"FORTY-EIGHT YEARS IN THE WEST."

Dictated to Miss Mary Sheriff by Moses Manuel.
Helena, Montana. 1903

I located in Minnesota in 1855. We hunted and trapped a good deal among the Sioux Indians, who were then the principal inhabitants of that country. The first little Indian excitement I remember was made by a band of Sioux, led by Chief Little Crow. They had got hold of some whiskey and were drunk. They surrounded the house and made a good deal of noise, but finally went away without harming anyone.

We were living at the same place in 1862 when Indians broke out. We made up a party of forty people to make a stand against them, but by the time the Indians had come within five miles of the place, burning houses as they came, the party broke up and started for the nearest town, five miles away. Our family stayed at the house until the Indians got within a mile and a half. Myself and brother Fred stayed at the house until the Indians were half a mile away, then we struck out for the timber and finally reached a town just before daylight. Here we found many people gathered to make a stand. The Faribault troops met us there and repulsed the Indians. I was only a boy at that time. We stayed at the town three days; then tried to get a party to return home but did not succeed. When I reached home I found everything all right and I stayed there three days alone before anyone came. At night I wrapped myself in a blanket and slept in the tall grass. Soon after all the neighbors returned, and the Indians were driven back about ninety miles.

I followed hunting and trapping until the spring of 1867. We trapped from about the middle of August until Christmas of each year in Northwestern Minnesota and Dakota. We did most of our trapping on what is called "neutral ground" between the Sioux and Chippewa battlegrounds, and during that time we saw considerable fighting between the two tribes.

Our supplies, on these hunting trips, consisted of fifty pounds of flour, two hundred and fifty pounds of ammunition and ten pounds of butter, which would last two men about four months.
Our first experience with buffalo was at the head of ... River and the Chippewa River. At this time there was a great prairie fire and the whole country was dark with smoke. One day I ran across a band of buffalo lying down. I crept close with a shot gun loaded with buck shot. Presently one of the buffalo got up and I fired both barrels into it. This aroused another buffalo, and as I found I didn't have much time to spare I made for a little creek nearby, but by the time I reached it they were close upon me. I jumped down the steep bank and was safe. When they had gone I went back after my gun, being forced to crawl on my hands and knees as the rest of the herd was still there; Then I made a bee line for camp, - without any buffalo meat!

On the same trip, at one time there were some soldiers camped not far from us. We had heard some shooting during the afternoon and suspected the presence of Indians, but did not see any until after dark. We had finished supper and were ready to go to bed when the Indians discovered us and spoke to us. We told them we were hunting, but they advised us to get out of there in a hurry. We did not find out until the next day what the trouble was about. They had killed three soldiers near that place. They did not fire on us, however, and we kept on hunting just the same on our way home.

In 1862 we went back to the farm. One day a company of soldiers passed and I wanted them to take me with them, but they refused because I was too small. They took my brother Fred, who served two years and then went south with the 10th Minnesota regiment and served in the Civil War until it ended.

We started for Montana in the spring of '67. We came through by the northwestern route by Fort Wadsworth, in the company of Judge Ellis. At Fort Wadsworth we expected to meet the balance of the train at Fort Ransom(?), but at Fort Wadsworth the soldiers had orders not to let small parties go through the country on account of the Sioux Indians, so we had to wait a week or more until they could send troops to guard the party until we reached Fort Ransom. There we met the balance of the train but had another delay of two weeks until the Government sent two companies of infantry to guard the train to Fort Stevenson on the Missouri River.
When we reached the fort the excitement was still running pretty high. A party of Sioux warriors had attacked the fort the day before we arrived and got away with a great deal of stock and killed one or two men. The same party of Indians attacked Fort Union and got away with pretty near all their horses and killed nine men.

We started from there with two more companies of soldiers and came on to Fort Buford. From there we had no guard; we had to take our chances of getting to Fort Benton.

The train consisted of about sixty men, about twelve families in all. Everything went alright until we got to Milk River where we found a large party of Yankton Sioux camped. Through some misunderstanding in trading, before we got to camp, the Indians were very dissatisfied. When we reached camp they rushed out and surrounded the train and would have had everything their own way if some Red River half breeds who happened to be on the bluff had not rushed and taken our part and made peace with the other Indians. We gave them gifts of provisions and ammunition and anything they wanted. This incident delayed the train from nine o’clock in the morning until late in the evening before we could get away. After this we had no more trouble and reached Helena in safety late in September.

My brother Fred had come to Helena the year before and I found him engaged in placer mining. That fall he and I went down the Yellowstone on a prospecting trip. We got as far as Big Timber when we began to find the Indians a little too numerous for two men. We returned to Bozeman and from there we followed the Belt Range down across the headwaters of Trout Creek. By this time winter was upon us. We left all the horses but one and tried to get across the limestone country. We finally came to a place where it was impossible to get through. We removed the pack from the horse and tried to lead him across the narrow path around the bluff. The horse slipped and fell about two hundred and fifty feet — and that was the last of the horse. Now we were left on this high mountain with provisions almost exhausted and a long way from anywhere. We made a rough sled and put our baggage on it, and finally got down into a little “flat” on the mountain, where we made camp. We stayed there two days waiting for the weather to moderate. By that time our provisions had given out altogether; we
didn’t even have salt. The weather became colder and colder and it became necessary for us to move down into the lower country, so we pulled down to the Missouri River bottom, close to what is known as Bear Tooth Mountain, the weather still remaining very cold. We had had nothing to eat for four days. We hunted some and the first game we found was a little mountain sheep with his leg frozen clear to the body.

The next day was snowing, blowing and bitter cold. I discovered a band of elk across the river. I started across on the ice, but just about the middle of the river there was a small drift of snow, and when I stepped into that drift I broke through and went into the icy water up to my armpits. I hung onto the ice and kept working until I finally got out upon the ice. I gathered together the pieces of my gun which had fallen on the ice and was broken in two, and started for camp. When I reached there my clothes were frozen stiff.

The next day I went hunting and had gone about two miles from camp when I ran across a bunch of deer and killed four of them. I took the smallest one and started with it for camp, packing it on my back. When I reached camp I found Fred had a good fire. I sat down and pulled off my boots and found that both my feet were frozen. Fred got some water in a gold pay (pan?) and put my feet in to thaw. He got the balance of the deer to camp and we lived on that meat for six weeks before I could walk. We finally started, making two or three miles a day until we reached civilization, and got into Helena, where we remained until I was well.

The next spring we went prospecting again, and struck the first quartz mine I ever discovered, about twenty-eight miles from Helena. It has been a good producer and it is yet ours own.

Fred and I worked at mining for a few years, shipping the ore to Omaha by town (?) to Corduna (?), over five hundred miles, and the expense was so great that there was little profit. Then we went out prospecting for a gold mine. We found some small veins of gold which we worked with an arista. Some time later Fred went down into Utah and I went to work in the mines. The next year I went to Utah with a friend of mine named George Weston. The second day George got discouraged and turned back and went on alone. When I was between Ogden and Salt Lake City I overtook a party of
prospectors, one of whom I knew very well named Jack Reynolds. He was known by all the old timers in the western country. When we reached Salt Lake we were going to Arizona. Jack Reynolds met a friend of his, Dr. White, who told him a great story about a lost placer mine in Idaho. He gave us a map and on his story we started out into the Thunder Mountains near Red River. Here we had much trouble with the hostile Indians, but we did not find the rich placer mine. We left that country and started back for Utah.

When we reached Snake River I made up my mind to prospect in western Utah and Nevada, and one of the party named Hall came with me. We went on until we came to what is called Goose Creek Mountain and prospected there a few days, other parties being there at the same time, and discovered several small veins of silver, but the distance from the railroad did not make it worth while to work them. Mr. Hall decided he didn't want to go any further south, so I went alone and kept on until I reached Piute, Nevada, three hundred miles south of the Union Pacific.

From there I wanted to go to Arizona. I got up a party of eight men, all well equipped with horses and supplies and started down what is known as Meadow (?) Wash: a long narrow canyon some seventy-five miles in length. When we had gone about forty miles we met a man coming back, and the Indians had shot him through the arm that morning. He said that as nearly as he could see there must have been about fifty Indians. Our party came to the conclusion that they were too few to go through and proposed to turn back, but when I start for anywhere I go (sic), so the party turned back and I went on alone.

When I got alone to where this war party had been seen, I camped, with the intention of going through under cover of night. I slept a little too long, however, and was late in starting. When I got close to the camp I expected to find, I tore a blanket into strips and tied up the horse's feet in it to prevent his making any noise, thinking to make a sneak through, but as luck would have it the horse neighed and the Indians were aroused. Two of them jumped and caught hold of the bridle. The rest were on the bank, and looked to me at the time like about a thousand. I knew there was no use shooting at so many. I hit one of those holding the bridle and they let go. The horse started to run and the Indians started to shoot, and they were at very close range.
The pack horse, running alongside of my saddle horse, was hit and fell. I kept on until reached what is known as the Big Muddy, where I came across some prospectors camped and secured some provisions from them. Then I kept on down to the crossing of the Colorado River at what is called Patterson Ferry. From there I had to cross the Mojave Desert to Avanpaugh, some sixty miles. The night I reached the ferry I saw a man across the river. The ferry was a small skiff in which we crossed over and found the man had been without water for a long time and was out of his head so we could learn nothing from him. We suspected he had a partner, as men usually travel together, but could get no information from him. We took him to the cabin and I went back on his trail to see if I could find anybody, as we were afraid his partner had perished from want of water. About half a mile from the river we found his partner, already dead from want to water.

We stayed there three days until everything was straightened out and the man became rational; then I went on to cross the desert myself, which I did without trouble. I prospected alone for a week or so and finally went down to Arizona where I found three other men and we prospected there for quite a while.

I left the party again and went down into California alone. I worked in the mines for some time, and while there a rattlesnake bit one of my horses which died from the effect of it. This left me but one horse and I could not get another for love or money. I started from there with one horse and went to Yellow Pine district on the line between California and Nevada where I found a company from California just starting to open a lead mine, and I took charge of the workings of the mine for them. I worked the mine for quite a while, but they found the ore too low grade to pay and all the officers returned to San Francisco. I had got the lead cramp but I wanted to come back to Nevada. I started about ten o'clock in the evening to try and make Los Vegas, but I had cramp so much I could only travel in short stages. When I made Los Vegas ranch I gave out entirely. I had come to a small spring, and I made up my mind I could go no further. I took the saddle off the horse and lay on the ground, where I was found by Indians who saw my horse and came to investigate. Four of them took blankets and carried me to the ranch and there I found one white man among them, an old bachelor.
I stayed there two weeks until I was cured. I tried to get another horse, but failed, and had a long desert to cross.

At the end of two weeks two men came along with four head of horses and I made arrangements with them to take an extra supply of water for me. I took a gallon canteen and a half gallon canteen of water and started across the desert in the morning. I had gone about fifteen miles when the gallon canteen fell from the saddle and the horse stepped on it and broke it and lost all the water. I kept looking back along the trail but could not see anything of these men coming. The water was running very slow and I didn’t know what to do, but kept on with the hope that they would catch up. When the water gave out, I did as they all do, chewed gravel for awhile, but finally that gave out. The last thing I remember is that I took hold of the horse’s tail and wrapped it around my hand and that is the last thing I remember for three days; then I found myself by a water hole and was all right.

After crossing the desert I camped on the Big Muddy, where I found some men camped and spent about a week with them. From there I went to Pieshe(?), Nevada, a walk of three hundred miles.

