-bye to mistress, alimony checks—it's all there encoded in columns, the features of facades, windows that will not open. Walk in the shadow of subconscious, toll in the monuments to bitter decline. The skyline graphs the hubris of generations, visible for miles, and inevitably all who see it extract the wrong morals from the stories. Comedy begins and, too soon: Recognize royalty by height, or sight, and memorize their crowns over time... In buildings comprised of other buildings' discarded thirteenth floors, sinister transactions unfold. Office Space Available. Few buildings around here deserve to be people, but judging by the grim procession of faces, some of these folks are halfway to sheetrock."

Cauterizes abound in small epiphanies of hope and pangs of disappointment. It is peopled by anonymous, anxious citizens, funny and sad, who mine and mutter the mantras of the streets. No matter where his thoughts carry him, Whitehead's voice is spot-on. For instance, among downtown hipsters: "Wow, this crappy performance art is really making me feel not so terrible about my various emotional issues. He has to duck out early to get back to his bad art. Three cheers for your rich interior life, may it serve you well come rent day."

I underlined so many sentences and turned down so many corners in this book that I could have quoted the entire text. The skyscrapers' Jazz Age had F. Scott Fitzgerald; we've got Colson Whitehead. As he says (I can't resist one last quote), "There are eight million naked cities in the naked city—they dispute and dissemble. New York City you live in is not my—" Oh, see for yourself. Buy The Colossus of New York, turn down your own corners, and savor this poet of postmod ern Gotham.
16 Sept. Friday

Dear Ivan,

Thanks for the ace "Rediscovery." The book sounds terrific and you made me want to read it. You remind me of the strangely vivid days of my own enlisted service in the '50s Air Force.

I saw Susan Richman last night. She is certainly big on you. We were on the back porch of a $5 million town house in Georgetown and clearly in the tall cotton.

When the piece runs, of course we'll send you copies.

With every good wish.

Yours sincerely,

Reid Beddow
Australia: The Curtain Goes Up

THE PLAYMAKER
A novel by Thomas Keneally
Simon and Schuster. 354 pp. $18.95

By Ivan Doig

To answer the "What is there left to be told about Australia's origin as an 18th-century prison asteroid after The Fatal Shore" question before it can be asked: plenty. Readers who made Robert Hughes's robust history of the convict colony a recent best seller have an imaginatively different saga awaiting them here. Indeed, Thomas Keneally's fictional panorama of life among the prisoner founders of Sydney and their military keepers is one of those free-spirited books that insouciantly tells us, not we it, what company it's to keep. We shall get to other corners of the world in a moment, but to draw a comparison from the American side of things, The Playmaker is the best performance of a novelist's magic that I have seen since William Kennedy's Ironweed.

In the England that sent its convict arks to the southernmost Pacific, a music hall joke asked, "If all the world's a stage, who's the driver?" In fledgling Australia. —Continued on page 6

Ivan Doig's novel, "Dancing at the Rascal Fair," has just been published.
The Playmaker

Continued from page 1

of 1789, the unexpected answer is Ralph Clark, a monumentally homesick young marine lieutenant who is ordered to produce a play when the Sydney penal colony undertakes, somewhat desperately, to celebrate the king's birthday.

Quick as this, Keneally begins his inspired weaving of life and roles, for the designated play is a convoluted society comedy, "The Recruiting Officer"—the one play of which two copies existed in the pinprick settlement—and the players to be are petty thieves "spat out" by Georgian England. Ralph undergoes a hilariously belegued casting call, and rehearsals begin. The colony's minister, whose sermons "were capable of making your average sheep thief's eyes cross," listens in on the racy stage dialogue, and is outraged. A pair of uproariously splenetic Scots officers get wind that Ralph has cast a suspected perjurer as his leading actress, and are enraged. On the other hand, Arabano, the captive aborigine who has become the governor's court favorite, finds Ralph's playmaking sensational even though he doesn't understand it much as a syllable of it.

Offstage, Keneally's sizable ensemble responds with private dramas. (With 16 novels to his credit now at the age of 51, this author's career is as capacious as his books. He may be peeking in the mirror with a grin when he has a character here in this ample novel observe of another, "he could narrate nothing in its short form.") Ralph's closest friend, Provost Marshal Harry Brewer, is haunted by a love rival whose hanging he oversaw. Ralph himself, tortured by separation from his wife in Devon, "had become the most notorious dreamer in the colony, with his quiet cries and his wailings." Convicts and keepers alike, these are scrabbling victims of time and space, these firstcomers to Australia's indifferent vastness, souls who have been dropped "through such an enormous sieve of latitudes and longitudes."

WHAT WE have here is a style of rich, chance-taking fiction that we don't encounter often enough on our own shores. For a generation or so, the U.S. literary fashion has been "show, don't tell." Depict your characters and their surroundings, while forsaking that old literary demon Rhetoric. Thank God, no such advice ever reached Shakespeare. Nor Thomas Keneally in Australia—nor Nadine Gordimer in South Africa nor Trinidad-born V.S. Naipaul, the world class of writers who like him, have shown us in such vivifying novels as A Sport of Nature and A Bend in the River that it is possible to write fiction with character as well as characters. While experimental fiction in this country has been nearsighted eating its own tail and minimalism has been yawning in condescension toward people who have to shop at the K-Mart instead of Banana Republic, show-and-tell has been occurring in world literature and, guess what, the old grade school dictum is still valid—we can learn fresh wonders from the experiences of others.

And so, Thomas Keneally gives us his best zest. He is capable of it in a phrase: Dabby Bryant, the convict woman whose imaginative ministration damps down Ralph's dreams, flunts to him "thighs olive as sin." Or simply in the narrative flow, as when Australia's first hanging is projected to be a multiple affair and the uneasy Provost Marshal protests to His Excellency, the colonial governor: "Harry argued that—in number terms—to hang three in a swipe was equivalent to hanging two thousand Londoners. H.E. waved his hand, saying the court had not taken the trouble to consider per centiles and that therefore neither could he."

And when Ralph the smitten playmaker at last finds the courage to unshackle himself from his aloneness, he does so with triumphantly unexpected a line as a lover could utter, which you deserve the pleasure of discovering for yourself.

One last bit of Keneally's alchemy awaits the reader. At the book's end, this display of novelistic skill turns out to be about actual minor figures of the Sydney penal colony, whose lives in exile are known only in dim archival outline. Keneally justly concludes, "Of them fiction could make much, though history says nothing."

Dear Mr. Asim—

First of all, congratulations on the new job. Book World is a classy outfit, the best in the business.

I'm going to have to say regrets, now and for maybe the next couple of years as I work on my own next book, to the reviewing assignment. Glad and flattered to be thought of, but more and more I hole up and concentrate on getting my own stuff achieved. I can suggest a reviewer for the Jonathan Raban book, though: Bryan Di Salvatore, a Missoula writer and former contributor to The New Yorker (the pre-Tina Brown New Yorker, if you take my meaning), who also knows the Pacific Northwest scene that Raban is writing from; Di Salvatore, I recall, did the New Yorker piece on the town here where "Northern Exposure" was shot. So, he's a longtime Montana resident and professional writer (doing a book now on an early professional baseball player and union organizer, I think) who also has a Pacific Coast perspective to gauge Raban's own; he's also a lively stylist, having written for a number of magazines. You might check him out; I'm not sure if this phone number is current, but the latest I have for him is (206) 543-7357.

regards,

Ivan Doig
In Memoriam: Reid Beddow

WITH THE DEATH of Reid Beddow on Feb. 19, Book World, and the world of books, lost a fine editor and a good friend.

Reid had worked full time for Book World since 1983. Before then his career was something of a hodgepodge—stints at Yale, in Korea with the Air Force, as a Post reporter in the early '60s, administrative jobs in the Department of Education and at American University, editorial positions at two trade magazines, free-lance writing... But what Reid really wanted to do, he often remarked, was to read books all day. Failing that, working as a book review editor was an acceptable alternative and it included a salary.

It also gave Reid access to an unending supply of new books, a privilege he never tired of. He couldn't wait for the morning book delivery and often fetched the jiffy bags and boxes from the mailroom himself. He'd riffle through the piles looking for his favorite publishers—Yale, Princeton, Oxford, Penguin—sometimes intoning plaintively: "Where are the good books?"

As an editor, Reid was especially imaginative at assigning—matching books to writers to yield reviews that, ideally, would be both well-informed and well-written, fair and lively. "I hope I'll be bursting in at an awkward moment," he'd say when telephoning a prospective reviewer, after persuading the notorious authority to accept the assignment, he would always close with, "That pleases me." Once, for instance, he called biographer Elizabeth Longford—Lady Longford, as Reid reminded us—to ask her to write about an eminent Victorian who married an illiterate working-class girl for slightly kinkier reasons. The review was funny, scholarly and utterly brilliant, a tribute to Reid's editorial flair.

His specialties at Book World were politics and history, but his own reading was wide-ranging and eclectic. He loved Henry James and Edith Wharton. Boswell's Journals, Iris Murdoch's "romances for intellectuals," Marquand's "Wickford Paint," the Oxford novels of J.M. Stewart, Kipling's Kim, political biographies, military history and anything to do with the U.S. Navy and the sea. He was among the first to "discover" Tom Clancy's "The Hunt for Red October," the first novel ever published by the Naval Institute Press, and his enthusiastic review helped launch Clancy's career. His expertise in military matters is suggested by the opening sentences of his 1982 review of John Keegan's Six Armies in Normandy.

