

Aug. 20, 1992

Early-Day Logging in Montana, while not much kinder to the environment than current methods, was at least slower: Trees were felled with hand tools, skidded by horses or mules, and hauled on team-drawn wagons to nearby sawmills.

MISSOULA, MT
1PM
21 AUG
1992
59843
865

Dear Ivan + Carol —

High time we got our calendars in order! As re. your dual Msso-days: We will be chez nous Sept 4 it now appears & yr guest room awaits yrs. Sept 19 — Jim will see you en passant at the signing. It's registration day. How come yrs get to come along, Ms. Carol? Year off? Half year? Fun.

Norton is planning all sorts of stuff for Jim's October. Ivan starts sooner. At least yrs won't be doing the home state in the snow. Probably.

So much happening. So little space. We'll talk up a storm soon. Late afternoon Sept. 4th? Love,

Lois

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—Historic photograph from the U.S. Forest collection, courtesy Pictorial Publishing Co., Helena, Montana



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Ivan + Carol Doig
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Seattle, WA 98177

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SEATTLE WA 98177

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CARE JACK MILES, BOOK EDITOR RPT DLY MGM, DLR
LOS ANGELES TIMES
TIMES MIRROR SQUARE
LOS ANGELES CA 90053-3863
ALL AROUND, IT WAS AS IT SHOULD BE. CONGRATS AND LOVE TO YOU BOTH
AND FOOLS CROW.
IVAN AND CAROL DOIG
17021 10 AVE NORTHWEST
SEATTLE WA 98177

11:52 EST

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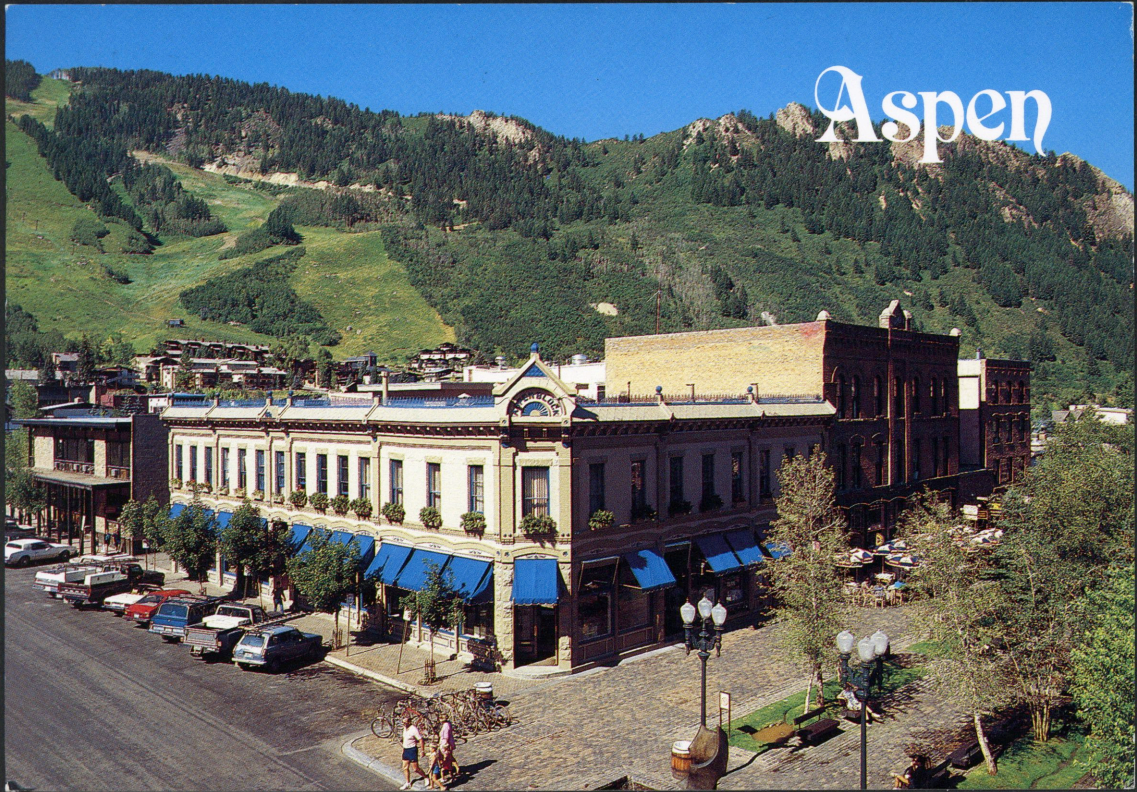
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It was now lunch time and they were all sitting under the double green fly of the dining tent pretending that nothing had happened....
I prefer action stories

CLUE OVER :

(from Lois Welch)

IN CASE YOU HAVENT MEMORIZED IT, THIS IS
THE 1st SENTENCE OF HEMINGWAY'S "SHORT, HAPPY LIFE OF


Aspen

Thanks for coffee cups in Mpls.

July 24, 1990

1178

ASPEN, COLORADO, elevation 7,907 ft.

ASPEN, CO
PM
JUL 26
1990

Dear Ivan & Carol —

Greetings from perfect USA. Not only is litter unthinkable here, old blossoms can be plucked & tossed to the ground, they must be gathered in little baskets. Jim is teaching fiction at the Writers Conference — I can hear the class babble below me even as I write. Also here: G. Wolff, Al Young, Chs. Simic, C. Fonche, Scott Walker, Cyra McFadden — all good folks. Students are fun, pretty good. Board of Directors gingus buffet suppers every third night — & can they cook! We're staying in a tiny condo, all white & pleasant. Across the street a new Victorian house, perfect in every detail, for sale for $2.5 million. I liked one jacket I saw — $650. It is all spectacularly lovely, dazzlingly like a House & Garden mag, ho hum! When are you coming through Real Msso?

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Buffalo Bill Cody

USA 15

Ivan & Carol Doug

1702, 10th Ave NW

SEATTLE

WA 98177

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"There's NO business like SNOW business like NO business I KNOW..."

Dear Carol & Ivan the slag —

Great minds, yr will observe, choose Xmas cards by the same person. My former dispensary doesn't think of Boynton as artist but as recycled paper products, + no longer. So they became "former"

Our pals Kittredge & Smith zoomed out to their mild climes to visit parents & kids & breathe sea air, but we're stickying close to Wylie st. Lot of slogging going on here too. Jim is doing the last revisions of the Indian Lawyer (his editor capitulated to the tribe.) Doing some lawyerly revisions, etc. Will be done Jan. 5-10.

Besides, we now have Bill Berris Kittredge to gnaw on us. He's just 4 mos. old & is getting beyond the baby bear appearance of the enclosed photo. As you can see, he's another golden retriever, though he promises to be smaller than Frank. He's beginning to understand sit & no & ouch!

He'll be company while Jim lives in his nice white house within walking distance of Cornell from Jan. 15 — May 15. I'll visit Spring Break, having a line on a puppy-loving housesitter. My chairman won't hear of my leaving. Being needed is it all it's cracked up to be, turns out.

Yr course on W. Writers sounds great, Carol. I didn't know of "Am. Writ. as Living Space" but will look it up. Jim is consultant to a film team doing a documentary on Stegner & they shot some footage here w writers who know him. Bill the pooch was banished to prevent him from chewing on the electric cord all over the house. It was quite a complicated scene.

Wishing you the sudden inspiration of the season

And happy slogging with the end of yr books, Ivan. When's the next research trip our way?

♡ ♡ + cheer!

Lois & Jim

Oh dear, I bet no one has told you about Sarah Crumps. I was going to tell you how the Berries are doing, & then I thought how you probably didn't know that Sarah committed suicide in August at her father's place in N.C. She was due to meet Bill & Juliette in Japan the next week. Bill & Juliette were in Fiji & it was an ordeal to get ahold of them & worse for them to get back here. They stayed here (because the house was rented out.) & family all came & they had a lovely heartbreaking memorial service. Sarah had been increasingly depressed & probably only forced confinement in a hospital could have saved her, w drugs & such. It was a shock & yet not quite, to the family, but they'd tried so hard to save her, to keep her. What a loss of a lovely talented child! I'm glad Bill & Jul. & MC are in Japan where their attention is required on strange new things, & time can heal the wound somewhat.



October on
the Rattlesnake

with Bill Bevis Kittredge Weber
(b. Aug 17, 1989)

age 2 mos



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4/10/89

Home on the Range to a "sodbuster" family, this tar-paper shack near Scobey, Montana, typified the quarters of many Americans who followed the Homestead Acts westward to the Great Plains in the early 1900's, determined to find their fortunes with small ploughs and great hopes.

Dear Ivan & Carol —

Home sweet home. I wanted to thank you for lending us your house for our Seattle visit. It really gave us an illusion that we were really living there again — a pleasant illusion. I loved walking down your street under all those drapey trees, seeing the little efforts at blooming here & there. Better yet was the chance to visit — over crabs, strawberries & the like. Friends of the Hibor. pretend your visit here, so it's for real.

I only hope that I didn't give you the Dread Bug! The night we were in Ellensburg I developed a fever & it's ups & downs made me miss the 1st week of school, if you can imagine. & I'm still half deaf. So I hope my breath wasn't deadly! That would be no thanks for such a pleasant holiday.

See you soon in Missoula. Typhoid

Thanks again, Lois

APR 11 1989

Published and distributed by Big Sky Magic Enterprises, Helmville, MT 59843 —Thain White collection, Mansfield Library, University of Montana—



POST CARD

ADDRESS

Ivan & Carol Doig
17021 10th Av. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

April 15, '89

What an editor! Can't wait to see what he says about Jim on the next book jacket!

Nope, neither of us caught the Typhoidus Kalalochum or whatever it was that felled you, Lois. Vast sympathy to you from both of us; we'd heard of people this winter coming down with particularly pernicious flu, awful stuff. We hope you're revived, resuscitated, re-whatever is needed.

Indeed I guess I am going to prate to the Friends of the Library, and the way that day is shaping up I'm confirmed in just accepting Tall Dale's motel room and not imposing on you two at the (sob) Welch Ritz. I'm driving in from Spokane that afternoon, the Friends of the L start the drinking at 6, then the banquet, then (somewhere in there) me, etc.; coupled with the fact that I'll pull out early the next morn to drive to Billings, I think I'd be an utter non-guest even if I did stay at your place, this time. But: how about two Doigs overnight--the quality one, Carol, can be with me by then--on June 16? We'll wander on to Choteau the next day. Will give you a call around June 1 to see if the June 16 date fits with you, okay?

We've just had a week of summer weather. Boggling. Got out the lawn chairs, zeroed in on the narrow patches of sun that reach this property this time of year, and sprawled and soaked up rays, even, a couple of afternoons. The straining-to-blossom flora along our street you mentioned, Lo, had the plant equivalent of a weeklong drunken binge; Carol and I were convinced we could actually see the buds grow on the vine maples out the kitchen window. Today? 45 degrees and not quite raining, yet.

It was a treat to have you out here. We all better do it again before long,

luv,

Dear Jim and Lois

Welcome! There's milk, beer and juice in the refrig, Beam under the counter across the way, cereal above, etc. etc. Enjoy.

There's more firewood in the woodhouse on the property line, and the garbage cans are in the front section of the same shed. The fireplace flue is on the far right, rear.

You may or may not find ants in the bathroom. You will find that the hot water is a stream, not a river. Old plumbing; the next project to be achieved. Showers work OK as long as kitchen equipment isn't using the supply simultaneously.

All 3 phones -- kitchen, bedroom and study -- can be silenced. Bedroom phone is already on mute.

Please water the plants. (Beware of the dark brown pot over Ivan's desk, which overfloweth the lip unless fed in sips.) Watering can is on kitchen windowsill.

The light switch for the overhead in the guest bedroom is inside the bookshelf, 5th shelf from bottom.

Soap for the washer is in the cabinet above.

The living room lamp by the window is on an automatic timer; just slide the control element from "automatic" to "manual" while you're here and want to use the lamp, and back to "automatic" when you go Kalaloching.

See you soon!

Carol + Dean

Dear Doigs —

Welcome! Thanks for roof, bed, koaco, milk, coffee, books, best seller list, etc. We're very vested.

We have the front door key. Won't be here Fri. much before 5:00.

Here be gate keys.

NB. → The electricity went off Tues a.m. so I pushed ~~sh~~set buttons here & there to stop flashing but set nothing.

Thanks. Friday. ☺

♡ to ♀ Jim.



Dear Doigs —

Did you hear that Mike Malone is proposing that Montana be returned to territorial status on the Centennial? I hear that the Elliott Bay signing was a great success & that Juliette gained 4 lbs. eating Crabs. Did you hear that Nora Kobel (or however she spells her name) is selling the defective Count Anthologies for the regular price? Did you hear that Frank is looks better but still lists when in motion? He still is enthusiastic — but he aims wrong. The vet reminds me that time is a great healer.

Barb's celebration was a huge success. dined up out to the sidewalk at 5:30. Good buffet after.

Bill & Annick were on TV re. the Author. tonight — but of course it's sold out.

We're enjoying the sun — if not the 10°. We've lots of lights & candles & music — but it's just not the same as a good visit in the Seattle air. Be of good cheer, & we'll keep your pillow plumped for April.

PEACE * PAIX * PAZ * MIR * 平和

Love, Amitie's, Aufklärung, Tanazalii,

Jim & Lee

Alban Welti ★ Switzerland • Suisse • Suiza ★ Peace • Paix • Paz.