In 1874 I followed the Alaska excitement to the north. I went to Fort Wrangel or the steamer and from there we took Indian canoes and with four men in our party went to what is called Telegraph Creek and from there there was no way to get into Deer Lake except on foot, packing our supplies on our backs. Three of us took one hundred and fifty pounds apiece and the fourth man took one hundred and seventy-five pounds, and we went through in eight days. When we reached Deer Creek we found there were few good claims there but they were already located, so we went prospecting and found some small patches of rich ground but not extensive enough to work. We came back to Deer Creek, and there I met a squaw who had been married to a Frenchman and spoke fairly good French. She told us she had been in that country when she was a little girl and had been down the river toward Great Slave Lake and camped at the Fork of the river; that they followed the branch of the river about twelve miles and one day when she was fishing she lost her sinker, and while looking for a stone to make a new one she found a yellow rock and used that. That later when she was on the Fraser,
River the gold she saw there made her remember the yellow rock she had picked up and she was sure it was the same kind. She gave me a map of the country and we go a skiff and some provisions and went down and found the place just as she represented it. There was plenty of gold there.

We worked there the balance of the season, but I found the climate didn’t agree with me, so I sold out my interest with the intention of going to Africa.

We reached Portland and sold our gold dust, about $25,000.00 and stayed there a few days waiting for a ship to sail for Africa. During that time we got hold of a newspaper with General Custer’s report of the Black Hills. I had always wanted to go into that country and when I saw that report I saw my opportunity. There would be a rush in there and people would go in spite of the Sioux Indians and I determined to abandon my Africa trip and to go to the Black Hills.

This being in the fall of the year, I thought it best to go up to Walla Walla and get some horses and cross the Mullen trail in the mountains. I bought two head of horses and started pretty late in the season to cross the mountains, but I made it all right. When I got back to Helena I found Fred had returned to Montana. I had not seen him all this time. He was in the Marysville district. I took a contract and lease on what is called the Whipponwill. In the spring of 1874 (5?) we had some four hundred tons of quartz out, built an aracra and milled our ore, which was the first ore milled in the camp. When we had finished that, Fred and I started for the Black Hills by way of Helena, Soda Spring and Idaho and took the road by Green River. When we reached Green River we had gathered up about four darkies and two more white men, making eight in the party. We heard there was a mountain party camped across the Wind River mountains at Camp Brown, and if so we would be strong enough to cross direct to the Black Hills. When we got to Camp Brown we found only two prospectors in that vicinity, so we had to wait there a week for two companies of cavalry which were going to Fort Steele for the winter with wagon supplies. It was getting pretty late in the winter and pretty cold. We came through what is called Whiskey Gap and struck a heavy snow storm there. We traveled all day through that snow without knowing where we were. Many of the horses gave out and were unhitched and left, and finally all the stock gave
out and could go no further. There was no timber; nothing to make a fire; the wind blowing a hurricane and we had to hustle to keep from freezing. We dug holes in the snow and covered ourselves up, but for all that many of the soldiers had their hands and feet frozen very badly. The storm cleared up toward morning and we found we were only a few miles from Rolling Springs, which we reached next morning. From there the disabled troops were sent by railroad to Fort Stevens; the rest continued overland to Laramie City with the stock.

The wind filled up all the low places with snow, and when we got into one of these low places we had to stop and shovel out the road, having about a hundred and fifty shovels with us.

When we got to Laramie City, crossing the Black Hills, we stayed there two weeks. The weather got much warmer and our party of eight started for Cheyenne and made the place in December. There we got six more men, making a party of fourteen. We took four horses and a wagon and supplies and started for the Black Hills. We got to what is called Cooney’s Ranch on the North Platte. There we found quite a number of people, some sixty or seventy, waiting for a larger crowd to go into the Hills. We tried to persuade them we were strong enough to go through, but they did not think so, so our little party of fourteen went alone, and all the Indians we saw were sixteen near the mouth of Red Canyon. We ran on them while scouting, but they never saw either us or our train.

When we got into Custer we met a man well known to the people of the Black Hills, and in fact to the world at large, Mr. Tallant, who took the first woman ever in the Black Hills. Mrs. Tallant also wrote a history of the Black Hills. They started from Fort Pierre in the summer of 1873 and were called THE GORDON PARTY. They went into the Hills and built a fort at Custer, wintered there and did some prospecting, and Mr. Tallant claimed they had some very rich quartz mines and also rich placer diggings. When Fred and I got there we found there was nothing there at that time which would pay, being 300 miles from the railroad. We soon got dissatisfied with the place and started out with the intention of taking a circuit clear around the Hills prospecting as we went along and make a winter campaign. We loaded four horses at Custer with
provisions, tools and camping outfit. Our first camp was near Hill City where there was a party of prospectors sinking a shaft on placer ground. The water was bad in the shaft and they wanted assistance. We finally got a shaft to bed rock and found there was not enough gold to justify working it at that time. Fred and I left there and went to Palmer (?) Gulch near Hannay (?) Peak. We started to sink a shaft in the gulch and got down to water. The next day we saw a large party of men coming up the gulch, locating claims as they came, and we found there was excitement at the lower end of the gulch. They staked out claims adjoining ours. They were Colorado miners, and fourteen of (sic) went together and sank a shaft to bed rock but didn’t find anything to justify working.

We broke up camp again and Fred and I left and struck out for what is called Box Elder, camped there and prospected that creek and got fine colors. Had been there a few days when some men came along and reported rich diggings a little farther north. We got in with two other men, one by the name of Hank Hamey (?), and went down Spruce Gulch to Whitewood and made camp. The excitement was running high; everybody was reporting rich diggings and new strikes. Finally a little gulch called Bob Tail was struck. We all got a claim apiece on that. My claims was located near what is known as the Golden Torra quartz mine, and Fred and I got hold of two thirds of it. We made camp at the mouth of Bob Tail Gulch. We wanted to locate a number of quartz claims and get some placer grounds and the Gold Run, for which we traded the De Smet lode. Towards spring, in the latter part of March or April, four of us found some rich float quartz. We looked for the lode but the snow was deep and we could not find it. When the snow began to melt I wanted to go and hunt it up again, but my three partners wouldn’t look for it as they did not think it was worth anything. I kept looking every day for nearly a week, and finally the snow melted on the hill and the water ran in a draw which crossed the (load ?) and I saw some quartz in the bottom and the water running over it. I took a pick and tried to get some out and found it very solid, but I got some out and took it to camp and pounded it up and panned it and found it very rich. Next day Hank Hamey consented to come and locate the Homestake Mine, the ninth day of April 1876. We started to dig a discovery shaft on the side of this little
draw and the first chunk of quartz weighed about 200 pounds and was the richest ever taken out. We came over next day and ran an open cut and found we had a large deposit of a rich grade ore. We ran a big open cut and saved the best quartz by itself. Afterwards we built a road to Whitewood and bought an ox team and wagon, built an arastra and hauled the ore over. We ran the arastra the following winter and took out $5000.00. That spring we sold the Golden Terra to John Dailey of Denver and Deerborn Brother of Cheyenne for $35,000.00.

The next work we did was to bond the Homestake to a California company for $40,000.00 and the Old Abe to Weston Brothers for $5000.00. Brother Fred and Hank Hamey took a trip to Chicago and I stayed to work the Homestake alone. I put up a ten(?!) stamp mill and bought a half interest in Owinn's(?) sawmill. I ran the ore from the Homestake through this mill and the only other mill in the neighborhood was running the Homestake ore at this time. When I had a spare man more than I could work on the Homestake, I would put him prospecting on the Old Abe and in the fall I struck the Old Abe big chute(?). By that time the two bonds had expired and no sale had been made. Fred and Hamey came back and we had improved the property so much we concluded it was worth more than the bond and we wouldn't sell for any such figure. Kellogg, the agent of Senator Hearst came up one day and wanted to get a bond on the Homestake and we agreed on a bond at $70,000.00 for thirty days. A few days later Captain Huron came up and wanted to buy the Old Abe and offered us $45,000.00 for it which we took. Both bonds were complied with and paid for within the limited time.

In March of 1876 a little party from Bob Tail Gulch went down to Cook City to help the people there build a stockade and lay out a town site. We had picketed our horses and were sitting by the camp fire. Recently a little Irishman(?) went to get his horse to water it and soon we hear shooting and yelling and he came jumping down the bank. He said it wasn't his horse he was after at all, it was his life. One Indian was shot and fell off his horse and lost his medicine bag. I got two shots, but missed one. They were the only shots I had at Indians while I was in the Hills.
In the spring of 1876 Spiegle and Alec McBatt(?) and I had four claims on Whitewood which we used to go and prospect, coming home the same day. I used to stand guard while the other boys prospected. I saw Indians a number of times. We afterwards found the ground wasn’t very good; we had better ground up above, so we gave these four claims to Alec McBatt and his friend. I cautioned him to keep one man out scouting while they worked. The first day their scout came in to help them prospect and as soon as he got down with the rest, the Indians came down on them and shot Alec McBatt in the leg, above the knee. In the spring when he got well he was telling about going through the head of the Little Missouri with General Custer and claimed he had found some gold there, so Spiegle and I got up a party. He worked the lower district and I worked the upper district. I got a party of seventy-three men and Spiegle had seventy-two and we were to meet on Red Water near Spearfish. When we reached there we found Spiegle’s party already in camp ahead of us. There was a man with Spiegle’s party who claimed he had come through the Big Horn country that spring and had found very rich diggings. Part of the men wanted to go with the Big Horn stampede and the other part wanted to go with Alec McBatt where he had found his gold on the Missouri. We took a vote on it and he had 72 and we had 73. Each party started in the opposite direction. We traveled a long time through that country. It was before the Custer massacre and all the Indians from Fort Pierre to Yankton were getting up in the West and we passed them every day. I was out scouting one day and came upon their camp fire. Going up on the hill we saw the Indians on another ridge watching our maneuvers, but they did not disturb us. We made that trip without losing a man or horse. The next party to come through didn’t get off so luckily. They lost one man and all their horses and supplies.

From the Black Hills my brother and I went to Minnesota, our old home, and got married. We stayed there nearly two years and then I got inflammatory rheumatism(?). I took a trip to eastern and southern states but found no place that suited me to settle in so came back to Minnesota and in company with my wife went to California. We spent a few months there and finally came back to my old stamping ground in Montana where I located, and have made my home since.
I went into mining again and discovered a number of pretty good mines. I took trip in '74(84?) to Idaho and the Ceour d'Alene mountains in the dead of winter in company with a half brother of mine, with a tobbagan and Chippewa snow shoes, and pulled all our baggage by hand. We got onto what is known as Trout Creek divide and from there we left the trail and went across the country at the head of all streams to Pritchard Creek. We were three weeks making the trip through that country. The snow was from eight to sixteen feet deep. We camped on top of the snow for three weeks and at the end of that time we got down on the main creek and shovelled the snow to the ground and made a good camp on the snow. We prospected there for a while but got no favorable property whatever so came back to Helena and resumed mining here.

In 1894 I located on what is known as the Porphyry Dyke(?), erected a ton or ten stamp mill and milled 25,000 tons of ore but the Helena water company put an injunction to stop my using the water any longer. I sold my holdings there to James Breen of British Columbia and since that time I have been mining closer to home.

In the spring of '82 Fred came out from Minnesota for his health and I took him up Basin Gulch and prospect for some time around the country and finally discovered the Mittie and Josephine mines which are well known mines at the present day. We developed these to the depth of 100 feet and then I sold my half interest to Fred which he operated for some time, and sold the Josephine for $30,000.00 in 1882. After I sold my interest in the Mittie and Josephine mine to Fred, I bought his interest in the Minnesota mine which I have been operating practically every since with very good results. The mine is still considered very valuable.

