Blue as the Odyssey (Sea Runners journal, plus several file cards on WBros & Sky) put in Edmonds Wash'n Mutual safe deposit box, Nov. '95
10 March '81—The month's name is apt so far; the past 7 writing days, I've marched on schedule, averaging 5 pp./day as intended. Most of it is choppy, written by the graf, sometimes just a sentence lifted from the file cards; it's the effort to get a critical mass accumulated, so I can get the revising and adding-to underway.

Today during the walk up to Sh'line (and maybe the sauna there) occurred to me to add the couple of proverbial bits—paper is the schoolman's forest, etc.—to the Rosenberg scene, and to say something here about the effort I'm making with to put a proverbial sound into this ms. The aim is to tap into the interest proverbs hold for us; they're nuggets of idea and language, and we all respond to their gleam. Thus, the proverbial tang of M's dialogue; and I'm considering whether to put biblical flavor into W's interior monologues. Have ransacked a number of books of seaman's slang and the like, to pattern M's talk on. Also, I trust that my proverbs aren't diluted too much by the fact that a number of them, I've made up.
NOTE: my diary entries of '80-'83 have Sea Runners work and general mood of working at writing.
Juneah, 24 Jan.

This morn alongside the Helix, school (?) of sea lions in the channel. They make quick forward thrusts of head thru water, as if puncturing a membrane. When many do it at once, they are close enough together, and their turbulence in the water is mass enough, that they seem some twenty-nosed sea creature pushing along.

--Their noise is a kind of burping roar, like: orhrhr!*

--a whale, probably a male killer whale, also went past, in porpoise-like arcs of back sliding thru the water. Had a large dorsal fin, but I never saw the head for any colors there.

--When whale would spout, the spout would drift and hang in air, like dissipating steam.
9 Sept ’80 - D’neen’s Spit campground, 5:05 p.m. -
Have made no entries for couple of days. Vacation hiking at
Rattlesnake Kalaloch. But two ms. editing occurred to me
today, out of I know not where -

- early in mg, change “escape had been M’s plan” to “of M’s making”
  (occurred to me on Spit this afternoon)

- w shot B a look that “all but mystified” to “all
  but thundered.”
  (occurred in car en route from Kalaloch)

Also thought of, today or y’day: “Her be monsters”
Blue

17 Aug '30:

Cold chilly & windy day, geese whooping in trees all afternoon, but no drop of rain.

Have been reading, nights past, Van Watl's books on Conrad. Today just before lunch—this is a day I have taken off entirely from writing or house chores. I came onto W's passage on p. 94 about inherent dramatic elements of a voyage. The sort of thing I knew by gut instinct in taking on the Runners, but it's a thrill to see it expressed as completely as he has.
Blind

17 Aug 12

This week of writing went well, I think, after some
year-grinding on Mon. & Tues. Intended to add 10 pp.
to ms, and exceeded that a bit. The pp. describing
New Orleans were what I knew I had to do, and
they seem pretty good. The Rosenberg chaplain scene came
as a total surprise to me, although I'd begun thinking in
Silica of some use of chaplain, after finding material about
real person, Plathen. Began, slowly, on that section at Tues.
morning; Wed. morn, went to UW for photocopy
of article mentioning Plathen, that afternoon hastily wrote
3 pp. Likewise, Friday's work, revise of K. setting
up Bilibin for escape, happened unexpectedly well.
Blue
17 Aug '3

At this point of the ms, though I don't have as much revised as I'd hoped I would, in setting schedule when we got back from Alaska 2 yrs ago, what I do have revised seems to me of higher quality than any other ms of comparable age. Some problem of proportion may be developing as I add details got in Alaska, but the new sense of life, of "knowingness" that this is how it was, seems to make up for that frail.

For all of this impression that the ms is adding up well, I have the companion feeling that I've never yet really hit stride on this book. Not in the sense of the writing possibly being made better — that may or may not prove the case, it'll take time to know — but in being able to make rapid progress on the book; a feeling that if I can somehow set up the material properly, it can be carpentered together fairly rapidly.
Blue

26 Jan, near Lemensurier Pt. on Clarence Strait: notes from the bridge of the Alpha Helix, 5:45-9 am--

--mtns seem lower in the dark

--when daybreak began, clouds began to look furrowed

7:35, gaps of daybreak began on eastern horizon; these first breaks of light are like gaps beneath a curtain.

Near dawn, the islands and mountains all around the channel like herd of knobby heads; a surround.

occasional small openings in clouds like lips

As fuller daylight came, the strips of light on eastern horizon were as if chinking had fallen out between mtns and clouded sky.

Dawn went from silver to slight yellow, to mild peach.
Write a coastal storm scene with wind roaring in trees as it does in this valley.

20 Nov. '81--Long had this card on file, and last Sat. was at work on ms when the big windstorm came. Went out in it for about ½ hour, up to brow of hill to see into the Sound, came back and wrote wind scene at Tow Hill.
Blue

have K shoot ducks at Tow Hill river.
--gunshots wake them with other men; M checks, sees K and 2 rifles missing.

--inserted, 18 Dec. '81
17 April '81--Am toying with the idea of simply leaving a pause in the pages at major turning points of the book: after B's champagne toast, after the surviving of Kaigani, after M's death. They are dramatic points, where the language carries itself to climax--natural "chapter" endings. But I don't want chapters or sections as such in this book, particularly don't want them with the headings devices I've worked so thoroughly in Sky and Winter.
Begin with diary entry of CHill quitting as editor, the first few hrs of my work on Sea Runners.

possible title: Novel Days
Blue as an Odyssey
Traveller in White Space
Paper Sailor
Juneau harbor, Jan 25, '81 (Sunday).-Red sky at morning, S at. and 7 Castinean Channel, over Castinea. Capt. & Dolly both commented, said it'll likely mean rough weather at Dixon Entrance.

- B'ful morn, mins out in electry, only high stratus clouds; morn at 9:10, it's to meanig full light. See 3 or 4 whales have been in water near ship again.

- Capt. went over charts c me, steering route S.
- (Guard vessel & small freighter moored near us; flock of goldeneyes (?) ducks in water beneath boughs & black pattern on water.

- Chip morning, but not uncomfortable.
- See how can be easily heard over mj 1/4 - 1/2 mi away

- 1st group of ducks landing

- 1 diving duck c. our head, black men bare 7 bill - reserve

- 9:30 - sun coming up over Ascension - out my around: base 7 Mt. Robertson (?) - 1st light on peass - 7 Douglas X Mt. Juneau
Blue

18 Dec. '80, alone Sisley in the to San F:

W prayer as a텍inin-ending:

"O God who watches over pods of babies," We murmured,
"what am I doing in this prison camp?"
Blue

Monday night, Dec. 15 (?), '80, as I was driving Bill & Carolyn Reabough up to our place for dinner, Bill told me 'gyps of his being's crew were enthralled c my "Coming Out of Country" story. - See T [仝]runners - & all were looking forward to it. Then he said, it just occurred to him, Alpha Helip we had'd to come s. from Seward to Delco to ship for refitting b Jan., & U be upset in reading an ad.
8 Sept '60, Puerto again, 8:16 a.m. - Finished work at tidal trough of day, hiked back to parking area, sat on the rise of beach, sipping Cutty Sark & watching sunset of brilliant clarity.
from blockhouse replica, facing Shekka Hse (S-SW?):
- Jap'ki 1 to right - own west? - 0 1/2 mi away

- 1st of bay islands to south: cream of surf and west facing edge of
  the rock tidal line

  small
  - channel 2-400 yrs to, island now causewayed to fij

- To left, 0 200 yrs to Castle Hill
  - further left (east) 200-250 yrs to church

- openings - portals, channels - can be seen out among bay islands;
  timber o facing shores seems to draw back to make way
  (Note: Castle wall has formed amid this movement; openings glimpsed past its sides

- bald face of rock; wall is on: 0 25', high

300 yrs (paced) my wha whas terraces we have been, up hill from
  Shee Atila, to base of this rock.
Blue

2 Aug: our modes of travel y'day, from Metlakatla to home, inc'd:
- rented red Ford 4x4 pickup, Metlak to Sandspit airport. When
  I had a sinus attack midway, got out open pt of Scotch C had in
  camera bag. She said I was true north entry trainin, swigging whiskey
  in a red pickup at 9:35 AM.
- Skideste ferry K'umna; invited up for chat by skipper Ken Eaton.
- PacLm 737, Sandspit to PT Hardy to Vcrn.
- " Vcrn - Seattle. Long wait for bagage, then long line to
  check bag to Seattle, then customs, then 1/2 hr delay of jet, then
  long lineup of everyone except us & a few others, to board.
- airport bus to Cn Rd brain
- # 5 Metro local, to Shilene
- C walked en. hill to get. Volvo, fetch me & bags.

At stop at E1st, young guy got off bus: was wearin blue Tshirt
which read: F**K SITKA.
Sitka - flying in, Jul 21

> Sharp peaks along shore - forest opening with green bowls in lower
  2d higher spine 7 mins behind

Places of rocks, inc E 'cumbled' just behind Sitka.

Islands in Sound pier-covered, c rock ramparts @ waterline

Sitka in embrace 7 mins, only opening to ocean, few units of
wooded islands.

From airport tunnel: Egg out thru islands is like they do succession
of openings, doors, into a maze. (Have M O Klk from s'where
on Sitka shore, as start 7. jney.

> Quill - bunches of trees on small islands.

11:30, just before take off; sun more or less came out, grey in sunshine
which loosely makes a shadow.
June

July 21, 1950, 9:35 a.m. - 20+ min. n of Victoria, flying along eastern shore of Vanc. I., all is truly blue: water, Y. Coast Range, a band of fog of clear blue, snowcaps like its father.

- incredible peaks on n-nw horizon, from 25 min n. of Vic: like un cathedral, c bright brushy storms mov'ng among them.

- blue, of water & even 7 mins., turns mother as we fly toward cloudy weather.

- C. in near blue hump area to blower beside me.

- seats 23 E F, F window seat, lost on rear on r. side.

- Marshall drove us to airport in his tiny red house, our big leather bag barely fitting trunk.

- at airport ticket counter: clerk asked if we're related to D'orge of Juneau, whom she'd gone to school with.
Blue/2 (Jul 21)

- Tremors reach white cloud strata, 2 occasional thick veins of gray. Beneath us, 30-20 min. from before Sitha. Like traveling through snow.

- Uncannily, of red & blue wire-inclined notebooks I packed for trip, I pulled out this blue one for this flight. & it's not only obliquely but also uncannily am writing in blue felt tip.

- Descending to Sitha: clouds now thinly cover gray & c openings; c nose like color bands. 7 Painted Desert, except all grays.

- Landing at Sitha: plane's wingtips reaching alt. then trees of island, then also alt. into water, then funny pop up.
Juneau, July 21

- Descent into white boil of clouds, after 5-10 min holding pattern. Water & islands came into view, but not a min anywhere. Plane over for islands, I can see interior limits. Delta come into view: at least a place to ditch. Runway again appears nowhere, enorms soon of Deceleration, stairs at men o' war's split says: "Welcome to Juneau."

- "Blue of M' hall Glacier behind airport as we taxi in."
Blue

25 Jul 80 - blues of channel, mtns, islands, jibs, north after take off from Juneau. To take off, plane goes to end of runway, wheels around, aims at hill at far end of runway, & revs like hell.

- white pyramids, j mtns, grow out clouds to north, enl Sitka. Except for some 1st of mtns, sea of cloths.
- descent thru layer after layer of clouds, don't don, thin deeper grays, bowing land, immediate power slow-down
Blue

29 Jul '80: related entry on Juneau: final item Phyllis dug out for me to see us and 3 other novel & Baranov Castle legend, "The Lady in Blue"
Blue:
- Jul 30, in flight Keelum - PR, 3:25 -
  - rocky at tideline, trees growing out of rocks, only very small
    beaches
  - small islands have muskeg interior (crowns)
  - lots of rain on water in harbor before takeoff
  - 3:27, over more water, rougher air, plane breaks into it
    - quick white puffs of small waves, lasts perhaps 15 secs, in through
    - logs washed high onto all island tidelines, up to base of growing trees
  - dark species of rock, age weathered to lighter color on top
  - over water, can't see horizon (in cold), simply a brighter number than
    ocean
  - occasional sizeable waves
    - larger waves: white puff continues through, spreads like stain
    - occasional minor slope out of jog yields to water like avalanche
- plane: de Havilland Beaver (yellow)
Blue, Jul 30/2

- Along route, many small islands like small whales, agnit get greater (cf. coastal mts).
- 3:40, weather brighter, plane higher (but not much).
- Hammering power of engine more

3:53, 2d square on tower of lighthouses.
3:54, into thicker overcast, abrupt dimming: weather still shallow height we're at, wisps fly beneath us.
4:0 - over Duncan I.

4:05 - passing it is a rock to our west
- timber grows to waterline all along route
4:15 along BC coast beneath, narrowcheres
- over land now, muddy & prist; muddy pattern in lichen-like
- many caves & channels of old tide
- freighter in harbor; another at grain tank

- Bold eagle for speed's sideways from us 200 yards below
- log booms east along shore as far as can be seen
- Carol: occassional island like 3. most runners 'several together like a fleet'
Blue

31 July
10:20 took off from PR, 20 min. late

- over town, mine shadowing in overcast, plane bouncy, lurching
- tide out, small islands stand in skirts of rock & mud
10:22, landing at PR airport, picked up 3 more passengers, now full load of 81, inc. 1 in co-pilot seat
- irregularly furrowed surface of ocean
10:40 over many small islands,idence to N(?); gray-white caps of rock above tideline, eukhau tree
10:44 fog, visibility a mile or so; 2 fish hooks at far indistinct from waves
- pilot: right hand on wheel, fingering black mustache c. left, as if pressing
- dog at PR, someone asked if Chs weather like this: yes, he said on way to cockpit, raining, fog, windy, rough - a word per step
10:46 fog thicker, vis 1/2 min
- plane worsening, broken midway
Blue, 31 July
10:46, real trough of waves now...
- very's at most than 75';
shards of air wave against mast of boat
- saw then nothingness of fog
- Rose: grass; broad sand; trees to this right
- bumpyness of air sickness - I broke into heavy sweat - interrupt here.
Subsequent notes are catch-up at Masset:
- storm n. in Dixon Entrance like vast cloud of steam rising
- impressive face of Tug Hill above beach as we flew past
- pilot brought & runman flown in to very tip of Rose Point,
horn-like curve of beach & grassland behind, then followed shore to Masset inlet

11:06 tider, absolutely smooth
Little did you know, in the Branton chapel, that it would lead to this!
Olympia Transcript, April 19, 1873, p. 1--

--reprint of letter by CJW Russell of Jan. 22, 1853, about 3 Swedes who drifted in "last Sunday" to Shoalwater Bay in canoe, after harrowing trip from Sitka. (Note that Swan arrived 2 months before that; check NW Coast for reference.)