"John Keegan writes about war better than almost any one in our century. He is better than those gifted masters of military history, B.H. Liddell Hart and S.L.A. Marshall. If he is not so good as Samuel Eliot Morison, it is because Keegan writes about soldiers and Morison writes about ships. The difference is that of prose and poetry, and Keegan is Proust in a foxhole.

There was, however, nothing belligerent in Reid's demeanor. Tall, somewhat rumpled, favoring clothes from J. Press and L.L. Bean, he was gentle in manner, rather courtly towards women. He was given to small, unexpected kindnesses—walking to Georgetown on his lunch hour to find a colleague the fresh raspberries she needed for a dinner party, for example. Though his considerable wit was most often directed at himself, he did not suffer fools gladly. One colleague speaks of the "opaque, man­darin look" he could summon up and the scorn he could—very rarely—turn on people he felt were wasting his time.

In moments of crisis he would quote favorite aphorisms. Whenever change threatened Book World, he would humorously grumble, "The old ways are best." As he grew older he would echo Boswell's melancholy observation: "I must resign myself to life losing its vividness." Sometimes he would say, paraphrasing Dr. Johnson, "It's a sad thing but I knew more at 18 than I do now." And in this town of lawyers he frequently repeated Burke's devastating putdown: "The law sharpens the mind by narrowing it." He loved the past not only for its orrunt wisdom but also for its gossip value. Reid simply loved good stories, history was a form of higher gossip.

An editor who attended a White House reception with him found him a font of odd and unexpected knowledge about both the living dignitaries assembled there and the dead ones represented on the walls.

But what those who worked with Reid recall most fondly are the ritualistic phrases with which he marked the start of his "Photos, to your machines," he'd say at the end of the Monday planning meeting. "Hark!" he'd exclaim when the phone rang. He'd sweep into the book room with a shout of "Shazam!" and then look about, demanding "Quotes, please?" As lunchtime approached he'd moan, "Hummunngrryy!" After any particularly good meal, he would lean back happily and mumble, "Time for my nap." Late in the day a quiet muffled sound would usually arise from his corner, "Hooooome! Hooooome!" Promptly at 5:30 p.m., he'd announce with feigned astonishment, "Well, I believe I've reached a convenient break point." And then he would rush away, crying out, "Tim!"—the name of his latest Irish setter—"I'm coming."

He always lived near Dupont Circle, in recent years in an apartment on Swann Street he shared with hundreds of books—including many scholarly editions and sets purchased from Blackwell's of Oxford—and with Tim, the fifth in a long line of setters going back to his childhood in Dubuque, Iowa. In the mornings and evenings Reid would go for long walks with Tim—or Shamrock, or Panegy—through the woods and parks around Georgetown, and Kalorama. At work he would sometimes exchange cards of greeting with a fellow dog-lover.

Reid was an unregenerate Anglophile, even harboring a somewhat ashamed fondness for pop novels about the Raj and the adventures of Captain Horatio Hornblower. Yet he waited until he was 54 to go to England, fearing perhaps that the reality could never measure up to the land of his imagination. Last fall, he finally made the trip with his friend of 30 years, Ken Boyd. Ken had once lived in London for two years, but Reid, he says, knew the city much better than he.

On that visit Reid naturally traveled up to Oxford—in one of his fondest daydreams he would imagine his life as a don, preferably a fellow of All Souls—and from there wrote his last piece for the Post. "There's a McDonald's under the dreaming spires, rock music blares from the gothic archways and Evelyn Waugh would be appalled by the students' sartorial habits," he began. But Oxford was still Oxford, and the long-postponed trip was a complete and happy success.

In retrospect, the visit to England was a signal that Reid knew his time was limited, that he was losing his long, gallant and very private battle with AIDS. He did not speak of his illness and never complained. As long as he was able he simply continued to come to work, to read his favorite writers, to live the quiet bookish life he loved so well.
Reid Beddow, Washington Post Editor, Dies

Reid Beddow, 54, an assistant editor in the Book World section of The Washington Post, died Feb. 19 at Georgetown University Medical Center. He had AIDS.

Mr. Beddow had been on the full-time staff as a Book World assistant editor since 1983, and earlier he had worked part-time at The Post as an on-call copy editor in Style since 1979. He also had worked at The Post as a reporter in the Metro section and as a Sunday magazine editor in the early 1960s.

A resident of Washington, Mr. Beddow was born in Dubuque, Iowa. He attended Yale University. In 1956, he joined the Air Force, serving as a translator in an intelligence unit in Korea and later as an operations specialist with the Strategic Air Command. He moved to Washington in 1961 after leaving the Air Force.

He was a reporter at The Post until 1964. He attended American and Columbia universities, did freelance writing and served as Washington editor for two trade publications, American Banker and Transportation Age.

From 1973 to 1975, he also was special assistant to the dean at American University Law School. Later he was special assistant to the executive director of an organization called Youthwork, which attempted to find ways to alleviate unemployment among black teenagers.

He returned to The Post in 1979 as a part-time editor and in that capacity took every opportunity to work in Book World until becoming full-time in 1983.

"The wonderful thing about working for Book World is that one is forever learning," Mr. Beddow once wrote. "Each new book is a challenge to put it in the hands of a worthy reviewer."

Survivors include two sisters, Janet Trick of Olympia, Wash., and Shirley Hall of Las Cruces, N.M.
October 11, 1989

Ivan Doig
17021 10th Ave. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Mr. Doig:

Thanks for your postcard. I was recently lucky enough to interest an agent in my novel and now, with a request to excerpt a short story from it and another I would dearly like to be working on, I envy you your time. We would, of course, like to have you in our pages again, but I will wait until sometime next year to contact you. In the meantime I hope your work goes well.

Sincerely,

David Nicholson
Dear David—

Thanks for thinking of me to do a review. I hope to be a bit more capable in '90. I'll have this manuscript done by March—I keep trying to remember if I knew what I was letting myself in for when I decided to spend nearly ten years of my life on this trilogy—and there may be eyelets of time in late spring or August, before I hit the bookstore trail, when I can tackle something for you. Until then, all best wishes.

p.s. Am reading Terry McMillan's "Disappearing Acts" on the basis of your review.
Dear Reid—

Here, only a year or so late, is the Re-Discovery piece on Sorrowless Times. About 800 words, I think.

I don't have access to a current Books In Print, but last year's didn't show the book in either hardback or paperback. I don't know how you go about checking availability—you certainly don't expect the reviewer to do it, right?—but if you need to contact Herndon, I have an address but no phone # for him: 1795 10th Ave., #7, San Francisco CA 94122. His editor is Dan Green, now at Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

In the book Herndon doesn't use quote marks around the dialogue. After some judicious staring at the excerpts I quote on pp. 2 & 3 of this piece, I daubed out the quote marks that ordinarily would appear before each new graf in a consecutive quotation. My reasoning was that Herndon's method looks clearer this way; putting in the standard signal of quote marks looks funny to the reader because there then aren't corresponding quote marks after the dialogue lines, if you follow my drift. Of course, style it as you have to.

In the eleventh line from the bottom of p. 3, "Panamand" indeed does have a "a" on the end in Herndon's repeated use of it in dialogue. Chalk it up to sailor nuttiness, huh?

If you need to call me, I should be here around the phone except for the week of Sept. 12, and again Sept. 29-30 when I go to Denver to huckster the p'back of Rascal Fair. Hope you're thriving. Carol sends regards.

all best,

p.s. Hey, I don't know how you ordain poets for your pages, but let me tout a terrific poet from out here who's being published nationally this fall—Linda Bierds, The Stillness, The Dancing, from Holt. I've heard and read her stuff for years, am going to do a blurb; it's wondrous narrative poetry, considerable of it published in The New Yorker when Howard Moss was poetry editor.
He was seventeen years old and one-eyed, and afraid that World War Two was passing him by. He made his own ticket to that central event by joining the Merchant Marine and so, as a crewman of the tanker S.S. Malibu docked in the Panama Canal Zone, found himself ashore of a typical evening:

"The Explorer found Slim, Buddy, J.D. and Johnny in a bar attached to a tattoo parlor, along with innumerable others of the crew. They were in a period of comparative repose, drinking steadily but quietly, discussing the first five or six hours of shore leave and watching each other being decorated with hearts, eagles, anchors, panthers. The word spread that everyone was going to the Blue Moon, which was a real whorehouse...with a band, dancing, drinks, a madam, and upstairs rooms
to take the girls up to. They all danced, drank, sang, took girls up.
Parting, meeting later, some of them, back at the tattoo parlor, hearts,
eagles, anchors, panthers, blood, ink, blue, red, green, rum."

From The Way It Spozed to Be, two decades ago, to 1985's Notes
from a School Teacher, James Herndon has periodically provided America
with unforgettable dispatches from the combat zone of education, the
classroom. Those books were properly critically clucked over, some
reviewers actually noting Herndon's poker-faced wit and realist's
incisiveness. But his 1981 wartime memoir Sorrowless Times, in which
he caught with ineffably profane precision what it is like to be a
young male in a term of service with other fledglings who are nothing
like you but yet identical in that uniformed servitude, made little stir.
It is like ignoring Billy Budd just because Melville had already written
Moby Dick.