October 3, 1951

Appendage by Edna Manuel Adamson
daughter of Moses Manuel.

I have copied the foregoing fourteen pages from the original manuscript which is in my possession, for Mr. Guy Norman Bjorge and the historical record of the
Valier

This is the story of my brother's return to Valier for a highschool reunion. I think it's interesting and funny, and I thought you might enjoy it too, as you kow what I'm talking about. Since I suppose you have to be careful about such things, I want to make clear at the outset that I will refuse any remuneration if that is an issue.

My brother, Sherwood Martin, graduated from Valier Highschool in 1948, some years before you did. I am two years older, had already graduated, and was working as a civilian Morning Report and Statistical Control clerk at East Base before going on to Bozeman. Both of my parents grew up in Montana (Chinook and Roundup) but were only in Valier a year and a half.
Sherwood died of a melanoma a few years ago.

His family lived in Kennydale. His wife, Luanna, still does. Some years before, Sherwood got a call out of the blue asking him to come to Valier for a reunion. He was about to put the invitation out of his mind but remarked, in jest, to a friend who had dropped in "you want to fly me over there? and thought no more about it. His friend owned a small plane. Several days later his friend came in and said "This is how we're going to do it.

The appointed day came, but they could not fly through the mountains because of weather conditions. They ended up flying down the Gorge and hopped over there to Valier, landing on a dormant wheat field. Alumni came out to meet them, and after introductions one of the men said Well, "let's get on the white Russians. This was a precursur of things to come -- They got on the white russians for any reason and no reason the rest of the time they were there. At some time the second day one of the men offered to show Sherwood around the town. Sherwood told him that's somebody (don't know the names) had already showed him around. The man said "oh"-- but he doesn't know the town like I do". There was the dance and other activities such as dinner I suppose and then it was time to leave.

Several weeks went by and Sherwood's friend dropped in at the house again, wearing a baseball cap, and threw one to Sherwood. Embroidered on the front was, "I got on the White Russians in Valier Montana.

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Bjork Annual
The story of the Montana State Bjork Annals is just waiting to be made into a documentary at least an article.

I am sure you've seen the annual, and perhaps are as intrigued of the story of the editor as I am. What a genius! I'm surprised it isn't better known
Please stop reading now if you are way ahead of me.

He was a senior in 1927 and had given up joining everything. He was the editor of the annual. While the annual committee was hard at work on the annual, he and a photographer friend of his were putting together their own version. In every group picture, Bjork would appear sometimes shirtless, always unshaved, once with his arm around the dean of women, or lying on the railing beside the steps where the women were prettily assembled. The houses of the fraternities and sororities were pictured as an outhouse, a railroad car, and so on. The text was strait out of "The Rover Boys" -- who ever reads the text? The athletic teams showed up as rubber heels or butter finger bars. And so on.

The outrage was great -- he was kicked out of his fraternity and he graduated in disgrace.

After the annual won national honors, and was declared the only annual ever to have increased in value, he was a hero. The frat across the street moved him on a red carpet. He became a county agent in the state.

I understand there are very few known surviving copies I wish I had one.
Feb. 17, 1978

Mr. Paul Ringling
Ekalaka, Montana 59324

Dear Paul--

You may remember me vaguely as a red-headed kid in White Sulphur Springs 25 and 30 years ago—my father was Charlie Doig, and my mother's parents, Tom and Bessie Ringer, were on the Moss Agate ranch through most of the 1920's. I'm now finishing up a book about my family and the Smith River area—it's to be published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich this fall—and inevitably there are a few loose ends. One of these is the extent of John Ringling's holdings in the Smith River Valley in the early part of this century, and I thought the best authority might be someone in the family. I'd much appreciate quick answers to a pair of questions; if it would be simplest to jot on this letter and fire it back to me, please feel free to do so:

---I note that in Henry Ringling North's book, THE CIRCUS KINGS, he gives the Ringling landholdings in the Smith River area as "about 70,000 acres." The centennial history of Meagher County done in 1967 gives the figure as "90,000 acres." Do you know which—if either—is accurate?

---As a number of White Sulphur people relate the story, the Ringling acreage was bought by Wellington D. Rankin early in the Depression. Is that indeed what happened? And do you know if Rankin bought the entire amount of land (except, I suppose, for the place on the edge of White Sulphur)?

As part of last summer's research on this book, my wife and I spent about a month in one of the apartments in "the old Ringling house" in WSS. It was a pleasant experience; Agnes Gratz was doing some painting downstairs, and would tell us stories of what the life had been like at the house when she was a child living nearby. None of it had anything to do with what I'm working on, but it was nice to hear. Also, I believe I missed by a day or so in coinciding with your daughter—Ann, if my memory is right—at Esther Skerritt's. White Sulphur remains an interesting place to me; how much it changes, and yet doesn't change.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Dear Ivan,

John Bingling owned about 60,000 acres. It was mostly in the following areas: Birch Creek, Massagate-Black Butte, Badger Basin, and some on Rabbit Creek and of White Sulphur Springs.

The land was sold about 1944 to Wellington Rankin, Clymares, and my mother. Rankin may have purchased it all, and then sold the Badger Basin land to Clymares, and the Rabbit Creek land to my mother. I was in the service at the time.

The land which my father owned including the place on the edge of M.S.S. was an entirely separate ownership (60,000). When your great-great-grandfather James Bingling ran at Massagate my father leased the John Bingling land. It was my father who bought all of the oldest being cattle to the Miller brothers.
1 March 1978

Bill Tidyman
122L3 West 68th
Arvada, Colorado 80004

Dear Bill—

How pleased I was to hear your response to my portrait of your mother. Everyone who's read that portion of the manuscript has been captivated by her, and I'm doubly glad that my version rings true within the family.

The copy-edited version of the manuscript should reach me any day now, and I'll make the change about the mythological bedtime stories. I may use a version of your line that "the Minotaur, Cyclops, Romulus and Remus were as familiar as the Seven Dwarfs, Pinocchio, etc."

The manuscript, incidentally, has been enthusiastically received at Harcourt Brace. Things have been going so well with it I'm beginning to wonder how long it can last.

And yes, Patti pretty well has convinced Carol and me to visit Colorado. We considered going it this spring, but decided we'd want to wait for a warmer season. I think the odds are good that we'll find our way to Denver and points south in the next year or so. Incidentally, if your work ever brings you to Seattle, give a call; by now I owe you at least a dinner on the town.

thanks again, and best regards
Dear Ivan,

I must apologize for taking so long to return your manuscript. I have truly enjoyed reading it, and it still is pleasurable to consider that my mother had such influence that you would speak of her in your book. Of course, to a high school-aged son she was both a source of pride as well as a personal embarrassment, and I suspect that you have understood this with your vivid portrait.

I could detect no errors or slips, and your original draft was accurate. I was the one who made an error in terminology—Greek and Roman mythology were the sources of bedtime stories rather than "the classics." The Minotaur, Cyclops, Romulus and Remus were as familiar as the Seven Dwarfs, Pinocchio, etc. I have no suggestions or corrections; your portrayal brings her to life and has a very accurate ring.

I think I must have overwhelmed you with superfluous information, but it was a good experience for me to focus on this portion of my "roots." My three brothers were here in August, and we spent a good deal of time reminiscing. It was fascinating to compare our varying perspectives on events which occurred years ago.

I am sure your book will be a success, and I look forward to reading it. Thank you for including my mother.

I hope Patti Ekhoff has convinced you to visit Colorado. We think it's a great place, and if you do get a chance to tour this area, please plan to visit with us.

Best wishes,

Bill
24 January '78

Bill Tidyman
12243 West 68th
Arvada, Colorado 80004

Dear Bill--

At last, here's the brief portion of my manuscript draft which describes your mother. I'm much appreciate having it back, with whatever comments you'd like to make, in the next ten days or two weeks; Harcourt Brace will be asking me for some revisions soon, and I'd like to be ready to send them in. Please feel free to call me collect with your responses, if that's simpler, and then mail the manuscript at your leisure.

I always send out "checking" copies such as this with trepidation, wondering how my portrait of a person will jibe with that of someone who knew the subject so much better than I did. I might explain that if your mother sounds even a bit more formidable than she could be in person, this description is meant to reflect my wonderment at her when I was a 15-year-old freshman. That wonderment was heightened, of course, by the incident of my first test scores at Valier, a story I'm not sure you know. She was absolutely right that I was the logical suspect to have nabbed the test answers, given my stratospheric scores; and I hope my point comes across in the manuscript that she was equally as prompt to nurture me as a genuine student. Anyway, of the several friends here in Seattle who've read the manuscript for me, all seem to be enchanted with the portrait of your mother, and I hope it rings right with you as well.

And I definitely want it to ring accurately, in every detail. I've tried to work to details from your exceedingly helpful letter of last summer, and to memories of others who knew your mother, such as the Harry Palins and some of my classmates. But I note on p. 248 I somehow transmuted "the classics" she told you as fairy tales into Greek mythology told as bedtime stories. I'll take care of that, but please let me know of any similar slips.

All is well here. I've worked on this book until I'm fairly blue with exhaustion, but I think the result is going to be pretty good.

best regards
Dear Ivan,

I'd like to apologize for taking so long to answer your letter, and I hope that since you were in Montana for six weeks, I have not thrown you off schedule. It pleases me that my mother could be a positive influence in your life, and I know she would have derived a great deal of satisfaction in knowing she had played even a small part in stimulating one of her students to enjoy the "search for knowledge." I remember that she recognized that you were not the run-of-the-mill student; she had high hopes for you, Ivan, and evidently she was right.

I hope I can be of some help to you, and have made some rather random notes which undoubtedly include more than you wanted to know, but I'll throw it all in and you can use or discard as you wish. I know she was a "character" to many of the students, and I could recognize some of her eccentricities; but, when one lives with those eccentricities, they assume a sort of normalcy that makes it difficult for one to notice them as anything unusual. So, for observations of that sort I hope that possibly you were able to dredge up some remembrances at the reunion.

Frances Carson Tidyman was born October 22, 1900, in Townsend, Montana, the oldest of three children. She didn't like her given name, incidentally. Her father was an immigrant from Germany and a harness maker by trade until the advent of motor vehicles. At that time he purchased a small farm on the outskirts of Townsend. Her mother was English, tracing her ancestry to the early Puritans of New England. (She was a Puritan in every sense of the word, so I heard.) She was a former teacher.

Mother used to tell stories about her father and how he valued education and the company of educated men, such as the Catholic and Episcopal priests, although her father was not a religious man. He had an interesting way of dealing with someone he discovered as having lied to him--he simply never spoke to that person ever again.

Mother graduated from Townsend High School as valedictorian in 1917 (according to my calculations), and that fall entered the University of Montana at Missoula. I guess it was MSU at that time. When she left for school, her father asked how much she would need for spending money. After serious consideration, she resolved that $1.00 a month would suffice. At the University she became quite involved in school activities, and I remember her talking of going to athletic events, and going with other students to the train station to greet returning football teams. She was involved with the drama group, the Masquers, and worked as stage manager. She played bit parts, but never the lead. Photographs of her as a young girl are those of an attractive person; however, she never considered herself as such. She joined the Delta Gamma sorority as a senior, but knew that she was not their first choice, as the initials on the pin were not hers.
We have here a letter written to my mother by her father in the spring of 1919. It is apparent that he was responding to my mother's request for permission to travel with the Masquers on their summer tour. The letter makes it plain that her parents were much opposed to her plan, and they advised that "those people" involved in "show business" often suffered poor reputations, particularly in the area of sex. She didn't tour with the Masquers.