--possible use: Shoalwater seemed to draw in drifters...
1 May '81: revised this to get away from choppiness of "K...axman" sentence, and to get it into more logical sequence and set up the "milk the bears" conclusion more firmly.

upbringing near the forests of Skane had sufficiently skilled him as a woodsman that he was sent with the hunting party which occasionally forayed out to help provision the port, to milk the bears, as it was jested. Ordinarily, he worked as an axman in the wood-cutting crew. He was the sort of man with nothing much to say, not of whom much was
1 May '81: material on back of this, about reasons for Xmas escape, I shifted sometime this week. In original version, it sat there as an explanation, well beforehand of the escape. Now the escape date is not given until the escape actually starts (M earlier mentions that he knows "a time"), as a more suspenseful unfolding of the plot, and this "reasoning" material is M's interior monologue as he and W go thru the dark for the stealing of the guns.
Now Melander disclosed to them the escape date. Christmas.
The Russians would be celebrating and carousing and dancing their
boots off. The officers and any of the Company Russians who
frequented their lodgings for card games and tippling and monotony-
breaking argument all would be at the governor's ball in Baranov's
Castle, leaving the gun-room accessible. When the escapees' absence
was discovered, the Russians would not be eager to leave their warm
festivities to chase them through the cold of Alaskan night. Moreover,
what could be more natural than for Karlsson to offer Bilibin a few
extra holiday swigs of hootch?

Confusion, alcohol, reluctance, all would be their allies for
the escape, the tall leader concluded. The best possible guests

for New Archangel Christmas.
week of 27 April '81: an example of changing from "telling" to "showing". M's double-cross by Russians is simply shown in the new version, and the "contempt" mention is moved on into section about Otkhotskans.

Melander's name is not to be discovered among any frontier baronage. Instead, Melander at New Archangel rapidly came to hold contempt for the life he and the other Swedes found themselves in as indentured laborers of the Russian-American Company's fur-gathering enterprise, within the Tsar's particular system of empire-by-proxy.
Braaf took up carving. After his first effort, a copying of a madonna in the Russian cathedral who emerged from Braaf's fingers somehow looking simultaneously mournful and sly, Melander suggested, "Carve us a little figurehead for the journey, Braaf. A lady for luck." It had been Wennberg who added, "Where we're going, better make her a mermaid," and so Braaf did.
30 April '81: revised this in Tow Hill section for better pace, and to avoid the thumpy style of "placid seawater...misted trees".

Having pushed the canoe into the placid seawater and turned toward the misted trees, Karlsson and Melander found themselves crossing...
1 May '81: a bit of cosmetics for the page; recast K's song into a centered stanza.

the gate, singing as if drunk—"The fruit of the heart-tree, do not eat, for sorrow grows there, black as peat." Also, he carried

—Robt. Frost on writing, has material on how words look on page.
1 May '81: reversed this US-Russia reference, for better lead-in to eventual
next graf of background on Russian America.

and Athapascans and Bella Coolas, merchants of Moscow and Irkutsk were
being provided fortunes by bales of Alaskan furs, the United States
was taking unto itself a second broad oceanfront.
27 April '81—This morning, a Monday, I intended to go on with the revise of the 1st half of the ms; the escape scene is the next that needs doing. But for whatever reason I began looking at the start of the ms, trying to judge its "feel"; the barracks scene which I revised on Friday—actually, mostly wrote from scratch—doesn't yet have what I want. One thing nudges another, I looked at the immediately preceding material, the "Melander maybe under different policy" piece. It always has seemed a lump of background, bumping awkwardly out of the ms; I think I originally had it very near to the lead, then reset it after the explanation of Melander and the steamship. Now I've moved it to just after M's leave-taking of the Finn skipper; this uses the narrative, the question of what will happen to M as regards the steamship, to carry the reader thru this background chunk. Maybe I'll change my mind again, but right now it seems to smoothen the ms, to feel right.
24 April '81—10 a.m., an awkward strung-out morning I'm now going to try to redeem. Was very groggy, with half a headache behind my right eye, when I first tried to work. Laid down for an hour, then went to Edmonds for coffee and a cinnamon roll, I now feel at least semi-human again. Probably the chore ahead, writing the early scene of Melander crossing the settlement, is one I don't want to face; at least, I haven't faced it, these past few weeks. But also the grind of the past 2 weeks is catching up with me; the first half of the ms is improving vastly, so it's worth it, but revamping 10 pp. a day, as I've done for 5 of the last 7 workdays, is a load. I've kept at it because I want to have this revision achieved by 1 May, week from today.
Vaster stretches can be found on the earth, but not all that many. Among features of this planet, the Pacific Ocean is the blue mammoth among features of this planet. Sum the reaches of Pacific water—nine thousand miles across from the Philippines to Panama, 0000 from the Bering Sea to Cape Horn—and they add up to area much greater than all the earth’s land surfaces of this colossal integer, the North Pacific makes the hugest fraction. Is, to cast the image geographically once more, a kind of shard-shaped planet unto itself, possessed of its own fierce logics of existence.
he had in him the seaman's way of letting the days take care of
that seagoer's necessary faith that
distance, simply accepting that because there is more time than
there is expanse of the world, any journey at last will end,

Melander tended to think of the escape in this stepping-stone
manner, rarely in the totality of what he and the other three
were undertaking. This made a loss to them all, for Melander
alone of the four had traveled greatly enough on the planet
Karlsson was the sort of man with not much to say, nor of whom much was said. Slender and withdrawn, with a narrow bland face like that of a village parson, compared to the so-seldom wordless Melander he was a figure almost in camouflage. Yet Melander one time had noticed Karlsson canoeing back from a day's hunting—Karlsson was a skilled enough woodsman from his upbringing near the forests of Skane that he occasionally was sent out with a hunting party to help provision the port; ordinarily, he worked as an axman in the wood-cutting crew—by skimming across Sitka Sound with steady stopless strokes. Watching him, Melander had been put in mind of the regularity of a millwheel.
inside the stockade gate. The smithing shop transected the middle of the structure, and within its open arched doorway stood three huge forges, like stabled iron creatures of some nature, aligned from the outside in. The outermost forge was Wennberg's.

Melander scanned out into the parade ground from here where Wennberg stood by the hour at his work, wagged his head in rueful understanding of the view thus presented of all comings and goings and most particularly of Braaf's storage hulk, and proffered: "So?"

"You have plans to get away from this Russian bearpit, and I'm coming with you."
8 April '81: edited p. 37, dialogue between Wennberg and Melander, to show W's abruptness: his talk has more contractions than that of the others.
Rosenberg pinched the area between his eyes again and asked:

"Drink, do you mean?"

"Actually, no. He, ah, gambled."
Russian navy contingent stationed at New Archangel. In his first Alaskan year Melander was permitted to steam out with the Nicholas only whenever Rosenberg, the Russian governor, took his official retinue on an outing to the hot spring at an outpost called Ozherskoi, a little distance south along the coast from Sitka Sound. This happened precisely twice, and Melander's sea-time-under-steam totaled six days. The rest of the workspan was an assignment conferred upon him by a Russian overseer as promptly as the supply schooner vanished.
A scatter of much smaller islands, then the large Queen Charlottes group, south-pointing too, like the sheath Baranov had been pulled from.

Another broken isle-chain of coast, then the long blunt slant of Vancouver Island.

At last, the fourth and biggest solidity in the succession Melander was drawing, the American coastline leading to the Columbia River, and Astoria.
lay amid the dozen canoes nearest the stockade gate, convenient, and Karlsson had watched to see that the native who owned it was scrupulous, on New Archangel's rare warm days, about sloshing water over the cedar interior to prevent its drying out and cracking, and in damp weather heaped woven mats over it for shelter.
2 March '81—It seems to be a positive disadvantage to have a good title ready for a book, as with Winter Brothers and now Sea Runners. While I was working on Winter ms, Sloan Wilson's novel Ice Brothers came out, and a book called I think Winter Journey. And late last week I opened the Feb. 20 Pub Wkly to find the 1st book in Nonfiction is titled Sea Run.
2-27-81: The 20 or so pp. after B's champagne swig have taken shape the past few days; next week I'll have Merlyn do the lst typescript of this section. Have tried to regulate pace and nuance in this section, even at this "early" stage. An example: have been aware that too many of the scenes—there are I think 18 in the just over 20 pp.—end in periodic pronouncement style. The 1st one ends with the descrptn of M as worker ant on mtn, the next ends with series concluding "dark brought night two of their leaving of NA". I had the Kuiu scene ending with "This had been a day of stumble...But..." Just now, I cut that as an ending, leaving that scene to end on action, canoe pulling to shelter "just short of full dark", and putting the "stumble...but" material as lead for next scene.

A bonus of this is that the new "first day of stumble" phrase sets up later such stumbles, too.
Blue

23 Feb. '81:
Am at a stumping section, as I recall I was with the Tidyman material in House of Sky and the Mt. Rainier material in Winter, tho I hope this one is not so major. (Both those came out to be among the best pieces in those books.) I need to describe the North Pacific, and as yet don't have the background for it. First thing this morn I scrapped the material I'd intended about explorers, thinking I'd better keep the emphasis on the ocean itself; may, however, say something about the NW Passage quest, to the effect that the Pacific never yielded itself to this notion that it was a crooked stair to somewhere else.
18 Feb. '81: After a faltering day y'day, trying to tool up from a 3-day weekend, this has been a day of strong editing, the writing and rewriting of the past weeks evidently having reached a critical mass.

First of the day's decisions was one of style. To cut what had been the resumption from following the ms sample—"So, Melander's plan had slipped them from the seven-year shackle of New Archangel. Now it would be seen whether it somehow could carry them ten hundred miles along one of the earth's most wild coastlines"—and go directly back to action, Melander permitting a few hours of sleep before resumed paddling. The rhetorical sentences, I intend to tuck away within quicker passages somewhere. If I do some of this, I should be speeding the narrative with action leads, yet delivering notional passages within...

—Sometime within the past few days, I've had the idea of going to italicized interior passages for K and probably W in the last portion of the book, probably K's beginning right after he realizes there are no further maps, and W's after Braaf's drowning.
11 Feb. '81—9:15 am: this may be short-lived, but the ms begins to feel alive. I've already revised 3 pp., half the day's quota, and am about to try some immersion into the "phrasing" and "coastal details" file cards, a plunge I've been reluctant to take. The change in weather somehow may account for, or at least contribute to, this; a skiff of snow on the ground this morning, C walking up the hill to work, me feeling somehow more comfortably wintered in, ready to achieve. Mysterious, but so it seems.

3 pm—The day continued as well as it started. I took a mid-day break by walking thru the snow to food store on Richmond Beach Road, about an hour's excursion, then light lunch and a quick go-through of the Seattle Times and the Weekly, and back to work. I've tallied 8 pp. of rewrite today, roughly 1500 words, and within them a number of sentences which will pretty well stand as finished, I think. Have quit at a point where I think I can resume tomorrow--the crossing from Baranof I. to Kuiu I.--and seem to have energy left to do some making of file cards from notebook jottings.
11 Feb. '81: A physical reminder this noon when I walked through the snow to
the QFC on Richmond Beach Road: my right heel took the brunt of the Alpha Helix
work, growing tender through the hours of standing on metal deck plates of the
wheelhouse; by sometime in the second day, I folded a handkerchief into the
heel-space inside my boot to try for extra cushioning. My back, which dislikes
more than about ten minutes of standing, also felt it, and I learned to lean
periodically against the back wall of the wheelhouse to rest it.
9 Feb. '81--Managed some organizing of the 2nd quarter of the ms, setting up a ring-binder titled—after Swedes, Swedes 2, and More Swedes--0 God More Swedes Yet. Have decided to use, at least for now, tabbed pages to divvy the scenes of this roughed section; in Friday's session of thinking it over and browsing the bookstore for possible aids to organization, couldn't come up with anything better. Of course, this *meditation pondering is primarily stalling; if I'd get down to the gutwork of writing, much of the organizational hassle would take care of itself.

Be that as it may, I've now scheduled in 6 pp of revision of this roughed material for each day of this week, and likely for the 4 workdays of next week as well. Will see if, in trying to bend the ms to about its halfway point, a hundred pp. or more, it won't get underway more than it has recently.

--Occurred to me while walking the n'hood this afternoon: I'd like each sentence of this book to excel.
4 Feb. '81—My loose-leaf binders to date are labeled Swedes, Swedes 2, and More Swedes. If I have another one, I'll call it 0 God, More Swedes Yet. Should check the short story--Erskine Caldwell?--House Full of Swedes.
3 Feb. '81—Had hoped that the Alaska trip would spur me into strong writing as soon as I got home, but it hasn't. Y'day I could manage only 3 of intended 5 pp.; today I got the goal, but it seems to me rough stuff. I don't have the spurt of energy I'd been looking for, altho the success of the Alaska trip ought to have been sufficient to provide it. My lag may be physical; I don't feel very much in shape, and the past 2 days have had a canker sore on side of my tongue which has been like sitting here with a hot coal in my mouth.
30 Jan '81: this morning I've sorted the file cards of the past week's Alaska trip into chrono'l order: the Blue cards for that journey are in with all the others, in the Alpha Helix section of the "vessel detail" heading in file box. (Likewise, the Blue cards from the few days in Sitka are with the cards in the "Sitka" file heading.) I also made diary entries during the trip, Jan. 21-28.
8 Jan. '81: This morning, I at once sat down and undid some of y'day's richening of prose, seeing, with C's advice last night, that it lost me some of the ms's quickness and cleanliness of rhythm. If nothing else, y'day's doings can remind me that in my eagerness to make this a brilliant book, I shouldn't forget to make it a good one.
7 Jan '81: Y'day midafternoon—I went to UW library in the morning, on the Seattle City Light false alarm that the n'hood's power was going to be off—I began reworking the lead of Sea Runners. I'm attempting to make two things develop at once, the scene of the canoe coming ashore and the realization in the reader that this is "the first necessary picture in your mind" (i.e., the first of possibly many); I tinkered through 6 or 8 versions, the main problems being to get the "first necessary picture phrase" into an early and logical, yet not intrusive place, and to use the "nimble and buoyant as a magnified seabird" image without its skewing a sentence rhythm. Finally, after supper I came up with the current version.

Today, went on from there through the next four pages, adding a few bits of dialogue from Melander, moving grafs around, and loosening up the material with expanded details or side-comments. I'm searching for the right texture for the book, and this revision begins to feel somewhat like it.

8 Jan: On the inevitable other hand: C read the revise last night, got me to comparing with the previous one, and convinced me I was tinkering too much. I have changed 3 or 4 words I wanted to--indeed, it was those words and some doubt about rhythms which made me tinker in the first place--but it now seems to me a deft enough lead. Certainly I had better make myself leave it alone for awhile. (intended revise is on back of this card.)
A ridge of surf, rumpling in from the wakeful January ocean.

A high-nosed cedar canoe adds itself atop the tumble of whiteness.

Next, in this first necessary picture in your mind, the craft sleds across the curling crest of wave and, nimble and buoyant as a magnified seabird, begins to glide toward the dark frame of your scene, a shore of black spruce forest. On modern charts of the long, crumbled coastline south from the Gulf of Alaska this particular landfall is inscribed as Aristazabal Island. But here in midwinter of the year 1853, three of the four voyagers bobbing to shore in the keen-beaked canoe know nothing of any such name, nor would it matter the least whit to them if they did.
handicapped by lack of shovel in gathering clams. also, they now are expending energy, digging or gathering, to get food.
1-27-82: added Sitka blueberry buds, p. 237
possible add

246--W's reluctance

W looking spent: mention food shortage?

