The buffalo and a lot of blue air of argument behind us, the next several road days were devoted to going to places which Riley and Mariah would then decide not to do a story about.
the nature of news, i.e., in The Montanian:

"It's either blood and guts, or potholes and ruts." (have Mariah or Riley say, in extenuation of why they want to do the centennial series?)
Carol, in April '89 reading: lengthen (embellish) the turtles-all-the-down joke.

- me: change little old lady
Jeth: *beautiful Madrid R, a murmuring ripple in its every droplet, which had to be *acme 7 trout fishing.
July 4, '89

Quake Lake

- Hebgen Lake earthquake, 11:37 p.m., Aug. 17, '59, 7.5 on Richter scale
  28 killed: 7 @ Rock Creek e.q., 20 @ Cliff Lake e.q.,
  19 missing & presumed buried
- Madison Canyon - slide 7 m high "1 mi x 3/4 mi wide"
  Flash a mile 7 m inside did avalanche...

  DeMar Taylor phoned in late pm to AP, "I thought you might be interested."
  aerial
- drive ghost trees sticking out of lava caused by slide
26 Sept, '57

Va City
- Built on side hill
- Variety of buildings, stone-wal (C's pic); alt geologic in variety
- Windmill: Silver Stakes-Sap Stake-Buffalo Boys (C's pic)
- Small buildings, like cabins, were 1st stores; weather beaten to extreme
- Actual saloon, Dale of Haig; change name (Mother Code.)
- Doors drooping or ajar;
- Painted sideways, write
- Textures of wood, stone, brick in buildings
- Boot Hill: hogback ridge above tm, covered w hip-deep sage
- Tm wth many various shades run together; it is taken gold to justify
- White V, like seagull, high on ridge Tm
- Tdr R Tm impressive over sage ridges
- Cemetery: C's pic of faced-in frame plot, c to faced-in gravery, and
tombstone set another box or confinement; succession of 'containers'.
- Cemetery Tm
- Impressive old mausoleum presently now
Va City/2

cemetery sharp-pi'd fence against tn as if 'rm, not cem, we penciled in
3 magpies in cluster fly across cemetery
traffic of tourist voices from inside and came up to Rt 116 & cemetery
3 remaining c'woods, esp in cemetary along road thru 3/4 mile, one small, hand-pressed on tour dry ridge. Probably survivors of a line.
coming to Va City thru New City, bottom land has been planted in giant gravel furnace; miners never put earth back. Like more burns.
cold pic at e. (3) end of tm, too pretty to visit; no shade
Va City C'word: 14 1/4 mi. 1/2 mi, apply, from tm
Ditto for Dillon, a goodlooking town in the Beaverhead ranching country where I had never been; and the highly interesting Red Rock Lakes wildlife refuge, almost into Idaho; and even the wide handsome Madison Valley with its riffle-quick river which I figured had to be the acme of trout streams. Riley and Mariah, one or the other but usually both, would peer out of the Winnebago and not see a story worth doing. Place after place, we came, saw, and fizzled.
Nor was I the only one puzzled about how Riley and Mariah were going to produce a centennial series by constantly not seeing stories worth doing. The rest of that first week, one or the other but usually both of them nixed Dillon, a goodlooking town in the Beaverhead ranching country; and the highly interesting Red Rock Lakes wildlife refuge, almost into Idaho; and even the wide handsome Madison Valley with its riffle-quick river which I figured had to be the acme of trout streams.
I suppose I ought to have suspected the way all this was trending when the next day after Moiese the famous newspaper pair had me buzz us right back down the highway to Missoula and then keep right on going-- when I asked if they wanted to stop at the Montanian for anything, Mariah
After having traipsed around western Montana up, down, and sideways for the past ten days? At this rate, it was going to take this pair the next hundred years to get anything at all told about Montana's first hundred.

I opened my mouth to deliver the message that the Bago and I had
Days more of that followed. Going to place after place which Riley or Mariah but usually both of them would then decide not to do a story about. All in all, I was just this side of peeved when we pulled into Virginia City.
I figured the newspaperers had it in mind to continue northerly to Flathead Lake, nice country that is called the Montana Riviera, or maybe on up all the way to Glacier National Park. Wrong a hundred percent. Instead we buzzed back down the road from Moiese to Missoula—housing developments nervously crowding each other, and any number of times in our Bitterroot route I figured my passengers would want to pull over and start picture-taking and scribbling. Wrong again. The next thing I knew, the Bago and we in it were across Chief Joseph Pass and over into the Big Hole.
The buffalo and all that blue air of argument behind us, the
next several road days were devoted to going to places which Riley and
Mariah would then decide not to do a story about.
A brain light lit in me. A glance at Riley confirmed that the change of bartenders' shifts had not been lost on him. Indeed, it was a short hop to the conclusion that his story idea about bars and their 'tenders had been fostered there.
Twice during that span when Riley's beeper went off (it was the BB), and the second of those times he returned from the phone to report (BB suggested leaving blank newsprint with overline, Watch this space, Riley and Mariah will eventually think of something. "He getting surprising subtle," Riley said, sarcastically proncing it "sub-tull."
I don't know, do plays these days have what are called ingenue roles? If not, this young lady was doomed to a lifetime of being miscast.