I don't know the particulars of her post-graduate education; however, she did take some post-graduate courses at Northwestern University. This may have been during summers, because after graduation from MSU she taught high school at Conrad, Montana, and came to teach in Valier in 1922 or 1923. There she met and married my father, a Valier native who worked for the irrigation company. He had attended school at Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin. My father was on the School Board for years, and after my mother had taught for several years she began to decline the salary raises due her, because she thought that it would come to a point where they couldn't afford her as a teacher.

Four sons were born: Jim (1930), Tom (1932), Jack (1934), and Bill (1940). Mother quit teaching in order to have her family, and returned in 1942 or 1943. She taught from then until her death in May of 1962. Your description, Ivan, of her bending forward from the hips and bustling about, is so accurate, and I have no doubt she was doing exactly that when she slipped and fell in school that May. Her hip was broken, requiring surgery, and she was recuperating from that when a fatal blood clot reached her heart.

Both my parents were avid readers. Mother regularly read the best sellers, and had a library including P. G. Wodehouse, Tarkenton, Ibsen, Zola, even Salinger. Periodicals included "Saturday Evening Post," "New Yorker," "Colliers," "Life," "Time," "Newsweek," "Punch," "Photoplay," and "Esquire." They had stored in the basement every issue of "Time" from 1928 on. As a mother, she was eager to instill the classics, which stories were told to us as children like fairy tales. Books were a valued part of her life, and she wanted her children to share her love of reading.

Politically, she was probably a moderate Republican, but voted for Truman, much to my father's displeasure, because she felt sorry for him. She had her own private "charities," and often one of her friends would appear at the house and talk with her for hours, end up staying for dinner and on into the night. These events occurred to the chagrin of my father. She would "loan" money she never expected to be repaid. She really didn't place much importance on material possessions, and tended to be rather careless (careless?) in loaning her belongings. By the same token, I suspect that she was casual about returning promptly things she had borrowed. My father handled the financial affairs in the family, and one of his frustrations must have been Mother's habit of writing counter checks and neglecting to inform him. If she were in Conrad and decided to make a purchase, she simply wrote a counter check--on the Conrad Bank. For this reason, although my father did his banking in Valier, he kept money in the Conrad bank to cover the possibility of Mother's writing a check.
Yes, she did usually wear dark dresses. I don’t think she ever owned a pair of slacks. She wore a brooch with the dresses, and the chain for the glasses was a concession to the fact that without it, she never would be able to locate the glasses. I think she weighed about 180 pounds and was 5'5" tall. She wore her hair long, parted in the center, usually in a bun. One of her mannerisms was her constant "brushing back" of the errant strands of hair that would fall forward into her face. Your description of her in the classroom is perfect, Ivan. As for expressions she may have used, I’m afraid I can’t be of much help to you. I know that I never heard her use any profanity.

Mother loved gardening, and regularly could be seen out putting in the yard while clad in her nightgown. She disliked organized rows, so at times the yard and garden had a jumbled effect. She was a good cook, but the kitchen was a "disaster area" when she finished preparing a meal. We always ate in the dining room, even breakfast, and she used the china, silver, candles, etc., every night. After a meal she didn’t feel compelled to clear the table immediately. If there were guests, everyone adjourned to the living room after dinner, and at midnight Mother would be alone in the kitchen, doing the dishes. At other times she and my father would leave the table and go for a ride in the car. She wasn’t a good housekeeper, and things were often cluttered and strewn around the house. In the later years we had a cleaning lady once a week. I guess she was not an orderly person, and her flights of fancy were evident in the way she ran her household. She really was sort of a free spirit, and if there was a good book to read or good conversation to be had, she didn’t let things like the dinner dishes interfere. I don’t remember her watching much television. Neighbors and friends often dropped in for the evening, or my parents would walk over to someone’s home to visit. One time when my wife and I were home visiting and she had invited over a couple who were their good friends, she told my wife, "Once you get used to her split infinitives, you’ll find that she’s a very nice person." She refused to give praise or compliments when she thought it undeserved. If someone asked her opinion of a new dress, picture, or whatever, and she said, "That’s very interesting," I knew that she didn’t like it.

Mother was the organist at the Methodist Church for several years, and then she and the minister had some sort of falling out and she became the organist at the Lutheran Church. She never did drive a car (a loyalty to her harness-making father?), I suspect she didn’t feel the need to drive. Each day in late afternoon my father and she would drive to Eppe’s grocery to shop for dinner, and this was a social event. During the years that Valier had a movie theater, Mr. and Mrs. Tidyman were among the regular Sunday evening patrons. Mother also attended all school activities—the athletic events, plays, whatever. She enjoyed those years when she was responsible for the dramatic events, and, as you know, the yearbook was a special pet project with her.
I hope this has been of help to you, and I wish you success in your project. If you feel I've omitted something I surely must have knowledge of, drop a note and I will answer PROMPTLY. I forwarded your request and address to my brothers, and I'm hoping that one of them will assist me in answering your questions. They also will have a somewhat differing perspective, as they were older and closer together in age. I was the "baby," and by the time I was eight years old, my brothers were beginning to leave home for college. For instance, my brother Jim thinks that Mother was unhappy staying at home keeping house and raising a family during those years she took leave from teaching. I know nothing about this, because when I was two or three, she began teaching again, so I never really saw her in that role. It may very well be true, because I know she did love teaching, and Valier High School was a very big part of the Tidymans' lives.

We enjoyed reading your article on jogging, and again--Much success with your book.

I wish you much success on your book and after.

Bill Tidyman
Bill Tidyman
1221.3 West 68th
Arvada, Colorado 80001

Dear Bill--

I'm glad I was able to reach you yesterday, and that you're game to answer some questions about your mother. I might explain a bit more about what I'm up to. For the past four years or so, I've been shaping a book about my growing up in Montana. You may recall that I had an unusual family situation -- that I was raised by my father and grandmother, in a somewhat ragtag life on the fringes of the sheep business. That life, as I see it now, helped to give me a sort of desperate hunger for education -- book learning, anyway. In one of my next chapters to write, I feel I have to talk about the lucky coincidence (for me) of landing in a school where I would have your mother for a teacher. Now that I've been through a couple of universities, I realize what a remarkable influence she was for me; only one professor of all those university years comes close to her.

So, for at least a few pages of a chapter, I want to try bring Frances Tidyman alive again: to show what it was like in her classroom. I want to do it honestly, which will mean pointing out that for some students, she was a figure of fun. (One reason I'm interested in going to my class reunion in a few weeks is to see how opinions of our teachers, and of each other, hold up after 20 years.) But mostly, I want to convey how her flights of fancy and enthusiasm set me off on trains of thought, made an educated life seem exciting to me. I need, Bill, even such mundane facts as the years of her birth and death, and whatever you can tell me of her own education. But beyond that, the real help will come on questions and impressions such as these:

---I recall that in the classroom, she perched on a high stool, in front of a kind of reader-board lectern which had long crossed legs like elongated X's; that she wore glasses on a chain around her neck, and that the glasses, pens, handkerchiefs and I don't know what all else frequently were deposited down the bosom of her dress, where she would rummage for them; that often, in the midst of reading something to us, she would drop the glasses, a kind of musing look would come over her face, and she would be off telling us some story. Do these details sound right to you, and do you have any to add?
--What can you tell me about her reading habits? I know we read some Shakespeare and Walter Scott in her English classes, and quite a lot of poetry, such as "Miniver Cheevy". But from the times I was in your home, it struck me that there were all manner of books, and magazines such as TIME. Do you happen to know what some of her favorite reading was?

--I can only dimly recall one or two of the stories she told, and would be happy to have any you remember, since you probably were in the unhappy situation of getting a dose of them at home as well. One I do recall, because it strikes me as a rare example of actually seeing a teacher from those years think through a process, was her account of how she felt upon reading of a plane disaster in the newspaper; then that first she would hope no one she knew was involved, then that no one from the area was involved, then no one from the state, no one from this country, on up a ladder of remorse to the wish that no one at all had been involved. The reasoning had a kind of off-center logic of its own, and I think in a way that's what was valuable about your mother, what made her stand out as an individual in the not-very-distinguished ranks of small-town teachers then.

--As to her personality: it seems to me she fired a lot at the recalcitrant students, and occasionally would toss one out of class, but generally put up with them; that she went at a bustling pace, leaning forward from the hips in her haste; that if a class didn't have its assignment done, she would be briefly exasperated--did she call us "people"? "All right, people"? -- and then get down to teaching us what she could, try to salvage the hour. One thing I'm unsure of, Bill, is how flighty she was, or wasn't. Her mind seemed to be going a lot of different directions, and certainly she was doing three times the work of anyone else on the faculty. But do you remember her as going in all those different directions, or as more orderly and methodical than that?

--Finally, Bill, can you recall any favorite expressions of your mother's, of pleasure or exasperation or anything else? As I find in writing of my own family, recapturing just how a person sounded is one of the hardest tasks.

I leave it to your judgment as to whether you want to pass this along to any of your brothers. I don't want to tie up the entire Tidyman family in reminiscence, but on the other hand if you feel someone else would like a crack at what I'm asking, it's fine by me. I should say that I intend no direct attribution in the book except to myself; I feel that the people who are helping me as sources have contributed enough without having any responsibility for my words on the printed page. And I will pass along an autographed copy for you, when Harcourt Brace manages to bring it out in a year and a half or so. Meanwhile, I'm enclosing a recent piece I did for the New York Times...and now I'm off to Montana for six weeks, to get on with this writing business. Best regards, Bill.

p.s. One last detail: did your mother almost always wear plain dresses, usually gray or some other dark shade, such as a deep maroon? I seem to remember her in them.
Dear Bill--

Your letter is immeasurably helpful, and your timing was just right: we had just returned from Montana, and I was just preparing to look over my notes about your mother, when the letter arrived.

I would imagine that growing up in a household with a person of bigger-than-life qualities is more pleasurable to look back on than to have gone through; I feel some such sentiments toward my own family. But I must say that one of my regrets is that your mother passed from my life before I had the maturity and skills to entirely appraise and appreciate her (she wouldn't have appreciated the halving of that last infinitive, would she?). She seems to me one of the colossal people I've ever known, and I hope I can do her some justice in a few pages of print.

I don't know if the Ekhoffs managed to visit you on their way home from the class reunion; if they did, you'll know that I managed to talk with Patti's parents about your mother. Many of the points the Palins made coincide with yours, and the combined detail is going to be very useful to me. Sometime in the next few months, Bill, I'll likely try on you a draft of my material about your mother, to see if I'm able to ring true with someone who knew her best.

Meanwhile, do get in touch if your work brings you to Seattle. By the same token, there's an improved chance we may happen through Denver in the next year or so. We have friends in northern New Mexico, and now Loren and Patti have so talked up the Durango area—a part of the country I've never seen—that they may lure us on a writing-visiting trip. Incidentally, you have a considerable fan club in the person of Patti—and you know what a formidable fan she can be.

Again, thanks hugely, Bill. Your letter truly is a searching and thoughtful assessment of your mother, and I'll be back in touch to show you how I hope to use some of your insights.

best regards
In my school annual, amid the signatures and doggerel of schoolmates, Mrs. Tidyman wrote: "You must come back."