1-27-82: inserted this on p. 246A; also made an add on 246.
The clatter of gravel being shoved by the surf...
possible add

The journey was a holiday for the nose (after man-smell of barracks). Have K notice?--perhaps have B snuffling, his nose running off with its freedom.
possible add

230-1--two days' travel
- K uses air to dig for clams
- tough horse clams

1-27-82, made these adds instead on p. 235, **scene of K in looking over sand dunes.**
possible add

228--dusk paddling to 3d beach

--dialogue

--coastal desctn
the islands in dusk, their dimension now all in black outline
outlined islands held their dimension
22 Jan '82: y'day went to Fed Rec Center to track down Tom Cox's ref'ce to Jane, in Olympia customs house records; opened the register, beautiful broad pages of copper plate script giving ship name, where built, owner, last port, master, where bound, and cargo--and under cargo for all ships such as Jane, simply the notation: "Piles and lumber." By studying the pages for 1851-54 I finally found one cargo entry with some arithmetic--the Leonesa, 12,000 feet of piles--and luck of luck, it was a brig as the Jane was. Since it was 180-tonner and Jane about 165-tonner, I made the Jane's cargo 11,000'.

p. 213--crx Jane's cargo total in Jan.
19 Jan '82: at Lapush last Thurs., after last of Winter Bros filming there, C and I walked the beach to the breakwater, looked at the town with its pilings rising from water, I thought up the line "low tide showing the shins of the town." Have just installed it in the Astoria descptn, p. 139 of ms, substituting for this:

the foot of a shaggy Columbia headland. Yet also the recognized port of America's Pacific Northwest, tapping the 1200-mile-long Columbia and its tributaries like a cup hung to gather the sugar of a giant maple. If, through whatever unlikelihood, you found yourself at Astoria, you could aim yourself onward into the world aboard one of the dozen or fifteen vessels which plied here month by month.
UW: check date of Victoria's founding. OK - 1783 historic
p. 67--check whether Sharps rifle existed in early 1850s

No--after Civil War

- use a smoothbore octagonal barrel
HBC Scots

Faulkner 235
McLoughlin THon Co., p.232 - OK
Simpson, 175-77 THon Co  OK
Mackenzie

Fraser

Douglas, THon Co, 233 - OK
John Rae, THon Co, 242 - OK
Campbell, THon Co, 251 - OK

F 1060
W 85 - Woodcock

Maria 514
F 77 E Freydy

Cultrude
1-20-82
9.158 - sled hames (OED)
  - don't use; sub "shafts"
  (and if it be "close-ground"?)

OED PE
1625
M7
1933

2-20-82
p. 69—quarter arms correct? No—port arms: ELY.

see New Infantry Drill Regs, 356, N42, 1939
UW or Shoreline: check Columbia Gazeteer for Sveaborg, Finland.

- see Suomenlinna

p.1846: island fortress, S Finland, in Gulf of Finland,
   2 mi SE of Helsinki city center
- began 1748-9
- 1808, taken by Russians
Hawaii: called that in 1853, or the Sandwich Isles? — Colia Cary: called Sandwich Isles by Cook
7 Jan ’82: going thru Sitka and Run America bgnd material as final check, found in Holmberg report on Tlingits that they preferred silver to gold: accdgly changed on p. 77 of ms, "even the yellow coins" to "silver".

--ms p. 19: opening line abt B's desire to leave NA went thru mutations from across abt yr and a half:
--originally, "B wd have given the fingers of one hand..."
--in revise before ms completion in late ’81, "fingers from one hand"
--now has become "fingers from either hand"
11 Jan '82: a catching-up note from pocket notebook: sometime in Nov. or Dec. C asked me how I was faring with Runners, I told her it'd be a great relief to get to the next book where I can send people different directions, instead of perpetually south along the coast as the Runners go. (Likely this was at the start of revising the Wash. coast section.)
8 Jan. '82: last Monday, the 4th, Tom Stewart's letter appraising the ms arrived, along with the snowstorm that covered the roads for the rest of the week until today. I'd intended to take time off, get out—downtown, and to Ebey's Landing, for ex—but given the weather and Tom's prompt response, decided to get back to ms instead. Spent most of time since then working on 1st 75 pp. of ms, the New Archangel end. Have r reviewed all the Sitka and Rn America source material, made crx or additions on ms with green lines. Today revamped, mostly by moving around, the bgnd material in the ppl which intro M, and the 1st scene of M and K; will go over them with Carol tomorrow.
16 Dec. '81—added tidemark stick, from Brueckmann, to p. 235
Countyline scene: show their wavering strength by difficulty of pulling canoe up.

--like sledge?

--16 Dec. '81, addition made, p. 233
Melander needed rapid decision. Still struggling against sea-sickness, Wennberg was erratic at the paddle. But if he lowered his head to bail, he would be sicker yet. So---"Braaf, you'll need to shovel water, and quick."
Blue

102A-104—combine into M's sleepless speculation?

-103-cut: "Ponched etc"
  - night at horsenough
  - So it wasn't going to sit up

17 Dec. '81. did this.
K at Countyline: in his calendar count, have him come out at holy day of some sort.

- at scene where he takes it from me.

inserted, 18 Dec. '81
p. 66+—change lock scene tok having them pry off hasp?
    - have W chisel place for pry bar?
    - do it w mallet, less noise?

p. 68—B suggested they cut trigger gds rather than chain.
18 Dec. '81--after John Roden's reading, changed gun room scene for plausibility's sake.

"Stick in your thing, blacksmith," Braaf said under his breath.

"Don't be bashful, the padlock won't giggle."

Wennberg pulled from his breeches a queer piece of metalwork about the length of a serving spoon. At its small end the device was shaped like a thick skeleton key. At the other, it flared into a fat doughnut of metal, like the eye of a sizable ringbolt. It was of iron, and had taken Wennberg great time to forge in secret.
Two exertions on the long handles of the snippers, and tempered jaws crushed twice through filigreed metal.

The triggerguard of the first rifle cut away, Braaf plucked the weapon free of its restraining chain and handed it past Wennberg to Melander.
p. 143—W smashing the canoe: does Indian method of smashing canoes need earlier mention?
"No," said Karlsson. He picked up the mapcase, out of habit tied it snug, tossed it into the canoe. "No, before we've done, we may wish Mister Blacksmith was only a fool."
Blue

16 Dec '81--added to this.
from Wayne Arlt, remembered from his underwater voyage: being on ocean is like being in a bowl, horizon higher all around you than you are.

high was in every saying of it...

16 Dec. '81, inserted, p. 122
have K kill a blacktail deer?
p. 122, after Astoria?
or just have the men see occasional deer?
p. 94, after M and maps scene?
12-16-81: pp. 110-1104, scene added
15 Dec. '81—revised p. 46+ to make Pierce's crx that Russians didn't use hanging and to tone down metaphorical dialogue a bit.

"I am. Else you and Braaf and Karlsson'll be hung from the top of the stockade for the magpies to feast on."

"Tsk. On all this big island there should be plenty for the birds to feed on without going to that. Aye? What makes you think we're kissing goodbye to New Archangel?"

"Don't come clever with me, Melander. I've watched your trained packrat Braaf, these weeks."

"Braaf is his own man."

"Braaf's operated by your jabber. So's that stiff-cock Karlsson."
"Such powers I seem to have. You'll want to watch out I don't command your sidewhiskers to turn into louse nests."

"You're not the high-and-mighty to command anything just now," the blacksmith rumbled. "You're down the toilet looking up, and don't forget it."

"Come down with these fevers often, do you, Wennberg? Say we wanted to flee, how would we? Call ourselves Jonah and ask a whale to bunk us aboard?"

"You'd yatter as long as maiden's pee runs downhill, Melander. Time we barter. My silence for your plan."

" Silence I don't much believe in. But school me: why are you interested in notions of fleeing from here?"
"My reasons sleep cousin to yours. Because I'm sick of life under these shit-beetle Russians. Because there's wider places of the world than this bedamned stockade." Grudgingly: "Because if anyone here is slyboots enough to escape, it's likely you."

"Flattering."

"Which doesn't mean I wouldn't laugh to see you hung high for magpie food, if that's your choice. Decide."

Melander held Wennberg's gaze in a lock with his own. Then the serious smile made its appearance.
Melander's unease went on longest; an absence of some sort nagged through the dark at him. At last he placed what this was. He was listening for the creak of ship timbers, the other part of the choir whenever ocean was heard.

add to scene of restless sleeping due to ocean sound: M looking at the others, per Tom Stewart's suggestion.

15 Dec. '81--made change, p. 102A
wrist, arms—yes, they tire, stiffen. But where the effort eats deep is the shoulder blade. First at one, then when the paddle is shifted to the other side of the canoe for relief, the ache moves across to the other: as if all weariness chose to ride the back just there, on those twin bone saddles.
15 Dec. '81—Added to this Brueckmann's details on aching legs and knees.
The canoe bucked, slid down nose first, rocked to one side, bucked again, slid again and rocked to the other side, a nautical jig new to Wennberg and Braaf and a horrifying one to meet in the wet dark.

"Steady up, don't beat the water to death," instructed Melander. But the paddling efforts of the pair in the middle of the canoe still were stabs into the sloshing turmoil until Karlsson directed:
12-15-81: changed this to present version on pp. 73-73A to incorporate Korte Brueckmann's paddling info.
their legs, shrug the hunch from the top of their backs. Creakily, Melander leaned toward Braaf and whispered.

graaf nodded and ran a swift hand into the supplies stowed within the canoe. When his hand came up, it held an elegant dark bottle.
15 Dec. '81—changed this to include K's methodical care and 1st mention of Brueckmann's point about clumsiness until refueled by food.
Dec. '81--p. 34 of typescript, *mmnthim* added to this Tlingit tree-cutting chant.

of wood - the way a great red cedar had been hollowed and trimmed and stretched by heated water into a sleek pouch of vessel, its wooden skin not much more than the thickness of a thumb: exaltation of design and thrift of line, the jugglery of art somehow perfected
Blue

14 Dec '81--typescript insert, p. 60

add B and K scene: Chinamen and furs--adorn

B: Not much of a word spender, are you?
   K: Not much.

K: Maybe to see how it'll be.
"He'd married, you see, a Kolosh woman. Sometime soon after my arrival here, the woman died. Croup, I believe. It was then Wennberg slipped from the path of right. When I sought to console him, he cursed me. He also cursed--God. Since then he has fallen, if I may say so, even deeper into harmful ways."
14 Dec '81: cut this from typescript to make W's Countyline monologue more a surprise.
20 Nov. '81—The week I think I bent and strung the bow. Second $\frac{1}{2}$ of ms is at last feeling right; I've filled in the yellow "to come" pp. except for 4 or so at Shoalwater Bay, and the Vancouver I. run (and I've a rough of that). Also went thru the pp., 132 of them at week's start, and brought nearly all of them up to the point needed before final polish. Still to come: personality of K and W, K's divided mind about the coast. But the main stuff I think is at last in place.

Plan for the next 3 weeks is to finish rough of ms by Thanksgiving, then take the 2 weeks after for smoothing.

Meanwhile, on W d. of this week, I think it was, I sent to Merlyn the 1st $\frac{1}{2}$ for typescript, asking her to have it back by Dec. 1.

I may get a book out of this yet.
10 Nov. 81—Ms is demanding so much work that I've forfeited both the diary and these entries, recently. But as best I can summarize what's been happening:

---1st week of this month, I worked on 1st 2 1/2 of ms, so C could read it in some version of completeness last weekend; also strung together the second 1/2 a bit more, and inserted yellow "scene to come" sheets where filling in is needed; about 20 of those, now worked down to 15 or so. C began Friday afternoon, finished ms by Sat. night, Sun. morn went over suggestions with me. Not really so many; main one was that M could not have given up on getting all the maps, he was too careful and organized, would have sent K back for the rest; she suggested I change it to a case of only 4 maps being available, the steamship never venturing farther south than that.

---Was weary at 10PM of last week, but with a couple of days' rest and being heartened by C's sense, and mine, that not much more needed doing on the ms than I already knew, felt much better. Hard to maintain, though. Y'day was a useful one, several good patches inserted, but all still on 1st 1/2. This morn, too, the work had to be on 1st 1/2, insert of descptn of paddling. Set to work right after lunch on the 2nd 1/2 scene of the crossing of Milbanke Sound, didn't get far. Did some mild editing, some moping, then about 3:15 took the plunge and rewrote W's blackest interior musing, on death of his wife (also restored to ms at C's sug'n) into dialogue; decided to run graf of Cook's journal descptn of Vancouver I. coast, idea I may or may not stick with; began to wonder if I can meld the Cook jnl and material I have on the "dreaming"—ideas perking a bit, finally.

over
31 Oct '81: past 3 weeks have gone much as the previous card intended; I now have just over 100 draft pp. of 2nd half of ms, some of it decent stuff, and the plot is in place. But what I missed in previous calculations is that these are 100 triple-spaced draft pp., instead of double-spaced typescript: therefore I'm still short about 25-30 pp. Spent some time y'day juggling the 2nd ½ together, and inserted yellow "scene to come" sheets at about 20 places. Some will be brief, the descent of Vancouver Island will be the longest. Hope to do them at about 2 per day.

So: a lot of reasonable work on the ms in Oct., the 2nd ½ of ms taking shape and some life--and given the complexity and challenge of it, I suppose that's no small result. The rest of the job looks quantifiable: fill in the 2nd ½ scenes and do as much look-over of the 1st half as possible, by Thanksgiving; then the rest of the smoothing. There's not as much time left as I'd like; could well be finishing the typing just before we go to NY on Dec. 20.

Other progress this month: hired look-overs of the ms (1st ½) by Diane Zink and Irene Wanner, both did valuable job; also, Margaret Svec and Pat Armstrong both re-read 1st ½ again, made good comments. And managed a few checking letters and stray bits of research, too. Busy.
9 Oct. '81—Past week's work I think was valuable one—50 pp. of 1st ½ of ms polished, a couple of fresh pp. added—but came at a disconcerting time, before I've managed to finish the draft of the entire ms. Probably it's a restorative I need, casting back into the earlier work, and I did gain some notion of how to extend and sharpen char'zn of K and W. I think now, tho, I'd better put this brushing-up mood to the 2nd ½ of the ms: try, in each of the next 2 weeks, to lengthen 30 of those draft pp. into 40 "revised"; then take the last week of this month to finish whatever's left of 2nd ½, I hope no more than 20–30 pp. The week after that—1st wk in Nov.—I'll try insert 12 pp. of adds into 1st ½ of ms; from Nov. 9–25 (Thanksgiving) polish the ms. Then get 'er typed.

This is more formulaic than I'm comfortable with at this stage of the game; had intended the 2d ½ would be in full draft, and polishing could start soon. But it seems necessary, to get this tricky ms finally tamed: number my days, as W preaches over M.

Over: today's accounting of week's work on 1st ½.
l Oct. '81--First of a month, and by a month from now, there should be long progress on ms: it should have nearly final shape, need just touching-up and polishing.

The last 3 weeks have been a constant levering on the 2nd half, and y'day the task finally pivoted. With the achievement of that day's 5 pp., just 10 were left to do to reach the goal of 85 pp. of draft ms, and as I put in the diary, those 10 I could write with bloody stumps of fingers if need be.

This slogwork of the past 3 weeks is never easy, especially at the start when all the pp. loom. I think my mood has been pretty decent through it, though. Also have tried not to let other matters slide too much and add to the fret.

As I see the chore next: keep at the ms at as high a pace as I can without breaking my guts as I've done these 3 weeks; after likely 2 weeks of that, which I hope will produce fuller charzns of K and W and fill in most of the plot gaps, evaluate and see how the work has to be divvied into days again.
15 Sept. '81--Revised the 1st 7 pp. of draft of 2d half, and the book began to feel underway again. The revise took on some flesh, if not yet all the muscle and flex I want. Think I begin to see how to make K an interesting character--by beginning to reveal his history and complement it with interior monologue--and then do some of the same with W.