No sooner had Miss Bliss departed from us than Riley was onto
Mariah sat up in instant attention and peered at him through the bar gloom. "Where?"

"Here." He whomped his hand on the table. "This."
MontSt

WPA -- folklore, anecdotes, persons

price of whiskey: it took 25¢ to look into a glass.

or: 1989 prices, which baffle jive
That got a rise out of her I hadn't expected. "How do you mean, it's Riley?" she said as I'd accused her of orphanage arson.
Butte, Jick, when we get there in a couple of days. Compared to Butte, what the gold miners did here is like scratchings in a cat box."
eye took a second to recognize as buffalo, dim but powerful, indistinct but unmistakable. It was all there.
Miss Smile-A-While (Va. City bartender)
The ghost town turtle.
The suffering farmer turtle.
(Riley comes up with contemporary cliche "turtles" he doesn't want to write about.)
Montanians

in Castle Mountain Livestock Co. inventory in Livestock file is listed:

"Hay stacker (beaver slide)—blueprint by H.S. Armitage of Wisdom, item 10"
changed in Va. City scene to "My reverie was ended when..."; is the new version too explicit?

Behind me, I heard a bump as someone stumbled into a chair and then a corresponding bump a little farther away, evidently a couple of customers finding their way to the table next to ours.
I would have refereed if I had known where to start. Riley, though, wasn't going to stay sat while Mariah pulled his story idea out from under him. "That's the way it's going to be, hmm?" he said to her as he pushed his chair back from the table. "Okay, Mariah, you stay here and stew. I'm going to go do a story." With that he was away, taking up residence at the cash register end of the bar where the brunette item of contention had stationed herself. The solar increase of her smile showed that she didn't at all mind being Riley's story.
ms p. 80, in Va. City bar:

--in Jick's musings about Big Hole haying, shd the washerwoman's story be added?
It didn't seem to me that either of these two were at their best in silence, so I was about to try and jog Mariah by asking if her thinking about pictures was the same as Riley's about words, internal turtle work,
that as it may, the velvet smiler was in charge of our liquid. "Miss,"

I called across to her and held up an indicative glass, "we'll have
another round of jelly sandwiches here, please."

I thought the new bartender blinked at Riley a little quizzically
Kimi wanted to know where he got the (two-colored) contact lenses and with a straight face he drawled that they were a hard-to-find kind called *natural*. 
Riley rolled his eyes and stared at the ceiling as if the letters p-a-t-i-e-n-c-e were inscribed up there. Then he blew out some breath and met Mariah's gaze, dagger for dagger. "Just out of curiosity, Flash, what're you going to tell the BB when my story lands in there and no picture with it?"
As I approached, Riley was inquiring of her in a confidential way, "Okay now, Kimi, if I just came in here from Mars and asked for a drink, what would you give me?" Granted, he did have the notebook open in front of him. Maybe he was mixing business with pleasure, a little.
p. 94: enough business for Mariah with the cameras, whisking dust off them?

--should there be some bit of description of Mariah?
can't be unfeeling about someone you have chosen, or even mischosen, earlier in life. How different was my own case when I coincided in the Missoula Buttrey's with Shirley like she was the ghost of flings past, after all? Not surprising that a person will get the willies about what might have been, I guess; but not much fun to sit and witness, as I was now with Mariah, either.
I try to be sufficiently modern, but a father in my generation is never going to be comfortable about hearing the ef word out of his daughter. Particularly when her voice saying it is as angry, as pained, as Mariah's was now. And as if that kind of anguish is catching, Riley's voice sounded as afflicted as hers when he retorted:
Riley to Jick in Va. City:

"Do you know what a deadline is? It means if Mariah and I don't come up with a story by 00, the BB will kill us."

why they call it a deadline. Because
"So how crappy was he?" Mariah asked tautly as he plunked himself down.

"This is about the time of day he wakes up enough to get mean," Riley reported. "The bewitching BB and his wee bitching hour." He fingered his mustache as if making sure it had survived the withering experience. "What he suggested was that instead of the teaser ad, he just leave a blank place in the paper all the time with a standing headline over it: Watch This Space—Mariah"
p. 104: possible change: Playing pitch with you two is a blood sport.