Mrs. Tidyman was a carnival of knowledge. She taught English, Latin, sometimes Spanish, directed school plays, advised the newspaper and annual, ran the library. She loved language as if it was a pageant put on for her. We took apart sentences in her classes as if they were jigsaws to be memorized. Words were chalked to other words like scaffolding. Often she would pick up the books she had assigned us to read, and read a favorite portion aloud just for the thrill of it: It was the best of times... (Ivanhoe, front de boeuf). For those of us who liked it along with her, the sentence work was like learning to carpentry. The whooshing of that woman caught me.

I took four years of English classes from her, two of Latin, wrote for her school paper, entered oratory contests she urged me toward.

She had a heavy, dramatic bosom, and was as grandly humped behind, so that her rapid walk seemed a pulling-and-pushing. She had dresses in all the shades of gray I have seen, the brightest of them just tinge toward a smokey wine color.
northeastern states of the U. S. He came back to Portland in 1946 to succeed Munger as head of the Station's division of Forest Management, then went on to become an Experiment Station Director, first at the Central States Station in Ohio and next at the Southern Station in Louisiana. His next, and final, return to Portland came with his appointment to succeed Cowlin in early 1963.

Brigleb had seen, during his quarter-century of federal forestry research, a changing attitude in the lumber industry, "Gradually some of the skepticism developed into tolerance," as he put it. Now, with the lumbermen more amenable, segments of the public were skittish about the Forest Service. The first annual report of the federal Council of Environmental Quality bespoke such concern: "Good forest management is no longer synonymous with timber production." Yet, despite the push and pull of stronger environmental and recreational demands, timber production would have to continue. Brigleb charted his policy for the PNW Station: "Mostly, more intensive forest management practices were in need—such as genetics research, fertilization, pre-commercial thinning, more intensive protection of watersheds."

In terms of some specific research projects, a study of the residual effects of pesticides was begun in the fall of 1964, and the emphasis began to shift toward biological and silvicultural measures to control insects. The
The Station had experienced its own moments of cloak and dagger even before the war began. A German forester showed up at the Station in 1940, evinced great interest in the forest survey maps of Oregon and Washington, and requested copies. The Station suspiciously passed along his request to headquarters in Washington, D. C. and shunted him off. On another occasion, the Station was visited by two Finnish foresters whose names and actions, one staff member recalls, "seemed to arouse suspicion that their background was more German than Finnish." This dubiously-regarded duo left by car for California, reportedly under the eye of the FBI. Derring-do or dark suspicions of it were the least of the Station's puzzles during the war. What emerges from the records and memories of the war years is the effort it took to retool a science-oriented facility into a clearinghouse of economic and technological questions.

Well before the United States entered World War II in December, 1941, military needs were changing the Station's focus of work. A survey of the supply of Sitka spruce prime enough for use in aircraft production was done. The Pacific Northwest's production of lumber, plywood, and wood pulp was growing with the armament program; since such softwood products were vital to military needs, Station researchers began studying the utilization of lesser grades and species of trees than had been customarily used. If there was any doubt about the seriousness of the new thrust of forestry research, the dispelling word came from on high.
From that strange, mussed, magnificent mind of Frances Tidyman, learning was rummaged out for me that I had never dreamt of.
There was the question of whether I should continue with the checkerboard hops to school, from the ranch to Dupuyer to Valier, or the bigger towns of switch to Conrad or Choteau. In my school yearbook, amid the signatures and doggerel of classmates, Mrs. Tidyman wrote: "You must come back."

I did.
BORN TO BE

The stage coach was unusually late that night. The train was late at Dorsey. (That old Jawbone Road was never on time in the summer, so you can imagine what time it made in the winter.) I heard Butch Norse, the stage driver, whistle and crack his six horse whip. I'd know that whistle if I heard it in Purgatory. The custom was that as long as the mail came in before midnight it would be distributed, and the general delivery window would be opened. I told Maude the mail was in and asked permission to go for it. We had to be in the Post-office when the window was opened, because after eight o'clock at night they never kept it open longer than when the last person had left the waiting room at that time.

Maude gave me permission to go. To get a letter at night, from the right person to the right girl, usually meant an extra two or four bits for me: from the wrong one to a girl not feeling too good meant a cursing out for me. They always laid the jinxes on me as well as saying I was good luck. (Voluptuous moods.)

The next half hour I spent with the milling mob, jammed in the lobby of the Postoffice, talking, half whispering because the clerks couldn't work fast if the people made too much noise. At ten o'clock I got my bundle of mail. I knew every girl on the line by her real name and nickname. At times I ran for nearly fifty, steady, and more on off days, such as fast Saturdays and slow Monday evenings.

It was five blocks from the Postoffice to the first crib on the line, the Brown House. There were twelve girls in there at that time. I dropped their mail and hit on

MOTHER'S FORESIGHT

up the line—Blue House, the Cabins, then Bennett's place, the last and biggest house on the east end of the string, a big gray frame house with seven large rooms on the ground floor. I always saved Maude's mail until the last because I worked there steady.

There was a new girl at Bennett's, sent to her by some friend in Butte, without letting Bennett know that she was coming. The girl had just gotten off the stage coach. She still had her coat on. Her suitcase was setting in the parlor. Bennett's was all filled up. (Agnes Bennett was her name. Seldom anyone ever called her Agnes.) She asked me if I knew any house that needed a girl. I told her that Maude had an extra room, if she would take her. (Maude was so funny.) Bennett asked me to find out if Maude wanted the girl. I ran down the hill to Maude's and told her of the girl. Maude asked me what she looked like. Her house was full of men. I told her—five foot six, thirty-eight bust, blue eyes, chestnut hair, and young. Maude said, "My God! Yes! Get her quick!"

I went back to Bennett's, got the girl, her bag, and we hurried down to Maude's. I took her in the back door and called Maude to the kitchen. She gave the girl a surveying look from head to feet. Then they had a little chat. Drinks were selling too fast for Maude to have time to put over her fine points regarding her method on the business.

Jewell, that was her name, Jewell Hooks, was assigned to the Daisy Room. All the rooms in Maude's were named after flowers—Daisy, China Aster, Lily of
HI FOLKS;

WELL IT IS TIME WE GOT A DATE & PLACE SET FOR THE FAMILY & FRIENDS
GET TOGETHER, I WAS SURE GLAD TO HEAR FROM SO MANY OF YOU.
THE DATE - I PICKED JULY 8, 1978
THE PLACE - RINGLING AND WALLED MOUNTAIN AT ABOUT 9 OR 10 AM.
WE WILL GET TOGETHER AT JAY DOIG'S AT RINGLING AND IF THE WEATHER
IS RIGHT WE WILL GO TO DAVE AND PETE DOIG'S OLD RANCH AT WALLED
MOUNTAIN AND HAVE A PICNIC. WE WILL FURNISH TRANSPORTATION FROM
RINGLING TO WALLED MOUNTAIN FOR THOSE THAT DON'T WANT TO TAKE THEIR
CAR IN. I WILL FURNISH THE MEAT AND GORDON AND JAY WILL HELP WITH
SOME OF THE OTHER FOOD AND WE WILL GET SOME OF THE RELATIVES THAT
LIVE AROUND HERE TO HELP SO THE PEOPLE TRAVELING A LONG DISTANCE WON'T
HAVE TO BRING ANYTHING. ABOUT 7 OR 8 PM WE WILL GO TO RINGLING & HAVE
A DANCE IN JAY'S BIG QONSERT BUILDING. I HAVE A 3 PIECE ORCHESTRA
LINED UP AND WE WILL TAKE UP A COLLECTION TO HELP PAY FOR THE MUSIC.
I WOULD APPRECIATE A REPLY FROM YOU SO THAT I MIGHT BE ABLE TO PLAN
ON THE AMOUNT OF FOOD THAT IS NEEDED.

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH

RAY DOIG
RT I-BOX 35
TOWSENDE, MONTANA 59644
PHONE 266-3626

[Handwritten note: 100-150]

[Handwritten note: Jan Mon-Thurs]

[Handwritten note: Aug Lager]
Dear Ray——

Just a note in answer to yours about the date of the family reunion. Carol and I intend to come, and if they can manage it another couple will be traveling with us. You once asked about any friends of the Doigs who ought to be invited, too. I'd say Edith and Alice Brekke, as they were friends of my mother, and if she's still alive, Kathryn Donovan, who lives just outside Helena. Also, Clifford Shearer of White Sulphur was a close friend of the Pete Doig family.

So, we'll hope to see you on July 8. Best regards—hello to Emma and Wally.
HI FOLKS:
I AM TRYING TO SET A DATE & PLACE FOR A DOIG FAMILY REUNION & FRIENDS THIS SUMMER. WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER & RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE FEW QUESTIONS I HAVE BELOW:
(1) DATE THAT WOULD BE BEST FOR YOU
(2) THE PLACE YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IT
(3) PLEASE LIST NAMES & ADDRESSES OF RELATIVES & FRIENDS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND & IF YOU WILL CONTACT THEM.
(4) IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEND 3 OR 4 DOLLARS TO HELP WITH THE EXPENSE OF MUSIC - DRINKS & ETC. BRING ENOUGH FOOD FOR YOUR OWN FAMILY.
(5) ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS

RETURN TO:
RAY DOIG
RURAL I BOX 35
TOWNSEND, MONT 59644

The place I thought of was the Mauelo School. I sent this to the wrong address and it came back. I got this address from Elsie Townsend. If you have any suggestions be sure to let me know about them.

Ray
March 1, 1978

Ray--

You're to be commended for taking on the job of getting a family reunion together; I'd say you have more courage than any of the rest of us.

Since your phone call, I've tried to figure out my summer schedule more exactly, and if it makes any difference to your planning, it would be better for me if the date was after July 22; the 23rd would be okay, or the weekend of the 29th-30th. But if you and Gordon have come up with an earlier date, that's okay; Carol and I will do our best to make the trip whenever it's set for.

Am enclosing a $5 check to help a bit with your expenses.

On your question about William Scott Doig: my guess is that he was a brother to D.L. and Peter Doig. According to information which Rosebud Winters once got from Jeannie Campbell, there were nine in that family—one of them a brother named William. And Scott was their mother's maiden name.

Hope to see you this summer.

Ivan Doig
Dear Ivan:

What a pleasant surprise to hear from you! Your description of our house in Ringling is very interesting and brings to mind many thoughts and memories of the past.

Your mention of the only trees in town reminds me of stories we used to hear of how Henry Foster worked to get trees started in the yard. I believe he said he had planted a total of 150 to 200 trees to come up with the five or six that lived and grew. Two of them at the dining room window died some fifteen years ago and had to be cut down, but the others do pretty well. They show signs of dead branches that have to be cut off now and then -- the winters are hard on them. Of course, we have been trying to get evergreens started around the fence, and they are doing better lately. Do you remember the honeysuckle growing by the house, around to the right of the porch; and then there is the hedge by the front fence with a couple lilacs that never quite make it to blossom. Not much like gardening in the Seattle area!

Then the "many-windowed sun porch" not only "opened the entire front of the house" but seemed to spread the light to strangers who may have gotten stuck or got off the train, looking for a place to go for help. And, of course, the porch was a comfortable place to sit and visit or just look out over the town -- the railroad and highway -- and even on cold days in the winter when it was sunny the porch would warm up during the day.

Well, I guess that's enough rambling from here! Am anxious to see your book.

Going through some old pictures, we ran across this one of your mother. It's taken on the steps of the Loweth school house. She was visiting Alice for a weekend. We think it was about 1933 or 1934 but not sure. After talking with you here last summer I went through the old school papers in Ringling and found an item about the Ringers moving to Ringling. Was hoping you would stop by when you went through, but then I should have sent them to you. If it would help you, I can look them up again when I get over there. Let me know.