Herndon's tale of the Malibu pinballing around the Pacific loading
and unloading oil—need it be said, cost-plus was the compass of
military expenditure—is sometimes told in prose as clean and fine as
this:

"The ship lay eight days in repair dock, men working at its
innards, its power shut down. Inert and ugly, it stained the ocean
water with shiny oil."

And sometimes in exhilarating jazzy riffs (before seagoing, Herndon
played lead trumpet in a dance band) such as:

"Up in the messroom, couple of engine-room crew and disconsolate
port watch of Navy gun-crew, had to stay aboard, that being the Navy

"Come you aren't ashore, Red?

"Red drinking whiskey from white mug. Now he poured out half a cupful from a pint bottle, pulled out a flat, round can and shook black powdery stuff into the mug, stirring it with his finger. He drank up about half of it.

"Little snuff? holding out the tin. No wonder Red knew everything."

In either mode, Herndon's ear is a sonar wonder. His couple of pages on the crew's reaction when they discover that the Navy's gift to them of free dungarees are in fact women's dungarees is something like a Hallalujah Chorus of cussing. Somewhat more quotably, here is one of Herndon's shipmates on another matter of truce:

"Look at them there pants, One-eye! Slim shouted. I'll take them pants back to that Panamian no-good bastard, and make him eat one half and stick the other half...

"The Explorer was looking at the pants. They looked great. Fine, beige, light, tropical-weave gabardine. They look great, Slim, he said. What's the matter, they don't fit?

"Matter? yelled Slim. Them is zoot-suit pants!"

For all its raunchy veracity, Sorrowless Times deals in larger truths as well. Better than in any other "war" book, fiction or non-, that I know of, James Herndon conveys the inexplicable epidemics of enthusiasm—catfishing in the Persian Gulf, jewel-buying in Ceylon—that grip such groups of time-serving youngsters. (I think of the
carload of my barrackmates who took it into their heads to accompany
a buddy in his nutty notion of driving home to Chicago, a 1,500-mile
round trip from our Texas base, on a weekend pass. And did.) Herndon
also is profoundly right about the basic discontent of being either
young or in the military, or worst, both: you are perpetually handed
only jobs, not work.

So, a sorrowless time passes, a young sailor called One-eye begins
"getting his memory in order," a war winds down, uglifying as it does:
"cost-plus was gone and led to something like dog-eat-dog." A book
such as Herndon's vibrant account of the "long, skinny, steel world"
of the Malibu is a vital serum (hearts, eagles, anchors, panthers, blood,
ink, blue, red, green, rum) against Clancification, the high-tech
confidence that war machinery, ours, anyway, is in the steady hands
of military paragons. Herndon's contrarily honest testimony is what
any enlisted man knows, has to know in self-protective cynicism: that
some of the people running his world are okay and some are loonies.
Surprisingly like real life, in short.

###

Ivan Doig is the author of the novel, "Dancing at the Rascal Fair,"
and the memoir, "This House of Sky."
Eighteen Million Honeybees Can’t Be Wrong

A COUNTRY YEAR
Living the Questions
By Sue Hubbell
Random House. 221 pp. $17.95

By Ivan Doig

WONDER if I am becoming feral," Sue Hubbell speculates equably amid her pages of coyotes, oppossums, chiggers, black rat snakes and other creatures she neighbors with in her adopted rural life. "Wild things and wild places pull me more strongly than they did a few years ago, and domesticity, dusting and cookery interest me not at all."

By remarks that dimple now and then in this extremely likable book, she is fiftyish, smallish, an ex-librarian, the survivor of a discombiating divorce ("I was out to lunch for three years") and either owns or is owned by 18 million honeybees in the Missouri Ozarks. By the evidence of her every sentence, this pensive beekeeper is also a beautifully blossoming writer. How about:

"There is a magnificent dappled brown and gold house spider changing her skin today in a corner up above the wood stove"—the deft shovelf of eye-rhyme there in "above" and "stove," the rural twinning of "up above," the perfectly apt arrest description of molting as "changing her skin."

Or: "When I drove up in front of the barn the night was full of eyes. Eyes floating in the night, almond-shaped eyes everywhere, looking toward me, golden, gleaming eyes, eyes reflected in the headlamps with no other body parts visible. Eyes surrounding me. Eyes. I turned off the headlights and quietly got out of the pickup. I was in the middle of a herd of deer." That single-word sentence someone at the publishing house, too, quite possibly the sales force, because in an unusual move just before publication, the scheduled title Living the Questions: A Country Year became vice versa. With a justice that so earnest and little-known an author rarely is granted, however, this book has been given an exquisite design by Cynthia Krupat, and its press-run of 12,500 copies is at least twice what a runative first book usually gets.) Hubbell's bees, most pleasantly omnipresent in her census of the creekside hill where she lives, behave in ways still magnostically inexplicable to her after a dozen years of attentive beekeeping.

Likewise most of the other creatures that inhabit her 41 brief essays in a kind of breviary of spring, summer, autumn, winter, and in a nice touch, spring once more: the inch-long frogs, for instance, who one night, and only one night, decided to march up Hubbell's windows by the thousands, "waiting in patient ranks to move up to the lighted surface of the glass." Midway in the book she quotes cosmically again, a physicist's apophthegm that "we live in a world that is not only queerer than we think but queerer than we can think," and this time she more than convinces us.

WHAT THOUGH, of the ultimate "chemical bundle" inhabiting those 90 life-teeming Ozark acres, the denizen called Sue Hubbell? Because any of us who are or have been rural cherish our own foibles and like to look down our sunburned noses at other people's, a book of this sort has to undergo my "yeah, but" test:

Yeah, Hubbell has to resort to a chainsaw for harvesting firewood on her woodlot, but I still detest that blind, shrieking, motorized omnivore. Yeah, "she is diplomatically wise to regard as local charm the small-town mechanic's irremediable ritual of grumble, gos-

I illustrate by Lauren Jarrett from "A Country Year."

Ivan Doig grew up on ranches in Montana, an area and way of life he has written about in "This House of Sky" and "English Creek."
To: Ivan Dog

For a review intended for exclusive publication in Book World, and its syndicate, due... early April.

Approximate number of words: 750.

Please note:

● When quoting from book or galley, indicate the page number in the margin.

● Please attach a brief biographical note, your address and phone number.

● We need your social security number when you submit your review.
"I wonder if I am becoming feral," Sue Hubbell speculates equably amid her pages of coyotes, opossums, chiggers, black rat snakes and other creatures she neighbors with in her adopted rural life. "Wild things and wild places pull me more strongly than they did a few years ago, and domesticity, dusting and cookery interest me not at all."

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of molting as "changing her skin." Or: "When I drove up in front of the barn the night was full of eyes. Eyes floating in the night, almond-shaped eyes everywhere, looking toward me, golden, gleaming eyes, eyes reflected in the headlights with no other body parts visible. Eyes surrounding me. Eyes. I turned off the headlights and quietly got out of the pickup. I was in the middle of a herd of deer." That single-word sentence of "Eyes." to bespeak an overwhelming multiplicity is downright magical. Hubbell watches language as sagaciously as she eyes nature, and the combination makes "A Country Year" steadily eloquent not just of her life but all life.

The questions of choosing to live in close daily touch with nature, of course, involve human deportment more than the other creatures'. (Living the Questions, the subtitle Hubbell uses to frame these concerns, is a quote from the poet Rainer Maria Rilke, a bit cosmically urbane for my own country blood; Rilke must have unnerved someone at the publishing house too, quite possibly the sales force, because in an unusual move just before publication the scheduled title Living the Questions: A Country Year became vice versa. With a justice that so earnest and little-known an author rarely is granted, however, this book has been given an exquisite design by Cynthia Krupat, and its press-run of 12,500 copies is at least twice what a ruminative first book usually gets.) Hubbell's bees, most pleasantly omnipresent in her census of the creekside hill where she lives, behave in ways still majestically inexplicable to her after a dozen years of attentive beekeeping. Likewise most of the other creatures that inhabit her forty-one brief essays in a
kind of breviary of spring, summer, autumn, winter, and in a nice
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night, and only one night, decided to march up Hubbell's windows by
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Because any of us who are or have been rural cherish our own foibles
and like to look down our sunburned noses at other people's, a book
of this sort has to undergo my "yeah, but" test:

Yeah, Hubbell has to resort to a chainsaw for harvesting
firewood on her woodlot, but I still detest that blind shrieking
motorized omnivore.

Yeah, she is diplomatically wise to regard as local charm the
small-town mechanic's irremediable ritual of grumble, gossip and gab
before sidling up to a repair job, but across thirty years of
periodically dealing with that ilk I still always feel a monumental
urge to bill him for my time.

But yeah, Sue Hubbell does pass, by miles. Even when her
topics or ways of going about things are nowhere near my own, she
wins me to them with her felicity and calm conviction. Some of the
best prose of our generation has come from our Three Samurai of the
far places—Edward Hoagland, Peter Matthiessen, and John McPhee,

The writer she most reminds me of, to her credit, is none of the above, but Aldo Leopold in his great 1949 book of the rhythms of the land, A Sand County Almanac. That classic of ecology was by a human who suggested "thinking like a mountain." Hubbell too is gifted with the ability to step off from the humanly habitual—"There has always been a part of me that stood aside, watching, commenting"—and yet keep her own equilibrium: "a life is as simple or complicated as the person living it..."