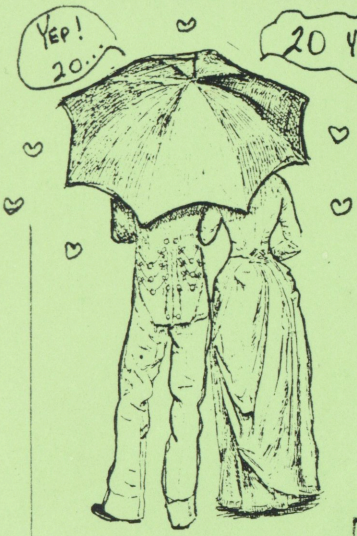
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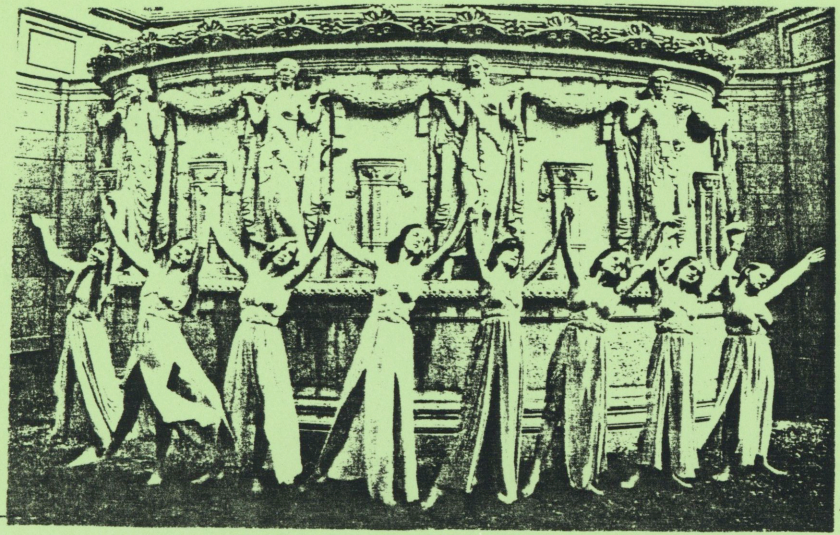
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Ivan & Carole Doig



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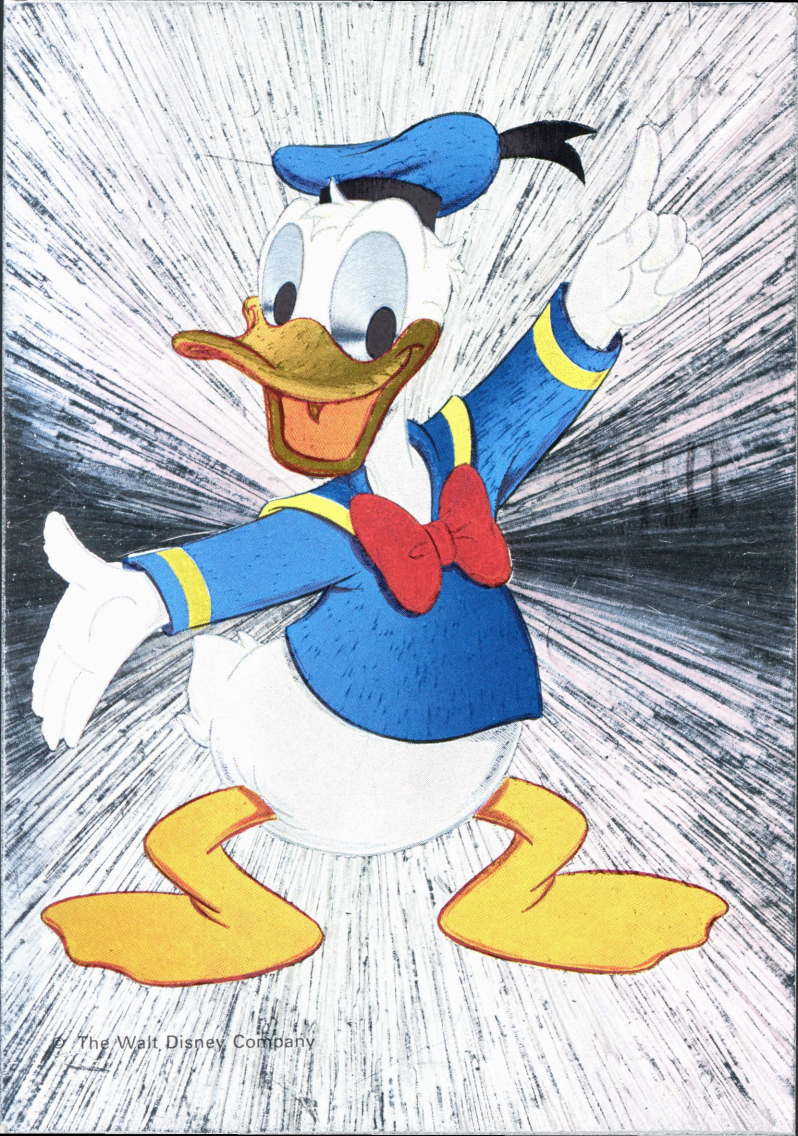
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With warm greetings and
renewed hopes for
peace, contentment and joy
and copies of Dancing at the
Rascal Fair & Fools Crow
in every stocking!

Love,
Jim & Lois


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11/24/87

Dear Ivan & Carol, PMS DLR
LDB012 (1152) ICS IPMMRZCPS.
YABA DABA DOOO ! And thank
you very much for the telegram!
What a surprise to be handed that
after all the glitter & speech making.
And since I am not himself, I can agree
that it seemed just then as though it was
not only "as it should be," but it couldn't
be better! (One has these elations...)
Altogether, it was a remarkable weekend
in Japan, as it turned out. Swank Jap.
hotel in Jap. district (nr. LA Times) w roof
garden & related graces. Jim had to make
3 speeches — all 6 had to — at different
occasions. And the sun shone (into the smog)
& we even got to do beach one day. We all shone.
Jim is now back trying to master his MacPlus.
It sounds as though Dancing is doing wonderfully.
Are you worn down from your travels, Ivan —
or from stay-at-home, Carol? We hope all's swell!
Happy Thanks +to Lois

Thanks, what they say in telegrams.

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17021 10th Ave NW
Seattle, WA 98177

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— From the Desk of the Director of Creative Writing

University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59812

10/20/87

Dear Ivan —

Just in case Ginny Merriam didn't send you a copy of your page in the Entertainer — or in case you want to paste the back-side best-seller news into your scrapbook alongside the review & interview — here's an extra copy. Nice to see the Doig oeuvre all selling! Nice mug shot too.



And thanks for doing the reading! Ripples of pleasure were evident everywhere.

By now, I hope, you're safely home in your droughty landscape & rested up from the promotional hegira.

We're whirling along: Home today, Wordsworth tomorrow. Jim's word processor is due tomorrow. It's a new age.

Thanks again,

Lois



Lois Welch July 1, '87

Hi, guys. Bill the K set some kind of mark for Elliott Bay readings, Jim, when his latest grandson--Leo, of the inimitable Zack-Riley-Max-Leo group--began squalling during the most prurient part of Bill's Paris Review story and had to be temporarily ejected. Speaking of readings; Lo, in honor of the new Director of Creative Writing I'd be glad to contribute a gratis reading (unless that's a bad precedent to set), if you want, when I swoop through Missoula this fall. Tentatively I'd be swooping on Sept. 30; the 29th I've promised to Barbara Theroux, for whatever kind of signing shindig she wants, so on the 30th I could probably manage to talk to a class and/or do a reading, if you'd like, somewhere before, after or amid signings I may be doing at Freddy's and the UM bookstore. Maybe give me a jingle in early Sept. about it? Happy summer in the great backyard and aboard the floating meatwagon.

love II,

19 Feb. '87

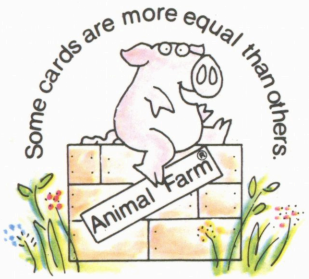
Dear Jim--

Congrats on the Pacific NW Booksellers Award. If the ceremony happens to be here this year instead of Portland, do feel free to stay with us. (We also provide airport limo service, mini-version.) What a pleasure it is, to see FOOLS CROW get its deserved tribute from the booksellers.

all best

p.s. Hi, Lois!

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mMEerr yxChristm MAs/! ①



① Delete this greeting after 12/25/86

Dear Doctor Doigs —

Admirable, your Christmas drama! * Is the draft off, done, Ivan? Are yrs having fun? (Were yrs having fun? Yes.) Is this a quiz? NO. If I sent this card before (yes – no-), sorry: it's such a writerly card.

The Welches' solution to the fall was to glide to SF at the end of finals week & research the relation of sunshine to palms, sea shore, seals, bougainvillea, hibiscus, oranges & traffic. Positive. (Here no sun. No seals.) Seriously we did nothing serious (except sleuth out Fools Crow in bookstores. Bet yrs do that!) Then we slipped back to Hsso. between fog banks, since LA does not do Christmas correctly. Just in time.

Jim is reading his Parole Board dossier (He never writes Christmas cards.) & is recovered from writer's cramp. His editor was so happy with the book's reviews, etc. that we sent him a woodbiter branch. (A beaver had chewed a swell 9-inch piece w great tooth marks.)

Ripley et al & ZZ. for a fondue Christmas sup.

* the illustrated 5-act - tragico - comic - greeting/letter



Love & Cheer(s)

Jim & Lois

We wish yrs a swell, prosperous, happy, healthy, famous, eventful & altogether exceptional 1987. xoxL.

14 Oct. '86

Dear Jim--

The comp copy of FOOLS CROW came yesterday. It's lovely. Thanks--not just for our copy, but for the writing of it.

You are rumored to be available for sighting in the vicinity of the UW on Nov. 13. See you then or thereabout.

all best

James Welch
2321 Wylie Street
Missoula, Montana 59802

April 16, 1986

Dear Ivan and Carol,

At long last I have come out from under my mushroom. Paying taxes has jarred me back to reality and I'm ready to enjoy the spring--poorer but warmer. It's been a pretty good spring so far, fairly warm, some sun. We went floating with Bevis and some of the gang a week ago. Caught a lot of rays but no fish. Snortin' Orton was over for the week and that was fun. He's working on a new novel and laboring at B. Bailey. Quite a Snort, as Kittredge might say.

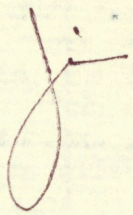
I've finished the copyediting on Fools Crow. The copyeditor did an extraordinary job. There was a 5 page key, filled with Indian names, words, rivers, mountains, etc. It was the most remarkable thing of its kind I've ever seen. And I had had a hard time keeping things straight, so this copyeditor was sent from heaven. Speaking of which, Dana Boussard did a piece for the cover and will do 5 or 6 drawings for the inside. Do you know Dana? She's a very good local artist. And Gerry Howard, of course, is a joy to work with. He's the kind of guy who makes you think you've written something good. I was totally tired of Ted's reserved judgement, so I was ready for Gerry's unbounded enthusiasm.

And speaking of which--I've been meaning to write to you for a long time to tell you how much I liked English Creek. You really made that country come alive and I realized that I had met virtually all of your characters at one time or another. In fact, once a friend and I went to a buafflo jump on a sheep ranch on the north slope of the Little Rockies--there were a lot of men there doing some sort or work (maybe shearing, it was a long time ago)--and I couldn't get that image out of my mind as I read English Creek. There was a basic decency to them, but you could tell they came from all kinds of backgrounds, some probably better off not known. Anyway your novel, Ivan, really put me back in that country. And I like the humor you give your people, humor of survival. Best of all, I like the way it is written, the tone of it which really seems to mirror the tone of your characters. I couldn't imagine them talking or acting differenctly than the way you portray them. Well done! And thanks for the mention in the acknowledgements. Lois and I were pleased to find ourselves in such august company (with the possible exceptions of Bevis and Kittredge).

We are coming out to Port Townsend July 10-20 (I think). Are you folks going to be around then? If I know your history You'll probably be in Montana then. Anyway I'm sure we'll see you this summer. We're looking forward to it, to do some catching up. It seems like a long time since we have talked seriously.

A little local news: Rick DeMarinis has had his novel accepted and will probably come out with it in the fall. I think it's St. Martin's Press. Also, he won the Drue Heinz Award (yes, of ketchup fame) which consists of a $5000 award plus publiscation of a book of short stories. Annick and Kittredge are real close to making a movie of A River Runs Through It. It seems that Normie has just about given his permission--and the money is available. In fact two movie outfits are kind of vying for it, including ROBERT REDFORD. Crumley is down in Hollywoood working on a movie screenplay about tunnel rats in Viet Nam. Krauzer is also down in Hollywoood working on some grade B job. Matt Hansen's book of poems is nearly out from a small fine press here in Missoula. It will also come out in an offset edition soon. More on this later. And Dick's book of autobiographical essays will be coming out in June. In fact Lois is up at Ripley's helping to proofread now. Oh, and Brian DeSalvatore had a piece in the Talk of the Town section of the New Yorker about Missoula softball (I think it was in January or February). He is now writing a piece on dynamite for them. And we're all anxiously awaiting Ralph Beer's novel which should be out soon. So everybody in Missoula is getting rich and famous all at once.

Well, you two take care, enjoy your walk around Lake Union and just enjoy spring. That's what we intend to do. Lois sends her love as do I.