The ms continues difficult to bring the full force of the file cards and other research to bear on it; possibly because of scene-by-scene structure. This I think will change somewhat in the rewriting and polishing after the entire draft is achieved, but it is a bugger to achieve.

Would like to pin down the mood of today, why it &--and intimations of it as far back as Friday and Sat., on the Olympics hikes--begins to feel like achievement, possibility. Possibly the restedness from the Oly trip, possibly my internal clock. I'm not eager for these next 3 weeks of doing the rough draft; am considerably bothered they weren't achieved earlier; but I do look at them as a stint with better times just beyond.
4 Sept. '81—Am trying to retrieve the Runners schedule, after loss of abt 4 days of writing due to Lucie's illness during her visit. I have 63 pp. of 2nd half draft, where I'd hoped to have 80 by today or tomorrow. Of the total ms, I have 190 pp. of abt 240 intended.

So, the situation ain't great, particularly given how weary I am and the complexity of the ms just now. Two notions fight in me: to try slog out the necessary pp. to meet the quota, or to stop and think things over for today and the weekend. Am tilting toward the latter, thinking of going to UW library for needed books on bgnd of K and W in Sweden and on w. coast of Vancouver I.; those sections of ms would bring 2nd half total to about 75 pp., which I'd settle for.
23 Aug. '81: 11:30, have just reworked the ending pp. of the ms to have K build a signal fire atop the log. Thought of this on Friday, while C was at Mason Clinic with her parents and I some hours to sit around and mull. This is Sunday, and a sunny one, but with visitors in the house I've holed up in the study this morn, trying to work toward a rough of the 2nd half of the ms by the time they leave, Sept. 2. Tomorrow I try start a so-many-pp/day schedule.

--Spent most of last week on Winter Bros tv script; did manage some Runners reading, including a look at books on dreaming and a read—a long one—of the voyage of the Vega, which provided some good language.
31 July '81--The past couple days, first ones back at the ms, have been rough, but sometime y'day I had two ideas on how to handle the interior monologues I intend in the book's send half: frame them in ellipses, and keep them short, at least at the start. Have just tried it out, breaking a draft of K's first musing into 3 shorter monologues, and it looks good. Think I'll further set off these first ones by surrounding them with dialogue or description, at first breakfast after M'd death, when K decides not to admit absence of maps.

As I see these monologues, they're to be a surprising element, in the way Melander's metaphorical language was in the first half; an odd angle into the story, a slant shaft into the lode...
29 July '81—1st real day of resumption of Runners. Daunting damn task to get underway again, partly because I'm being schizo and want also to achieve the sundry house chores, some dabbling with friends, exercising myself into shape, all of them of course direct conflicts with the immersion the ms needs.

I did revise, to not all that much improvement, 3 pp. today, as well as leafing thru much of the 1st half of the ms to try catch its mood. Quite a lot of that 1st half seems to me pretty good; but I'm appalled at the work ahead to get the 2nd half into rough draft. Am going to try do that by the time C starts back to work in mid-Sept., though it's problematical whether I can find the time and focus. My original notion was that I'd try do 8 pp. per workday, a combination of revise and fresh drafting. Today's slog panicked me about the problems of that—coming up with the fresh drafting—until I went up about 3:30 to walk the track and during that decided to come home and jot an outline and estimate of pp. per episode in it, then work toward those totals. Have just done so, and it adds up to 83 pp. of the 100 I figured I want in the 1st draft of this second half. So I think that breaks down the numbers into something workable, and in the next week, I'll see if I can't pile up some pages on that basis.
5 June '81: today mailed to Liz the 1st ½ of Runners ms; see diary entry.
3 June '81: At UW today, inquired at MSS for mid-19th c. letters to look at, as guide to salutation style for the mock-letter which is the current ending of Runners. Karyl Winn suggested the Ayers family papers, which provided a number of options; Connie chipped in a "business reference" book with hackneyed expressions—i.e., 19th centuryisms—to be avoided. Then went up to NW Colctn to see if I could get the name of the Ore. Weekly Times editor at the time, Glenda found a prompt reference.

--details of the salutation-gathering: the place on the same line with the date; the "th" of "19th" at the top of the last digit; the Df for Dear, and the variant I liked as a sign-off, Yours &c.

--Also, the Ayers were Conn. people, and the fictitious writer of the letter is meant to be a Yankee, Jonathan E(dwards) Cotter.
29 May '81--Y'day afternoon, C brought home from Merlyn the final typed pp. of the start of the ms, and I began typing in the page numbers of those that needed it—a stage of ms process C says she can recognize by the "tick-tack" sound of typewriter slapping the double digits onto the paper.
29 May '81—Comment from a photog that my scenery descriptions are like watching the images come up as a print is developed in darkroom. (See Duncan Kelso letter, Sky letters file.)
29 May '81: see diary entry about writing.
Vaster stretches can be found on the earth, but not all so many, as fiercely and none so changeable.

Most of the climates imaginable are engendered somewhere along the horizon of coast, from polar chill to the stun of desert heat. The North Pacific's special law of gravity is lateral and violent: currents of water and weather rule. The most tremendous of these, something like a gigantic permanent storm under the water, is called the Kuroshio, the Japanese Current, and puts an easterly push into several thousand miles of ocean. Even here at the farthest littoral from the current's origins, Melander and Karlsson and Wennberg and Braaf feel Kuroshio's ceaseless shove against their journey without realizing it.
22 May '81: Mid-afternoon y'day, going thru the first several pp., saw a way to move the background material on M to scene where he is looking out over Sitka Sound. Since I've been bothered by slowness of the ms getting underway, went to Sh'line, photocopied the pp., and pasted up new version. Showed it to C, she was lukewarm about it, saying she was used to 1st version. This morn, I tend to agree; the 1st version isn't very fast action but has its own impetus. But I am glad to have the optional version; if my two minds on this matter continue, I may have both versions set into galleys at SeaGraphics or somewhere, see how they look that way.
20 May '81: cut this today, as too fancy; section on Pacific needs something more, but fact rather than rhetoric.

It is like the North Pacific to mask its power, have its effect on you before you can come awake to the fact; the perpendicular animal that is man, after all, is a visitor upon this wild blue shard-shaped planet named the North Pacific.
27 May '81: Early in Memorial Day weekend, I think maybe Friday night, I came to the idea of adapting the CJW Russell newspaper letter to use as ending. Can't tell yet whether I'll stick with it, but it looks promising. The settler's name I made up is Jonathan (dwards) Cotter, simply because it sounds so ineffably Yankee.

--The idea came in the evening, so the next morning I roughed a version of it, even though it wasn't a writing day; just now have done a second draft.
18 Dec. '80: change M's "aye" habit to "aye-Eh?", or not?

No.
13 Oct. '80:
This morn photocopied ms sample, completed cover letter to Liz. Will mail tomorrow; intended to today, but post office had a holiday, Columbus Day.

Merlyn finished the typing last Thurs., having done all 65 pp. since Monday. I changed a word in the first p. -- "however" for "But"--and she redid that by Fri. morn.
6 Oct. 80—Either have finished the revise of ms sample or am abandoning it, not entirely clear which. Whatever, I seem to be written out on it for now. Last couple days of last week, and to a lesser extent today, have had great reluctance to face what needs doing in the ms, because what needs doing is some writing-from-scratch in the escape scene and I feel too weary to take on anything fresh.

As to how the ms sample now stands, I can't just say; will look back on it at week's end, when Merlyn will have retyped it all, and maybe have some notion then. Strangely, I know it's improved immensely from when I started this revise, 3 or so weeks ago: more dialogue, better pace and sequence—yet I feel less sanguine about it than I did then. I maybe am thrown a bit by the fact that the revise didn't quite go as intended, more writing-from-scratch needed than I had guessed and consequently not the time or energy left for going over it word by word and then for sentence patterns, as I'd planned. Also, despite all my tinkering, I think it still starts slow, as my stuff always does.

So: if I have any handle on myself at all today, it's that I've done considerable work the past 3 weeks, some of it a great improvement, but I'm not sure it's nearly enough.
Dear Mr.

Re-reading, Sept. 18, '30:

P. 8 - link - comes to M's looking at them from catwalk

9 - more out N.A.'s remoteness?

12 - more on implications of impulse?

17 - later date to reached helms. During escape?

20 - more cane debate. Use some dialogue, or points back on it.

21 - adjust blockhouse description to M's earlier visit.

22 - more description of Bielos?

27 - more M-W dialog?

30 - "Main" reference too modern?

36 - too much W looking?

39 - Xmas dialog with M?

38 - M returns as he walked across N.A.

45 - have K put his arm at Kolesh chief?

P. 4 - mention Findlayson, McLoughlin, etc.
3 Oct 80: cut this graf from bottom of ms p. 2, on re-reading this morn before Merlyn’s retyping, to speed the start of the book a bit. May insert it later, perhaps as Wennberg’s realization that he has underestimated M.

Yet do not be misled by the length and loft of all this wordage of his. Whatever Melander’s tongue dealt with at any given opportunity, ayed and roudabout and chaff-strewn though the route might be, in most likelihood would end up with more weight to it than other men’s mouthings.
1 Oct. '80: changed this graf—problems with it being that the cemetery was outside the stockade, and neither Phyllis DeMuth, who I was certain told me the epitaph, nor the Sitka people can verify "Peace be to your dust"—to material about B hiding in a hulk. Using the hulk had added virtue of fitting better with the descptn of New Archangel, and of being plausible for W's discovery from the viewpoint of his Borgeework.

where on this brow of land which holds New Archangel's four capacious graveyards—Kolosh, Russian Orthodox, Lutheran, and unconsecrated. This morning as usual Braaf angles past the particularly handsome headstone of a young Russian officer who died of pneumonia. Braaf cannot comprehend the Russian inscription, but it reads: Peace be to your dust.
30 Sept. '80: today rewrote scene of the three choosing a canoe, into indirect dialogue. Y'day, rewrote the scene of B joining the escape, into direct dialogue. The pair make the funniest scenes in the book, the canoe scene perhaps too humorous, but think I'll leave it for now. They also change the thrust of the characters, Braaf at once emerging as obliquely funny, K less silent than I had intended, M more patient.
Sept 29, 80: recast this sentence, p. 25, to do away with the complicated double-dash structure, which I've already used in scenes of K at the gate. Also, it dawned on me that I want the reader to be alarmed, not have the immediate disclaimer that the voice wasn't Russian.

Braaf was making away with the sailcloth, the folded length of it cradled beneath an armload of skins he ostensibly was carrying toward the tannery, when a voice--through his fright it did register on him that the voice at least was Swedish rather than Russian--suggested huskily into his ear, "Let's talk about what you have under those skins."

Braaf turned his head the fraction enough to recognize the
The next morning after tea was taken outside the stockade by a pair of men, it was taken by a trio: Braaf studying back and forth from Melander's forehead to Karlsson's as Melander once more outlined the plan. Only for an instant, about the duration of a held breath, did Braaf's eyes come steady with nodded agreement theirs, just before he agreed to join the escape. And that is how they became three.
24 Sept. '80--Today wrote 3 pp. of dialogue in bathhouse, first chunk of that length as it goes into the ms. Moved the ploy of K visiting the Kolosh women up to here, as strong ending line, and will cut the brief graf I had --M okaying B to start thievery--to insert this dialogue. Hard day of writing, but the result looks pretty good.
23 Sept. '80: first day of work on Runners since last Thurs.--the 18th--because of diversion to G'heim application. But this felt like an achieving day, the front portion of the msk beginning to feel solid, in place. I think much of this is a matter of pace; the scenes seem to be going somewhere, doing what they should, in this rewrite. Texture is another part of it, each sentence taking on some feature. Also, this is fairly pleasant work, mostly a matter of moving material around, rather than having to invent from scratch.

I worked to bottom of p. 18, and think there's a need to insert a long chunk of dialogue, perhaps set in the bathhouse. It'd be the first extended dialogue among M, K and B. Deliberately I'm trying to make the dialogue take the course it would in life, sparse at first, then looser and fuller as the men get to know each other.

Read today at lunch, in John Updike's review of Roland Barthes essays (NYer, Sept. 22), this: "the grain of the Voice, which 'an erotic mixture of timbre and language." Which I think is what I've called "texture" in writing; the note I made to myself that every line in Sky should have something good, preferably poetic, in it.
16 Sept. '80: Amy sent home with C a letter from her daughter-in-law Elizabeth, commenting on House of Sky: "...As you know when weaving I throw the shuttle back and forth. Yet it is not this throwing that makes the emerging pattern: it is my feet plying the treadles. But wait! it is not the treadles, but the threaded hiddles (?) in patterned sequence. And so is Ivan's book. The fine story line shuttle is made exquisite with the intricate footwork of mastered language. Yet that has not made the fabric: his love has..."

Today's work on Runners: better, much better than y'day. Revised the first half-dozen pages, mostly a matter of moving grafs around. I do have the major problem just now of lacking sufficient distance from the ms to see readily what it needs or doesn't. I'd hoped the week on the coast would provide perspective, but it didn't. Will have to trust to the feel of the ms, try to find a rhythm of scenes, to be able to work on it.
15 Sept. '80: sobering, even a bit alarming, day of looking over Runners. It was not helped by inability to get much done, out of a poor night's sleep and the usual problem of gearing up after vacation days. But I wasn't satisfied with the texture of much of the ms, nor—that perpetual bane—the lead. Decided it needed more details of "picture-making" after first sentence, did some roughing for it but nothing conclusive. C brought home Margaret Svec's comments from weekend reading, she objects to the imperative tone of lead, and all the exposition of the first 1/3 or so of the pp. Pat evidently had much the same reaction to the first portion of ms, and though I haven't talked with her yet--will on Thursday--Ann McCartney's response to C was similar.

In any event, whatever the final version turns out to be, it's evident the ms is not nearly as close to the kind of specialness, distinction, I want for it as I'd hoped. This I think is a point I hit in every book; I know I did with Sky, and probably the Missoula conference trip was the point in winter. Which doesn't make it any easier a point to start solving.
2 Sept 80: cut and inserted revised graf because of dashes in this version; C in her reading of ms late last week warned me of proliferation of dashes, which happens to me in every ms. While I was retyping, I tinkered in the phrase about the chasing canoe as reflection of the first; I don't know whether it'll stay.

Hours later to the numbed arms of Melander and Braaf and Wennberg as darkness thinned toward dawn's gray they saw the canoe behind them.
Sept 2, 80: cut and inserted rewritten graf just before taking ms to Merlyn for retyping, this morn. (8:45)

...this port-capital of Russian America, Melander at New Archangel was, then, a man away from three homes—the

within the Russian-American Company officialdom had taken the trouble to tot up the situation, made the lanky Swede a triply restless exile.
His initial Alaskan year, no great span of time for a man accustomed to sea voyages, Melander in his measuring manner gave New Archangel life what he deemed a fair try. But fairness evidently had all too little to do with the situation of a seven-year man. Chronically short of dependable laborers, the Russian-America Company had a long-standing policy of wringing work and more work from those it did manage to entice to Alaska. Letting himself be wrung was not Melander's notion of life. He listened with loathing one day to one Russian overseer proclaiming to another: "A strong right arm is the lever of life."
Blue

29 Aug 80—See diary entry of today, for material on Last Roof suddenly elbowing aside work on Runners.
28 Aug 80—9:35 am, I'm about to call it quits on this ms stint at Juan de Fuca motel. Y'day was a breakthrough, 9 or 10 hours of very strong work. Went through virtually all of the 56 or so pp. of ms to date, tinkering verbs, inserting characterizing details, smoothening and smoothening. Except for a few stray spots—need to find Swedish folksong for K to sing, and to discover ways to extend the suspense of the night of escape, which I worked on a bit this morn—the ms is about ready for next retyping. I may be deliriously sanguine, but I feel it's very nearly good enough that I wouldn't hesitate to present it as the needed ms sample.