What is wanted next from her is, happily, on her own list of "wantings." On a first morning of spring, after she has slept outdoors in celebration of this freshest season, "I want indigo bunting singing their couplets...I want to read Joseph and His Brothers again. I want oak leaves and dogwood blossoms and fireflies....I want to write a novel." Do, and soon.

Ivan Doig grew up on ranches in Montana, an area and way of life he has written about in "This House of Sky" and "English Creek."
28 November 1984

Dear Ivan,

Than you for the friendly note--I am pleased that you liked my review for I very much liked "English Creek" and am touting it to everyone.

You would honor us if you would review for Book World, though I fear the book by Professor Farr doesn't interest my editor. She feels it's too regional. Having been in that country myself, it interests me, but I am only a small cog here.

Why don't you ask Smithsonian magazine if you can't review it for them? The book editor is Bennett Schiff and his address is 900 Jefferson Drive SW, Washington, D.C. 20560. Another possibility is American Heritage (do you ever see it?; VERY interesting).

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

Reid Beddow
Assistant Editor
Dear Reed—

November 1884

I'm not surprised that the Reservation Blackfeet look somewhat distant from the Post. Appreciated your Smithsonian and Am. Heritage suggestions—If I can find time I may give them a try.

This year for the Indian voice—

While I have the typewriter going, I may as well tell you I'm likely not going to be available as a reviewer during at least the first half of '85. I've begun the next novel by putting Jack's grandfather in the steerage queue of emigrants leaving Scotland on the first day of summer of 1889. "America," says Angus Alexander McCaskill. "Montana. Words with their ends open." So I'm going to be busy seeing where those words lead.

All best for your own '85.

With every good wish,

Kath Seabrook

Outlook Editor
Dear [Name],

It may not be etiquette to thank a reviewer for reviewing a book, but I can send you appreciation for seeing into the book the way you did. The Two Country is a long distance from D.C., but you see it well. You might be interested that the first person who told me of your review, Mark Nuro of the Boston Globe, has done an essay-review of English Creek and I guess my other stuff, for The Nation.

While I have this in the typewriter, let me broach something I don't know how to broach except to blurt it. I've come across a book I would happily review for you. Now the bad news: it's a university press book from out here—The Reservation Blackfeet, 1882-1945: A Photographic History of Cultural Survival, published by the University of Washington Press. I am acquainted with the author, William E. Farr, of the U. of Montana history faculty in Missoula, to the extent that I had him look over a few chunks of English Creek and put him among the acknowledgments—quite simply, he is the man who knows most about the actual "Two Medicine" country of the Reservation Blackfeet, as distinct from my south-stretching fictional version of it. I'll understand if Post policy precludes volunteering for a review. But if not me, somebody—maybe John Ewers of the Smithsonian—ought to be got for this book; it is a stunning evocation of the Blackfeet and their journey into white man's America. This book won't get similar attention, I'm afraid, but it seems to me in the league with Wisconsin Death Trip.

Happy reviewing.

[Signature]
Dear Alice,

We'll show that Beddow guy: herewith, you and Ken Tanabe get real books, instead of that mere uncorrected chaff.

Carol and I much appreciated that all of you took the time for us the other day. Get in touch if you come out here college-shopping; I'd gladly be what help I can in steering you and your son around the campus, although I mostly know only librarians there. By the way, the one "book" person I know who knows anything about crew is Duvall Recht, who runs Books on Tape in Newport Beach CA; Duvall was an Olympic gold medalist at I think Helsinki in the two-person--do they call it something as simply as pairs?--event, and one of his former students is on the U. of Washington crew coaching staff, I believe. I don't think Duvall would at all mind any questions about the college crew scene etc.

Anyway, it was great to meet the faces that go with the familiar names at Book World.

best
Ivan Doig  
Liz Darhansoff  
Literary Agent  
1220 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10128

Dear Mr. Doig,

I am writing to ask if you would be interested in doing a story for the Travel section of The Washington Post. The subject matter could be of your choice. Montana, of course, would be a strong possibility. And we're putting together a section on Oregon, so that would also be welcome, if you've come to know some aspect of the state since moving to the Northwest.

We take pride in featuring fine writers who can provide insightful guides to their favorite places, which may be a park, an inn, a hiking trail, a city or an entire country. We welcome personal and anecdotal pieces that tell us why a place appeals.

Our payment is $500 for 1,200 to 1,500 words, and we'll add an italic footnote listing your most recent work.

Please write or phone collect after 11 a.m. if the possibility attracts you. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Linda L. Halsey/Assistant Editor
Dear Linda--

Thanks a lot for thinking of me for your travel section. Because of a combination of an impending book deadline and a minor but aggravating eye problem, there's just no prospect that I can do anything for you before early '87; I already owe Reid Bedford of Book World a "Reconsiderations" column, on that delayed basis. When '87 comes, I'll look at my situation then for you; I will be traveling Montana some next summer, and perhaps something could come of that.

So, if you wouldn't mind, perhaps you could nudge me about March 1, '87, to see how my schedule and inclinations stand by then. And if you'd in the meantime provide me tear sheets of 3 or so Sundays of the travel section, that'd be helpful to my thinking; sorry to say, given that Book World comes to this house separately by mail and the Sunday Post arrives at newsstands out here maybe by Tuesday night, I don't see the Sunday paper much of the time.

One mild afterthought: I hope to talk my publisher into bringing me and my wife to Washington, D.C., for the next American Booksellers convention, late in May. If it'd be useful for us to talk in person about your article requirements, that'd be the one shot I see.

best regards
Dear Reid--

Nifty display on my Ansel review. Many thanks for whatever care and tending that took.

Having rashly done a review for you in 1985, I now super-rashly wonder about doing one in 1986. I get occasional bound galleys, and Random House has sent me Living the Questions, a set of nature essays by Sue Hubbell, whom I've never heard of. At first look they seem damn good—enough so that they remind me of Aldo Leopold's classic, Sand County Almanac. It also interests me how different they are (I think maybe) from Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, though the situations aren't so dissimilar. anyway, I don't know what Post policy is about having a review proposed to you, but I also don't know how to tell you what interests me except by telling you. This seems to be something I'd like to review—pretty rare—and about which I might have something pertinent to say—rarer yet. I do urge you to have a look at the book; no hard feelings if you can't assign it to me, of course.

Snowed an inch here today. Disasterville.

Happy Thanksgiving.
Dear Reid--

A quick advisory, to let you know that while I'd still like to do a "Rediscovery" for you—and SORROWLESS TIMES is my likely candidate—I may not be able to get to it until early '87. Why not? you may ask with justifiable outrage. Well, because I've just been felled, or at least seriously tipped, by a minor eye ailment, my fourth bout with it in the past year. It's nothing serious to my vision in the long run, but it does blur and tire my eyes so that I can read very little beyond the work in my own typewriter. I just have to grit through the damn thing and shrug off a lot of thick stuff I'd like to do. So, if you'll check me later this year, maybe I can have a more definite outlook on the "Rediscovery" piece.

Very interesting novel by my Missoula cohort and buddy, James Welch, which I did a blurb for last spring before this eye situation—FOOLS CROW, coming from Viking in Nov., story of a band of Blackfeet of 1870 from their own cosmic point of view. You might like it.

all best
Ivan Doig 13 May 1986
17021-10th ave. NW
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan:

That's a very nice review, and I'm grateful for your having kept my name out of it. I know you'll be pleased to know that the first printing of Sue's book is almost exhausted, and that we should be going back to press shortly.

Sincerely,

JMF: pjh
"A great photographer, perhaps even the greatest ever,
he photographed what his heart most rose to. . . . No lover of Ansel Adams' photographs can afford to miss this book. . . . His photographic love letters to the world will keep him alive. But so will this book, with its intimate record of a dedicated and inspiring life."

—WALLACE STEGNER, San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle

"A work that anyone who celebrates the complex beauty of the human spirit will want to own." —Chicago Tribune

"This imposing yet friendly volume carries a warm sense of the man as well as a wide and beautifully reproduced selection of his photographs." —Chicago Sun-Times Book Week

"In this eloquent autobiography are the man and his memories, plus a generous selection of his finest photographs. The book does Ansel Adams proud." —John Barkham Reviews

"Here in their half-century panorama, Adams' pictures have never spoken better for themselves, and thus for him.... And along with lesser-seen ones his classics shine anew."

—Washington Post Book World

A Book-of-the-Month Club Featured Alternate

ANSEL ADAMS:
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
with Mary Street Alinder

NEW YORK GRAPHIC SOCIETY BOOKS/LITTLE, BROWN
34 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. 02106
Continued from page 64
sleeve — sometimes by the throat — and makes your blood race."

AN UMBRELLA FROM PICADILLY, by Jaroslav Seifert. Translated by Oswald Osers. (London Magazine Editions, $12.95.) The works in this, the first volume of Jaroslav Seifert’s poems to be translated since he won the Nobel Prize for Literature last year, were written in the 1970’s. It is heavily autobiographical and thus especially useful to people who know little of the Czechoslovak poet’s life and work, although the translation is somewhat pedes-

Science Fiction

FIRE WATCH. By Connie Willis. (Blue Jay, $14.95.) In her first collection of stories, the author "deploys the apparatus of science fiction to illumi-
nate character and relationships, and her writing is fresh, subtle and deeply moving."

FREE LIVE, FREE. By Gene Wolfe. (Tor, $16.55.) The author of the four-volume "Book of the New Sun" turns to "that problematic mix of non-
scientific lore and dreams of power known as the oc-
cult."