13 May '86

Dear Jim and Lois--

We knew seafood famine would bring you out here eventually. And as this is a once-in-a-century summer when we don't plan to come to Montana (guess who has to stay home and finish his novel), your Port Townsend gig is great good news. Of course plan to flop with us, before or after the July 10-20 stint, if you're in the mood for a soupcon of Seattle. (Looky there, Lois, I'm talking the same lingo Proust did!) This house still has the one bathroom it's ever had, but at approximately the cost of a moonshot it now has oak hither and yon. We hope you're going to stay with us, but even if you're not you've got to come use the bathroom.

Well well well: the cover of FOOLS CROW. I'd say they finally did right by you, huh, Jim? At least it looks nifty to both of us. I have another instance or two to report of how much Gerry Howard seems to be on the ball. When he asked me for a blurb he did something I've never had happen before but which I think makes astounding good sense--he simply photocopied your typescript and mailed me a copy. It's faster, it's a hell of a lot easier to read than bound galleys, it's just pretty damn smart. Then not long ago came the bound copy, with the cover, and a nudging note from Gerry saying if the Muse of Blurbing happened to visit me... What the hell, I thought, I sent that to him a couple three weeks ago. I got right on the phone, collared Gerry's assistant (G. out of office), and found out that either the U.S. mail or the Viking mail room must have swallowed the blurb, it was so succulent. So I read it to him by phone and that was that. But, if Gerry hadn't followed up with the bound galley and the deft nudge, I'd have blithely figured he'd gotten the blurb and he'd have figured I'd gone uncharacteristically mute. So far as I can see, Jim, all auspices are terrific for this book.

We're both pecking along about as usualy if you don't count the bomb threat that emptied Carol's college at 10 minutes into her first hour of teaching yesterday morning. She said Mondays are bad enough, but that was fucking ridiculous. We're looking forward to Craig Lesley coming up from Portland to read at Elliott Bay this Friday night; I guess it's going to be him, Welch and Unger at Centrum, is it? Jesus, those students will reel out of that 10 days with so much sense of the land they'll think they been interned with Tolstoi at Yasnya Polyana. We hugely look forward to seeing you two; please be prepared to tell us all about Europe, and if you'd like, bring slides--we're real suckers.

love

p.s. Jim, your words about the voices in English Creek are the best praise I can imagine.

14 March '86

Dear Jim--

I trust you know that Gerry Howard sent me a copy of the FOOLS CROW ms for me to make a blurb about, which I'm glad to try do. I was liking your damn book just fine until Yellow Kidney came home without fingers; the attached pages from my own ms will show you why. We must be living proof that great minds run in similar tracks. As Carol points out, we're providing some Ph.D. candidate a readymade topic--"Welch and Doig: Amputational Fiction in the Two Medicine Country."

The work is going okay here, but that's about the only thing that is, today. Carol is under the weather with the flu, and I'm about half under. Serves us right for not living in a healthful place like Missoula. We hope you two are thriving.

I'm truly liking FOOLS CROW; the voice of it, sir, is an achievement unto itself.

all best

12/21/85

Dear Ivan & Carol-- Wouldn't you know it: get a perfectly good card written to you and here comes a whole typed card full of news and howdy-doos. PLEASE ANSWER One (a) HOW DO YOU GET THE CARD INTO THE TYPEWRITER WITHOUT BENDING IT? _____ or (b) HOW DO YOU FLATTEN IT OUT SO PERFECTLY IN TIME TO GET IT HERE BEFORE CHRISTMAS? _____.

I imagine that Carol is finally out of the livingroom, or at least she's got the finals and her red-stained little fingers somewhere else. (In a file drawer, for example, or a brown paper shopping bag. The papers, that is.) And what does a bathroom sound like when committing suicide? (Don't answer) I heard on the radio in a store (as I was looking at SantaClaus cookie cutters) that a few planes have gotten in and out of Seattle today, so your fog must be alleviating some. They predicted increasing clouds here today--as though it could be relevant when you can't even see the treetops. You sure did get more snow than we did! We have about 2" of some old grey stuff. It matches the sky. And the air.

Sorry Snort couldn't descend the Hill for Thanksgiving. It's sort of hilarious at this distance, though I recall only too clearly the havoc 4-10 snowflakes created when I was a child. And you got 24" inches at a swack...incredible! We chickened (so to speak) out of going to visit Jim's family over Thanksgiving because of windchills approaching 3 digits.

THE TRAVELOGUE. How about Ode to a VW Camper? How about Camping Ecstasies for Intermediates? What about Gross Glockner, the Pass No One Passes Twice? Or Fun in Venice without Sinking? Or Has Dressing for Color changed Portofino? Or Riviera Breasts: a Primer for Protestants. Or the Friendly French, an undiscovered dimension. Or Return to Agen: The Provinces 20 years later. Or Fumes, a guide to Spanish back roads. Or Bon Appetit: Gourmet camping menues by Knorr and the Friendly Fellows who Make Sausage, Pate & Cheese. Or How I Learned* to Body Surf with Bevises on golden Portuguese Beaches while Overcoming the Fear of Undertow, by a Former Oregonian . I can't go on!

I guess I'm going to have to give Jim a title for his novel for Christmas. Everything is working swell for him except that he hasn't got a title. He won't take "Great Expectations" (my favorite). "Fools Crow", the name of his main character, is currently the title of a bio about a Sioux. Maybe I'll give him a box of titles. There should be a game. Hmmm. (Sounds of Lois thinking...)

You can see clearly now that Jim is with Viking. He's glad of it. And Winter in the Blood is scheduled to come out in Febr.with their Contemp. Amer. Fiction series that you're in. Actually,Jim was so visibly irked (in his pleasant way...) with the cover for it that Gerry has asked what he'd like for a cover for The New One. (One wonders, after all, if New York knows that All Indians Do Not Look Alike. This chap is distinctly Hindu in features, as opposed to the Navahos & Redfords of previous covers. Nice colors, though.) Though Jim & Gerry spent a whole day going over the new novel page by page, no major changes are required. A relief.

* or didn't

(You'll like this: Solataroff thought Jim ought to have killed off his main character. One of the reasons Jim left Harper & Row. The guy survives smallpox, a massacre & will soon be moved to a reservation --and the ending is too upbeat! Call it Surviving: a Blackfeet Comedy.)

You can see we're settled in for the nonce. Apart from jaunts to Havre (a conference on Montana Writers in January: such sophisticated planning) & to Portland in May, we've nothing on the agenda but typing. Sun Valley sounds ideal but I don't know anything about it. There are a lot of your books around that look like they need signing. We'll see what happens after the thaw. Be merry.



mMEerr yaxChristm MAs/!



12/20/85

Dear Ivan & Carol—

How's typing? You fogged in & done with papers? Things are so quiet here you can hear the hoar-frost drop in-between the click of little keys. I find it quite lovely. Jim responds differently to the all-white landscape.

We hope all's well with you. Everywhere we've been lately we see that lovely cover of English Creek on piles of books that people are snatching up. Jerry Howard (from Viking) - he's your editor too, no, Ivan? — was out in mid-Nov. to go over the manuscript. We invited the local Viking writers & others to meet him but felt you might not be in →

Jim says No.



Cheers
Lois & Jim

the mood for an Interstate Party. It was a good one, actually, since Rick recently sold a novel to Arbor & Bryan di Salvatore made "Talk of the Town" & Ralph Bee made Harpers, as well as Viking.

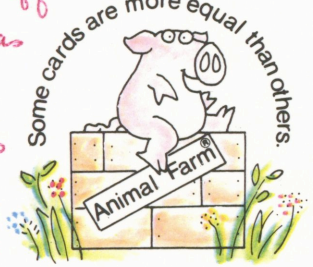
Otherwise, it's all quiet. I've just surfaced from 750 pp. of student papers. Ripley will be home soon from her part-time comp job in Coeur d'Alene (where Melissa is learning to be a bank teller). Boises have lots of family stranded, waiting to arrive if the fog lifts.

Are you off to the Bahamas or typing in the morning as usual?

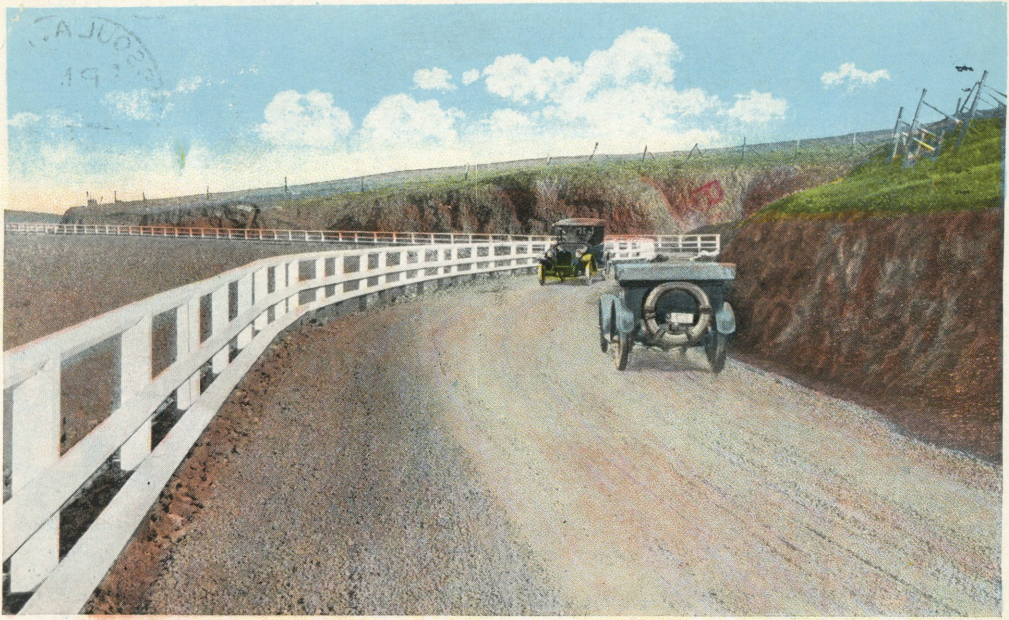
Be jolly!

Love,
Lois

NO TREES WERE DESTROYED.
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366. THE SUMMIT, LEWISTON HILL HIGHWAY, LEWISTON, IDAHO.

9/14/85

Dear Ivan & Carol –

POSTAL CARD

MISSOULA, MONT. PM

R-81137

ADDRESS ONLY ON THIS SIDE

Sinclair Lewis

USA 14

Isn't travel fun! As you can see, we had a splendid tram a vehicle of utmost comfort & modernity. Thought you'd like to see. Actually, we're going to SF the 16th to pick up the VW Van we got in Europe & travelled w Orton & Bowses in. A quick test camping it homeward in time for me to leap into the saddle. Classes the 23rd... Never thanked you for your kind letter this Timeless Spring. Hope your summer has been fun & profit too. ♡ xxx from Willie st.

Lois & Jim

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Ivan & Carol Doig

17021 10th Ave N.W.

Seattle, WA 98177

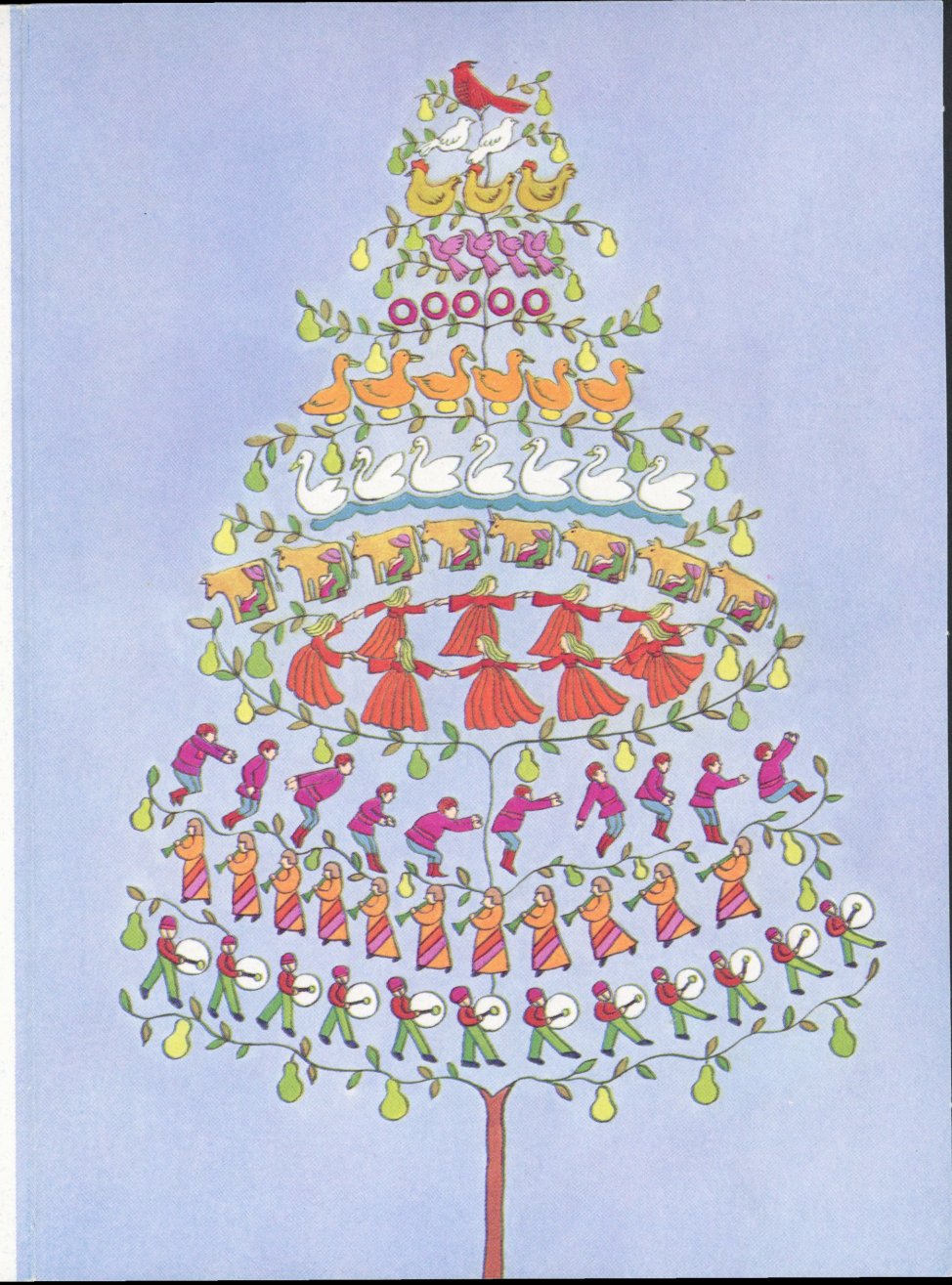
* Don't be pedantic, now!