All for now. Hope we will see you and Carol again this year.

Best wishes to you both,

Edith Birkle
2 March 1978

Dear Edith--

Thanks for the prompt response to my letter, and for the information about the trees in front of your parents' house. There seem to have been more than I remembered; I believe I'll change the manuscript from "a few small tidy trees" to "half a dozen small tidy trees."

And thanks, too, for the photo of my mother. I have a good many photos—the albums were one thing that somehow survived all moves and general comings-and-goings of both sides of my family—but not this particular one, and I think it's a nice shot.

I would indeed like to see the old Ringling school papers, and anything else of that nature which may have lodged in your Ringling house, and I hope to have a chance this summer. Ray Doig of Townsend, a second cousin of mine, has begun organizing a Doig family reunion for late July. He's working with Gordon on it, and the plan is to hold it in Ringling. Not only Doigs are invited, although we hope to have a considerable number of them; Ray and Gordon have said to pass the word to friends of the family as well, and certainly the Sreekies are high on that list. I'll try to keep you apprised as some definite date is set, and in any event, Carol and I will hope to see you when we come for the festivity.

best regards
Dear Jean,

I should like so much to read some of your articles - I often wish someone could write the lives of some of the people I have known. Lloyd Robinson told me he came to Montana when he was eight years from Missouri - the first ranch he worked on was between Harlowton and Seeley. When asked if he could stack hay, he said, "Oh yes" but he had never stacked hay or seen a hay stack before! Mrs. Crabtree told me he came to Montana with Lloyd. I wish I could have known Mr. Crabtree. Before he got so old, he could have told us so much history of the Valley. Our belief, Colie Hall, who could remember the Oklahoma run when she was a little girl - Rose Gordon, with her wonderful stories of the past.

But then I was remiss when my mother & father told me of their early days - and now when I talk of when I was young, to my grandchildren - they aren't so interested.
I think they believe I make up stories, of
a little girl, who walked three miles to school,
and saw in the winker, gray wolves, watching,
watching on a hillside-

Lloyd married when he was almost elderly
and lived in Missouri, he and his wife came
to see us. He is dead now, and God Forgive me-
I wonder if his wife didn't talk him to death-
Ollie Hall would have done that sentence, because
she feels the same way I did! and in case you
think the same as me - Robinson is how it
is spelled-

Sincerely

Maud McCade
March 1, 1978

Mrs. McCabe--

Thanks so much for your pleasant letter, and for straightening me out on Lloyd Robinson's name.

Your mention of having seen wolves when you were a child reminded me of the enclosed article I wrote a few years back. The lady it's about is dead now, but what a striking person she was, even at the time I interviewed her.

I hope all is well with you. It turns out that my wife and I may be making another trip to Montana this summer, and if so, we'll try to see our WSS friends.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Dear Mrs. McCabe—

You may remember that a few years ago, during one of my visits to White Sulphur, Pete talked into my tape recorder one evening, answering questions about the town’s past for me. I’m at work again on the piece of writing which will use some of that information, and while Pete was a tremendous help in jogging my memory on names, I didn’t think to get the proper spelling from him on one of them: Lloyd Robertson. I’ve never known the right spelling of Lloyd’s name—whether it was Robertson, Robinson, Roberson, or what. Can you help me on this? It’s a small point, but I do want to be accurate about it. Heaven knows, enough people have mistreated the name “Doig” over the years to make me want to respect other folks’ names.

If it’s simplest, please feel free simply to jot an answer on this letter and ship it back to me. I hope all is well with you. White Sulphur, and the people I knew there in my boyhood, are much in my thoughts these days as I write about my father and his ranching life.

Thanks for your help.

best regards

Ivan Doig
February 11, 1978

Edith Brekke
1208 N. Lamborn
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Edith—

The book I was working on last summer when I talked with you and Alice continues to grind on, and I'm in the process now of checking some facts. I have a very brief section of description in which I recall how my grandmother and I lived in that house in Ringling with the Badgett's and your parents as neighbors. The years involved are about 1950-52. Am I entirely accurate in this line of description about your parents' house?—

"A white-fenced yard ruleded neatly around it, framing a few small tidy trees—the only ones in town—and a many-windowed sun porch which opened the entire front of the house."

If it's simplest, please feel free just to jot any comment right on this letter, and ship it back to me. I do appreciate your help, now as in the visit last summer. It's quite a chore to bring back exact details from memory, and a great number of people have been deeply helpful.

Carol and I enjoyed seeing you last summer; we hope all is well with you.

best regards
Dear Ivan:

First, my apologies for this late reply to your good letter. It arrived just after I left here for a trip to California and when I returned the middle of May I found so many things to get caught up on.

Now I am wondering if you plan to be in Ringling for the big community get-together on July 3-4. Thinking that you might do that and that we would have an opportunity for a more detailed discussion of our backgrounds and "life in Montana" while you are in the area, I will just send you a quick note now.

Your comments and questions about all the books and magazines in my folks' home were very interesting. Am so glad you enjoyed them as you grew up. Of course, many of them at that time were left by the Posters when the folks bought the house. You probably never knew much about them. They were both teachers, intelligent, interesting and a terrific couple. Henry Foster was the best story-teller I have ever known, and I only wish I had a better memory -- or had some tape recordings!

As far as the Brekke's are concerned, I think we have always been interested in books, always have a lot around and enjoy reading as much as we have time for. I imagine this comes from our parents, perhaps for the most part from our Mother who encouraged and insisted that we should learn as much as possible. I remember when we were small and any of us said, "I don't know", she always said, "Hell, you better learn!".

Of course, when we were small growing up on the ranch, we didn't have an opportunity to own much reading matter -- we received a weekly Norwegian newspaper that carried a section of stories every two weeks. My Mother looked forward to these, read them when she could snatch some time from all her work, and shared them with us so that she made reading a very real pleasure and adventure for us. She learned to read English along with us in school, and this opened up a whole new world for her. Sharing whatever she had available was a great part of her life. She didn't believe in having anything that was not used -- and so when there were books in her home, she was anxious to hand them out to anyone who showed any interest in them.

As we look back and see areas of life from a different perspective, there is much to think about. These are a few thoughts that come to my mind now. I look forward to visiting with you and Carol and hope that you will come to the house in Ringling and we can talk about some of these things. I am sure you have started a very ambitious project and I am very interested in hearing about it. I have often wished I had some ability in the area of writing!

Look forward to seeing you both.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Blaine M. Brekke
April 16, 1976

Dear Edith:

It may be surprising to get a letter from me out of the blue, but I wonder if you can help me on some writing I am doing. I am working on a book about my father and grandmother and their life in Montana—-at least that will be the basis of what I hope will be a keen examination of their times there.

I have been gathering information from anybody who could help, and I am at a part now where I ought to turn to you. I remember that when my grandmother and I lived in Ringling we were good friends with your parents. One thing I especially remember was that your parents' house was always full of books and magazines, which they loaned to me and which I read by the hour. It seems to me it was unusual for people in Ringling, and people of your parents' generation, to have all these books and magazines around. Can you tell me anything about how this came to be? Was there some strong feeling for reading and education in your parents, or was it that you children brought home the habit from college?

I suppose what I am interested in is why your parents seemed to me then—and still do—such thoughtful and serious people, probably the only ones of their kind in Ringling. I think it was a considerable influence on me to have them as neighbors, and I would appreciate anything you could tell me about the personalities of your mother and father, as you look back on them.

This book has a very long way to go before getting into print. I will certainly see that you get a copy when it does. Meanwhile, Carol and I will likely make a research trip to Montana sometime this summer, and we will hope to look you up then.

Best regards,
Dear Walt--

I'm continuing to work on my book about my dad, and I have a couple of questions you're the best expert on:

--The Basin doesn't have its name on the maps I have of the Sixteen area. My Aunt Anna tells me she thinks the proper spelling is "Turney Basin," instead of "Tierney Basin," as I had thought. Do you know which is right?

--The maps don't show either the name of the creek that ran past the DL place, through Spring Gulch and on into Sixteen Creek. When you were living in the Basin, was that creek called Spring Creek, Spring Gulch Creek, or what?

If it's simplest, Walt, please feel free to jot your answers on this letter and ship it back to me. I appreciate your help; I'm trying like the dickens to be accurate in every detail, and it is a job. I'll send you a copy of the book when it comes out--perhaps if I'm lucky, by the end of this year. Regards to Emma and Wally.

best regards

Ivan Doig

Dear Ivan,

THE BASIN WAS CALLED TIERNEY BASIN. THE CREEK YOU TALK ABOUT WAS CALLED JUST PLAIN OLD "SPRING CREEK" AND MOST OF THE OLD TIMERS CALLED OR SPELLED IT SPRING CRICK.

BEST REGARDS,

Walt
11 February 1978

Librarian
Montana Historical Society
225 N. Roberts
Helena, MT 59601

For the sake of some writing about the history of Meagher County, I'd like to obtain photocopies of any obituaries, or other pertinent biographical references, of Wellington D. Rankin, once one of the county's largest landholders. I'm particularly interested in anything detailing the extent of Mr. Rankin's livestock enterprise--such as total acreage of his holdings, and his total of cattle. Also, I'd appreciate any reference to Mr. Rankin's original purchase of much of his Meagher County land--which, according to my information, he bought from the John Ringling family in the early or mid-1930's.

Please feel free to call me collect at the above number if there is any question about the extent of the material available--or if you'd like to notify me of the photocopying fee involved. Many thanks.

cordially

Ivan Doig
18 February 1978

Rex C. Myers
Reference Librarian
Montana Historical Society
225 North Roberts Street
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Mr. Myers--

Thanks immensely for being so prompt in sending me the W.D. Rankin photcopies I requested. They look quite useful.

I'm enclosing my check for $2.50 for the copying cost.

cordially,

[Signature]
February 14, 1978

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Ave. N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Mr. Doig:

Thank you for your letter of February 11, 1978, requesting information on Wellington D. Rankin.

Enclosed are photocopies of Mr. Rankin's obituary and part of a series on him which the Great Falls Tribune carried. The cost of these photocopies is $2.50 and we would appreciate reimbursement at your convenience.

While these articles provide some data on Rankin, they do not contain the precise details you need. Land ownership, and property data should be contained in the records of the Assessor and the Clerk and Recorder of Meagher County. Digging them out would take a considerable amount of time, but you need to work through those officials.

If we may be of further service, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Rex C. Myers
Reference Librarian

Enc.
12 February 1978

Public Information Office
Helena National Forest
U.S. Forest Service
Helena, MT 59601

I'm at work on a piece of historical writing about the area of Sixteen, Montana, and need to check my information about the date when that area of the Big Belt Mountains became National Forest land. Can you provide me--

--the exact year that the Helena National Forest was created?

--the extent of the National Forest land in the Sixteenmile Creek-Crassy Mountain area? That is, did the National Forest originally extend southward of the Broadwater-Gallatin county line -- the area of Townships 5 and 6 N. of Range 5 E. -- as my USGS map seems to show it currently does?

cordially

Ivan Doig
REPLY TO: 1600 Information Services

SUBJECT: Inquiries

TO: Ivan Doig
    17021 Tenth Ave. NW
    Seattle, Washington  98177

March 3, 1978

Please accept my apology for the late answer, I have been out of the office for the past three weeks.

The Helena National Forest was created in April of 1906.