HELLICONIA WINTER. By Brian W. Aldiss. (Atheneum, $17.95.) The final volume of the au-
 thor’s "masterful trilogy whose theme is nothing less than the interrelationship of all living (and non-
living) things."

NEUROMANCER. By William Gibson. (Ace, Paper, $2.95.) In this "freshly imagined, compel-
ingly detailed" 21st-century work, Michael Cray, a telepath, and his "bleeding fields of computing hardware and engineering have made it possible to create human beings of preter-
natural strength and agility."

ROBOTS AND EMPIRE. By Isaac Asimov (Doubleday, $16.50.) The author has "once again turned an ethical dilemma into the basis of an excit-
ing novel of suspense" in this tale about two intelligent robot.

STARS IN MY POCKET LIKE GRAINS OF SAND. By Samuel R. Delany. (Bantam, $18.95.) A "challenging and satisfying" novel about "a uni-
verse of the far future, which contains more than 60 robotized worlds and a marvellously rich blend of cultures."

Science & Social Science

BRAIN AND PSYCHE: The Biology of the Un-
conscious, by Jonathan Winson. (Anchor/Doub-
day, $16.50.) A compelling and well-written book, intriguing both for its view of the brain in light of the computer revolution, and for its attempted revi-
sion of certain Freudian notions about the mind.

CHANCING IT: Why We Take Risks, by Ralph Keyes. (Little, Brown, $15.95.) An "entertaining writer with a light touch" divides the risks we take into those involving physical danger and those in-
volving "commitment, intimacy and self-knowl-
edge."

THE COGNITIVE COMPUTER: On Language,
Learning, and Artificial Intelligence. By Roger C. Schank with Peter G. Calder. (Addison-Wesley, $17.95.) A "clear, funny and smart" account of "the problems involved in trying to get computers to mimic human reasoning."

CRIME AND HUMAN NATURE. By James Q. Wilson and Richard J. Herrnstein. (Simon & Schus-
ter, $22.95.) This "important" and controversial summary of behavioral science’s theories about crime "will be the starting place for discussions of the subject for years to come."

THE FLAMINGO’S SMILE: Reflections in Nat-
ural History. By Stephen Jay Gould. (Norton, $17.95.) "One of the sharpest and most humane thoughts in the sciences" offers a new collection of essays on a variety of scientific topics.

FROM ONE TO ZERO: A Universal History of
Numbers. By Georges Ifrah. Translated by Lowell Bair. (Viking, $35.) An "exhaustive...history of numerals (number symbols) and numeration sys-
tems from prehistoric times to the Renaissance.

HABITS OF THE HEART: Individualism and Com-
mitment in American Life. By Robert N. Bel-
lah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven M. Tipton. (University of Cal-
fornia, $16.95.) In this "well-written" book, the au-
 thors conclude that middle-class Americans have

U.S. and the Soviet Union.

IN THE NAME OF EUGENICS: Genetics and the
Uses of Human Heredity. By Daniel J. Kevles. (Knopf, $25.00.) In "well-written narrative," Daniel J. Kevles examines "the symbiotic relations between the genuine science of genetics...and the political programs and prejudices of eugenicists."

THE KNOWLEDGE MACHINE: Artificial In-
telligence and the Fate of Man. By Donald Michi-
ery and Roky Johnston. ( Morrow, $16.95.) The authors argue that "in an increasingly complex world we need all the sources of knowledge we can get, in-
cluding machines."

Masks of the Universe. By Edward Har-
ison. (Macmillan, $18.50.) A "provocative" and
"scholarly review of a "of aspects of philosophy and theology" by a "broadly based on the scientific enterprise that is "a marvelous piece of historical research."

MIGRAINE: Understanding a Common Disor-
der. By Oliver Sacks. (University of California, $17.50.) In this expanded, updated and reedited edition of his first published book (first published in 1979), Dr. Sacks "describes the various manifestations of migra-

ine and their relationship to mental and physical well-being."

THE NEW OUR BODIES, OURSELVES: A Book by and for Women. By the Boston Women’s Health Collective. (Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, Paper, $12.95.) This revised and expanded edition of a 1973 work "remains an excellent source for a woman evaluating medical care."

PERFECT SYMMETRY: The Search for the
Beginning of Time. By Heinz R. Piggels. (Simon & Schuster, $16.50.) In this "attempted by a well-
known particle physicist to look at the first moments after creation and even to look at the creation event it-
self," Heinz R. Piggles shows he is "one of less than a handful of scientists who can write excellent prose about the scientific frontier for a general audience."

REFLECTIONS ON GENDER AND SCIENCE
by Evelyn Fox Keller. (Yale, $17.95.) In nine "philosophical" essays, the author "analyzes the pervasiveness of gender ideology, investigates how it became established and how it still shapes the current social and experimental contexts and speculates what science might be like if it were gender-free."

REVOLUTION IN SCIENCE. By I. Bernard Cohen. (Harvard, $25.00.) A history of physical sci-
ence from the 17th century to the present day "care-
fully documented and told in a straightforward, comprehensive style."

SCIENCE AT THE SEASIDE. By James Trefili. (Scribners, $16.50.) A physicist takes read-
ers on "a marvelous excursion from the beach to the end of the solar system."

STAR WARS: A Penetrating Look into the Lives of the Young Scientists Behind Our Space Age Weaponry. By William J. Broad. (Simon & Schuster, $16.50.) When a New York Times reporter spent as much time as he could with the scientists who are actually trying to make "Star Wars" work, he "was not able to find a single scientist who said that to him [i.e. that] it would..."

VITAL LIES: SIMPLE TRUTHS: The Psychol-
y of Self-Deception. By Daniel Goleman. (Simon & Schuster, $17.95.) "By helping us to become aware of how it is that we are not aware," this book by a New York Times reporter "performs a valuable service."

THE WOODS HOLE CANTATA: Essays on Sci-
ence and Society. By Gerald Weissmann. (Dodd, Merrill, $20.00.) "Lively collection of essays on medicine and science and their "sociocultural context." Gerald Weissmann, a physician and researcher at New York University Medical Center, gathers "an impressive array of literary, historical and sociological sources."

BARBARA MYERHOFF & ELINOR LENZ —
THE FEMINIZATION OF AMERICA

Award-winning anthropologist Barbara Myerhoff, author of Number Our Days, and educator/author Elinor Lenz deliver a groundbreaking book that chronicles how women’s values are positively changing our private and public lives. Controversial, fascinating, and unexpected, this book explores what’s happening to the workplace, friendships and family, our health care system, our politics, our religious institutions, our artistic expression, and even our language now that women have become a powerful force in shaping mainstream culture. "Provocative, important, insightful...Anyone who must spot trends to stay on top of a trade should read this important new analysis of American society."

—Los Angeles Times

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Southern Dreams

SOUTHERN DREAMS and Trojan Women

a novel by Leo Snow

Like the women of Troy, the Mitchell women were strong in the face of adversity, steadfast in their love for their homes and families. Women beaten down, but never defeated, by the whims of the gods — cruel twists of fate they could never understand.

SOUTHERN DREAMS and TROJAN WOMEN is the sweeping saga of sixty years and four generations...from the turn of the century, when the love of two young migrant workers gave birth to the Mitchell legend...to the 1960s, when a troubled adolescent was left to reassemble the pieces of a shattered family history. It is the story of one family’s battle, waged on the farmlands and in the textile mills of North Carolina...a life struggle between hope and despair.


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"Southern Dreams is a rich tale of prejudice, pride and jealousy and the love and hope that can overcome it...The characters...are not easy for us."
—Sidney McInnis
United Press International

"...there is texture here."
—Publishers Weekly
The Washington Post

Washington, D.C. 20071

Book World 202-334-7882

To...

For a review intended for exclusive publication in Book World, and its syndicate, due...10/28.........750 to .
Approximate number of words...........

Please note:

- When quoting from book or galley, indicate the page number in the margin.

- Please attach a brief biographical note, your address and phone number.

- We need your social security number when you submit your review.
Dear Reid--

So here it is, the Ansel Adams review. Something I haven't managed to check is his version of his meeting with Reagan, which he says on pp. 349-50 occurred June 30, '83, and lasted 55 minutes; as he mentions on p. 351 that the Post interviewed him about it, I hope this is easily enough checkable.

Social Security number (mine, not Ansel's) is 516-44-4410. The only bio sheet I have is the publisher's dope sheet for my last book, attached.

Hope you're thriving. Liked your American Falls review, although do you never touch a book that weighs less than 2 pounds?

Thanks, and best.
A Singular Grizzled Grace

ANSEL ADAMS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

With Mary Street Alinder

New York Graphic Society. 400 pp. $50.00

By Ivan Doig

As a pilgrim to Yosemite, I remember being scarcely out of the parking lot when I stopped in my tracks and stood gawking at one of our primary natural monuments. It loomed in redoubtable weathered repose amid its half-circle of students and cameras, it wore a Stetson hat like it knew how, and there was no other eminence upon the American earth that this could be but Ansel Adams.