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12/23

Dear Ivan & Carol —

I can explain everything! Actually, that's pretty funny about Egg-topped Egbert showing up at your signing. (Tell me, would you not go for "Bert" or 'E.C.' if you were Christened Egbert?) And I have written van Veens ... this was not a very letter-worthy year here on Wylie st. I liked the GENERIC quality of Allen's Landscape Card. Thanks! Did they buy your books?

Although Jim maintains his Scrooge approach to it, I'm still enchanted by this snow. It's sifting down in big floppy flakes. (Of course, the wind is roaring down the Rockies & Travellers' Advisories are posted, but I'm here quietly at home, listening to Christmas music.) Is it 59° + cloudy there?

I think Jim has leeched out in the housing domain once again. I called the list of sabbatical houses sent to me by an ex-student (getting Ph.D.) at Cornell. The West's 5 bedroom, 2 study house w King-size waterbed (!) & 2 acres is 4 mi. from campus. We'll take the 3 bedroom version, actually. With fireplace. We'll see if the decor is Powdy Faculty... I couldn't ask. And it is Cornell, after all.

Jim is actually working hard on his novel. He's rolling again, at last. Plans to have it done by departure time. So we have a quiet Xmas in mind.

© A.G.

I hope this arrives on one of these 12 days ... when do they start?

Carol - if you think we have a hard time: Cornell's Final Week was 17th-21! The faculty faints with relief on the 25th!

On the Twelve days of Christmas my true love sent to me Twelve drummers drumming, Eleven pipers piping, Ten lords a-leaping, Nine ladies dancing, Eight maids a-milking, Seven swans a-swimming, Six geese a-laying, Five golden rings, Four calling birds, Three french hens, Two turtle doves, and a Partridge in a Pear tree.

—*Old English* Carol

NO PUN INTENDED.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Lois & Jim

We hope you manage a cheery holiday!

Enclosed find an excerpt from a book I 'wrote' last week entitled "A GOOD SHORT STORY IS HARD TO WRITE." It was great fun! Carol no doubt understands the extremes to which grading papers drives ones.

Dear Lois and Jim--A couple of Sundays ago I signed books at the Oregon Historical Society's Xmas gathering of authors, the all-time cattle-call booksigning I've ever been to (must have been 100 of us scribblers there), and I unexpectedly gleaned mucho about the Portland Past of the Welches (or at least Prof. Lois's). First, here came the tall goateed guy who asked me to pass you the landscape-green card and ask you why they never hear from you. So! Inconstant correspondent-hood! Next, up pottered a little round bald man who said he was Egbert Oliver of PSU, and as I stood dazed by the eggly qualities of Egbert, he told me he was head of the English Dept. at P'land St. when You Know All Too Well Who was on the faculty there. Lois, you owe us an hour or two of Egbert stories, when next we meet. When I told him you were doing well, he said, with a whiff of surprise that he was glad to hear that.

Carol has just finished grading fall quarter to death, I am about tolleave the house for my next-to-last booksigning. Reviews have been great, except in Seattle & Missoula; guess I'm not cut out to be a hometown hero.

Drop us a line when you get established at Cornell, Jim. (While Lois writes to the van Veens.)

love, and best wishes for '85.

17021 10th Ave. NW
Seattle, Wa. 98177
August 14, 1984

Dear Lois and Jim and Frank

Here I am, back from Scotland with the intrepid researcher, and ensconsed once again at my word processor.

We found the libraries in the olde country somewhat more technologized than previously. The library at St. Andrews, for example, boasts two photocopy machines. The first instructs that it's for ~~xxxxxxxx~~ eight copies or less; the second is declared for 10 copies or more. Ivan managed to survive perplexities like that, and a major upheaval of moving furniture and equipment, and came home with lotsa material toward his fictional emigrants, circa 1889.

Shopping was fun, too. With the exchange rate at about $1.33 a pound, sweaters were not quite being given away. I do hope we have a cold winter.

Before that, though, we hope for a superior fall, especially for Ivan's tour of bookstores in October. Is the offer of a place on Wylie St. still redeemable? If so, we'll be there the nights of October 26 and 27, the Friday and Saturday deliberately of homecoming weekend! Ivan has a signing arranged at the U. bookstore, twixt parade and game. Sure, he's game. (He remembered that he'd done a stint for Sky at The Fine Print, quite inadvertently, and that it turned out well.)

Anyway, he'll be driving a circuit of Montana, starting with Kalispell on Monday, the 22nd, and ending with the Missoula signing. I'm gonna fly over and meet him somewhere midway, depending on what kind of time I can talk my boss out of.

All is mightily well here. We came home to find the back 40 dry; hardly any rain the five weeks we were away, and less since. I'm about to do another round of watering, which I find pleasant work. In fact, we've pottered and puttered inside and out, just like homeowners are supposed to do.

One other mention for you: The daughter of excellent friends of John and Jean Roden will be starting graduate study in environmental sciences in Missoula this fall. Her name is ~~xxxx~~ Jane Dewell, I once took a history of science course with her at the UW, and she really is a very nice and responsible young lady. Jean wondered if ~~her~~ your name could be given to her, since she knows no one in town, and we duly provided it. Ivan chortled, though. She's done a two-year stint in the Peace Corps in a village in The Gambia under what we understand to be exceedingly primitive conditions. Ivan figures if she could learn the language and handle that assignment, probably she'll be able to figure Missoula out. Should you be wanting a housesitter some time, she'd be a good candidate.

Hope you're all thriving, along with the rest of the Wylie St. literati, and even unto the Bevis/Crump neighborhood. Fond greetings to all.

January 10, 1984

Dear Ivan & Carol,

On the 1st of November it was discovered that Matt Hansen, Ripley Hugo's son, Richard Hugo's step-son, had cancer. It is a particularly fast growing cancer ("explosive," the doctors called it) named Burkitt's lymphoma. It attacks the abdominal area as a tumorous mass, affecting the stomach, the intestines, the kidneys and other organs. Sometimes the cancerous cells break away from the mass and become free-floating, affecting other areas of the body. The mortality rate is very high. Even if one beats this cancer, the chances of getting leukemia at a later age, usually early 40's, is great. Matt is 22.

He has been at University Hospital in Seattle since discovery of the cancer, undergoing first an operation to remove as much of the mass as possible, and now six months worth of chemotherapy, to be followed by radiation treatment. As you can imagine, it is a painful and often discouraging procedure. After each chemo session (three week cycles, one immediately after another), Matt is laid out and vulnerable to infection, which is just as dangerous as the cancer itself. Before the final radiation treatment, the doctors will remove the marrow from the bones in Matt's legs to reintroduce after treatment. This is all very traumatic but the only hope for recovery.

Ripley has been out in Seattle all this time, doing everything she can to help Matt. Those of you who know her well know that she is courageous as hell in times of adversity. When she lost Dick a little over a year ago, she carried on (with Matt's help) to a point where she was again looking forward to her life. This past fall she started a good teaching job at Northern Montana College. Lois and I visited her one weekend and were pleased that she had found a nice apartment and filled it with things that meant a lot to her. She had started to make friends and she was truly enjoying her students. In November her life changed, again. Since then it has been a struggle to maintain her spirits so she can help Matt do likewise.

Now there are a hundred little things that seem to pop up every day, things that Ripley can't possibly deal with without help. Fortunately she has friends in Seattle who are helping out on that end, and she has friends in Montana who are trying to take care of things around here. But these worries are a tremendous drain on her spirit and energy which should be free to focus on Matt and his illness. Her most immediate concern, as you may well imagine, is money. Fortunately, most of Matt's medical expenses are covered by insurance--but not all. Then there are the living expenses, the expenses of households, of broken cars, of her daughter's education (she is trying to keep Melissa in college in an effort to keep her life somewhat normal), of special equipment for Matt. These expenses, taken together, are enormous.

18 Jan. '84

First National Montana Bank
Drawer B
Missoula MT 59806

I'm enclosing a check for $500.00, for the Matt Hansen Fund. If there are any questions about this deposit, please contact Jim or Lois Welch in Missoula--549-6713--or me at the above address.

check #10
$500-
1-18-84

cordially

We are asking you to contribute whatever you can to help alleviate these expenses. Whatever you can afford will be greatly appreciated. And if you can't afford anything, it would be nice of you (and just as valuable) to write to Matt and/or Ripley. Matt especially loves to get mail. Don't worry about getting too maudlin. He is very much alive and alert and receptive to communication. But he isn't up to answering a lot of letters right now.

One thing I haven't mentioned is Matt's spirit. It is a very strong spirit and it will get him through. Even the doctors and nurses remark on his great resiliency. He'll be down one day and ready to fight the next. It is not even a possibility that he will give up. Many of you know that he is a fine poet and historian. He wants to write more poems, to continue his writing on the Metis in Montana and to do more work for the Montana Historical Society. Already he has a couple of projects lined out. He is not going to give up. Those of us who are in close touch with him are convinced that he will get well because of this attitude. And because he knows that friends are supporting him every way they know how.

And so we ask for your moral and financial support. And forgiveness for this awful form letter. Thank you very much.

Best wishes for 1984,
Jim & Lois
Jim And Lois Welch

Please make checks payable to: Matt Hansen Fund
Send to: First National Montana Bank
Drawer B
Missoula, Montana 59806

Matt & Ripley's address:
120 Roy Street
#E 41
Seattle, Washington 98109

PS: Could you send your name and address on the enclosed postcard so Matt can eventually respond.

Hi, prize correspondents!
If your letter hadn't arrived yesterday, the offer of a house (prof. on leave) near the U. wouldn't have been interesting today. Another coup — or so it appears — for Types-At-Night.

Scribble, scribble, teach, teach!
xo Lois

18 Jan. '84

Dear Jim and Lois--

Bless you guys for getting something under way for Ripley and Matt while the rest of us stand around blinking in horror. I'll mail a check in the morning, and this weekend we'll try get in touch with Ripley and see what we can do in person-- we'll visit Matt if it's feasible for him.

By god, that Types-at-Night has the damnedest touch for securing housing: we're gonna have to rename him Finds-Mansions-in-the-Spring. Anyway we can't wait till he gets out here (Dr. Prof. L. Welch too, if she so deigns) and brightens the Seattle scene once again.

love & knishes

9 Jan. '84

Dear Lois and Jim--

Hey, nice pics from the great Welch spring party. Characteristic, too: the sober introspective writer earnestly pondering pearls of wisdom from John David, the blithe professor throwing her arms in the air and waving Scotch at the world. Good going, gang.

I would ask you if this winter rather than last isn't the ideal one to be in Mexico, but I suppose I'd be the 458th person to do so. Or Bevis already has asked it 457 times, or something. Seriously, we've had horror stories from everybody we know in Montana. The weather has been--or was, in Nov-Dec.--kind of wacko out here, but not as grim as yours. We did have Thanksgiving for 11 of us by candlelight, courtesy of a windstorm. And before Xmas, we had 6 straight days when it never got above freezing, the longest stint of that I can remember in our 17 years out here. Back to fog and rain now, though.

One of the results of our Xmas vacation, besides that nasty weather, was the mutual revelation that we can't get our act together to go to Scotland in spring. In summer, probably, but this spring there just are too many loose ends--my eternal novel, a bunch of work this house is demanding, the fact that Carol would have to take unpaid leave and thereby zilch about a third of our annual income--for us to manage it. So I hate like hell to do it, but we have to renege, fink out, crap out and other forms of weaseldom, from our offer to turn the house over to one James Welch. Jim, you're welcome to stay with us for as long as you can stand it. Or we can pitch in to help you find a place, although we're not at all sure we can match what you've come up with in your peerless finds. Anyway, let us know, short of hara-kiri (just short of hara-kiri), what we can do to atone.

