

It may be that I know or at least use too much history in my fiction; Stegner maybe has had the same "problem." For all the history and background I winnowed out of Eng Crk, it still has a bunch. I've been trying to let the tip of the research iceberg show, the summit 10%; but in the bob of the couple of years of work on a book, 11% or so may creep into sight.

cubes from the iceberg

Alpha Helix piece: cannibalize for research examples?

--Tow Hill example?

Research:

Iceberg effect: ~~itix~~ isn't wasted, whatever you don't use.

Evaluating accuracy of sources: people's memories are unsteady (Peter Doig example)
--try for several sources ("slushai"; 4 rangers looking at Eng Crk forest fire)

Common sense: WSS phone book for bars; st. bank examiners for Eng Crk farms

Iceberg Maintenance

--chapter on research and keeping track of it

--haying: ads in small-town papers

--Forest Service

--Sea Runners: Slushai!

grasshopper poisoning (as a research obsession):

--material in "Bucking the Sun: grasshopper poisoning" file

-- " " Frances Inman letters

--wanted to use w/ Jick in Eng Crk, didn't fit; on through the trilogy, it still didn't fit; then it fit Bucking

slow poetry of fact: *horris tail ... - wind blew.*

--ranger diaries: Pinchot kept diary, to his dead beloved.

--rangers who pack things home or know where they're tucked away: Evan Kelley dismembering the old Selway NF...

--bank examiners' lists of farm inventories

--Historians warn themselves with the apocryphal story of the last surviving veteran of the French defeat at Waterloo being interviewed. Asked if he remembered Napoleon (on that day), he said, Of course, how could I forget such a moment, such a man--he was very tall and had a long white beard.

--On the other side of Waterloo, Duke of Wellington "sparrowhawks, madam" story; is it in biog of W'ton? (more checkable)

--Jim Welch's "fact" of animals speaking to Blackfeet; Mary Blew's of the difficulty of a child explaining her grandmother's boyfriend.

slow poetry of fact: the poppies and other planted things that mark the otherwise vanished homesteads Jerry DeSanto has shown us on the N. Fork of the Flathead.

Cussing: The Journal of Verbal Abuse.

"Talking History" interview:

- Rascal Fair opening: 5 Glasgow n' paper item alt drowned here
- Maurice Shedbolt: "History has best plots."
- songs thruout trilogy: "Dancing @ Rascal Fair"; 1930's sq dances: *Treadwell Angels*
 - c & w: "Lucy, you know, well can't be round / It drops off sharp @ edge of town."
- Jack's memory storms; memory comes back to him mercilessly (at age 65)
- Angus: post has brought us to where we are.

method: oral history - rode a horse to a 1-rm school, did you. Where'd you tie horse:?

- letters: emigrant's home to Scotland; Heart Earth
- archives: bank files alt 1930, complete inventories (for mortgage purposes)
- language: joke books - journal of Verbal abuse (Walrus people)
- photos

historical realities drop into our lives: my uncles in WWI

Thos Hornsby Ferrell, of 1st settlers: "I wasn't here, yet I remember them."

- Back where I have never been. ("wagon people" who "pushed aside cottonwoods / to build our city where beavers nested")

Doris judges in her Flanders range.

Darker Material - "Out World"

"Talking History" interview:

- Marnie Barrett, The Hartys - Swan River colony - drawn from letters (Capt. James Stirling & settlers on ship "Parmelia" in 1829)
- Annie Campbell, from "Perth": I've been to both (i.e. "other" Perth)
- Kalbarrie gold rush in '93
- my uncles in WWII

- Dick Brown: Wm civil war of incorporation, 1860s-1910s

incorporation "gunfighters": W Bill Hickock, Wyatt Earp, Walter Crow (deadliest: 5 killed 1850 Calif wmt/10)

Asian frontier: convict

squatter

West - Westralia, mining frontier east from Perth

New Guinea (new Papua NG)

frontier mythology: Ned Kelly / Crocodile Dundee W Bill Hickok / Gary Cooper
bush ballads / cowboy poetry

horses ran loose by hundreds, many work stock

--Eric Ford letter, 1/29-79, p. 6

--possible use: after the homesteaders' demise...

--Howard Gribble letter: neighbor who fed horses to hogs

UW Natural Sci library: compare with submarine of Das Boot--

--"heroic claustrophobia"

--long carrying shot, camera rushing the length of the sub; what happens when you travel similarly in aisles of N Sci, avoiding Q00 shelf here, studying students' chairs there, another user, until at last you reach the far end--
fire the tubes, launch. "Fire one!"