A singular grizzled grace is our image of the late and hallowed photographer-enviromentalist, and Adams takes his customary workmanlike care to preserve that in these pages. Posthumously—he passed to history at age 82 in April, 1984—the Adams profile still looms redoubtably here, from the silver-spoon San Francisco child who plagued the household by asking "Does God go to the toilet?" to the famous photographic craftsman who answered when asked if he felt a heightened consciousness at the instant of shutter click, "I
practice Zone, not Zen." But he also tellingly remarks, "Relatively few really know me, but millions know the folk hero they think is me." It would take a confessional barn-burner of a memoir to change our view of Ansel Adams the stalwart yet sensitive Sierraman, and this isn't that.

What Ansel Adams: An Autobiography does nicely manage to be--it's a tribute to the book's quiet but beautiful balance of design that this works--is a simultaneous family album-cum-memoir and retrospective of the Adams photographic canon. Not unexpectedly, the inimitable exactness Adams gave us from his camera wasn't duplicable from his word processor. He recounts various social occasions and ceremonies which do not retell as niftily as they must have uncorked at the time, and he provides numerous deep ritual bows to family, friends, colleagues, patrons. Be prepared for some ancillary Ansel throughout these pages. A deep focus sometimes has been deliberately chosen against. He mentions that his grandfather "built a prosperous lumber business." In fuller and more interesting perspective, William J. Adams was a baron among early cut-and-run timbermen who took down the magnificent virgin forests of Puget Sound, once vowing when a competitor outdealt him: "We will get even as sure as there is a God in Israel." Also, there probably was more to Ansel Adams' thoughts than is in here about the rise of pictorial magazines such as LIFE, which proffered to artistic photographers a mass audience previously undreamed-of but then frequently truncated or scrapped the photo essays they did on
assignment. And his (and everybody else's) role during the Sierra
Club's internecine combat in its David Brower era needs an incisive
neutral observer. If we, and Ansel Adams, are lucky in his eventual
biographer, a more complicated and compelling soul may emerge from
under the shadow of that Stetson.

Meanwhile, anecdotes have to sustain us, and they do. With
wonderful amiability Adams lets Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia
O'Keeffe steal the scene whenever they show up. Tales are told of
dozens of fine photographers and other artists—and a hilarious one
about the mobile moguldom of Darryl F. Zanuck. Here in his last
public words Adams is permanently angry at only a chosen few—fellow
photographers William Mortensen (exponent of allegorical portraiture
that Adams deemed "fuzzy-wuzzy") and Edward Steichen ("As a friend
said, 'He has the ability to make women cry and he revels in it.'")
and President Ronald Reagan, former employer of James Watt. The
Prez may have won a p.r. moment in 1983 by actually sitting down
with Adams the symbolic environmentalist for 55 minutes, but Adams
now gets to aim an earful at posterity: "I was negatively impressed
with Reagan's failure to discuss or challenge my opinions at every
turn...The flow of bilge from the Reagan administration is a blot
upon our history of literacy."

For all his environmental spokespersonship that capped a career of
outdoor life, Adams well knew what would give him his own mark in
our history. The photographs, the hauntingly luminous photographs.
Here in their half-century panorama, Adams' pictures have never
spoken better for themselves, and thus for him. Of this book's 277 illustrations some 120 are Adams' nature compositions, and along with lesser-seen ones his classics shine anew here—"Monolith, The Face of Half Dome"; "Mount Williamson...from Manzanar"; "Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico"; and that astounding eye-symphony, "Winter Sunrise, The Sierra Nevada, from Lone Pine," with the Sierra peaks whitely sunlit and teased by cloud tendrils, the dark undulation of leftover night shadowing below them, and below that a spectral line of trees and the lone tiny grazing horse which somehow lends resounding magnitude to all else.

"My vision established its own groove," writes Adams, "as I know I have been derivative of myself for fifty years." He indeed seems to have decided early, and I think rightly, that photodom's interpreter of the Sierra Nevada's magnificence was plenty to try to be in one lifetime. A recent critic tut-tutted Adams' trademark exactness in portraying nature—"a poet more of light than of personalities." What, are we so far gone down the narcissistic path that the face of Half Dome counts for less than human physiognomy? (But Audubon, baby, if you ever hope to get the cover of People you're gonna have to lay off the birds and whip out some portraits of, well, you know.) Ansel Adams caused us to perceive what we should have known was there, but didn't know how to see. Early in these pages he recalls an instant from boyhood, on a summer afternoon when he was setting the table for supper:

"The persistent fog had lifted and the warm sun streamed into
the dining room through the west-facing windows....The light was unforgettable."

Exactly.

Ivan Doig is the author of "English Creek," first of a trilogy about the American West.
Cell Collect

Primarily 1 pic hundred, etc. (221) 334-7984

Wet sample days

Reid

Bedrock

Wash - 887

Rand

Russell Lang

Scopis

Rivie

Annel Adams account - cash book + stock of life

month of 10-3
quote from her as lead.

By the remarks in her pages, SH is 50ish, a beekeeper in Arksnsas, etc. By the evidence of her every sentence, she is also a beautifully blossoming writer. How about: quote

Or: quote again

Living the questions is a title such as we might expect of Annie Dillard—it's a Rilke quote—and given the (similarity of topic) and even the chime of their bylines, it's natural to wonder (how similar SH is). They're not, to the credit of both writers. You may recall Pilgrim began brilliantly but chillingly with (cat's paw prints of blood)...

SH begins with indigo buntings, the more general question of who owns what...

Hers is a stance closer to Aldo Leopold's. The rhythm of the seasons—which after Leopold, Hal Borland in 00 and Donald Culross Peattie in An Almanac for Moderns remains a fine logical way to do a book—

Big Three—Hoagland, Matthiessen, McPhee. Now there is an order of observant writers—Ann Zwinger in Colorado, Kim Williams in Missoula, Barry Lopez in Oregon, Jack Nisbet in the state of Washington... make In this first book, SH is fully ordained. I hereby wish she'd D M V A M A T E write us an almanac every year.
Spring: long bees, U7 W.

4. long spells completed
5. coyote: "can't happen to me" formal view
6. canaries of culex of earth
7. 1.2 mile bees
9. out to lunch for 3 yrs
10. other a botanist
12. run with pain
13. saga on window
15. frog prince
16. bubonic plague
19. bees cover 1000 sq mi
19+ slow mechanic
25. free dance
30. net kills himself
32. go back to what had been
39 - test of suitability
45 - one weighs 105 lb
  - chain saw
51 - lives in Missouri
55 - spider chang'g her skin
  - molting
58 - sells honey to B'c'ales
  - chemical bun-unels
  - 'Liars' quotes
59 - 5 Central Pla
63 - 4 chippers
67 - still in process, chippers, humans & rest
69 - 33, one 'honey (how many tens?)
  - bees "really cross"
70 - breastfing her nephew

Simplicity that is difficult to attain
Which pieces in NY T "Hers"?
It is evident, no one connected c
"A C Y" feels it is a special breed - strong
values, design, etc.

Organizers (p.66)
75 - barn cats "pulls in inscrutable lives"
76 - shaking baby birds out of snake
77 - circle of chickens etc.
80 - spooky bee beard
83 - birds have "another dimension" - queerer than we can think
85 - calluses on son's girlfriend's hand
89 - dream during childbirth
90 - "a part of me that stood aside"
- saw many logs
109 - married to Brown U prof.
117 - 5000th load on freight
118 - poor
121 - escaping - suburbs
125 - rebuilding

woodlot - 87
beagle - 97 (E.B. White)
95 - named after...
137 - take a long view of a 'moscow' astonishing creatures, bees.
140 - native cigarettas & her
- 141 - takes life to emit life
143 - n'her killing bolcat.
145 - "winter is mol an enemy"
147 - dram
153 - crossing lines c on a possum
157 - coyote prone.
159 - crystallized honey in west on toast
163 - labeling tools
- mechanic "when he has a mind to"
165 - deer eyes
168+ - dram
177 - weather on little litty radio
182 - different climate on her place
185 - hoary paurcox
186 - "it mocked i said Umm."
191 - bear focus attention
192 - unusually, foreign agriculture
      - visitor to alien engaging world
195 - becoming local
198 - older women
196 - I want to write a novel
203 - mulch, newspaper, manjolds
207 - no tv
209 - yuppies like Rn pracnels
210 - life is as simple or complex as person living it
211 - Oregon's & back to landlords
25 - penal planet
32 - report to H.E.
34 - dialogue of hangman
34 - extremest penal colony
35 - convict's 'tyranny' over it.
40 - a strange like death
42 - lofty crimes in England
47 - dozen of daily souvenirs
50 - not an echo
53 - balance of evil
56 - rising stature of same
57 - Ralph's temperament
65 - catalog of insults
70 - play rehearsal begins
83 - debate

play June 4, 1769. F.O. Revellin?

- Newport, Gordon, ... world-class
- Reach of space, his imagination
- Passes may profit piece of Kansasiana

before until now one

no rules

deals c ideas: name in justice?