I note with mixed emotions your news that you've been seeing the House of Sky pic book everywhere. Doubtless one reason you've been seeing them is that the little wonders haven't been marching out of the stores as the publisher figured they would. Atheneum printed 6,000 and I think not more than half have sold. Luckily this is a project I've been able to cast a cold eye on. It was the photog's idea, he did 98% of the work and I only nodded brightly and said I'd need 50% of the money. Unluckily the money amounts to about 82¢ per book: the photog and I split 6% royalty on that fearsome $27.50 cover price. But Jim, it's kind of worth the experience to have a book come out with my name on it and not really care what the hell the reviewers say. If a reviewer likes it, I can tell myself Yes sir, the photog and I are a class act; if he doesn't like it, I tell myself it isn't me he's harping at, it's that dumbshit fotograffer. Thus there's strictly entertainment value in reviews which have ranged from "Kelso's landscapes are far less polished than the western scenes and therefore far more moving and melancholy" (huh?) to "this is only for the greatest fans of stark Montana landscapes" (hee hee hee). It's also been noticeable that a book like this gets only about a third as many reviews as what Carol refers to as real books.

Speaking of that other Doig, she had every intention of adding her two bits' worth to this letter, but between that intention and now has arisen (a) a teaching colleague who aced her out of her favorite classroom, so that now in her back-to-back mass media classes Carol has to troop between classrooms, do a double-setting-up of her regalia of clippings, projector, whatever, all the while with students trying to talk to her; (b) a supper date tonight with her parents and John and Jean Roden, which her parents set up despite her directive that tonight ain't a good night for it; and (c) general professorial harriedness. But if she were here, I know she'd be telling Jim how successful her use of Winter in the Blood was, in her freshman English class last quarter. I think she used it in conjunction with an assignment to write a piece conveying a mood, and she said the papers were terrific.

Not much else to report. Scribble, scribble, teach, teach. It looks now as if we'll be around here until mid-June, when we'll try again to rouse ourselves to invade Scotland. That'll depend somewhat on the health of Carol's parents, which right now is stable but her mother's will always be frail. (By the way, their move to a retirement home out here--in Kirkland, a couple miles east of where you guys had your lakefront house that one spring--has gone surprisingly well. It's a considerable new pressure on Carol, but she's shouldering it like Atlas.) So we are around to see (and wine and dine) all available Welches.

love & knishes

A CHRISTMAS HARVEST
by Griesbach-Martucci

VS 009
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CORTE MADERA, CALIFORNIA

LITHO IN U.S.A.



Retroactive
Season's Greetings

Jim & Lois

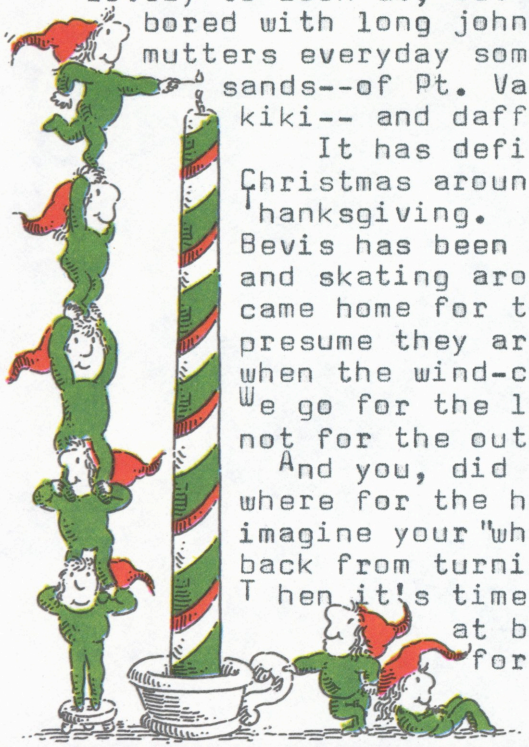
Hope this holiday stacks up as one of your best.

12/29/83

Fast away the old year passes
Heedless of approaching classes

Dear Ivan & Carol--

Perhaps the enclosed mementos of summer won't strike the same depths of nostalgia in you as they do us. You've had your ice this year, however. Not just in a glass either. At this moment, it's 13 degrees out there, a veritable heat wave. On the picnic table there is about 19" of snow, 3 of them fresh last night. Frankly, it's lovely to look at, but I'm already really bored with long johns & wool sox & Jim mutters everyday something about golden sands--of Pt. Vallarta, Nassau, Waikiki-- and daffodils.



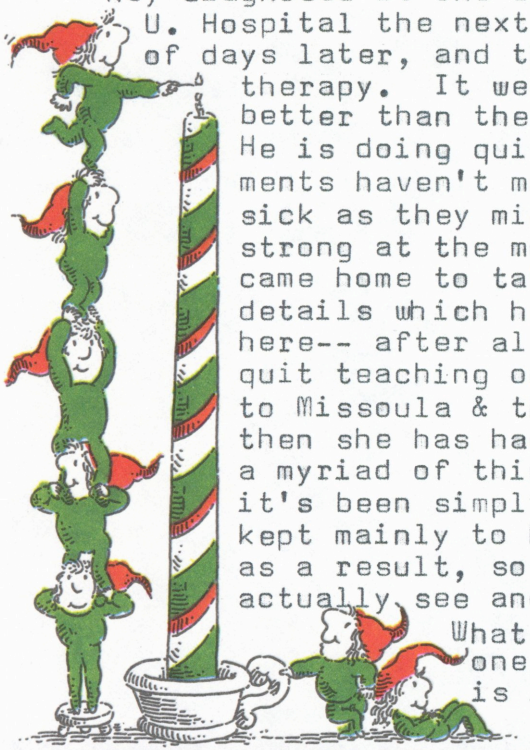
It has definitely looked like Christmas around here. Ever since Thanksgiving. That part's swell. Bevis has been up grooming his ice and skating around, and the girls came home for the holidays, so I presume they are skiing on days when the wind-chill is above 50 below. We go for the lights and music, but not for the outdoor jollity.

And you, did you jaunt off somewhere for the holidays? I can just imagine your "whoopee" when you came back from turning in grades, Carol. Then it's time to burn one's candle at both ends to make up for the time lost.

© 1983 AGC

Hope this holiday stacks up as one of your best.

Two more parties for the season and I guess my candle will not only be quite charred at both ends but the middle will be really fat. (Impossible metaphor!) It's been quite jolly, since we escaped frozen pipes & cars. We even got to see Ripley Tuesday night. It's been a long time. Very long. You may have heard about Matt... Nov. 1 they diagnosed him as having Burkett's Lymphoma, an abdominal cancer of the most shocking sort: it took 10,000 calories per day, doubled every 24 hours, drank up 5.5 pints of blood. They diagnosed it one day, got him into the U. Hospital the next, operated a couple of days later, and then started chemotherapy. It went as well as, even better than they could have hoped. He is doing quite well: the treatments haven't made him nearly as sick as they might have. He feels strong at the moment. So Ripley came home to take care of the many details which had just been dropped here-- after all, she had just to quit teaching one morning and zoom to Missoula & then Seattle. Since then she has had to look after such a myriad of things for Matt that it's been simply harrowing. She's kept mainly to herself over there as a result, so it's been good to actually see and talk with her.



What a trial! Everything one can think to say is insufficient.

© 1983 AGC

Hope this holiday stacks up as one of your best.

Have you seen Dichi's Collected Poems? Looks great. Making Certain It Goes On? Looks great.

Matt's father has been out in Seattle a good portion of the time, as well, and is there now to help with whatever Matt needs, so that Ripley could come back here & get out of her Havre apt. & other such things. They want her back at Havre in the spring. They just loved her & she them. It was all wonderful until everything just collapsed. She is hopeful now that she will be able to go back then, since Matt is responding so well to the treatment. (We hold our breath)

On a more cheerful note: a friend of mine in Portland from college days is on a current Doig binge and enjoyed the surprise of finding me listed as part of the Missoula gang. So I sent her a little group-+-Doigs snap shot. She has friends who read too.

And we've seen your photo book everywhere!

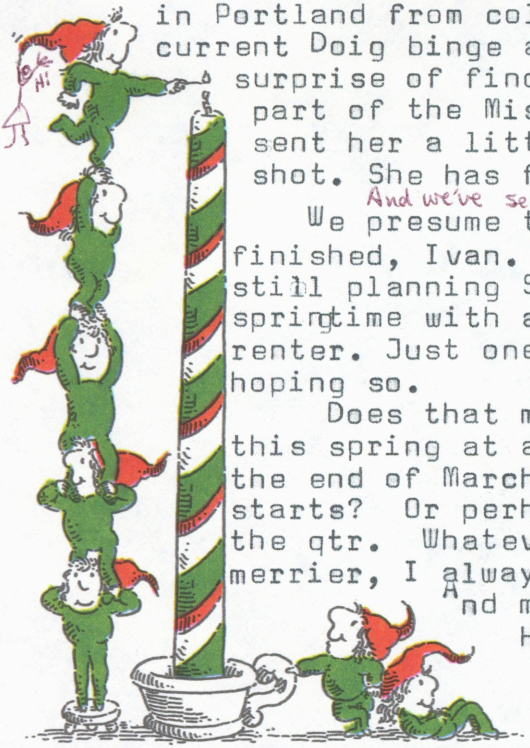
We presume the new novel is half finished, Ivan. And that you're still planning Scotland in the springtime with a Welch housesitter/renter. Just one. Jim is still hoping so.

Does that mean we won't see you this spring at all? Or perhaps at the end of March--before the qtr. starts? Or perhaps at both ends of the qtr. Whatever. The more the merrier, I always say.

And must stop saying.

Happy '84, folks!

Love, Lois



© 1983 AGC

September 22, 1983

Dear Carol and Ivan,

Thanks for the picture of Frank and the green expanse behind him (with mysterious woman). We are going to need that photo this winter when the snow flies and the ice crackles underfoot.

Lois and I have already had quite a taste of winter. We drove over to Billings this past Sunday in intense cold rain, hydroplaning all the way. That night it turned into snow and the next morning there were 8" on the ground and it was still snowing. After conducting a little parole board business, we left around mid-afternoon (sky threatening to clear) and drove to Helena where they had had 14" of snow. There were tree limbs down everywhere and it got down to 18 degrees that night. They sky cleared and the next morning was brilliant sun off snow. So we drove down to Butte to poke around and then home. BUT--the highlight of our trip was a side jaunt to Ringling and White Sulphur Springs, pointing out all the highlighted country of This House of Sky. We saw a sign pointing to the Sixteen Country, we tried to imagine where you lived in Ringling, Ivan, and of course we attempted to establish the bar pattern of WSS. All along the way we saw antelope and deer and grouse and Huns. It was really a magical trip through the drifted snow and it really brought the book home to us.

Speaking of books, I meant to write to you earlier that I had read Sea Runners and loved it. I thought it was very imaginatively written and I especially liked the language in it. I was with those guys all the way, sometimes saying, no, don't go in there, and, take the outside route, stay away from that village. I think a lot of the success of the book came from your ability to make that country and those people so real and alive. Any way, I enjoyed Sea Runners so much I immediately picked up House of Sky and reread it. Before I thought it was merely a terrific book; now I think it is a masterpiece. The tremendous emotional depth told in that seeminly matter-of-fact (though poetic, in the very best sense) style is awesome.

A couple of days later: Lois is back in school and after all the apprehension she came back yesterday and said she had a really good time. Teachers, you can't figger 'em. I suppose, Carol, you are enjoying yourself immensely with all those bright young minds. Bevis and Juliette are also back at it. We did have a few float trips this summer but

the weather was a little strange. Lots of late afternoon thunderstorms and periods)long) of rain. I think I watered the lawn three times all summer. But we are in the midst of Indian summer, almost all the apples have fallen and we have our big pressing party Saturday. We'll miss Ripley this year. She is up in Havre dealing with those tracter-heads and cosmetologists. We are planning on calling her this evening to tell her to buck up, only nine more months to go.

I hope you both are doing well and working hard. I am finally back at work. In fact I wish it would snow tomorrow so the yardwork would not be such a big temptation.

Love,

J

xx

17021 10th Avenue NW
Seattle 98177
August 22, 1983

Dear Frank Welch

You handsome fella, you. We thought you'd like this informal portrait -- a token of our esteem and in appreciation of the hospitality, especially the attention shown to shoes.

Who's that nice lady in the back yard -- one of those boarders who frequently cross your borders? I'm sure she'll word process this for you if she's programmed right. And how about that friendly fella who spends a lot of time in airplanes when he's not in front of a typewriter? Please give him our regards, too.

We've been at home now for several weeks, and the typewriter across from mine has been busy, spewing out paragraphs which get pasted to other paragraphs. I counted one page-in-process and found seven pieces, Elmer's glued. That's basic word processing.

Hang in there and guard the castle while the books-in-progress in your domain get cogitated into print.

Fondly

1/27/83: S.M.A.,Gto 37700

Dear Ivan & Carol--

Yesterday I began a missive to you, wishing for a battery powered typewriter to take up onto the roof where the sun was once again pouring down on our postcard lives-- and the typewriter must have taken umbrage, for it began giving up all its D's. Now already it had renounced the G except for a little flying arc. Can you imagine sentences like:"In . Stu ies will un oubte ly fin him another reat apt." I gave up, finding (yesterday: fin in) it absur . We are reduced, for the first time in our marriage to a one typewriter family (and I'm sure we have as high a potential word count for '83 as you are proposing, though without most of the present perqs). So you may imagine now the sun pouring in Jim's study door for the 4th straight day. Jim sitting behind me chortling over DeMarinis' latest missive. Children shouting in the streets as they always do on sunny days. Laundry ladies scooping their rythmic rinses. The peanut man crying his H"Hay cacaHUEtes". It's just like yesterday except with D's & G's: no research into times past needed to find that out.

Or you do the "01 s"

What a ball opening paragraphs are! Yatter, yatter. All the joys of the day pouring right in there before we say things like NO.