--red tape on floor

--Swans's Smithsonian stuff there; lighthouses; forestry;

Joseph Heller: Shearing instead of lambing.

(from Carstensen: in God Knows, Heller cites shearing as the messiest problem with sheep, overlooking the many times more difficult weeks of lambing.)

similar: Tom Wolfe in *A Man in Full*

- cites Seattle as one of - old cities, older than Atlanta
- compares crowd noise in room to rushing sound of Columbia R.

error in Eng Crk: superintendent for nat'l forest supervisor

Brad Hamlett

432--old Texas cowhands he knew in Custer country

→ 450--one of them at age 75 riding with hobbled stirrups; never learned to drive,
and "the minute they couldn't get on a horse, they were done."

^o
~~446~~ - start hobbled stirrups
cut ~~454~~ ~~459~~ 8-13

and @ ~~469~~ 23

used:
Perry Fox
in Eng. Cbk

Brad as prototypical Montanan--Yeah, hell, down in that Sumatra country, you know, ~~the~~ during the Depression the grass got so short a jackrabbit had to pack a lunch.

"Waldens/Eng Creek" talk in Speeches file box has references to how I did research.

speech
SPU?

--Tebenkov maps, found last afternoon of 4 days' research at Alaska Histc'l Library in Juneau; white gloves to handle; great portfolio, from about 1850.

--Sitka: pacing off distances; help of local historical society.

--coastline: Alpha Helix, 133' long, reserch vessel of the Institute of ^{3 named Mike} Marine Science at the U. of Alaska; stood double watch; crew of 9; like big fishboat

--Wennberg's seasickness, intensification of mine crossing Milbanke Snd and Qn Ch Sound.

--Chancellor Howard Cutler and Enid: serving for Ruth (Genesis 29); watercolors

--up at 5, b'fast, go to bridge at 5:45 when capt. tk watch from mate; stay to midmrn, go to cabin to write, back to bridge after lunch for afternoon; write after supper.

--Gene Ervine, Sitka park ranger: Wm Blake quote, "art cannot exist but in minutely ~~organized~~ organized particulars" (had asked him about what wood they'd smell in shipyard; similar questions, how high the tides, which way winds blows in morn and evening)

--Bancroft ms: James C. Ward, July 1835, "3 Wks in Sitka"--clerk's notes on much longer diary.

- purchases of provisions

- brews or vodka; rum; champagne

getting itself onto the page with the richness I wanted.

I happened to open the New York Times Book Review to an interview with Anne Tyler, a novelist I much admire--Earthly Possessions and Searching for Caleb I guess are her two most recent works. I was astonished at how much she sounded like me--~~she's~~ ^{Anne Tyler is} a clock watcher, keeps a very stringent writing schedule, allows herself so many minutes for lunch, begins to get uneasy if the mailman doesn't show up at a precise time--quite a number of the ~~same~~ ^{good}, healthy ^{weird} habits I recognize in myself. Then I read on to this paragraph of the article about Anne Tyler:

"The housewife and the writer --(she is both)-- are connected by index cards. White and unlined. 'Around the house,' one card reads, 'Cobb wears kneesocks with her housedress.' There are cards scattered in almost every room of the house.... The cards--with their random thoughts trapped--are eventually filed in one of two small metal boxes. The blue box is the novel box. Divided by chapter number, the box also has "extra," "general," "look up," and "revise" sections. The second box is the short story box. Its categories are "details" and "first sentence." The Cobb kneesock card has a three in the left-hand corner, which means it goes to event three in the 11th chapter of the new novel."

So: detail...Cobb wears kneesocks with her housedress. Detail...my father was so slim-hipped his belt lapped around as if trying to circle him twice. Detail...when my grandmother was losing a game of solitaire, she would cheat just once to try get the game going again. I had these details, and hundreds more, in the journals--but they were not finding their way out into my manuscript readily enough. I was perpetually ~~flipping~~ ^{paging} through, trying to remember where I had a particular phrase stashed. But...~~index~~ ^{file}...cards... spread 'em around, try 'em in various combinations. Make 'em dance. Now that's organized, I thought to myself. Sure enough, our house filled up with File cards in the next few weeks, and the manuscript of House of Sky began to march out of the typewriter. The method, I know, would not work for everyone, and I'm not sure it'll always work for me. But at the time, it organized my material the right way...and ^{heaven} ~~and~~ bless the orderly file-carding clock-watching mind of Anne Tyler.