- Protestant morality

52. Where are the one: readers who made
- Failed since a best-seller; now it FS as
- not only by
- enchanted by Dickens.

imitable

- head of other globe

no fewer; people are afraid of things mo

- count: lighting, etc., their own tendencies
90 - French
105 - trend toward punishment
110 - Ralph's "needy awaited eyes"
115 - writing to H.E.: "is he ever seen?"
127 - Froats of heaven
123 - Act Two begins
125 - military interrupts an elegy about
125 - K's stage Scotchmen
127 - stretch: lens, joke
129 - Scots doctrinal argument; chemistry
132 - flashback to Nov. '68
133 - R's complete men
134 - aftermath of intra scene
134 - autobiography
136 - Harvey's bank confession
138 - scene c H.E.
143 - summary of play

- It takes us through murder of it as though researching role. Learn
144 - roles c b roles: Nancy, Pargem, 
Studebaker, Hammer
146 - mention of "playmaker"
- R's dilemma: not to tell Nancy
147 - H.E. @ rehearsal
148 - 1759 an exceptional yr
149 - R's role in Alexander's capture
150 - convicts unchanged; will aborigines be? Flashbacks are history, epic of
152 - aborigines try to understand aliens 'new world.'
158 - H.E. & aborigines need to each other
159 - also mourning for camps, R M health
-H.E. - necrocy
201 - more in France
220 - crucial 4th Act
221 - Ralph love-smitten
223 - "...and for lack of absoluteness
235 - gov't "stipulated by custom"
237 - compliant aborigines
253 - The Poor
254 - convicts' epilogue: we has one, too
255 - Mary / W. hammer: delicacy of 19th c. novel
255 - R realizes he can have Mary, if he'll speak up
259 - C. dies
259 - exact repeat of opening scene (xerox & same c. 197)
260 - importance of Coole - can't be expunged
260 - H.E. "a true sonlary" cupacions book
260 - pattern of society
260 - Ed not narrate in short form
260 - Coole's merciful governance
269 - Harry substitutes poison in Boase's hanging
270 - Lends peace of mind after stroke
273 - Act 5 rehearsal
274 - bed/fellow: Mary's note
   - Act 5, "everything begins to cool down..."
274 - 7 yrs servitude
274 - life can he amended in play, but in reality?
275 - once little play, once large play.
277 - convicts' apéologue
279 - Dabby's higher powers & mercies
280 - Mary's tattoo secret
282 - Ralph understands his own role in life short narrative giver. This is
284 - scene of latitudes & longitude a lengthy bit, but capacious
286 - incorrectly played笛子
288 - Ralph & Mary most love; he finds right words
291 - Pope 7. War
292 - "those people" v. one population
293 - H.E. "grey & preternatural presence": Johnson's twin to him as to Joel.
294 - southern marriages as balance
295 - a learning in society
298 - day of play
295 - Ralph as Carrie
299 - Carrie as invited guest
302 - painted players
306 - Nancy not a perfumer: twist as in play
308 - 2 worlds & 2 truths
Eng which a music hall joke asked as playwrights

Killer, answer is R.C. an earnest yr. Lt. who is ordered to produce

Rec. Officers: only play the one copy of — in celebration of E.R. July 6th July

Clark assembles his cast & begins rehearsal. "personal colonel's minister

enforces him. One of his 2 leading leads—a pair of hilariously splenetic

Scots officers— he hears from. Can't other hand, Ascension captive

also who has become Cow's favorite, thinks it's terrific even tho he
doesn't understand a word of it, + he just goes on stage.

Ralph's best friend is haunted by a Marine he has hung. Ralph

himself "had become a sort of Terest dreamer in common—tormented separation

from his wife in Plymouth, (p. 57)

Possible quote: Syd p. 35

p. 46, eye-crossing sermons

50—back-pocket

H—H—Harry argues 70 or hangings
Blew

7 - vitals

9 - father died of appendicitis

11 - from place to be alone in to place to own

21 - how to break magnet pull

29 - unironing means to measure control

36 - linear prison ruled out Mary

# 43 - story of her father

- 46

- 47 how to sage - mythic Montana 7 part

49 - M's grandfather dead in horse accident

51 - pic: he knows he is a cowboy

- raised daughter like boys

52 - when not yelling, talking

54 - M now his only audience

55 - told ranch when girls had to go to high school

56 - "to lost us"

62 - grandfather reintroduced (we not seamless; essayistic)

- namesake Rachel

65 - Bill Hafen portrait

- enlisted in draft for subsistence

69 - M's grandmother as ranch hand

72 - card playing

74 - "acute attainment of childhood"

85 - Hutterites own M's family place

106 - M adopted in France

129 - "never know what I am to do without"

133 - born Dec 39

135 - will never know her mother

170 - father's ill health

- a 3d sup

177 - ranch disasters
Bob's "joker's license" communicating

"I did not know what private person
it is to give up."

"deepen source than memory"

"quote, p. 297."

"Emo is a brave life, I am enduring one. Daily

All of humankind and its classifications of it.

Impossible"

"a marriage gone awful"

"perseverance to..."
Harwood

12. pictures of memory - in heart
15. SS Malton, Jan '45, Merchant Marine
16. Apple, 17, sailing out of Panama, crew 740, 22 Navy

p.q.t. 17. How come...
19. They in 'ly....
20. . . . . . . quite 'ly ruinous behavior in your, mother yo / name.

p.q.t. 20. Two in three
21. riff: Up in madam
22. Old one - eye.

p.q.t. 23. Parking
24. tattoo... wait
25. "Screwed etc.
25. 6", "The Expression"

p.q.t. 26. "ship lay"... (clean & fine prose, v. riffs)
31-2. night over jang
33. "(propic crew)

34. "Sum"
35. precluded tattoos, mooman & pig
41. let: Two maps. . . move we do.

p.q.t. 43. 5: At 15, his benefit.
43. (H) his (H) yankee Beau, marked against - classification,
44. mid life is money, & often downright nuts
44. kid musician - 15 yr old trumpeter

p.q.t. 45. "to mean something you say."
46. and H's ear to long a sonor wonder
49. remain on run's board
52. fall to 'sum < remain

p.q.t. 53. hold for 1 - eyed girl
53. HERE follows a bit....
54. all, 100 below

p.q.t. 57. Radio messages... 47 was nothing new to 68

of which 40 or 5 gus are infinitely delicious. If modest more than
any one radish < of poorly be.
57 - enlisted men's suspicion of hierarchy; some, against me. - (asian)
   (saw, on writing a scan)
69 - interview - James' rescue piece

p. 70 - new records
71 - smash attack on mother
80 - gun and elevate

p. 81 - getting along even with
83 - felt ought to take couple of hrs
84 - 'cause undid why such a job existed
85 - end monolog
94 - sum alignd mouth

p. 95 - long standing steel world
96 - 'only man b' world
   - **Everything cost plus**.
97 - WAVE's durance/ [nautical]
98 - crew knew - 00 empty was 00ed up anyway
101 - 1st memorocular ship
102 - crew's cynicism
104 - never any work, only jobs.
107 - what all old men wear
109 - sailed to Philipines
118 - spirit of aggenv
   (marching - p. 130-1, p. 131)
134 - Mediuu was on
- in late spring... CF went to Ames Corp... trace

138 - enemy plane

140 - in late spring...well & truly
- I took it back

149 - fishing epidemics
- "a fishing"

151 - snakes or Garden of Eden

154 - jewel epidemic

156 - tired of it all

168 - Edenic life in Pan Gulf

170 - journalism epidemic

172 - a little Golden Age or Malibu

173 - Malibu cousins on hard time

178 - oil over ride

179 - steward unable to do accents (creative bookkeeping)

180 - never turned a job

181 - opposite of H'way

182 - he had taken advantage
- getting his memory in order
- surprise at his power

183 - thinking of how he will be.

184 - cool plus to dog-eat-dog
- rumor: ship rolling 1st +

185 - female: DE goes on

conference: yes/military, job wind of work
Adams

xi - Mary Alinder selected pics
4 - Adams + B Kin; Wash ln Mill Co.
5 - fish out of water
6 - cd see Golden Gate from bedroom window
7 - '66 quaker policy not the to record it c Brown
8 - Woke his mom
9 - his world - peace & beauty
13 - "Does God go to the toilet?"
15 - suburban clarity near his home
16 - "I wistfully remembered..."
17 - she no "weaned on mis word'd Emerson"
18 - up's pace to Pac Expo
21 - leaving expenses insted of seed
24 - "appearance of emotion in art... only in medium..."
26 - "like making love"
27 - At 6700 piano in 1925
   "a few things of one world are of enduring quality"
28 - small hands
37 - "clean reality of granite"
39 - I am ab/ume cracked
41 - mother gave up; father sold insurance
42 - "light as unforgettable" Exactly.
45 - "peculiar sad jovousness" at mother's death.
47 - "Can they see me?"
48 - 60 Captian pic - 8th truly starts?
50 - 80 a Y'mith; jam trip
53 - Y'mith fire fall
57 - climbers' holes in cliff; "how can we define..."
59 - pearl barley for burns
63 - phone call in with mom
67 - lost 4 quotes - S sax
73 - 1923 Banner PH pic
76 - H/Dome "realization"
78 - anticipation, spot of mind (hyperactive as a kid)
79 - short - take makes quote
82 - 1926: 1st portfolio
83 - S aria is plural
85 - 7 jeffers
87 - inherent abstract of 6-9-45
100 - 6-92 either before marrying his wife or 50+ yrs
102 - wife's Y unit concession
109 - Strand's mega
110 - that's plain
110 - F64
112 - Hungry-curious (lusty-decadent)

117 - Selznick: "You can pace too!"

124 - Stargazy

134 - "OK chaldeon"

139 - Ha on changes in his enunt

140 - Scania Club

141 - "Don't eat from cans."