Seriously, we thank you each for your first rate prose on your separate and together occasions and for the clippings as well. Yes, Marlene is Blessing's wife. And the picture of J,m was out of focus because Jim was out of focus. My understanding of the world has made things simple again. Maybe it's my 700 words of fluent spanish--which prevent me from distinguishing wobble & weave, beige & tan, pot & pan.

Seriously, we hope you save us a copy or so of Sea Runners somewhere before everyone in the west runs out. We imagine you buried in grey & green (I can't recall grey in Spanish either), limbs falling gently onto your cars, limbs draping over the mailbox which fills with reviews and checks,and a hedge which keeps the papperazzi* from taking your pictures all the time. (Is this The Ivan Doig?) We imagine Carol keeping cheerful, trudging dutifully up the hill carrying reams and hoards of student papers, folders and folders of Union Stuff.

Seriously, we look forward to seeing you. But you're on your own, kids, the castle's taken--by us! We seem to be headed for our own guest room about the 16th of March. Here's our plans: leave S.M.A. the 5th of March, be in Las Cruces the 9th, arrive home the 15th or 16th to change out of our summer togs into our rain gear. Jim's classes start the 28th. You will be in Missoula about that time, but is Carol going back before the 1st & you, Ivan, staying on a bit to ricochet around? Sounds like it. We'd love to see & feed you, but there might be a bit much confusion if the guests had working meta-guests staying up there too. It might be that all the little Beavers will decided to go play somewhere else for that week-- or they might lend you a studio. Or they might know someone whose house will be abandoned for the nonce.

Congratulations on your many successes. We will find somewhere to gather and chortle over them, fear not.

* you spell it, then- We've only Engl/Span, Span/Latin/Latin/Span, French/French, Engl/Engl & Diccionario de Idiomas Inglesas.

Lest you think everything is too perfect to bear here, consider that Donald--the puppy across the street-- is tied up and crying and breaking my heart. Consider that when we went last Tuesday to Mexico City on the buss it was deluging outside as though scenery were outlawed for the month. It has been such a cold wet winter that the oldtimers sit out in the park, waiting for the Mexico City News to hit town, chattering their perfectly capped teeth and whining that it hasn't been this cold in 35 years. The News said 2 decades. The morning we were being rained on, it snowed on the volcanoes invisible outside Mexico City--but then they're 17000 feet high. Next day was bright & smogless: a miracle for the world's biggest city. And it's been nice since. That is supposed to make us forget what it feels like to sit and write at 46 degrees in the morning. I should complain--the maid walks an hour down the hill to get here at 8:30 a.m.

Spots in paradise. Jim has been pounding up this machine, heading through his 2nd ribbon, past pp.215, not quite prancing through it, but pleased and steady. I'm trying to prevent him from freezing White Quiver to death; poor guy's already had both hands chopped off. (Ginz) He's got just a touch of sweet flesh this time too. Hopes to get about 300 before he heads north.

Me, I'm also pounding along, all pen and ink ← with G+D, after my fashion. Bogging down a bit toward 650 of Vol.III, but it will pick up in another 10 pages and I hope I never hear of Albertine again. But it's perking along on schedule too.

Meanwhile the economy is going to you know where. We are making out like bandits, our shekels growing every time we take them out from under the mattress. (Would you believe that our nice warm little hotel with color TV in Mex. City, just beyond the pale of the tourist zone cost us $19.17 for 3 nights. Had half a lobster one night for $3.00, after a shrimp cocktail the size of a pint jar for $1.00. Move over pike place!) Truly, we cannot afford to come home. But then we cannot afford NOT to either.

So we're really looking forward to our final 5 weeks--all of which we hope will be on sunny days where it's mid-70's in the sun, so the freckles don't fade off my legs until the Memorial Day Hike'Round the Lake. A couple of little trips and its homeward bound. We will take your advice and declare only our genius--so long as it's worth less than $300 per skull. No oranges, no tangerines, no avocados, no fresh papaya, no little bottles of Kaluhua for 85¢ a quart. Kentucky Fried, here we come!

Sun & fun to both of you--hope we see you in Mizzoo & then Seattle!

Love,
Lois

Male chauvinist quote of the year - via Rick (Denver): Nasty Colleague #1 (mine) to interviewing couple, candidate for poetry-2 UM job. "She grew up in Italy, attended the Sorbonne, speaks several languages fluently & is very bright & intellectual" He also poet, etc. Everyone loves them except Colleague #1 who asks her if it will hurt for her to be having babies!

① If you were a Mexican chatel, what would you name your dog? Pepa?

3 Jan. '83

Dear Jim and Lois--

Golly, Jim, I don't what they gave you to eat or drink at that Montana History Conference, but as p. 6 of the enclosed testifies, it sure did put you out of focus.

We had a bright cold week after Christmas here, and now we're back to rain. A good holiday for the Doigs; our ~~first~~ first one at home by ourselves, and it's just remarkable how sane and pleasant that can be.

I'm mostly doing this letter to have something to encase these clippings in (the Hugo piece I think is by Dick Blessing's wife, although I wouldn't bet the homestead on that supposition), but also have the ulterior motive of wondering about the Welchs' Missoula residence the week of March 20. I assume it's going to be occupied by your renters or swappers or whatever they are, or maybe even by a Welch? But if it's not, and you guys are going to in limbo or Mexico, we hereby put in a bid to rent for one (1) week. Our intention is to be in Missoula that week--Carol's spring quarter break--for me to look at some stuff in the UM library and to talk to smokejumpers and other firefighting types. Because it's going to be a work week, we don't really want to bum off somebody; feel like we ought to get a place where we won't bother nor be bothered. Anyway, the Welch hacienda (note my diligent practice of Spanish so that you'll feel at ease back here in Gringoland) came to mind as a first stab, so to speak. No problem if it's already consigned to you or others; we'll shake the town until something else presents itself.

A further logistic of that spring Montana trip, incidentally, is that I may stay on for a second week, ricocheting around the White Sulphur-Bozeman country, and so would likely be driving back through Missoula about April 1 on my way to Seattle, if there's stuff and/or personage that needs transportation out here. Also, let us know if we can help out with lodging when you hit Seattle. I anticipate that the Indian Studies lady probably has wangled the top of the Space Needle for you to ensconce in this time, but in case not...

Carol went back to teaching this morning, I went back to the Depression novel. I don't know the specifics of her day, but I as usual sat around pining to have a first draft done, to revise on. I have concluded I am not actually a writer, but a rewriter.

Sure do look forward to spring and you two, arriving north with a manuscript in each suitcase. Don't forget Oscar Wilde's line when they ask you at the border if you have anything to declare: "Only my genius."

all the best

Ivan

Apdo. 462
San Miguel de Allende
Guanajuato 37700
Mexico
December 15, 1982

Dear Ivan and Carol,

Well, I suppose you two are probably, like us, lazing around your patio, trying to stay out of the direct sun, trying to stay cool by drinking lots of lemonade and jacaranda juice. It's a tough life down here but Lois and I are managing. Sometimes the maid goofs off a little and then we have to crack the whip--like the other day the chile rellenos were a bit overdone. And then there are the clattering burros, the sprawling bouganvilla, the noisy kids in the French Park across the street...Put down that knife, Carol!

Seriously, folks, it's a pretty great life here. We just returned from Puerto Vallarta where we spent a few days on the beach. The water is unbelievably warm there, the air slightly muggy from the jungle, the hotel people wonderfully insolent from a necessity/hate relationship with the gringo tourists. Actually the place is a BIGTIME tourist trap and mostly unpleasant--except for the ocean, sun, fish, shrimp and plethora of bikinis. San Miguel is much more pleasant. The gringos are usually retired people who live here, a few artists, writers and that type. But mostly Mexicans who have a pretty good attitude towards these lazy bums. I was exagerating about the weather. We are over 6000 ft so the nights do get kind of cool. But the days are wonderful. The sun shines virtually every day and it gets up to the low 70's. We have made a few friends here, including a mother/daughter team from Issaquah. Mother used to own a bookstore there, but now she is widowed and thinking seriously of remaining in San Miguel. Daughter studied anthropology at UW and has even read my novels--so she became my best friend right away. And then there is Pierre and Nancy Delattre. He is a writer who has written a novel and a book of stories. They are really good people and the ones we actually hang out with.

His pa used to run the Middlebury Fr. School.

I am slaving away at my novel. I have just over 100 pages and I feel that I can come north in March with close to 300. I'm happy with what's happening so far. Mostly I'm happy with my work habits--writing every day and enjoying it. Lois is hard at work on her Proust. She has many pages and is excited. This sabbatical has been very good for her. We both have a great combination of work and liesure time.

← I just read it & like it lots. Ivan

How is your novel doing, Ivan? We don't get any literary news down here so I don't have any idea if you're on the best-seller list or sitting on a bench in Pioneer square commiserating with the other bums. I do know one thing: In early October I had to go to Washington D.C. for an NEA meeting and I met a woman named Mary Lee Settle, who was also on the panel. She was a little vague (her normal state) but she said she reviewed your novel for either the L.A. Times or the N.Y. Times. She loved it. I hope it came out that way in the review. Anyway, muchos lucko.

I am assured that I have my job at UW this spring. Lois will spend her time jet-setting between Missoula and Seattle, so we'll be seeing a lot of you if you're around. One reason Lois wants to spend some time in Missoula is to be near Ripley. She wrote us a long long letter about Dick's death and how it affected her and it was heart-wrenching. She has always considered Lois her best friend and we have been in Mexico while all this grief goes on. We both think Lois can help her out just by being there. I went up to Montana to talk to the Historical Society and it coincided exactly with a service they held for Dick. So I popped over to Missoula to attend and it was good and touching and funny. Lots of Hugo stories, lots of drinking and eating. He will be missed but certainly not forgotten.

Well, I hope you kids have a good holiday season. Just between us, tin trees don't make it, so it's a little hard to get into the Christmas spirit. But the posadas ~~sat~~ start this week. Maybe then we'll get with the program. Take care. See you at the end of March. And write and let us know how the book is doing and how you're doing.

Love, Jim and Lois

17021 10th Avenue NW
Seattle, Wa. 98177
December 23, 1982

Dear Lois and Jim

Thass OK, Jim. I don't mind hearing about the warm, sunny weather, the jacaranda juice, the chile rellenos. It's a fitting contrast to the Northwest, where we've had enough rain over the last several weeks to launch a boat -- if there hadn't been so much wind. So far the rejuvenated Hood Canal Bridge is afloat, and if it endures until Christmas day we shall drive across it for the first time in its new existence, and hike the Dungeness Spit, if there is a spit above the 9-foot tides. Since you, on the other hand, are in such an unreal atmosphere, some averaging can be expected during spring quarter. For starters, how about some nifty accommodations beneath Red Square....

We've had natural decorating this season. Poked my nose outside the front door the day before yesterday to find an evergreen bough daintily perched on the hood of the Buick.

So, for the first time in our entire married existence we are both at home and without company, and we are making the most of our incredible good fortune. (Or, as Ivan noted yesterday, this season we do not have to spend time in a single airport. And that is a first!) So we've been partying, and shall continue. Frank Zoretich called yesterday to invite us to a New Year shindig, but we traditionally play cards with the Rodens. We'll save Frank and Linda, and Jim and Lois, for the Memorial Day walk along Lake Union. (Never mind, Lois. We know you don't have to be in Missoula that weekend!) Can hardly wait for more Proust-on-the-hoof. We shall all have a merry spring in Seattle.

It's been a fine fall -- so busy it's kinda blurry. The Sea Runners officially came to life on September 30, and run they have. Atheneum, which prints by dribs and drabs, is into a 4th printing, which in this case totals 17,000 copies. The durn thing promptly turned up on the Seattle Times local bestseller list, in advance of reviews -- which gives you some idea of the potency of local reviewing -- and has stayed there since, with just a couple of weeks. The more remarkable since Scribners, which distributes for Atheneum, has trouble finding the West Coast, and so even the University BookStore went some weeks without copies. The flagship store! Same for Frederick & Nelson.

Other than that tiny problem, all else has prospered. Very positive reviews in the big papers across country, with a special fall preview rave from the book editor of the Chicago Sun-Times, who followed up a coupla weeks ago by listing it as one of his 10 favorite books of the year, and his choice of first novel.

Meanwhile, the night before Thanksgiving our local Channel 9 ran its half-hour documentary drawn from Winter Brothers. Considering the problems in reducing an 85,000-word book to a 3200-word tv script, they did a really nice job -- super graphics and sound, including whale song as background forpart of it. It's tv, so I sorta said "bah, humbug," but then the first printing of the paperback of Winter Brothers disappeared in a few weeks, and Harcourt has printed a second 5,000, so I got more respectful....although I still think it's an odd way for grown people to spend their time.

Other than that, the Doig with the beard has been to Phoenix (to give a speech to the Western History Associati on), and all the Northwesterners came back aghast. Couldn't figure out why a city was there at all, and if one had to be, why did it have to look like Phoenix? Then he spent a few days at Sitka, consorting with about every group in town. I got to go as far as Portland with him -- ahh, the joys of the classroom!

Actually, I had a good fall, despite the terrible and mounting financial woes of the state of Washington. Personable students, and quite a number of first-rate ones among 'em. I abstained from committees for the fall -- but we've got to negotiate this spring, I've been on the team the last two times, and this time we think it's likely to be a mess. Our new president already has many scared faculty volunteering for more students and extra courses without pay -- some day they may figure out that they're depthcharging their own contract, not to mention putting part-time faculty out of work. A new legislature, Democratic controlled this time, begins session January 10, but I haven't met anyone who thinks they can straighten out the shortfall or successfully manage a broad-based tax.