Enclosed is a Xerox copy of one of our district maps. This map shows the Helena National Forest boundary reaching down to include sections 2,3 & 4 of T4N, R4E. In looking at a 1912 map of the Helena Forest, I find that the original boundary was different. Included are those sections marked in blue.

The Gallatin National Forest boundary is shown in green. This entire area at one time was in a checkered ownership. The Forest Service since has exchanged it's land in that area. Consequently, this now is all in private ownership. The boundary however, remains, as it will take an act of Congress to eliminate the boundary.

I trust I have answered your question.

[Signature]

PHIL G. SCHLAMP
Forest Staff Officer

Enclosures
Dear Ivan:

Sorry I am somewhat late in answering your letter.

Most of your facts about the Ruby place seem to be correct.

The west side of Hatfield Mt is probably more timbered with Douglas fir and lodgepole pine than with jack pine.

The campstove usually had pack boxes on each side of the horse. These boxes were covered with canvas or rawhide; about 2 1/2 ft long, 1 1/2 ft deep and 1 ft wide. We still use these today packing out salt. The salt sacks could have been salt. A band of sheep would consume about 50 per unit.

Hatfield Mt is east of the cabin. Red rock Mt is southeast and Horse Thief Mt is due north.

Our regards to Carol.

Sincerely,

Lorinda Morgan
Dear Horace and Billie--

After several months of steady writing, I have my book manuscript in the hands of the publishing house, and toward the end of this year it should be in print. Your kindness of last July, in driving us in to the Rung cabin, has been immensely useful; my notes and Carol’s photos from that trip have been much more accurate than my memory could ever have been.

Now, I’m in the process of double-checking facts, and there are some details which you may be able to help me check against my distant memory as a five-year-old. Briefly, they are these, and if it’s most convenient just to jot answers on this letter, please feel free to do so:

--I seem to remember the camp tender (Willie Bennett) riding a blaze-faced sorrel horse when he came to the cabin. Does that sound right? Yes.

--Would the camp tender have come to the Rung Cabin about once a week? Yes.

--My maps of the Rung Cabin area unfortunately are of two different topographic scales, and it’s hard to tell exactly what mountain rises to the east of the cabin: is it right to say that it’s Hatfield Mountain? Also, would the timber on that mountain be jackpine? Yes.

--Finally, it seems to me that the camp tender brought us food and mail in old salt sacks—fifty-pound sacks, I suppose? I seem to remember them from my Dad’s later camptending days—slung on a packhorse’s saddle. Does that sound like the way that a camp would have been tended in those days?

All is well, but busy, with Carol and me. We were on the East Coast for Christmas, when I handed in my book manuscript to the editor in New York. It made us appreciate Seattle all the more.

Thanks again for your help. I’ll see to it that you get a copy of the book when it comes out.

best regards

Ivan Doig

cc: Patricia Morgan
Dear Friend, Jon Doig,

I am going to attempt to answer some of the things you asked me. This won't be very good or very clear. Very straight as I am almost blind. I am trying to see to good out of the right eye and don't see to good out of the left one, but I am going to try and hope you can read it.

First, about Aunt Kate coming to Montana. She was Wild Bill Cody's sister. He came to Montana from Missoula with a freight outfit which was 8 big steers or an ox team and he held freight from Deadwood, South Dakota to Billings and to Fort Shaw up close to great Falls and then he met a man in Billings at Hagen's store. Who had a sawmill on Peen Creek and he wanted to sell
to Civil Sumber from the Sour Mill to Billings So Grandpa Did Not Start Hauling Sumber and He Made Up His Mind He Was Going to Stay There so the Mill Workers Helped Him and They Built a House and He Sent to Missouri and Got Grandpa Clark and Their 3 Girls Nellie Who Was 12 Ethel 9 and Kate 4 Nellie was My Mother Well that was Their Home on Dan Creek for Many Years It was About 1888 When Kate and the Rest Came to Montana About 1902 or 1903 Grandma and Grandpa Clark Went to What Was the Antelope Slope Station It was Close to Where Boise is now It Was 20 Miles Out of Billings That is When Kate Met Her First Husband Henry Coger He Tendered Bar In the Saloon There When Grandpa Left the Station Kate and Everyone Went to Another Hardin Mont and Bought a Saloon and Henry Got Sick and Died There Saloon Sold As Soon As She Could and Came Back to Dan Creek and She Went to Brookridge to Visit the Espey's Friends of Her or I they go
to open the hotel there and Walter was the bartender there so that is the way they met. I know Walter was from Texas but that is all I know.

After Kate and Walter got out of the hotel in Brochneil, they went to Aton. Not far from there they settled at Happy Hollow. They formed the 1932 to 1933. It was very dry there all the years. Sagebrush and Rattlesnakes. Then they went to Selicia and raised Sugar Beets for a few years from there. They went to Mund-knee and Kate ran the Rock and Turned there. The train worked changed shifts there. Kate Boodie and cooked for all the folks traveling on the train. They stopped for dinner and a lot to stop all night whenever they left there. They went to Ringling and they lived at Ringling till Walter...
Passed away in Bozeman with pneumonia then Aunt Kate came here to round up and looked with me there was my mother my brother Zeno and Aunt Kate and I took my home and we all paid an equal share of expenses and I got settled then all our passed away first then Zeno and at last I had to put Kate in the rest home at the hospital I couldn't take one of her she got quite bad and required a lot of care Walter and Kate are buried at White Sulphur Their sons are suit by a boy I think it is Valga's wife husband that is all I can think of so if there is something else just ask me if I know it I will write it to you.

Sincerely,

Zena Crombley
I just thought of this
Meta Huffine
To Walter's niece or cousin. She
Was a Nurse for Bozemen and
Served on Willow Creek. And she,
Home there. I haven't heard from
her for about 4 years but you can
Write there and if you get her
She can tell you more about Walter
Box 63 Willow Creek.
Mont. 1 1/160
February 15, 1977

Mrs. Lenona Cramblit
619 3rd West
Roundup, Montana 59072

Dear Mrs. Cramblit,

I don't think we have ever met, although I heard so much about you when I was a boy that I almost feel as if we had. You may remember my grandmother, Bessie Ringer of White Sulphur, and that she was a long-time friend of Kate Badgett. I'm trying to do some writing now about the period when my grandmother and I lived next door to the Badgetts in Ringling, and neighbored with them very closely. That was about 25 years ago, and while I have many memories of Kate and Walter, I was only 11 or 12 years old at the time. I wonder if you can tell me a few things about them which would help me in the writing:

--- I think Kate was from Missouri, and Walter was from Texas. Am I right in that, and do you know where Walter was from in Texas? And was he a cowboy or ranch hand all his life? Do you know where Kate and Walter met, and how?

--- I remember Walter as being very tall. Would you say that he was about six feet two inches, or am I remembering him too tall?

--- I know very little about Kate's life. Did she work on ranches, or what? Do you know how she happened to come to Montana in the first place?

--- Finally, and this sounds a bit silly but it's the sort of thing which is hard to dig out of memory, am I right that Walter called Kate "wifey" and she called him "hubby"? I know Walter always called my grandmother "Mom", which made me laugh because he was so much older than she was.

So, any of this, or anything else you can tell me about the Badgetts, would be helpful, and much appreciated. I was fond of the two of them, and they are a pleasant part of my growing up.

many thanks

Ivan Doig
10 May 1977

Patricia Morgan
Montana Avenue
Laurel, Montana 59044

Dear Miss Morgan—

Please excuse a letter from a stranger, but the paths of our families happened to cross some thirty years ago, at a point which is important to a book I am writing. I don't know whether you will remember my father and mother — Charles and Berneta Doig, of the Sixteen and Ringling country — but my mother died while the two of them were herding sheep for your father in the summer of 1915. As I am trying to reconstruct some notion of that period, and my own memory as a five-year-old is limited, I wonder if you could help me with a few questions:

—Do you indeed remember my parents, and anything at all about the time of my mother's death? I know, for instance, that it happened at a sheep camp in the Bridgers; would you know more precisely where that camp was? (I do recall that we were living in a cabin rather than a wagon or a tent — yet it would seem to me the range probably would have been Forest Service land.)

—I've tried to recall how our camp was tended, and it seems to me that a rider came up, with a packhorse, every week or so. Would that sound right to you? I assume it would not have been your father himself, would it?

—Can you tell me how many bands of sheep your father might have been running at the time? I ask because it seems to me that my father was in with him on shares, rather than as a paid herder, for the band we were with — and it also seems to me we were the only people in those mountains for quite a scope of distance all around. I believe, for instance, that when my mother died, my father had to leave her and take me with him on horseback to the home Morgan ranch as the nearest place to get any help. Does that sound accurate to you?

Finally, I'd be glad simply to hear anything you can remember of the Doigs of Sixteen, and anything pertinent about your own father. The book I'm at work on, incidentally, is under contract by Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, and will be primarily a memoir of my father's life, and how he brought me up, after my mother's death.

Many thanks
Dear Mr. Doig,

I'm afraid that I won't be of much help to you in your research concerning your years at our sheep camp. I took your letter home with me when I went last weekend and asked my brother, Horace, about some of it. Both of our memories were rather vague, but some things we did recall.

When your mother died you and your folks were living in a cabin that we call the Run g cabin. The shell of it is still standing. It is located on the South Fork of Sixteen Mile. Since it is on our land, and it is a cabin, we felt that your dad must have been herding the sheep on our land instead of the forest service. I do remember that when your mother died your dad had to come out to get help, and it seems to me that someone went in in a pickup truck to get the body and bring it to the main county road. From there on, none of could remember, except that after that you and your dad left. Didn't you go to Ringling?

Part of the time we tended sheep camp with horses and part of the time with a truck, depending upon the situation of the camp. I doubt that it was my dad that tended your camp regularly. It was probably one of the men hired to do that and to work on the ranch. We thought it might possibly have been Willie Bennett, but we were just guessing, and there is no way to check since he is no longer living. We guessed that we probably had around 2000 sheep at the time.

I can not tell you much about the Doig family. I do know that two of them died as a result of an accident with a horse, but you no doubt have all of that information. If not, my brother suggested you contact Angus' son, Jay Doig, who is the brand inspector at Ringling. He is your cousin, is he not?

We rand sheep almost continuously until about 3 years ago. There was one year back in the 40's when we did not, but then my dad went into it again and we had the Morgan Sheep Company. After my dad's death, we continued on with the Sheep Company and my brothers took over the active management. About 3 years ago we sold out the sheep company. One of the major reasons was the high loss due to coyotes and another reason was the difficulty of getting reliable help.

My dad died in Sept., 1949 at the age of 69. My mother died in Oct., 1975. They are both buried in the Morgan Cemetery at Menard. This cemetery is a community cemetery, the land being given by my grandfather. My mother was 80 when she died. Our ranch still continues. Two of my brothers, Horace and Dick, run it.

I'm sorry I can't be of more help. I do wish you success with your book. I know I will be interested in reading it when it is published. And, now, I have a question. How did you ever get my name, and even more puzzling, my address here in Laurel? I will be spending the summer in Bozeman and at the ranch, and if we can be of further help, let me know.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten note: I remember your mother as a slight woman who was not well & you as a red headed boy. Am I correct?]
June 9, 1977

Patricia Morgan
Box 1081
Laurel, Montana 59044

Dear Miss Morgan

I was hugely pleased to receive your letter; it was especially exciting to me in that I had thought there'd be no chance to trace down that exact cabin where my family was in the summer of '45.