So far, and I think this is more than mood of the moment, Runners has been a happy book. The work at home generally has gone well, the Alaska trip clicked, and this stint on the Strait achieved amply enough that I have a kind of fullness of sensation, a sort of pleasurable tension, within me. (Consequence of this is that I had a hell of a time going to sleep last night.) Also, I may change my mind as later problems hover in—for one thing, I'm killing off the two most attractive characters, Melander and Braaf; for another, Melander is the most vivid talker—but I feel the hardest part of the book may be behind me now.
Blue

28 Aug 80/2—For the record, the working arrangement I set up here in the motel room:

--elderly brown card table I brought with me is along the eastmost of the three windows looking out onto the Olympics. Have used it for typing, old photocopies of Sky ms used for rough drafting in loose pile at far side of table.

--Motel's table, brown metal kitchen type with two drop-leaves, is lengthwise at my right, snug against card table. Not really an ell; I've intended a time or two to put up the drop-leaf nearest the window and extend the surface farther along my writing-hand side, but never got around to it. Two rows, and some tag-ends, of file cards on this table, 3x5s (from Sky sorting) and 5x8s mixed; also the two gray metal file boxes labeled Swedes, stack of unused file cards, 8 oz squeeze bottle of Elmer's Glue-All, plastic bag of rubber bands, box of paper clips, red felt tip, blue felt tip and a #2 pencil. Metal ripping ruler, now that I've found it, is kept alongside typewriter on card table; to cut-and-paste, I push the typewriter south along the card table, do the dabbling, put the page aside—at lest of card table I've had the motel's bathroom wastebasket; yellow legal pad lies across part of top of it, I stack the "done" ms pp. on the pad—and pull the typewriter back to me.

--a kitchen chair, patterned with big tan and orange and yellow flowers, is pulled up to the kitchen table at my right,
serving as a kind of tertiary table: Thesaurus is there, and file cards I've found use for, and marked for discard.

Brought a number of books with me—Watt's Conrad, Sky, bnd galley of Winter Bros, among them—but haven't really used any. Night-time reading has been peanut stuff: Summer of '42, which is alternately good and wretched, and last night, Fletch.
Blue

28 Aug 80/3—This morn got up, by alarm, at 5, had corn flakes, banana and 2 cups of coffee, and drove the 10 mins. to the spit. This was the best of these dawns, windless, clouds on east horizon and west but clarity overhead, and an egg-shaped moon. Roused what I think was a heron from a treetop as I came around the viewpoint overlooking the spit, and a pair of herons flew around the base of the spit while I was down there. Lights of Pt Angeles very bright and comely in the near-dark, Victoria could be seen too.
27 Aug 80/2—9:55 am, found the metal ruler. Beginning to clear the pair of tables—the motel's metal kitchen-type and the card table I brought—I moved some unused file cards sitting directly in front of the typewriter and there was the ruler. Mystifying how they could have concealed the ruler, since they're only 5x8s (I moved them and unthinkingly looked at the ruler without it registering on me what the configuration of the file cards had been, but I hadn't thought them fanned out very much)
27 Aug. 80—9:35 am: Have been at work steadily for 2 hours, an achieving mood of the kind I perpetually hope to catch and tame. Began by improving y'day's scene of the celebratory toast at end of 1st day of escape—inserted material about grins—and then the phrase about pastor housecleaning his voice box in Rosenberg scene. Then sorted the file cards plucked from Sky, divvying them into general phrasing; manners of speaking and responding, which this book needs much of; and ideas chunks (ex: this morn I inserted in section on W's waiting the Sky card with chunk, "Stanzas of argument were not his style"; y'day I inserted into the Kolosh chief's scene the chunk "When wondering begins there is no cure"); and into the categories of voyage detail and coastal detail.

The cards spark ideas; if the work mood can be sustained, I'll successively spread the phrasing and "manners" cards onto table, scan thru the ms to see what might be inserted. Depending on speed of this, this afternoon I may try write on into the section which begins to describe the voyage (altho y'day's writing of the toast scene provided unexpectedly strong place to stop the ms sample I'll send Liz: B's "May you live forever and I never die," then drinking deep).
26 Aug 80—7:40 pm. Strange delay this evening. Arrived back from supper at 3 Crabs about 6 feeling vigorous, began solving some of the rewrite of the Kolosh canoe scene which hadn't moved for me all day—and could not find the metal ruler I use for ripping and pasting. Looked everywhere, stymied. I have to conclude it either fell into the trash before emptying—altho I think I used it after that—or the maid for whatever the hell reason swiped it when she made up my bed while I was gone to supper. Mystifying, and it stopped me in my tracks: could come up with noting else—breadboard, fat issue of Family Circle, even contemplated a butcher knife—which would satisfactorily rip apart pp for pasting. Finally got in the Volvo, drove like hell the 0 miles to store at corner of Carlsborg Rd and highway, asked if they had a ruler among school supplies. They had one, a thin wooden style, and while it's not heavy enough to be near ideal, it saves the situation.
Blue

26 Aug/2—Alarm got me up at 5 this morn, I ate corn flakes and banana, drove to D'ness Spit, was down at the shoreline by about 6. As sunrise came, the Spit divided shades of water on either side of it like spine-gutter of book dividing pages from each other: brightening, glistening water on G'yard side, gray water on Pt. Angeles side.

4 pm—Up from catnap of 15 min. About 3, I went for walk along the road. As I went out, bookmobile was parked in the driveway of this motel; possible cycle of the ms I'm at work on now arriving back to this very site as book in bookmobile in a few years. Like message set afloat in bottle?
Blue

26 Aug 80—2:05. About an hr and a qtr ago, called C to say I'm staying over tomorrow night, rather than break down what I've set up here after one full day. She said fine, pointed out I'd miss the hrs of electricity being shut off that way, too. Said there was a spate of calls for me y'day afternoon, nothing I need know about now, but a laughable flurry.

Clouds began to come in from west soon after sunrise this morn, and for the past couple of hrs it's been off-and-on showers.

Worked so far today on the section after the escape; wrote p. and a half about going around Japonski I, rewrote the confront with the Kolosh canoe. Will try go on to short section of celebration after the Rosenberg scene.

Lunch today: sardines and crackers.
- en route to Dungeness, to hole up for mental days of writing.
  Cloudless day. Only speckles of snowfield on highest peaks. Constance etc. as: ferry pills.
- abd. Kingston ferry, met Brent Weston in coffee shop, talked; we both just missed lift Hol Canal ferry. Blvd. at one abd. next; at prepared our foot onto rear bumper of his new Subaru & talked cars. Is on his way to solo hike in 7-Hike Basin, up. Schedule.

- 7:50 This man, I called FBD a sky remaininger: Ann & had Marcia call me back, as soon as she got off other phone. Told her Wheelers out here are saying we'll sell copies of Sky during Winter Books promo, Ted Lucia in front. Right new gathering orders. M said she'd just prompt memo to Peter & Frank.
- 24 time recently - other was: nudge to get W Bros to meet, in late Oct - I've had to get to FBD about marketing, which I don't like to involve myself in. (over)
25 Aug/2: 1:45, at motel. Skyline of Olympics has been clear blue cutout, but just now a fogbank has begun blowing past, very rapidly; it moves across the fields like rain in sheets, dims the mountains by about a third. Fog of course is coming from west; meanwhile there is bright sun, cloudless sky.

Four sheep in pasture beside the motel room, between me and mts; 2 black lambs and their mother now shaded up on north side of their shed, the pelter—with much less wool—unconcernedly grazing.

3 horses at far end of field beyond sheep.
25 Aug/3: It may not bother me enough to pertain, but I banged the back of my right hand, midway between knuckle of at base of index finger and the wrist, against the car door while moving into motel. Small painful knob formed; I put ice pack on it, improving the situation but the right hand is a bit stiff. (ice-pack: found bowl with some ice in refrig, wrapped ice in washcloth, sat at table thumbing Newsweek with pack perched on back of my right hand for abt 10 minutes.
Blue

Aug 25/4—8:35 pm, after an afternoon of fogbank blowing through like $\text{X}\text{X}\text{X}$ scarf swept by the wind, a clear evening; now at near-dark, the Olympics in undulating blue humps, twice as deep in color as sky. Full doublooon moon in east, over Seattle. Lights of houses between me and mtns like sparks, some of those blue: yard lights.

8:40—looked out now, found full darkness, Oly's all but invisible working line.
Aug 25/*&5 — Randoms: driving from Hood Canal ferry to here, I did some wordless singing, it came to me that I needed to look up a Xmas hymn K is to sing, that in turn brought the idea of visiting Swedish retirement home fwx to talk about songs and sayings.

— Am trying to be mindful of work shortcomings I have: one is a tendency to be logistical, spending time on organization etc. which I can tell myself is necessary organization, rather than buckling down to the making of sentences. Another is telling myself I'm thinking, when I'm actually being hungry, reading, god knows what.

— The ideal I'd like to recapture from the past on a trip of this sort is the Sept. '71 stay at LaPush where I edited News, in long days of labor, some strolling of beach, and meals of salmon and oyster stew. At 3 Crabs, here, I'm at least duplicating the last.
Blue

Aug 25/6 Looking over the ms this afternoon, felt it needed work on texture. That is, some pp. seemed okay, others needed more pause, more substance.

--Also: must decide whether more dialogue is needed.

--To be done: page-by-page okaying of the ms.

--Achieved this afternoon, just before supper: start of "storyboard", scene-by-scene set of file dividers, into which I can drop file cards for possible use to richen indiv'il scenes. 16 major scenes, so far thru the escape--and that's coincidentally exactly how many usable file dividers I brought with me.
Aug. 18, '80: continuing y'day's entry: night of Friday the 15th, C and I were to pick up Ann and Phil at the airport at 9:15, so we went for dinner at City Loan Pavilion beforehand, and I told C I've been mulling a storyboard for this entire book, somehow--likely with tabbed section in file card box, as I once had the Days of Winter Bros set up—and file all applicable material, details, language, ideas and all, accordingly. The drawback I see is that the front portion of the ms already seems to me in pretty good shape, with about as much detail etc. as it can stand. Storyboard might be waste effort there. Advantage is that it would lay out the proportions of the book so I could see them more or less all at once; also, that the material, the scenes, might begin to make sparks off each other, one thing suggesting another. So, now to see whether the storyboard happens or not.
Aug. 18/2—The past few weeks, Runners has begun to get competition in my head from unexpected source, a Montana novel called Last Roof on Tough Creek. Have been mulling that idea for some time—story of a boy who spends high country summer with his forest ranger father—but ideas and coincidence have conspired to push it toward front of my head. For one thing, I read Terry Kay's Year the Light Came On, liked it, and began thinking Last Roof could have the same sort of vivacity. For another, out of the blue I had a letter from John Gruar, 82 and I suppose restless in the Masonic Home in Helena, remarking on Sky and fairly directly offering to spiel to me about any other writing he could help with. My response to him brought a 10-p. or so letter on forest rangering, the last few pages truly alive and exciting and piquant. Also wrote to Eleanor Mast at the same time for any sheep lore she may have, she suggested I talk to her husband Jake. So the material for Last Roof is beginning to flow, impelled by the fact that John and Jake and Eleanor are all getting very far along in years. Also, in Ian Watt's Conrad book I'm reading just now, he says Conrad's best work came out of pretty much a single topic, sea voyage; I've been leery of reprising House of Sky, but will have Winter Bros and Runners—and possible Blue, if these cards ever add up to anything—between Sky and Roof if I do it, so I wouldn't really seem a one-note writer, I think. Anyway, Roof is not a bashful book; it makes itself known with surprising strength these days, even when I feel quite immersed in the Runners writing.
11 Aug. '80: From the start, I included as one of Melander's frustrations the fact that the steamship did not often come into use, because it was such a beast to fire up and run. In Juneau research, I found that the ship truly was seldom, if at all, used in those years because Robenberg feared Indian attack and kept the steamer at hand for its guns.
5 Aug '80: Belated point from Alaska research. In plotting Runners, I imagined that K would discover the maps ran out at the top of V'ver Island, and he would have to fake it, somehow fend, from there. When the Tebenkov maps were brought out for me at the Alaska Historical Library in Juneau, and, white gloves on hands, I began reverently proceeding through them, Chart 8 of Baranov and Sitka, then Chart 9, then 10—which ran out exactly at Cape Scott, the top of V'ver I.
19 Jul '80: for whatever reason, Merlyn didn't indent 1st lines of grafs when she did the ms draft for me. I've just read over the opening 14-page chunk, inserting graf marks as I went, and found it peculiarly pleasant to make the little blue (felt-tip) hook and two short strokes against the yellow paper. It all looks like sturdy progress, somehow.
Blue

18 Jul '80: last night read some of *Runners to John Roden*, after we got to talking about it at supper. He questioned some plot points, esp. why Melander would stay on at Sitka when he first arrived, and didn't follow some of the plot turns too well, such as W'berg breaking the Indians' canoe; but the dialogue seemed to engage him, and he seemed to like Braaf a lot. Not an easy audience, John.

--Monday the 14th, I took the first 35 pp. of ms to Merlyn for typing.

--Just now (10:35) came in from walking around n'hood to strengthen my leg, a fine blue day with fog bank along the peninsula from Kingston to Pt. No Pt. On the way I got to thinking about the pressure periods a ms needs. For ex, I've about decided to rent a cabin #7 at the Juan de Fuca motel for 2-3 days while C's folks are here, make them days when I am on D'ness Spit at dawn, then go and write, long days of exertion on the writing as I did when I edited News at LaFush. *Runners* so far needs two strong pressure periods: the first one to get the 50 pp. sample by Oct. 15, so Liz can sell it well, the 2nd beginning after Jan. 1, to get the entire book into draft by June 1, for polishing the rest of the year. *Sky* needed pressure to get the ms sample ready, but then much the stronger pressure in the period of finishing the ms. *Winter* had no sample to be worried over, so the pressure times came at the end, or towards it: when I decided to make the book truly day-by-day, and when I did the editing, first the going-over of the language and then the trimming of days. That book perhaps suffers in that I did not exert the pressure on myself to somehow get to the Qn Chs and get 1st-person material to work in.
8 Jul '80—Y'day morn went to WW, puzzled out the microfilm provided by Bob Monroe. 1st roll, the "Uncle Serge" material, proved to be a daybook in Russian—entry card on it is in "sources" category in Swedes filebox. 2nd roll, which I should look at again, seems to be about the battle of Petropavlovsk.
2 July, '80--At NWC, was going thru the card catalogue when Bob Monroe came by, asked if I was writing another book already, didn't I know the storage problem they already had? Told him my understanding of the situation was that they threw some book out the back door whenever one came in the front, steady state. Began talking about the Runners, I asked if he had any photos of Sitka. He led me back to his office, got out his bootleg copies of Bancroft Library originals (he'd got the prints from Richard Pierce, who got them before the originals went to the Bancroft).