Hey, maybe instead of you coming north, we could come south and enjoy the devalued peso (NY Times story enclosed). Can you really afford to return to gringo-land?

For as long as you can stay, have a helluva fine time. Sounds like you're both accomplishing miracles of writing. Bring some miracles back for Ivan, if you have a spare supply. He claims to have 100,000 publishable words to write in '83.

Well, now that my press agent is done... Have tried to think of any great gossip to pass along, but it's all fairly pallid. Charles Johnson of the UW faculty got a good New Yorker review this week of his novel OXHERDING TALE. He and Colleen McElroy and Frank Chinn are gonna be profiled in a half-hour tv show done by the same film team that did Winter Brothers. Saw Jack Brenner briefly at a book shindig (not mine), but he didn't seem to be doing anything except magazine pieces and reviews. Dick Blessing has a new book out, I guess a young adults novel. Roger Sale and I were remaindered together this fall--On Not Being Good Enough and Winter Brothers, side by side in appalling stacks at the U Book Store. Bookstore owners tell me Frank Herbert's new novel, The White Plague, sold well the first week or two then tailed off; people evidently ticked off he didn't write Dune one more time. It seems to me Jack Cady has had yet another novel come out, but I frankly have lost track of his stuff, it's been zooming by so fast. Had a letter the other day from Norman Maclean, who gave me Scotch hell for writing about a puny place like Alaska instead of about Montana as real writers do. Said he's now 80, his ticky heart is chronic, and this summer's Montana trip may be the last he does alone. And this fall we met a dealer in western books, whose catalogue lists a hardback EARTHBOY 40 with dust jacket for $20 and JIM LONEY with dj for $17.50 (Niatum's HARVESTER OF DREAMS for only $7.95, hee hee hee). So if you got a warehousefull of them, you're rich folks. Or as us gringos say, muchos pesoses.

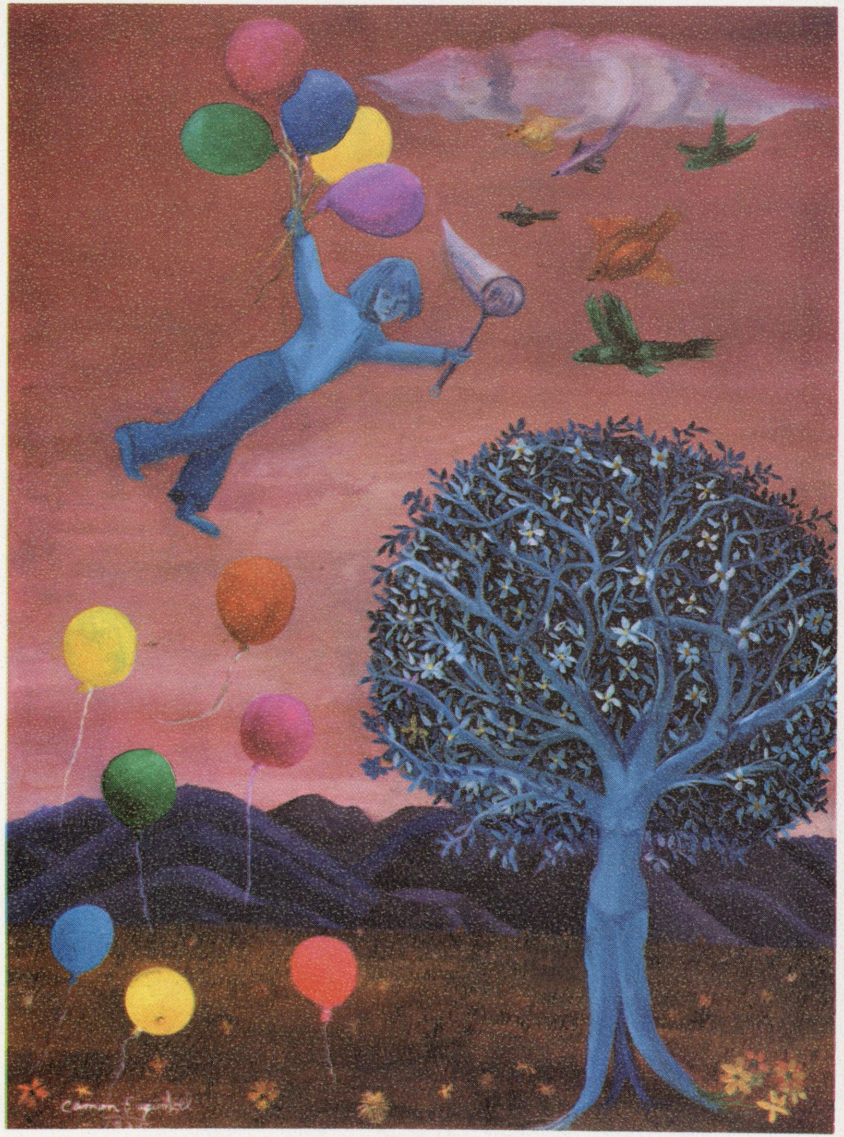
all best

Ivan

"EL NIÑO DE LOS GLOBOS"
Oleo Pintado por:
Carmen Esquivel.
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We're not really this high all the time.

Actually these people have some pretty amazing art down here: I thought this was sort of Hallmarkey until I saw that tree!

It's hard to imagine Christmas actually coming to this lush & warm (in general - not just now in the house where it's 55°) climate. They decorate the trees & bushes & branches — anything will do. I laugh to see white plastic reindeer for sale in the market. They make wonderful ceramic crèches with adobe houses & cacti & animals. Any size you want, any number of members to the party.

It's hard, too, to imagine that we're going to drive all the way from here to there in March. Jim's probably told you I'm going to alternate time in Mexico & Seattle so we can get our yard/garden into shape.* Boy, do we need Linda's skills! (your Sullivan landscaping friend)

See you then, if not all the time.

* & he is Ripley, as Jim said. (Don't tell).

Feliz Navidad!

Jim & Lois

Let us know how your novel's doing, Ivan.

And, Carol, don't you sneer at us; you had your sabbatical! Aren't they grand? There's time to get really involved in 1 subject. I love it. I love the place, the people. Miss you.

Love,
Lois

20 Jan. '82

Dear Jim--

A real quickie, to finally get this off my desk to you. ~~If~~ I don't know if the UMontana library has one of these Human Relations Area Files, but I just kind of blundered onto the U of Wash's version a few weeks ago when I was looking for stuff on Makah whaling. The beauty of this HRAF stuff is that everything imaginable is indexed and then filed on photo-reduced pages about the size of a file card. Say you're looking up Blackfoot weaponry: it'll have a number, something like 528, you reach in the drawer to where it's tabbed 528 and there'll be these ready-made extracts from several anthropological studies of the Blackfoot. Beats hell out of wading through all the books yourself. The HRAF file out here has, on Blackfoot topics, indexed material from three big anthropological volumes by Clark Wissler and from a book by Walter McClintock, who I guess lived with the tribe?

Anyway, this stuff is a way to lay your hands on specific points of tribal life (if the anthropologists got around to recording it). Should the UM library not have this HRAF and there's something you'd particularly like, let me know and I can photocopy the possibilities from the UW.

Also came across a note to myself that at Bozeman, there's a file of stuff on Blackfoot topics gathered by the Federal Writers Project in the 1930s. Some of those interviews, etc. might go back as far as people who'd remember the period you're working on. Minnie Paugh at the MSU library seems to be the one who knows what's in that collection.

We're hoping you get back out here this spring, but God, the cutting and hacking of budgets going on out here. UW is laying off something like 200 untenured profs.

Anyway, winter well, don't worry about having too much stuff for the book--what you like will float to the top of your brain--and say hello for us to the Missoula gang, especially the one named Lois.

all best

Ivan

December 11, 1981

Dear Ivan and Carol,

Thanks mucho for the book. I'm just starting it and it reminded me to write you.

Things here are going swimmingly. Lois is finishing up the quarter (exhausted from her three classes, Carol), and I'm at work finally on my novel. For the first time in my life I have so much material I don't know what to do with 98% of it. But that is a pleasant change.

I know I shouldn't look a gifthorse in the mouth but I thought David Quammen's article was pretty terrible. He made it sound like Montana is the place where derelict writers end up. Hmmm, do you suppose he's right? Granted, a few of us do turn over logs and eat bugs, but there are worse things.*

I've been in off and on touch with the woman who heads Indian Studies at UW and she won't know until the end of this month if I'll be rehired. I can't believe this is happening. I always thought Washington was a good middle-class rich state. Oh well. But it would be nice to see you at length and leisure.

Yes, Tom Orton is working in a bookstore at Pike Place Market. He's enjoying it more than at Elliot Bay. I guess his boss there was not very reliable or fair. Tom's novel is at my agent's and we are keeping our fingers crossed. I read it and liked it very much.

How is your book coming, Ivan? You must be going great guns. If I remember correctly you wanted to finish a draft by Christmas? I hope it is going smoothly and you can imagine big bucks down the road a piece.

Well, have a nice Christmas season. We're going to stay here and eat and drink with Hugos and Bevis' and others. Sounds mild enough but you know Missoula.

Fondly,

J

* caterpillars.
Lois



Dec. 20, 1981

Dear Ivan & Carol —

Enclosed, dear friends, find Jim's letter. He said "wanna adda note" & of course I did & you have now experienced final week. (If you put your ear to the paper, you'll hear the rustling of little voices: 'the ode stands in an ironic relationship to Antigone as a whole' + 'fear of computers is generalized fear of the future' + 'senator said...' & etc etc. The little darlings.) It's been a good quarter, actually, for me (despite Jim's comment) because the work load was even & constructive. And I did no Univ. service — except rewrite the Humanities Statement to the U. Pres. after throwing a fit at tergiversity.

And there is nothing like writing the 1st Christmas Card, listening to Bach, the sun rising over the snowy mountains, snow gracing roofs & bare limbs — & no more papers to grade. Jim is annoyed at snow but admits this 2-3 inches is very decorative.

Are you running off to Mexico for the holidays, or Anchorage? Or just running around the neighborhood. Bevises actually took off to NY for the holidays, since Juliette has to be there in Jan. for part 2 of the Laban Inst. program, on her sabbatical. Hugo will be 58 tomorrow. (You heard of his being elected a fellow

(to rear page)

© A.G.

On the Twelve days of Christmas my true love sent to me Twelve drummers drumming, Eleven pipers piping, Ten lords a-leaping, Nine ladies dancing, Eight maids a-milking, Seven swans a-swimming, Six geese a-laying, Five golden rings, Four calling birds, Three french hens, Two turtle doves, and a Partridge in a Pear tree.

—Old English Carol

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Jim & Lois

a fellow of the Amer. Acad. of Poets this month?) Ripley's book of poems, Mapping my Father, is just out & lovely. Good poems.

Jim is really loving doing his research — plowing through documents, planning to use what he has just read before. Jim delighted for him.

Let us know how you're doing on yours, Ivan. Let us know how you're doing. We think of you amid a glitter of colored lights reflecting in streets, puddles, lakes. We're planning no bugs, no derelicts for Christmas. Give Seattle our love. Keep some for yourselves.

Love,
Lois

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A 3004-0101

7 Nov. '81

Welch

Dear Jim and Lois--

Howdy, as we say way out west here on Puget Sound.

Sure do miss you guys, we do. Main reason we hope the legislature doesn't cut the UW off at the knees is so Jim can get that teaching gig again.

So, Lois, now that he's put your husband in the NY Times Book Review (11/1/81)--<u>now</u> do you know who David Quamman is?

Jim, I wanted to pass along to you this copy of David Plante's new book. It's my first venture into blurbing, but more than that, when I read the proofs I thought of what you'd said about being interested in minimalist writing. I don't know whether Plante is really akin to Vittorini/Vitorrini/Vitorinni (choose one, I can't), but I thought you might like to have a look.

All best. When you coming out again?

p.s. Somebody told me your friend Tom Morton (?--used to work at Elliott Bay) is working at a ritzy new bookstore at Pike Place Market, called Fix-Madore.

3 Nov. '80

Dear Jim and Lois--

I don't know whether you've ever before had a houseguest who sneaked out of the place before dawn, but... I tried to call when I got done at the Little Prof and the Missoulian; you evidently were out acquiring provender for the impending jollity. I hope the Missoula gang party was a great one. Sorry I couldn't stay on for it, but I did what I could toward its success by priming Bill and Annick and Krauzer with a few drinks beforehand.

The bookselling went okay. We got rid of about 100 hardbacks, Norie calculated; probably 3/4 of them Winter Bros, the rest Skys. Also, there was the bonus that Norie proved quite tolerable, once the actual business of selling books got underway.

Jim, I think you could sell a helluva bunch of books at a couple of the stores I was in, once Winter and Loney emerge in trade p'back. I particularly liked the store owner in Bozeman, who told me she sells a lot of your books and would love to have you sign:

Mary Jane Ottersberg
Country Book Shelf
1528 W. Main, Bozeman 59715--phone 587-0166

I'd think if you combined a signing there with a reading on the MSU campus, you'd do great. Rich Roeder of the MSU history dept. is a great fan of yours, and undoubtedly could arrange a reading.

The other possibility would be Readers World in Gt. Falls, run by Kathy Whidden (761-4952). An appearance there likely would be best if combined with an appearance on Norma Ashby's TODAY IN MONTANA show, and Kathy could likely set that up. Norma has a following only slightly second to that of the Pope.