141 - twin bright gradiets of Scania

144 - S Club steel spoon

145 - "Orestorphannies"

145 - "Straddla varnum" 147 - Hygge Lake pic

148 - Cenm mode of appren for is theatrical

150 - racing - lightning
152 - Brower's "ego & arrogance" - 153 - "overly crusader"
154 - "reactionary"
154 - "collective intelligence of we... can be less..."
154 - Brower "mover: world"
154 - does: BEV in big stick tactics
157 - Dragon might have 4 more yrs
164 - Fortune exotic arch'ie assumpt
166 - AT&T assumpt
170 - Heil! Sobles
171 - Blandy
172 - aspens: Porter & Caplin the too
175 - assignments: some enjoyed, some detested; 176 - discipline & depoly
176 - Drogen
175 - pot in a pot
179 - Ymogen / Pew - co-op: "strange chicken wire"
187 - echetik
191 - "... + artificial & fragile elements of our culture"
   - nature: "a never-ending potential"
   - "a resonance c eternity"
194 - Nancy N'hall's depiction of C
195 - NE brand: "measures/freedom etc.
197 - Russia: Trotsky
198 - ".art of West"
203 - Story: "Workman"
205 - "photography advanced art improving"
206 - NY "painting envy"
207 - "what horror!"
207 - un burden of beauty: Denver
207 - at odds w/ Steichen
209 - "detected" = aim of man
213 - "Oh, Sam, more nature"
214 - A Y machinery: carved spade near apple
215 - synergism of words, pics
216 - blandness of nature writing
218 - gallery pic
    - aversion to smoking
219 - Nancy N. hall killed on Tetons; last #
    - tradn of Ann W to "pass it on"
221 - Stylist: "you're not ready for it"
222 - debacle of riding eastern horse
224 - wife "trapped," managing studio while he's in DM Conf 226 - O'Keefe pic
228 - "all, adult 40"
232 - east "cold & remote from my own roots"
234 - students who felt A "not relevant"
*235 - "a practice, Zone, not Zen."
    last of's quote "vigor & values, world of nature"
237 - at 1st did like Weston's work 243 - Winter Storm pic - w/ all
245-6 changing Weston's nags
- lost 1/3 of nags in pic
247 - "an image become substance" - Death Valley pic
248 - "here on earth is synpathic"
250 - "my hayward so great" - Weston
251 - Weston in shrine, A in world
- "escapist simplicity"
254 - employs cold techniques to fuse my vision 261 - Mt W'non pic
261 - Winter Summit pic
264 - Boa-White, LIFE - shot every exposure @ 1/100
268 - Lange made him feel conscience-ridden
269 - "I am not afraid of beauty"
Adams/9
273-4 Maximine pic

311 - Zone system applies
   - "craft/facility liberates expression"

316 - Y'kite workshops '55-'51

317 - 3 gov o photos

319 - "medium must explain itself" #

320 - "Rohrau indolence" quote

325 - Zone

327 - macy's reactions of art

337 - last 2 #4s, on art

339 - last #

343 - Photo League

349 - Reagan
   "Why dispute w/moguls..."

350 - A for nucc power
351 - Reagan: "flow of bridge"
362 - 3000 points @ $800
370 - Ymite 100,000 copies
371 - "Without my awareness, I became famous."
   - "derivative of myself"
373 - compiler for his collection
   - "quick and to my liking"
374 - inorganic
376 - Cad c computer born
382 - "mystical aliens"
gringle of... grace of light on new a calls "clear bright granite"
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wa Rock</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Pac sunset</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Glass Shards</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Helmet Rock</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pac Clouds</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>New Fall, Y'mile</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ascend R.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Snow, Y'mile</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Rose + dwarf</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Old Plane</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Bare Trees</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Redude</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Cemetery path</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Helmet Rock</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total: 121*
92 - Taos Pueblo
93 - Tony Lujan
95 - Taos Church
97 - Seq. moose de/ail
99 - Minon L.
103 - Dogwood, Y/m
106 - Rock & Water
108 - Burnt Stump
113 - Autumn, Y/m
114 - Cattle
119 - Kuras-6 Moon
120 - Pines in Snow
124 - Factory
128 - Picket fence
131 - Leaves
132 - 0.15 hands
136 - Window
138 - Th'old, Kings C.
142 - Pk Raton
143 - Dawn, Mt. Whit
147 - Frozen L & Cliffs
148 - Pine Cone
149 - Marion L
150 - Monarch
152 - Wipomo Dunes
155 - terrain L.
174 - Aspens
177 - Aspens
180 - l cedar, Y/m
186 - Yrd. deer, winter
*192 - Tatos
*198-9 Surf waves (4)
201 - MoMa garden
203 - B D
205 - Dead trees
213 - Schoodic
216 - Lodgy pool
220 - de Chelly
229 - Ho Siem
230 - Peaks & Heads
233 - Gates, winter
234 - Aspens, driveway
239 - Board
243 - Cleaning Storm, Ym
247 - Dunes, Death V
251 - Oyster Fence
255 - Bad Water
258 - "D & Cannonballs
259 - B lacks Sun
261 - Mt Wilson
262 - Winter Sunrise
263 - Mt LeConte
271 - Hi Wind cliff
273 - Stump
274 - Moonrise
278 - "Potash Co
280 - Old 7/16 (4)
281 - Trails, "Kuroean
283 - Mt McKinley moon
284 - "
286 - detail, intertidal
289 - "grass in rain
290 - ice leg
292 - "stream, sea, cloud"
249 - Agapanthus
302 - El Cap, Winter
307 - Cup & Tug
309 - Cathedral Rocks, Y/m
314 - White Branches
319 - Cemetery & Derrick
322 - Dogwood, Y/m
329 - Pt Lobe
333 - Surf & Rock
338 - Ocean, Pt Lobe
342 - Barb Wire
345 - St. mld
352 - Pt Sun
354 - Big Sun forest
356 - Swallet
359 - graffiti

360 - Hopi Buttes
361 - Tenaya Cr.
367 - C & E
368 - Elbrugh cam
376 - Y/m Falls
*376 - Moon & 1/2
381 - Glac Bay
382 - petroglyph
383 - Wahtuwin
384 - Pane Bank
A shows us who we want to see. He did. I know now how to.
He helps us observe who we shall have known he did. And how.
It was but did. He's how to see.

Denver gate

-lessness undescribed

- neat euphony of his name

- Adams cannon

lesser-seen pics

85-90 dates: 5

7

12

5

6

5

3

46
"I'm a critic, or a photographer...?
"But, Lucullus, baby, if you ever hope to get covers of People
you're gonna have to lay off birds & paint some, well, you know."

A summer afternoon in the Sierra, an educator of primary
Adams, Stanton, leading a class.

If loomed in weathered space amid its 1/2 cord of students & cameras, &
it wore a Station hat like it knew how &... (cameras & students)
& the world could be but A A.

That singular quizzing grace
natural setting
another Sierra man... John Muir

A mid'le mag review of the late turtled Oak's covert-eyed view of nature

quicksilver
Swim malit town and tendrils
dark undulation of leftover night - luminous trees & single tiny gravity

cA decided, aptly I think, we are enough to be,
because doom of evil more
His photos have never spoken better for themselves.
paternal figure... then gestures to retire

But A does nicely manage to be 3 other things
a + complex soul may emerge from the shade of an eyelid
hallowed
The man who so loved granite

A as letter-writer from philo to advice ("cans")

discursive

2 old dramatic druids

What are we so far on manned path that now of 26 counts for less than human physiology?

yes western cow in NY AS - N'hall, best physical desc of

eye symphony

*did he have. perhaps he saw in sightly?

A was only 69 @ WWII 1945, minor mention of "war effort"

interminable combat of S clubs in its DB crown era.

steradian was quite disliked, western quality liked auxiliary arm.

geocultural fault line in: mid of America
Adams

He was a bunch

"Pray may have taken a moment by silently sitting down and默'y,
but Adams aims on careful at poeulcy:

Style & OC steal scene whenever they show up

very effective for Edward, very effective for Steichen

nicely

OK manages to be 3 things at once

quiet but liluul balance of design

Ivan Doig is the author of "English Creek," first of a trilogy about the Am West.

How pipe it is... (jeffer) said only "Good."

Here in his last words A is peculiar made it only a few persons

Apostle of you

patronize (att & status)

mo he felt fern 2 & oldstry
Unused in W. Post review of A COUNTRY YEAR, by Sue Hubbell

This is the ultimate kind of an author's first book, one that has been written all her life.

(In squinty type at the front, the book's lovely design is attributed to someone whose name deserves to be writ larger: Cynthia Krupat.)

The rhythm of the seasons—which after Leopold, Half Borland in 00 and Donald Culross Peattie in "An Almanac for Moderns" remains a fine logical way to do a book—

the ways in which her existence crosses that of other creatures—"chemical bundles".

It's natural to wonder how similar Hubbell's account of creekside life is to Dillard's Pulitzer-winning Pilgrim at Tinker Creek. To the credit of both writers, their modes and moods aren't much alike. Recall how Pilgrim began brilliantly but chillingly with the paw prints of blood her prowlsome tomcat tracked across Dillard at night, "I looked as though I'd been painted with roses." Hubbell begins with songbirds, indigo buntings belting out "complicated tangles of couplets," that "believe they own the place, and it is hard to ignore their claim." Trying to think what it would be like to have either of these for a neighbor, I would choose Dillard if I wanted to find out what Rilke really meant, but Hubbell if I wanted help getting my pickup out of a mudhole.