I was merrily studying them when Bob happened by again, said "yes, yes" in his manner, then "wait a minute," and came back with two microfilms, one--the Uncle Serge diary--passed to him by Erna Gunther, who'd been given it by somebody, and the other from family papers of the last Run gov of Alaska. Bob said they'd never been looked at; they're from his private stash, a bottom file drawer of such items. Agreed I'd come in next week and look at them.
July 1, '80--Bright warm day, before lunch we were on patio having a drink. I felt good from strong morning of rewrite, C said if I wanted she'd offer me her theory on who I was going to kill off among the characters. I said go ahead, she said not Melander, unless some of the others began to show leadership capacity; not Karlsson, his canoe skill is needed; not Wennberg, he's a foil to the other two; which left Braaf.

I considered, trying to keep a neutral face, thought a minute; it was the second time recently C brought up the matter of which character would die, and thinking it over I couldn't see the use of keeping her in curiosity. Told her it's to be Melander, which she said is audacious, and not a little dismaying, he's such a strong and attractive figure. Then xx told her wait a minute, it's to be Braaf too, eventually, at the tidal trough at Cape Johnson; she'd been half right.
Blue as Odyssey:

9 June '80: Y'day afternoon or evening as I stepped out of the shower, I said: "Don't give us your goddamn riddles, Melander." The line in today's writing became Wemberg's, after M tells him the Haida columns are a cathedral. The line simply came out my mouth, from no discernible source except my shower habit of thinking.
May 23, '80: as Eve Lebow of Uw MSS was accompanying me to Prod'n Svces for photostats I needed of Swan diary pp., she asked what I intended next, I told her of Sea Runners, she at once told me of Stepan Ouchin diary. (Also told me some background of her own study of Russian, to try land a teaching job at Richland, I think it was.)
Blue, 26 June '80

In the past couple weeks, began rereading Day's biog of Malcolm Lowry; on pp. 56-7 is info about shipwreckers of the Wirral, L's home area. Out of that mention came Braaf's dialogue with Melander about shipwreckers.
16 Nov. '92—Trying to unclog the office, moving Heart Earth research material into retirement to make way for Bucking the Sun filecards and folders, today I winnowed The Sea Runners file cabinet drawer, disposing of about a foot of photocopied articles etc. on Sitka, Russian America, Indian canoes, Swedish background. Anything I thought of value, I consolidated into the file folder with checking copies and correspondence; that turned out to include notes on the writing and editing, 1st drafts of the book's lead, and similar items which ought to be looked at if I do anything with the Blue as the Odyssey filecard/diary of The Sea Runners.
- insert New Caledonia refce, (or name of map?)
Watch in proofs for repetition of "onlooker would have", as on ms p. 121
Watch in proofs for repetition of "beyond any saying of it," ms p. 144.
Watch in proofs for repetition of "knew all too well," as on ms p; 236
Watch in proofs for repetition of "velvet sand," as on p. 229 of ms
First, outermost, the ridge of surf. Add atop its taut whiteness a high-nosed cedar canoe, poised and buoyant as a seabird.
First, a ridge of surf, rumpling in from the gray January ocean. Add atop its taut whiteness the high-nosed cedar canoe, poised and buoyant as a magnified seabird.

Carried nearer and nearer...
3 March '81—Making a last search thru pocket notebook from Alaska trip, prior to discarding for a new one, I find the line I may have put down somewhere else: I am part of an old coastal scene—back to the Indians—of the traveler and the stories he tells. Swan, of course, was another.

—Today I did a couple half-page Karlsson monologues, deliberately making the sentences shorter than the general run of the book, trying to make it sound more as a man would talk to himself. Also decided to have him "talk" to Melander occasionally in these.
Sitka, 22 Jan

Verstovia is broader than seems possible for so sharp-tipped a peak. Its southern slope at about halfway changes angle to even more gradual; its northern is even more gradual, very extended. An ungainly but powerful and self-composed mountain—again, like a tsarina.

At nightfall, V gets darker than anything else around, like some cloud or storm of night advancing; some triangular tunnel into the gray-weathered sky and vanishing peaks behind it. A maw of darkness, out of which night pours and spreads over the land around town.

5:50—the last things visible are V'a and the islands in the Sound, as if they were cut-off portions of V's lengthy train of gown. Or as if they were swimming home to the mtn.

Also, judging by sticking my head out open window to see all this, it's much chillier, with a breeze.
Blue

20 March '81—About 1 today, finished revise of 36 pp. for Merlyn to put into typescript. The pp don't feel as far along as the last batch, and I had to grit and slap together crude transitions at times, but at least they're a draft. This brings the ms up to about halfway—M's death—in typescript.

—in today's editing, changed: "In a half-moment Braaf recognized that the phantasm was of wood..." to "In a half-moment Braaf recognized that the phantasm was blind, as wood must be..." thereby delaying another beat or two the revelation that he's seeing a totem pole.

—also changed scene of W looking back at Indians on beach from sequence which had him seeing first the pair shooting, then others emerging from the forest, then those around the crippled canoe, to a sequence of the shooters—those at canoe—the ones emerging from the forest, to forward the sense of more and more threat appearing. Also put in "more oh God more" phrase.
3 Dec. '81-- 9:30 am. This morning, and for the most part the days of this week, at last are the point at which the ms begins to knit itself together. With no intention at all of it, I spent Monday and most of Tuesday on the Makah whaling scene, which has become one of the longer and stronger of the book, I think. At once this morning I set to reworking the ShiShi scene, and in not much more than an hour had refashioned the 3 pp. of K at the seastacks into 4 pp, including a couple of new interior monolog grafs. Then went to Edmonds for coffee break, while driving 3 new bits for ms came to me:

--B suggesting milk cow etc to W's wintering; (p. 165)
--men as chilled as if cold water poured into bones
--for Vancouver section, "3 times it snowed, swarm of white from out of the gray."
Al St Museum

- Doubled eagle mints accompanied copper marker plates on N Am coast, 20 pcs along coast as far as S Francisco.
  - Eagles are crowned, c crosses

- Piece

- Coins have double-headed eagle

- Green enameled decanter

- New Archangel map, every Holy Landed

* 3-legged iron pot used for trade w/ Indians, heavy-une-like handle

- Small boxes of bone & copper

- Brass creamer, sugar tongs, servant trays
11 Dec. ’81—Done, as of just before noon. Done, that is, that all of Runners is either typescript or being typed; some tinkering next week, but this is the done structure.

Took a grinding schedule these past 2 weeks to close off the book; make it click shut, the way Yeats said, like a well-made box. There was the unlooked-for direction the ms took itself early last week, the enormous expansion and deepening of the Alava scene, 3 or more days going into that. Then at the start of this week, the section from the ship sighting to K and W clearing the rocky part of the coast; then the stormed-in scene S. of Grays Harbor; y’day, the fog scene; today, Willapa. Each day’s work recently has been almost like writing an entire magazine piece. Not helped, either, by the fact that a primary concern of this finale of the book has to be pace, which the file card material doesn’t aid: it has to come out of me.

Am too numb to do much more justice, but will try enter points of recent ms work as I can, in days before NY. For now:

--Makah whaling scene came out of my discovery of Human Relations Area File at UW, a marvelous cross-file which C and I used on a Sat. afternoon (Nov. 29) and so were able to photocopy the specifics I needed on Indian whaling.

--Cut a description and placement of Willapa today, to leave reader as well as Swedes in suspense about where they are.
One more I owe Swan. Intended to have K and W come across something on beach, maybe an oyster basket, to make them think there might be white civ'n, make credible mistake about cabin. Looked in NW Coast for S's descrn of oysterling, at once found: "Each oysterman has a bed, which is marked by stakes driven into the flats..."

-Assembling the draft ms to put it in back seat of car for safety's sake, measured it: 3" high, with its strata of paste and paper.
4 May '82: 8:15 pm, have just written cover letter to Tom Stewart about galleys, which I began on on April 29, reading them first for sense and then for typos and changes. Tomorrow, will photocopy the galleys, for reference's sake. But in reading, I was struck by how complete, or impervious, or unarguable or something, the book now seems. Sets its own terms, goes its own way.
Blue

see diary entry 16 March '82 abt ill'ns for Runners.
12 March '82: my crx on copy-edited ms are in green pencil; I didn't make a copy of my own, for sake of speeding ms back to Atheneum, but in the past the pub'r has always provided me the production ms when they're thru with it. --I did photocopy 8 or 10 pp. with major rewriting; it and 2 pp. of yellow pad notes made as I reviewed the copy-editing are in SWEDES general file.

--it's notable that any run-through of a ms, no matter how far along, produces 2-3 pp. of yellow pad notes and qns.
change: little white father the Tsar? (check physical descptn of Tsar of the time)

Nicholas I - 6' 3" - Chandos, Shadow of Winter Palace

Cambridge Modern History, V. 10

10 March '82: going over copy-ed ms, found this discrepancy, ms p. 92.
K and Vcover I: make it "the one big thing"?

10 March '82: The sentence-by-sentence care the ms continues to exact: this reference, on p. 187, I had written as "But like the knowledge of the hedgehog, it was one big thing." Which is not quite on mark, the big thing being what the hedgehog knew, not his total of knowledge. So have just changed it to "But like the sum of what the hedgehog knew, it was one big thing."
8 March '82: copy-edited ms arrived Sat. the 6th. We'd been out, walking the American marsh walk and at lunch at Cont'l, and came back to find notice of express mail, cussed because I'd have to go to post office Monday morn; in a while, mail truck came back, the postman dropping the ms at conclusion of his run.

Spent today looking over both the ms and the copy-editing, got to p. 77, which I find discouraging progress; but maybe I can finish in 3 days total. One thing evident: even on a look-over of this sort, on supposedly finished piece of work, legal pad pp. fill rapidly with qns--3/4 of page just today.

Substantively, I find the ms still hard to judge, tho definitely a strange book. I'll hope it proves to be strange wondrous, not strange strange. Have changed some sentence rhythms, found some dead verbs; nothing earthshaking yet.
Life is the high wire. All else is waiting.
--C attributes to Karl Wallenda
18 Feb '82—While reading TH White's book England Have My Bones, I got to abt p. 285 and came onto unslit pair of pages. Got the letter opener, slit the pp, read on, until it happened again in 10 or so pp. And then a third time. Began to dawn on me that how ever many persons had read this 1936 book—a UW copy, with half a dozen prior checkouts going back to 1971 on the Date Due slip and undoubtedly at least one earlier slip than that one—none of them had made it that far in im a book which I thought was an engrossing read, or at least hadn't troubled to m open those pairs of pages. Chastening for a writer.
9 Feb '82—Have just read Flannery O'Connor's letters, and among the wise comments—often wisecracks as well—is her running battle against people who see symbolism that isn't there. She perpetually was asked why her character the Misfit wore a black hat, and perpetually answered, because Georgia farmers wear black hats. Which makes me think I ought to get down how it happened that Wennberg is a Bible-spouter. On the Alpha Helix trip, while talking with Howard Cutler about indenturement, he asked how many years my Swedes had to serve. 7, I said. That reminded him of the biblical reference—serving for Ruth—though he couldn't quite recall it, and went off to ask his wife. I was taken with the 7 year resonance—it's also in Conrad; the Chinese in Typhoon are 7-year men—and wanted to use the biblical reference. My first try was simply to quote it, but it looked awkward, and I decided to have one of the characters use it. Braaf, a thief, was obviously no candidate; Melander, a sailor, wasn't much more eligible; and for plot purposes, I wanted Karlsson to be a rationalist. Which left Wennberg, and since I wanted to complicate him anyway, making him a fallen-away believer seemed worth the effort; and the time of the men weathered in at Tow Hill and storytelling seemed the obvious place. So: no vast intention behind it all, just Howard's remark and my liking for the biblical rhythm.
Blue

chapter breaks:

73—escape from stockade

possibles:

113—Wennberg breaks into escape

127—Kaigani crossing (title quote)

225—B's death

183—Vancouver I. decision

258—rescue letter

2-1-82: inserted these in during last wk's revise.
Blue

possible add

251—lengthen canoe ride into Shoalwater?

--W falls in mud

1-27-82: added
Letter date is Sunday, March 20, 1853; either correct date or have Cotter date the letter to previous day.

--count the days mentioned in ms, see that they add up to the 64 days K counts at Countyline Park.
Wm Blake quote provided by Gene Ervine: "art...cannot exist but in minutely organized particulars."
19 May '81--Last evening began thinking about how to speed the first several pp., and this morning made a few cuts which I think do so considerably. Bottom of p. 2, trimmed some of the fanciness from descn of M's style of talking; p. 4, cut 2 sentences about his appreciation of steamship; in section of him walking NA, cut descn of 8-logged building I'd put in in previous draft; also cut descn of other mtns around Verstovia like "attendants arrayed a few steps in back of a Tsarina," just made use of "attended." And improved, I hope, some verbs and turns of phrase: "the long light copied Swedish summer" instead of "was like"..."took such a constitutional" instead of "liked to do so..." and "A threefold Jericho, this place New Archangel..." instead of "NA was a threefold Jericho..."

Yesterday was a zombieish day, got little done except finishing the read of Two Years Before the Mast. Today, for whatever reason, I have more energy.
Melander's manner of talking was prominently jointed, this habit he had of interrupting himself with a querulous "aye?" as though affirming whether he really dared continue with so mesmerizing a line of conversation.

The Emperor Nicholas I, the Russian-American Company's steamship berthed against a backdrop of boundless Alaskan forest the spring morning when Melander reached final exasperation with his dim captain.

Far from having a wind sailor's usual contempt for steam vessels, Melander was more than a little intrigued with these contraptions. Pointing course and achieving it by sheer power of mechanism—this was just the sort of thing to appeal to Mister First Mate Melander.
15 May '81--Occurs to me, as I hack and salvage to make 8 pp. of rough draft each day this week, that a first draft is like butchering: the guts of the book out in the open, blood and muss all around, mystifying chunks of bone (tripe) and fat and gristle which don't yet reveal themselves as anything palatable. It takes a while to get the good cuts out of all this, and longest of all to get it at last well done.
12 May '81—Have just finished the 2nd day of roughing the last half of ms. Having set 8 pp/day as a goal for the next two weeks, I purposely achieved 10 y'day, to have a bit of margin for myself. Today's 8 went as I wish they all would: did 5 in the morning, mostly by pasting together or rewriting existing rough material, then another 3 in the afternoon, mostly original work (B-W dialogue on where Melander is now that he's dead).

Each start of morning is tough, although today I did have leftover time in which to pick out some rewritable pages which I hope will give me a start tomorrow. But if I can gut through these 10 workdays, achieving 80--I'll actually settle for 75--pp., I'll have whipped the major chore of the second half of the ms.
7 May '81--Some distraction the past two days, banking and other chores. But today I wrote, surprise to myself, 2½ pp. of dialogue to fit into Tow Hill episode--M's tale about Bering, W quoting the Bible. I don't know if they'll hold up; might shift them around in later ms. But they seem to be reasonable progress, on a day when I wasn't sure I'd get any.
6 May '81: came across these today in unwinnowed notebooks--notes made in preparation for Winter Bros, inc. Haida influence.
6 May '81: This week is one of tinkering, working away at the list of niggles C and I each came up with on re-reading the 1st half of ms, and it reminds me that I should schedule a couple, maybe three weeks, at the end of the entire ms for similar nicking-in of detail and turn of phrase. That portion of time, just after the exalatation of being "done" with accumulating the ms, seems to be an important one; it puts a sense of rightness into the work, the final strokes of craft.