All for now. Just wanted to get you your copy of the book, and thank you again for taking me under your roof. Carol and I are truly looking forward to a winter and spring of Welches in Seattle.

all best

7/14/80

Dear Carol & Ivan —

Happy Bastille Day!

I'm not writing to wish you whatever the relevant greeting is but to say that I see today Ivan will be in Billings with Jim & all other hot Montana writers for the Hist. Soc. Conference in Oct. & how pleasant. We wives will of course be busy careering about — though it is a weekend — I presume.

So it was especially nice today to think back on seeing you both in your native habitat in June. Loved your house. Admire your joint study. Thank you so much for having us out on such short notice.

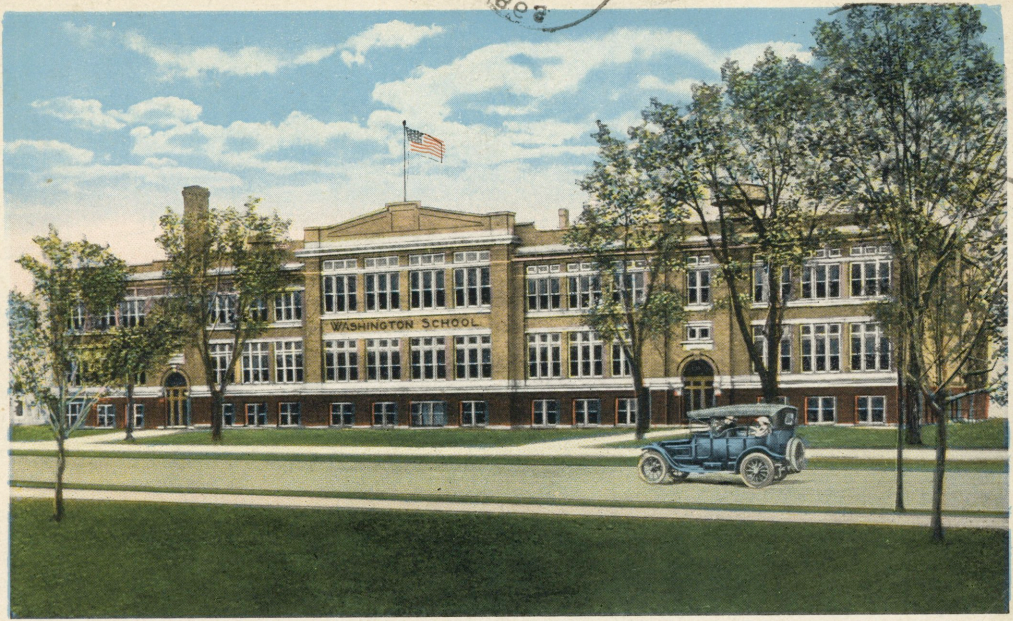
What a pleasant visit it was to Seattle, capping off the 2 Arctic weeks with friendly city days. I could have stayed a week — with only a pause for laundry. →

Oh luckily we didn't come home & just stretch out in the sun. (Yesterday our 56° was the national LOW high!) Jim dashed off to his parole board & then joined me weeding, pruning & chasing aphids*. Then a siege of visitors passing through & such picnics/parties! Bevis-Chump hosted 3 of the greatest dancers in the world (in any sense): can you imagine us playing with dancers? We also bought in on a raft with Bevis & have found 1 rainless evening to float & fish the Blackfoot – glorious! You can imagine the trout we will have access to, as soon as summer comes. You can well imagine other bucolic activities, since you know our native habitat.

Thank you again for having us out. (Maybe Ivan can teach Jim how to crock-pot when he comes out in Oct.) See you next time we're there or you here. (or some of us somewhere)

Best, Lois





WASHINGTON SCHOOL, MILES CITY, MONT.

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING Apr. 23, 1980

A-62800

POST CARD

THIS SIDE IS FOR THE ADDRESS

VALLEY FORGE Christmas
USA 13c

Dear Doigs —

Terrific. Do come ambling by May 5-6 to visit. We'll simply be here (Jim's editor is dropping in from NYC this very evening for 1-2 days) and would love to see you. Please count on staying with us - if you like. Sorry about your editor, maybe you can snag Jim's during these next days when he's in Seattle. JOKE Do come, do call (549-6713). Dinner's about 7pm. Picnic table moved back outdoors yesterday. Leaves due in 10 days. Cheer! Lois

Quality Line
Bloom Bros. Co.
Minneapolis

9357

Ivan & Carol Doig
17021 10th Ave. NW
Seattle WA 98177

from: Wash, 3331 Wyo, Hsso, 98501

17021 10th Avenue NW
Seattle, Wa. 98177
May 24, 1980

Dear Lois and Jim

Jim's crystal ball must be working fine these days. If we remember the itinerary, he would have been out of the country when the big blow came. Nice work when you can get it! We were in Bozeman, awakened at 4 a.m. Monday by a sound like sleet on the windows above us. We clambered from bed to see through the glass darkly -- not to mention fuzzily. Kinda like a Hitchcock thriller, not knowing how bad it would be or what it would do.

As for Missoula, we heard reports of darkness at daytime, and a much heavier concentration of ash than the dusting in Bozeman. Got to wondering how many of the writers' contingent might have been trapped in the Eastgate.

Ivan managed most all of his itinerary, including a lively two-hour autographing session at the Museum of the Rockies on Sunday afternoon. And he made it to and through a Monday afternoon classroom session at MSU, where a notice of the campus closing came mid-way through his presentation. There was not, I should add, a stampede for the doors. Good manners seemed to be in long supply. The museum had its big annual dinner planned for Monday night, and the planners were determinedly saying go until the governor declared a state of emergency and scotched the whole thing. So now it'll be rescheduled, and Ivan was asked if he could possibly fly back for it. That'll depend on the work schedule.

We left Bozeman on Tuesday morning, as planned, but in the entirely opposite direction. With Ivan's tour over, we'd figured to vacation near Glacier and see old friends. Howsomever, there were rumors of another eruption, and more of Mount St. Helen's indigestion we didn't need. Also, reports from Helana and Great Falls weren't encouraging, so we headed straight south, horseshoed across southern Idaho and spent a night in Boise with the state archivist, a friend of Ivan's from their University of Washington days. Then it was across to Burns, Oregon, over the desert and the Cascades and westward ho until we found the surf at Lincoln City. On Friday we cruised up the coast, noting that the mouth of the Columbia carried debris from the mountain and the water was the color of cafe au lait. There's a two-mile-long mud bar at the confluence of the Chehalis and the Columbia, and all frieghter traffic has been halted until the Corps of Engineers can clear the channel.

Reports from eastern Washington are of blowing ash, and the likelihood that it'll continue for months. Lots of people were trapped for several days along the main interstate route between Seattle and Spokane. Cheez.

Meanwhile, we're getting settled in again. Ivan headed for the UW yesterday, where he arranged photostats of several of Swan's ~~xxxx~~ diary pages for use in Winter Brothers. I concentrated on the laundry, and on paying bills. Sure is an excitin' life back here in Seattle.

We look forward to its improving with the arrival of the Welchs, some time after June 20. Please plan to stay with us -- it'll be fun to return some hospitality. We provide pickup service, if you'll let us know time, date and place of arrival. And besides the Buick, we have a middle-aging Volvo

available, so there'll be transportation if you want to do some visiting around the city on your own.

Let us know your itinerary, when you can, and we'll plan from there.

Meanwhile, how's Missoula faring? And how did the tour to Germany go?

University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59812

Sept. 20, 1979
10:00 a.m.

Dear Ivan (by Ivan Doig Ivan Doig BY ivan doig)--

Love your stationery. We don't have your street address either. Didn't. Now we do. On your stationery. (Had your phone #. Didn't get to Seattle)

Thank you for the "Footnotes" and the evidence of the push for Loney. I am already gratified , and Jim will be, ~~won't have~~ hasn't seen it yet. You must admit, of course, that "the story of despair and ruination" is not precisely the cheeriest description of the book possible, nor the description calculated to get it included on the Dale Carnegie Required Book List. Oh well. Read and weep. You will.

All is well here too. Weller and weller. School picking right up. Sun shining day after day. Students all polished and eager. Pears ripening faster than one can eat them. Apples falling like Newton's nightmare. Jim girding his loins (and filling his teeth) for the Fall onslaught of fly and read.

And TA DA! Jim will be on the Today Show Oct. 8. Fly & talk. We're excited. Should admit that he & Brokaw went to grades 7 & 8 in Pictstown S.D. & hence there's an odd appropriateness to this second meeting in the Big Time in the Big Apple.

So far all reactions to the book have been fine. Pins & needles continue, of course.

We will see that you get a copy (signed) to read soon.

Personally, I find quite startling that we got a letter from you today, because just last night I was reading through House of Sky again for the grandmother. I'm giving a talk soon to a conference of Sr. Citizens on Images of old people in Literature.

→

Great grandmother. I know she's not quite the center of the book, but she certainly has central importance.

Our summer, we felt,was truly incomplete because we didn't get over to the coast. VW van too frail to make it at first (belching black smoke) and later with our new golden VW Rabbit we were too poor and now we have no time. Alas for salt air. Crab. Clams. Sand. Waves. Ferries. Friends. Soon, we console ourselves.

I seem to be into choppy sentences this morning. Just wanted to thank you quickly and greet you and apprise you of the Today Show and wish you well. Both of you. Hello Carol.

cheer,

Lois Welch

1 Oct. '79

Dear Lois--

!?! The T*O*D*A*Y show!?!

We're giddy for Jim, and will be planted in front of the TV the morn of the 8th. Given Brokaw's background, there's even a chance the interview questions will be pretty good, which might be a first in American literature. Anyway, if Jim hasn't Gone East yet, give him our fullest congratulations and best wishes.

A quickie thing or so I wanted to tell you about my grandmother, maybe (probably not) useful to your Sr. Citizens talk. She is a great favorite of people who read the book, while the critics have mostly bypassed her for my father. The readers I've heard from also have liked the schoolteacher, Mrs. Tidyman, and the old couple, Kate and Walter Badgett (pp. 134-6). I would in fact have strengthened the portrait of my grandmother, and the point that she generally got the worst deal of the three of us, except for a quirk of the writing schedule. The material up to where she appears in the book--p. 109--was the manuscript sample, on the basis of which Harcourt gave me the book contract. I then, after the months of hiatus before the contract, began writing the "Lady" section, and by the time I was about halfway through it, began to feel that my grandmother was taking over the book. Carol, reading along on the same schedule as I was writing, thought the same. So I backed off a bit, and indeed inserted more material about my father earlier in the book, to try compensate for what I thought was the dominant appearance my grandmother was making. Not until after the book was in print, and the reviewers had focused so much on my dad, did I see that it was the schedule--the freshness of the material about her--which made her seem to predominate. All of which is a long way of saying that I still don't feel I really got at a "portrait of age" in her; I seem to be falling short in the same way with the pioneer I'm writing about now; and am beginning to wonder how insightful it's possible to be about a period of life I haven't yet passed through. Will happily hear your thoughts on the topic over Missoula or Seattle bourbon sometime.

all best

10/10/79

University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59812

Dear Ivan--

Thanks for the grandmother info. Interesting to see how she was shaped by schedule as well as your interest. It is--and that's the reason I'm dashing this one off-- admittedly a misreading of the book to give her tremendous primacy. But I was, after all, gnawing through every book I could get my hands on for good old folks. And she got better as the book went along.

I don't care that you might not have got a portrait of "age" in her. What I find is that most of those oldies don't feel themselves as old, any more than I feel myself "middle-aged" with all the connotations associated with that. What I did begin to find exceedingly interesting was the way that the horrors of aging seem to be the concern of the unwrinkled writer. Yeats at 26 & 27 was pumping out a lot of that stuff. The people who are old and writing seem to have other interests than merely the fact of their antiquity.

Curiously, the most exciting thing I have done in many a moon was talk about old people in literature to the old people. Well, after all, "an aged man is but a paltry thing/until soul clap hands and sing and louder sing." (that's misquoted and abbreviated--that's a swell text. Glad to divulge both my thoughts on the subject someday, over bourbon somewhere nearby.

NOTICE: You might have observed a lack of James Welch on the Today Show Monday, and an excess of Jesse Jackson, returned from the Middle East. So they taped Jim and will run him any day now. So I'm getting up dawns, hoping, & waiting for him to call and tell. Last I heard he had just

learned Sunday night he was bumped for sure. And then he went to dinner with Brokaws.

It's snowing on him in NYC, sunning again on us, and on you, I hope. And now I'm off to class. Hence this foolish mistyping which I'm not correcting.

Best to you both.

again, cheers,

Lois

Sept. 16, '79

Dear Lois--

I either don't have or have misplaced the Welch street address, so will go through the U. I thought Jim would like to see the enclosed, a mailer from the U Book store here which they send out with their monthly bills. Since the UBS sells a tonm of books--supposed to be the 2nd biggest bookstore in the country, after the Harvard Co-op--it's great to have it touting Jim Loney.

Speaking of which, I'm eager (a) to read and (b) to have a signed copy of. Would you ask Jim for me to sign a copy sometime when he's in The Fine Print and have Julie send it along to me with the bill? I hope the book does really well; I saw the good review in Publisher's Weekly a while back.

All is well here. I should be through with my manuscript by the end of the year. Carol and I hope to get to Montana for a few weeks next spring; will see you then if we do.

very best

Dan