Y'day I looted notebooks and old files for material to enhance scene of K and raindrops, p. 99A--mtn stream trying to leap from itself, veils of spray, and "quick thin lakes strewn by a half-day rain" are all from poetry fragments, some done a dozen or more years ago, or from description written after coastal hikes.
Can't've ... shouldn't've (use this double contraction as style of dialogue for one character, perhaps Braaf?)

(if so, should it be done on B's 1st appearance, or later? M's "aye?" is intro'd on 1st appearance; perhaps device shouldn't be repeated that closely.)

5 May '81: Sometime in last month's revision, decided to use this device. So far, it seems not to be obtrusive.
May '81: Have reached a calmer—more contemplative?—plateau of the ms, since achieving the revise of the 1st half to within 95% or so of what I want it to be, for shipping off to Ath'm and the next chunk of advance. Reached this point by the end of last Thursday, April 30. I re-read ms on Friday, C commented on it Sunday. There are at least a dozen fixes I want to make in it, but for some reason they don't seem that daunting. It may be that a gain made sometime last week is the palliative; looking back at unused material on weather and coast, I began fitting them into the ms and gained an immediate 14 pp. or so, and some good language and pace. In a sense, that gain puts me farther along, in that respect, than I'd expected to be.

Am now going to try, for the rest of this week, to work on the fixes for 2-2½ hours each morning, and think toward the last half of the ms the rest of the work time. Next week, I should resume the 5 pp/day roughing, to get 50 pp. added to the existing 40, by end of May.
to lift away this map to those next ones. And froze in place. Nothing lay beneath the fourth map except beach gravel. It was the last of the scroll.

(see rewritten version in ms)
ocean. The channel seemed to be a respite even from weather. Out where they had been, the ocean would change from ghastly to enticing, and probably back again in an hour. Here all was steady, including their progress. (rewrites, see ms)
Karlsson called to Wennberg. "Won't you be bailing up my breakfast this time, thank you. No, I don't need invitation to toss up my breakfast."

The crossing was four hours of stupefying slosh, under the most brilliant and glorious weather of the entire voyage. (Rewritten—see ms.)
The arriving waves were cream-colored, then thinned to milk as each of them spilled far up the beach. A constant rumble came from the water, and within that, a hiss, some manner of fizz, a foamsound as the tide-edge deliquesced into the gravel. Left in the air was a smell of great freshness, more a tang or sensation than anything the nose could definitely identify.
Next, last, this: the coastline between the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the mouth of the Columbia River, 000 miles southward. It is not the coast north of it, those shoreside mountains and litters of islands, nor the Oregon coast south of it, with magnificent headlands tall and capes. It is a lower, more troubling coast—in places as beautiful so grand about it; as the other two, but not in certain profile, in the right light, handsome as anything, but with detail rather than grand gesture.
...It must be that God's aim is bad... Aloud, Karlsson offered: 00
"Maybe God's aim is bad."

Wennberg pressed on. "No, got to be more to it than that. It's
like the (some biblical parable)... I am being tested...."

"Wennberg, this much I know. You're not playing whist with God
along this coast. We'll make Astoria, or die trying, according to the
effort we can muster."
10 Oct. re-reading cont.

p. 60—1st graf, cut "entirely"?

p. 62—change "R'berg found" to "could find"? Cut "the insight arrived" as unnecessary?
Blue

10 Oct. re-reading cont.--

p. 31--Strengthen "ducks into puddles" with "merely because"?

"indenturee" and "grandee" used on same page; change grandee to panjandrum?

p. 34--change to: grimaced. Scowled. Swore. ?

p. 36--change "debt paid" to "downpayment on a debt"?

p. 38--change "understandable ambition" to "und'ble ambition, and laudable"?

p. 44, last graf--insert some dialogue from Melander?

p. 46-- "Yet--it" could be changed to "Yet, and it..."

p. 51 --graf 2, shorten sentences:"...joined them. It thrust...It muttered..."

p. 55--change "frozen moment": desperate?

p. 58--change sentence length, and extend the pace, of last graf?

p. 59--1st graf, make into shorter sentences.
10 Oct. '80, re-reading of 64 pp. ms sample before mailing to Liz:
p. 5--could move p. 7 material abt M's first thinking of escape up to bottom of page here, after "grumbled it", and weave the steamship into into scene of him walking across the settlement.

p. 1--insert a line of dialogue in scene of canoe being beached? No

p. 8--last graf, could add dialogue or brief incident.

p. 10--"self-delusion" could be made more colloquial.

"best" day could be sharpened.

p. 17--cut "½ Million sq acres"?

p. 19--no double space before last graf.

pp. 17-19--New Archangel material perhaps needs speeding up.

p. 30--graf 2, excess detail about stockade gate?

--graf 3, make it explicit that "recreative" means women?

p. 31--smoothen 1st sentence, abt Bilibin.
"Can't paddle by daylight, you say yesterday. Now it's can't paddle by night. What's that leave, Karlsson, some new kind of time only you know about?"

"Dusk. It leaves dusk, Knud Wennberg. We need to make short runs of it, until we know we're clear of these Kolosh along here. We can steal enough light to paddle for an hour, maybe two. Whatever we make will be gain."
Karlsson was uneasy, and could see more disquiet than usual in Wennberg. They could not hide the canoe, could even do little to hide themselves: the beach held the canoe prominently as a single invited on a platter, the dunes offered clear tracking to anyone seeking canoemen. The only effort available to them was to watch the tide.
are those perplexed and behavior is that of a very large nervous wren: the ouzel bobs continually, as if flinching. It is not flinching, however, but evidently just practicing its livelihood, which is to walk along on riverine growth the bottom of streams, busily feeding as the flow pins it into place beneath the riffles.

In the way that the ouzel shops along the cellar of the river, the canoeists too now were held in place by improbable pressures.
Their clothes became their second skin; a dank layer they lived within. The rough tongue of the wind was on them often, and at times rain fell without let-up. There was constant rain. Some days
Beyond the mountains, wherever the men could have peered there stood only more mountains. Except, of course, west into the ocean, where there was only more ocean.
forced a tidal crevasse—a long trough bent at the middle, like an arm brought up to ward off a blow. Every surge of surf from the ocean, slopped through a harsh swirl into this trough, and the span of it was more than a man would want to try to jump. No surprise to the seals from that quarter either, then. But at the sea-end of the trough a fist of boulder met the ocean, and just inland toward the men from there—a low hump of rock—a wen on the back of the wrist, call it.
23 Jan 81, 10:55 am—Sun came out about 20 min. ago, low on southern horizon—not much above the mtns across the Sound from Sitka, and with fierce reflection off water. It remakes the scene here, greatly softens it; the mtns lose their moody edges, go into simple outline with silver mist, of cloud or reflected light, cloaking them; all the mtns south and east of the Sound are cutouts now. The surroundings all seem at a couple of removes from what they were. Unmoored, maybe.

--possible use: the sun appeared as if it were a new idea in the scheme of things. A blaze in the sky.

--Now that it's out, the sun is enormous, coming thru this clear air with tremendous aureole of blaze. Air and unexpected-ness magnify it?
Feb. 10, '80--The revise is now finished, as of yesterday, and today I've begun breaking down the research apparatus: I should note the total and types which went into this book.

--I began with 3 ring binders, tabulated for the day by day pieces of the book. Some drafts ago, probably late in the fall when the typists' work really began, it somehow became less hassle not to put the material in the binders, just let it stack up as ms. This trio of binders then held only xeroxes of opening pp. of each day, as a quick way for me to see the structure of the ms, and occasionally material I intended to add.

--Three other ring binders grew and grew while that trio was phasing out: 1 for Swan's diary quotes I thought likely for use, 1 of excerpts from Swan-Baird Smithsonian correspondence (because I could think of no other way to keep track of it) and 1, the largest of all, of "idea" or possible material.

--I've used four 5x8 filecard boxes, all nearly full by now and nearly another box's worth of filecards simply stacked on the desk. Two boxes were for day by day tabbings: material for the specific day chunks of the ms. Both in the rewrite for the typists and now in the revise, I've pulled out these day cards, to see what more can be included in the ms. The third box is tabbed into these categories: structure, techniques, ideas, phrasing, description, miscellaneous, and an "unused" section at the back of the box, as I've discarded possible material. The fourth box is tabbed: Swan, me, Makahs, Qn Charlottes, weather, birds, frontier, Olympic
Peninsula, and additions and crx. A box, that is, of major topical material, from which cards would be fed into the day portions of the other boxes as I figured how to use them.

--File folders, mostly to hold page-size material, were: documents (mostly Smith'n xeroxes), Swan articles, Qn Charlottes, events of the winter of 1978-9 (such as Hood Canal bridge), and a large general folder.

--Lastly (I think), a deep drawer of the financial affairs desk has been piled with Swan diary materials: yr-by-yr folders of the typed transcript of the diaries of the Civil War years, photocopied portions of Swan's ledger diaries, photocopy of Swan's British journey, photocopy of the Qn Charlottes typed diary, photocopy of his Qn Ch Smith'n article. With these are the yellow pads on which I made note of the diary material, yr by yr, which I thought I might use.

All in all, a system or set of systems I was not entirely happy with, feeling a continual pressure to be aware of what was where, what should go where. But I don't know how else I could have organized the amount of material in this space of time, and I think there's probably a creative benefit, cross-fertilization, somewhere in the back-and-forthing. In any event, I have managed to maul my way through the 40 years of diaries and much other material, besides building a complex narrative structure and attaining a high standard of language: so the research gimcrackery has worked.
Jan. 24, '80--In the revise, I've decided to use a phrase I didn't manage to fit into the ms the first time around: "back where I had never been." It's not original with me, and I wanted to quote and attribute exactly, so here is the research involved:

--I knew the phrase had been with me at least since my Decatur job (1963-64), when I remember trying to use it in a never-completed magazine piece about the 1930's. I also remembered that it was a New Yorker writer who had used it, in a piece about having traveled to Ireland. And that was all I could remember.

--Y'day I went to Shoreline, and looked in the index of Brendan Gill's book Here at the New Yorker, scanning for Irish names: John McNulty's clicked with me as the probable writer.

--Next started on Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature from 1963 back, fairly soon found references to 1956 obits of McNulty; couldn't get a look at them because Sh'line doesn't have NYorke or Newsweek back that far, which meant that if McNulty's phrase occurred in a NYorke piece, as was most likely, I couldn't get it there either; deferred more looking until I could get to UW. Total time spent, 15020 min.

--At UW this morn, back to RGPL (looking up "McNulty" in each vol. by learning from the 1st one what page his name fell on, flipping to that portion in subsequent ones) to try find a piece titled "Back where I had never been" or any other which mentioned Ireland. A 1954 Holiday piece on Tralee showed up; I took a look, found that it did not have the phrase but mentioned that McN had been to Tralee just once, some years before, which sounded as if I was on the right track.

over
—Next scanned the RGPL vols for likely entries (skipping 1941-45, WWII when it was unlikely McN would have made the trip): most of McN's NYorker work—his obit said it added up to 60 or so pieces—was fiction or vignette, and these are indicated in RGPL as "story." His nonfiction, however, like so much of NYorker's, simply was cited under departmental headings, such as "Our Roving Correspondent". Several of those were clustered 1949-52, which seemed a logical time—well before the Holiday "Tralee" piece but late enough after the war—and which made me wonder whether McNulty might have mined several pieces out of the Ireland trip. Choosing to look there (the span of McN's NYorker work is back to 1939, I think), I found the piece as the 3d of 6 I intended to check. Total time at UW—20 min. --The phrase, incidentally, only appears beneath the "A Reporter at Large" dept. heading; McN doesn't seem to have used it in the article proper.
Jan. 15, '80--during, revise on p. 102, next to last of Day 21, the line had apostrophized words--George's, Swan's, schoolboys--which I trimmed down by cutting the middle one, making it "the diary pages" instead of "Swan's pages."
Winter writing

Jan. 15, '80: revising Day 18, on the why of Swan's diaries: in saying he was not like Pepys, does not "repent every hangover and nor retaste every jealousy." First drafts had "mull every jealousy"; then "chant every jealousy"; then "calibrate every jealousy"—none of them nearly as good as retaste, because of the note of signifying repetition, doing again, which is what a diary does. "Retaste" also of course aligns well with "repent".
WINTER writing, Jan. 12, '80

--As part of revise, today I cut the 2 page incident of suicidal robin--in Day 15; pp. 71-3 of original ms--because robins already are mentioned twice: at near start of that Day, and again on Whidbey Island day. I am trying to keep to no more than 2 mentions any minor themes of this sort, so that major ones--such as Haida art--which get more are more self-evidently important, by being more frequency.

--twice today added brief parenthetical material. To the day about the white Tribe of Pt T, inserted S's quote about Butler's threat to him in Butler v. Butler case; in Day 60, at Bone River, inserted S's quote about the Shoalwater Indians being glad to see him. Both seem to me to enrich the ms, finish off a point with human touch.
Dec. 31, '79: this month I've discovered, by rereading Grapes of Wrath and reading new biog of Steinbeck, The Intricate Music, that I re-invented the wheel in Sky. The between-chapter italic sections I call "prism pieces" are similar to what Steinbeck called "interchapters" in GOW. The interludes don't serve quite the same purpose—Steinbeck used them as a philosophical commentary to frame the specific situation of the Joad family; mine are specific instances of musing about memory—but structurally they are similar. I had no awareness at all of the GOW example; I think I last read the book in high school, and had been intending for years to get back to it.
WINTER writing

Dec. 15--puns or allusions sown thru the ms.

--p. 1: the cat as inspector-general: as Thoreau was, of snowstorms

--ms p. 255, Pt Townsend, arrival of ferry: the elephant has landed: moon landing, The eagle has landed.

--ms p. 308, the boulder-stropped, the fog-polished Hoh: Jack Schaefer's piece in Holiday of Aug., '63, "The Green-FORESTED, The Cloud-HAUNTED Sangre de Cristos." I've had the magazine ever since I did The Rotarian's western issue for April, '66--probably it's from the Rotary library--and literally have wanted ever since to write something with that specific rhythm.

--Whidbey Island, Day 43, incidents of putting my fingers in mouth to warm them: I learned that from H.L. Davis, I think in Honey in the Horn, and deliberately put it in as a tease. I did do the fingers-in-the-mouth that morning, but only because I remembered it from Davis's book, thought I might want to include it.
WINTER writing:

Dec. 11—Although the ms was "finished" on the 7th, in terms of having an ending and being submittable to HBJ if absolutely necessary, this week I'm tinkering further, including some work which might be called writing backward: going back thru the ms and inserting or strengthening point which support other points later in the book.

Example: in Days 6-10, the quoted material describing the Makah culture, I took out a lengthy graf about Makah divvy of household duties, inserted instead a graf explaining potlatch, and another about blankets as trading currency—potlatch mentioned (already) in Day 19 and again in sketch of Edinso during Qn Chs narrative, blankets mentioned in Day 2 and again in Day 19.

Example: in Days 36-8, about S and the Smithsonian, I put in graf about Swan not knowing his Makah memoir was ethnology, but having the proper impulse to do it even so, then used his quote to that effect—which I came across in a second or third stint of reading the Swan-Smith'ın microfilm letters, after Days 36-8 had been substantially written.
Day 43, Ebey's beheading was Indians' exacting "a chief for a chief": fits with the "white tribe" theme to come.
Dec. 16--I hope to make a fuller entry about this, when I'm less weary, but in case I don't: the concept of Haida art became important to me as I worked on this book. Interplay—sometimes sheer playfulness to see where the hell an idea or a description would go (Swan as the Republic of Swan, for ex; the Hoh rainforest day)—and use of pattern were part of this. So were Bill Reid's explanations in his and Holm's book: particularly the idea of figures coexisting, flowing in and out of each other as they do on the great Haida carvings. I'm not sure how soon I picked up on this, but think it was early in the writing; perhaps late January; I know I mentioned it to Mike Olsen in a letter sometime then. Even before knowing anything of the Haidas except that they were mysteriously impressive, I wanted the book to be supple; but I conceived of it then as not scrupulously day-by-day, more like every other day entries.
Day 61: story of Fisher shooting geese, "eat them both at one meal": this archaism of Swan's, "eat" for "ate", is set up by Day 30--ms p. 130--mention of it.
Captain John: he begins the book; also begins Day 61, Swan's return to Neah Bay and the time of his dreams of Indians.
Dec. 11—Going back thru the ms, I noticed that I at times have repeated words, I think usually verbs. In SKY I likely would have tried to avoid that, trying to make the language freshly created all the way along. But in WINTER I am interested in patterns of repetition, and so the re-use of a verb--as far as I know, I'm not using any such word consciously more than twice--can become part of that.

Example: in Day 15, ms p. 69, I write of people of this suburb evaporating off to office, school, supermarket during day. In Day 84, I say of Swan that he has reached the age where the familiar begins to evaporate from him.
Dec. 11—Spaced thru the ms is a pace of the generations between Swan and me. Day 2 begins with mention that he is 4 generations from me. Later in Day 2—ms p. 20— is the phrase that S is "born two decades or so before my own great-grandfather." In Days 58-9, it is said that in his Pt Townsend years of the early 1870's, "Both of my grandfathers, in Scotland and Illinois, were born...and with them the family's western impulse." Then: the connection in Day 88 of Swan having "endured into time which touches my own": there in Jan. of 1900 Grandma is already 7 years old, Dad is to be born the next year.
WINTER writing

F 28, '80--There are different paces of time in Winter, as in life. At one point, I recite a week of Swan's diary entries; another day covers the first 6 weeks of his school teaching at Neah; yet another day covers the year 1880. Some of my own entries begin in a morning, have something additional "later" or at night; I think one or two are just moments, saying where I'm going on to.
One of the mysteries of life is why writers get asked to talk. It always strikes me like inviting somebody who sits around humming absent-mindedly to himself to come on downtown and play something on the synthesizer. But you have asked for it, or at least Rose Reynolds has, and so here I am—and my tune for the evening is how some of the things that show up in books such as mine, get there. Given that quite a bunch of you were force-marched into reading The Sea Runners for a course, I’ll do my talking about the writing of that book—maybe 20 minutes or so of filibuster from me, on The Sea Runners, and then let’s open this up to your questions, on any of my books or anything I might know something self-employed about as a full-time writer. That’s a career, incidentally, which one of my friends who has watched me at it for 20 years, solo at a non-musical keyboard, describes as "self-unemployed."
What I'm going to do is show you around backstage, a little bit, in the writing life. During my two years of work on the Sea Runners, I kept a kind of a journal about the writing of that book—jotting down specifics of how things had gone each day, what I thought I was doing, what seemed to be clicking into place and what seemed to be just lying there with a dead thud. I came out of that two years of writing about my four Swedes and their escape attempt from Russian Alaska to the Columbia River by canoe, with several hundred file cards of this daily journal—tonight, a very quick taste of them, maybe a dozen or fifteen.

The first is a diary entry, made on my very first day of full-time writing on the Sea Runners. A lot bigger day than I had intended, as it turned out.
March 31, 1980—Now begins a new era. This morning I began the schedule-in-earnest for the Sea Runners, setting up a pair of file boxes and typing ideas and details onto cards and then starting on the lead (the opening sentences of the book). At about 10:30 (that morning), the call from Carol Hill, saying she's leaving HBJ and the editing profession.... I joked to her that this isn't the way it's supposed to work, that editors are supposed to ricochet to another publishing house and pull their authors along, not veer off on their own. (Carol Hill was leaving her job as editor to write some books of her own.) She laughed and said yes, after 20 years she's finally got two real writers, me and novelist Michael Malone, and she's chucking us in.
Now, with an entire half-day as a fiction writer behind me, I embark toward a new editor at HBJ and most likely, a new publishing house for the Sea Runners.... Much to think about, and I find my mood is intense interest, speculation, some excitement at the decisions to be made.

A digression. The same thing has just happened to me again, one week ago today.

- Craig Lesley
  James Walsh
  Rich Darmin
  - Tumult on Wall St. does affect those of us trying to write literary stuff...
I don't at all recommend losing your editor the first day you sit down to write a book. It pretty soon turned out that I lost my publisher, too. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, which had done a very fine job with my first two books, both nonfiction, proved to be unhappy about my notion of writing fiction for a change, and I ended up leaving for a new publisher, Atheneum. But what I do recommend, in the ups and downs of the writing life, is to keep going, as this passage from one of my file card notebooks shows:
Blue spiral file ed notebooks, Jul 21, '50 entry
My wife Carol and I were on our way up to the country of the Sea Runners—New Anchorage as it was at the time of the book, in the early 1850s, Sitka, and on to Juneau for historical research there, and on from there, by small planes, to Ketchikan and the Queen Charlotte Islands, where some of the canoe scenes of the book are set.

Here's a file card from Sitka, to give you some idea of the kind of description I was trying to gather in words, and Carol was collecting for me with her camera--this impression of Mount Verstovia, which towers over Sitka:
That kind of notation, of accumulating detail about places, leads to this kind of description in the eventual book:
some other quick examples from that Sitka trip:
At St. Museum:

- fish

- coins have, head, tail eagle

- green enameled decanter

- New Archangel map, every thing deified

- 3-legged wine pot used for trade with Indians, heavy-wood-like handle

- small boxes of bone & copper

- Nau creamer, sugar tongs, custom trays
from block house replica, facing Stella Hill (S-SW?):
- Jap'ni'd to right - over west? - a 1/2 mi away

- 1st of - bay islands to south - cream of surf and west-facing edge of rock tidalflats
- channel 2-400 yds to island now caused to j' i
- to left, 0 200 yds to Castle Hill
- further left (east) 200-250 yds to church
- openings - portals, channels - can be seen out among bay islands; timber o facing shows seems to draw back to make way
  (Note: Castle well has formed amid this main - opening glimpsed past its sides
- bold face of rock - Weihe is on: - 25', high

- 300 yds (paced) my men who barracks we now been, up hill from Shea Atika, to base of this rock.
Sitka - flying in, July 21

- Sharp peak along shore = forest opening with green bowls in top;
- A ridge spine 7 mins behind
- Rocks of rock, ice, & cumbled, just behind Sitka.

- Islands in Sm on right; c rocks ramps @ waterline

- Sitka in embrace 7 mins, only opening to ocean, low lines of wooded islands.

- From airport tunnel: sky out, three islands in like they do succession of openings, doors, into a 7 maze. (Have N to K k from s where on Sitka shore, as start 7 jinks)

- Quint - bunches of trees on small islands.

- 11:30, just before take off; sun more or less came out, grayish sunshine
Juneau harbor, Jan 25, 31 (Sunday). Red sky at morning 5:00 and 7:00, over Gastineau Channel, over Gastineau Channel; Capt. Dolly both commented, said it'll likely mean rough weather at Dixon Entrance.

- B'ful men, mists out in plenty, only high stratus clouds; now at 9:10, it's too moving full light. Sea lions & whales have been in water near ship again.
- Capt. went over charts & me, morning. Route S.
- Guard vessel & small freighter moored near us. Lack of goldeneyes? 3 ducks in water beneath bow; white & black pattern on water.
- Chip morning, but not warm till 11.
- See how can be rarely heard morning 1/4-1/2 mi away.
- Soft sound of ducks landing.
- 1 drake duck & teal, black neck, black rear of bill,Career. 9:30 - Sun coming up over Aesauce - out my around, base 1 1/2.
- Rosewell (i) - 1st light on peaces 7 Douglas X Mt. Juneau.
Right here I'm going to do a bit of editing on myself, and this chronicle which kind of blithely suggests you just go off with a handful of file cards and pick up scenery for a book. I want to give you an instance here, from this same trip to Sitka, of both what's involved—logistically—in trying to get the country right, and of how intentions change, how the material for a book sometimes takes on a life of its own.
pp. 46-53, Tom Hill, from BS Club speech
The Sea Runners, the
forthcoming novel which got me to thinking about landscape, also
provides a final example of how things get into books. At least in my own
case. Of "some here and some there," as Kamante said of Isak Dinesen's manuscript
pages.

This one I don't quite know what to call, except maybe cost accounting.

On the route of my canoe men struggling south from Sitka, there's a particular
beach they land at in the Queen Charlotte Islands, offshore from northern
British Columbia. I knew something about this beach from reading about it—it
has a distinctive sort of half-dome cliff, called Tow Hill, rising nearby, the
tallest thing for miles—but I figured I ought to go see it. And with Carol
along as photographer.
So when we were done with research in Sitka, the two of us set off for that particular 300 yards of waterfront in Tom Hill in the Queen Charlotte Islands. This meant, first, flying to Juneau and there taking a jet down to Ketchikan. Any of you who have flown out of Juneau may remember the take-off procedure there: the jet goes down to the end of the runway, wheels around with its tail almost out over the water, aims its nose at an enormous hill at the other end of the runway, and begins revving.

I've never been as reassured as maybe I should be, by the fact that the trees are shaved off the top of that hill, evidently to give the jet a little better chance.
With that takeoff thankfully behind us, we made it to Ketchikan, where we waited around all day in a downpour to board a single-engine floatplane to Prince Rupert. Overnight in Prince Rupert, and the next morning, a taxi across town to the seaplane dock where we were to catch an amphibian, a Grumman Goose, and fly out to the town of Masset in the Queen Charlottes.

It was blustery morning at Prince Rupert— even though it was the last day of July. And the passengers, all of us were sitting staring out into the weather— the plane had a capacity load of eleven, including one passenger sitting in the co-pilot's seat.
When the pilot came on, someone asked him the weather in the Charlottes was as lousy as this. Yeah, he said, beginning to answer as he walked up the aisle to the cockpit. Raining—he took a step—fog—took another step—windy—another step—rough—by then I was enormously grateful that he'd reached the cockpit, couldn't deliver any more walking weather report.

That flight out over the water to the Charlottes was beneath the fog and overcast all the way, which put us sometimes just 75 feet or so above the waves—just what I needed for description in the book, even if I didn't care much for it personally.

(p. 29)
I'm thrilled to report the plane made it to Masset, landed in the bay, and we all climbed out. By now Carol and I had spent a day and a half in the airplanes and airports of Alaska and British Columbia, and we were looking at each other and saying, My god, we could have gone to Australia by now. Anyway, we were getting close to the beach at Tow Hill. We managed to rent a red pickup in Masset, and off we went, the fifteen miles or so to Tow Hill.

At Tow Hill and the beach, it promptly began raining. Raining hard enough that it conked out Carol's camera. But between us, she got some recognizable film, and I got a lot of soggy notes of description, and after a couple of hours, we had seen Tow Hill.
The next morning, we started home for Seattle, a day which consisted of:

—driving the rented pickup down the length of the island we were on, and taking the ferry across to the next island, where the jet airport of the Queen Charlottes is. Getting on a plane there, flying to Vancouver, changing planes in Vancouver, flying on to Seattle, taking an airport bus to downtown, catching a municipal bus on a street corner there, which took us to the hill above our house, whereupon we walked the last mile to get home.
Back at my typewriter, then, I set to work on the Tow Hill scene in the novel—and it came out to about three triple-spaced pages. The canoeists land there in a storm, look around the next day, figure out where they are, and shove off again. So there it sat, about 600 skimpy words, achieved at some cost-per-word I don't even want to think about.

But a Scottish sense of thrift isn't easily defeated. As I worked on into the novel of the sea runners this past winter, a terrific windstorm hit Seattle one morning. I went up on the bluff over Puget Sound and stood around in it for a while, then came back to the house and wrote a scene of my canoe men being weathered in by a windstorm.
Now, there's about a thousand miles of coast where this could happen, so where specifically should I set it--? You betcha. Nowhere else but Tow Hill.

Then, after some more work on the novel, I had come up with a couple of stray scenes where the canoemen are passing time by telling stories. These had to be put somewhere. Well, the guys are weathered in at Tow Hill by the windstorm anyway, so why not... put those there.

The result of all this has been, just because of the expense and logistics involved, that the Tow Hill scene in the Sea Runners has blossomed from being one of the shortest scenes in the book to one of the longest—and I think, possibly one of the best.
Well, back to the parade of the file cards and diary entries. Here's one at about the 8-month point, of steady writing and research since the day the book began and my editor vanished:
Blue piled, 3 Dec '81, 9:30 a.m.
A week or so after that came a stroke of luck. The baseball philosopher Branch Rickey once said "Luck is the residue of design"—but whatever your view of luck, this was luck. I'd been telling an Alaskan friend, an oceanographer at the University of Alaska, about the book, asking his advice and so on, and now he passed through Seattle on his way to a conference somewhere and said, Our oceanography vessel is coming down from Juneau to the Duwamish shipyard for refitting next month; how'd you like to ride on it and see that coast your characters are canoeing along?

Here's a diary entry:
dear [name], Jan 24, '31, Jamaica
Juneau, Jan. 24—Am aboard the Alpha Helix—or, as some of the crew disgustedly said y'day, often mispriced by Coast Guard and others to Alpha Felix—at the Coast Guard-NOAA dock. Flew in from Sitka y'day afternoon, after 2 days there. The Sitka stay was useful for Runners mood and detail—how Verstovia looms in on the town in winter, for ex. Weather there broke to couple of hrs of sun late y'day morning, a tremendous dazzle striking obliquely across the Sound to town. Only apprehension so far has been flight into Juneau, with the plane diving down, in a sort of roaring aerial skid, over the hill at the end of the runway; can't decide whether I more dislike landing or taking off with that hump looming in front.

Seem to be off to a reasonable start with the crew. Bill volunteered this morn that the wise policy is to get in good with the cook, Mary, and by instinct from ranch days I already was taking some care in that direction. At dinner last night, I chipped in $2 with one of the crewmen to buy her the wine carafe as a vase.  

My mood is pretty good this morning, reassured at having seen the setup aboard here. Haven't managed to get done any real ms work, either at Sitka or here, altho in Sitka I figured out the ms spots where more detail is needed and concentrated the research accordingly (I hope). Public library here opens at 1, and I intend to go up there for the afternoon, see if it's possible to write.

The ship is supposed to leave before noon tomorrow, altho Bill's colleague Tom Royer says he wonders if Super Bowl won't delay it; Bill said this morn he's betting on Dolly Dieter to get it out of harbor as sched'd.
The four days aboard the Alpha Helix produced countless details, of how the coast looked, of the feel of the water, the tones of the sky and weather. Here's one card of example:
Blue note 06/26 Jan to L’seau Pt
Let me do two final cards here, the next one to provide contrast to what you've just heard. The card done aboard the ship in Clarence Strait shows the use of the landscape outside the writer's head, maybe. This one I think shows some use of what's inside a writer's head.
Berta Hill cd, 10 Mar '81, Princeton
This final entry is actually not a file card, but—in a way—is the total of my two years' worth of file cards. It's the New York Times Book Review of December fifth, 1982—the issue in which the lordly Times presents what it regards as the "most notable" books of the year. On p. 48 there is this choice:

...The Sea Runners, by Ivan Doig; publisher Atheneum, $13.95.