I apologize for not explaining how I tracked you down. As usual in research, it was half persistence and half luck. I have been writing to various people about Kate and Walter Badgett of Ringling, who were our nearest neighbors and closest friends for a few years when I lived in Ringling. The third or fourth in that chain of letters led me to Mrs. Thomas Morgan of Bozeman. In addition to my few questions about the Badegette, I added some lines to ask if her husband had been related to your father, whose name I of course remembered from my father's stories. She in turn told me of you; it was simple enough from there to phone "information" and get your address.

Incidentally, your other information in your letter also was quite useful, and your memory is exact -- you do indeed remember me as a red-headed boy, as does just about everyone else who laid eyes on me in those years. I hope, if you don't mind more imposition from me, that I can talk with you further in July, when I'll be in Montana gathering research. There are other people I've intended to see in Bozeman, so I will be in touch to try see you -- and perhaps your brother Horace, if he'll have the time. By the way, I might tell you that I intend no direct attribution in the book except to me, my father, and my grandmother; I feel that the people who are helping me as sources have contributed enough without having any responsibility for my words on the printed page. And I should say, too, that I'll see that you get a copy of the book, with my compliments, when it finally comes into print an eon or so from now.

Looking forward to meeting you--
6 March 1978

Pat Honig
Publicity Manager
Pocket Books
630 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10020

Dear Ms. Honig--

In a book of mine being brought out by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, I have a reference to a book by one of your authors--BADGE FOR A GUNFIGHTER, by Clair Huffaker. For some reason, I'm unable to find the original publication date in the customary library sources, although I do find the book mentioned in a 1958 work on writing. Can tell me when BADGE FOR A GUNFIGHTER was first published, in either paperback or hardcover?

cordially

Ivan Doig
May 11, 1978

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan Doig,

This is in response to your request of the original publication date of Clair Huffaker's BADGE FOR A GUNFIGHTER.

In checking a copy of the book, I found that the original pub date was 1957 and it was a crest edition (Fawcett Publications). The first Pocket Books edition was released in August of 1975.

I hope this information helps you out.

Sincerely,

Monica Ciba
Publicity Department
Perhaps my first memory of Ivan Doig is the simple fact that the records I was given on my incoming freshmen that year included, somewhere, information that he came from "Ringling, Mont., pop. 50". As a city boy, teaching in a metropolitan area school, I simply couldn't envision anyone from any such place.

When I met him, I suppose I felt a little let down. He was not wearing cowboy boots or a John Wayne stetson. I remember him as a quiet, somewhat intense youngster, possibly a bit awed by his surroundings but not overwhelmed.

He asked intelligent questions and had done his homework in that he came prepared for his first bewildering registration. I seem to remember him being conservatively dressed, but not oddly so, with a limited wardrobe but always neat and clean. He did not stand out among his fellow freshmen as being at all out of place.

He approached his work in a most businesslike manner. On scholarship and with relatively little financial backing from home, he saw school as his business and he intended to work at it. I think he remembers himself as being humorless but I never saw him so. Intense, yes; serious, yes; but a subtle sense of humor was there at the very outset and it has matured over the years.

My impression was that he was methodical about his work, methodical and thorough. (This impression flowered fully when I directed his masters thesis some years later and did one of the best jobs of research I've seen.) He took no chances; he seemed in certain respects to be a mechanical man when it came to ticking off his assignments as they were due. While he may have felt strange in the Northwestern atmosphere (then somewhat more obviously plush than it is now), he was quiet enough and interested enough in getting what he had come for, an education, that he was not at all bothered by what was then regarded as a country club atmosphere on campus. Or at least, if he was bothered he kept it to himself and seemed to gravitate toward a more serious type of classmate. (I think of him and such classmates as Bill Pride and Ed Croft in tandem.)
I suppose there was an element of outright bashfulness in his makeup, but it was not a hindrance. He asked questions when he had them to ask and they usually were good questions, possibly too good for a younger. In certain respects he was old before his time.

While I've described him as being methodical and thorough, I do not mean to imply that he was a plodder. He always had a brisk, businesslike approach which was reflected even in his walk.

Nor was he in the slightest degree deficient when he came to college. His elementary and secondary schools had served him well. While some of his writing, for instance, may have been immature, he had mastered the fundamentals beautifully and his neat clean and simple writing was better than average from the very outset.

So yes, I remember Ivan Doig. When you have nursed a youngster through two degrees as his advisor; when you've believed in him enough to hire him as a right hand man in a program you direct (the National High School Journalism Institute); when you've introduced him to the woman he ultimately marries; and when you then serve as best man (with your wife as matron of honor) at the wedding -- it's not difficult to remember.
8 October 1977

Dear Ben--

Dotage, schmotage. You're obviously becoming a finer vintage as you go along, although perhaps lacking a bit in perceptive tartness about Montanans. Anyway, your missive is nicely on the mark—it makes points in ways I haven't quite known how to, and it has some specifics I'd forgotten. For all that, and doing it so pronto, my hugest thanks. It'll be very valuable background material for me.

I rather wish now I had shown up in your office that first time in boots and/or a Stetson. It took me some time to know quite what to do about my western-ness. I think I've begun to figure it out: simply admit I'm an incorrigible westerner, and live out here.

The freshest news from here is that Ann Nelson is laid low with abscessed teeth, with the corrective lancing and rooting around to begin on Monday. I don't know details, since Ann has been blotto with pain or painkiller the past week and I haven't wanted to take up the household's time with questions, but her mother is here to handle the kids. I guess Ann is on the route out of this, but it has sounded nightmarish.

Glad you did your Hilton Head stint again; that sounds like quite an oasis for you. Someday I'm going to have to put a foot somewhere in the South besides Texas or Florida. Maybe even the Carolinas; I assume you know that Bill Chamberlin is teaching at U. of North Carolina? Overworked as all hell in his first year there—plus having to finish his dissertation—but then so are other J school folks I've known. Take care of yourself, give our best to Jeanne—and thanks for the eleventy-seventh know in the lineage of favors done for I. Doig of Ringling, pop. 50.

all the best
Dear Carol and Ivan,

If I don't get this off today, it might not get off. The first papers of the quarter (in the magazine writing course I'm teaching) come in Monday and from then till next August, probably, I'm out of luck.

I hope the attached does the job you wanted. I got a little carried away and it may be longer than you wanted and a little too sentimental. But, after all, I'm in my dotage.

We did enjoy so much seeing Jan Bateman. She's the same gal she always was, which was pretty nice, and we were so pleased to include her in our 4th of July cookout.

Mark is a third quarter junior this fall and will be a senior winter quarter. He had quite a bit of advance placement out of high school and, of course, had the year at Vanderbilt. After spending the spring quarter working on the newspaper in Lafayette, Ind., he's more sold on journalism and is talking about abandoning his law school plans and sticking with newspapering.

Claudia is a freshman in arts and sciences. She was very apprehensive about it but things seem to have shaken down in this first week of school and she's a trifle more enthusiastic. She has a single dorm room which probably isn't the best idea and her (VERY VERY) steady boy friend isn't going to school this fall, so she isn't making friends too rapidly. She wound up graduating something like 16th in a class of 600 so obviously she ain't no dummy.

Jeanne keeps busy as heck although, of course, with both kids on campus the demands of housekeeping are a bit less. We eat out more and her sometime long hours at the office leave me to fend for myself a bit. Glenview is having a referendum on a sharp new tax levy this fall so as secretary to the superintendent of schools, she's extremely busy.

I'm teaching just the one course this fall and have been pulled off the Teaching Newspaper assignment. Dean Cole got me an enrichment grant for my graduate science writing course. It's going to involve some travel and planning but I don't yet know the dimensions. I'm still consulting with the magazine chain and was foolish enough (make that "greedy") to take on a job teaching writing to marketing men and engineering students at Signode Steel, starting November 1st. Don't know how I'll mesh it all but by Christmas we'll either have all our bills paid or I'll be in the nuthouse.

Your latest project sounds marvelous. I enjoyed Chet Huntley's book so much and this sounds like something in the same ballpark although not autobiographical. I'll expect an autographed copy, of course.

We vacationed, as usual, at Hilton Head Island and while we keep expecting
the bloom to leave the rose, it never does. We would love to sell our house and build on our lot down there but rentals are so high around here (and so scarce, with everything going condominium) that I'm not sure we can do it till we're actually ready to leave and that won't be for at least another seven years.

Give my best to Carol's folks if they're still around. I remember them well and find it difficult to believe that your father, particularly, is showing the signs of age. He seemed to be like me -- handsome, charming, brilliant and eternally youthful.

I doubt we'll try to make to the the convention in Seattle next year. I got a little tired of tying my vacation to the journalism teachers and, in all honesty, Hilton Head gives us what we want. The kind of weather we want, the instant relaxation, what have you.

I also doubt I'll be visiting Salem this fall....and we've now added Bend, Ore. to the Teaching Newspaper list. I'll have some involvement in the program but because of my own commitments, I probably shall limit myself to the more glamorous trips -- Carbondale, Ill.; Green Bay and Racine, Wis.; Dubuque and Burlington, Iowa; etc. They are quick one day jobs. But even if I got to Salem I rather doubt I could get on to Seattle much as I'd like because we're always on a tight schedule.

We hear from Ann and I got a letter from T. Craig M. this summer. Funny, him working for the military/industrial complex. Lord, if he had been here in 69 and 70, I'm not sure there'd be any military/industrial complex or NU or anything else. Of course, I've always argued that when you start paying your own income tax you suddenly become much less liberal.

And I guess that's it. I've got to turn now to a much less attractive chore, analysing and commenting on a report on our graduate program as part of my duty for a new planning committee I'm on.

Y'all take it easy and I hope the enclosure is what you wanted. Carol (most definitely Carol, with her total lack of bias in this instance) has my proxy to edit, Ivan? NO. If it isn't what you want and you can provide sharper guidelines, I'll do it over.

Best,

BC
August 5, 1977

Dear Fred, Theresa and Gertrude—

Now that Carol and I are home in Seattle, I can begin taking care of some loose ends from our Montana stay—such as thanking the three of you for your help and hospitality. We had a fine time both at the Buckinghams and at the Luppold, and Carol declares you topmost among her favorite White Sulphur folks.

About the enclosures: we thought that fine library of yours ought to be further graced with a nature book we’ve enjoyed. Considerably less elegant is my own travel article from our trip, but I thought you might like to see it. And yes, I know that jackstay fences are used for other reasons besides rocky ground, but couldn’t contrive enough space in the article to explain beyond that.

As for my business card, I’d appreciate it if you’d pass it along to Bobbie and Charles Cole, if they happen to visit you before I try to get in touch with them here in Seattle. I wanted to thank Mrs. Cole for making the records of The Dogie available at MSU, and most likely I’ll have a few random questions about the workings of the ranch as I get further into my book.

Again, thanks for everything, and we’ll hope to see you whenever we get back to White Sulphur—or if you happen through Seattle.

best regards
August 2, 1977

Dear Jim and Ann—

You recklessly asked to see a copy of my NY Times travel piece about Highway 89, so here it is. It covers a lot of territory, some of it more sketchily than I had wanted, but at least I seem to have fooled several Seattle friends, who say it sounds like a dandy trip.

Carol and I enjoyed having dinner with the two of you; next time it’ll have to be our turn. Incidentally, Jim, I may yet call on you as an expert sheepman when I get further into this book I’m working on. I intend to have at least a few pages describing lambing time, and I may want to pass them on to you to see if my remembering is right. That’ll be some time into the future; in the meanwhile, we hope the Sherrills are thriving.

best regards
August 3, 1977

Dear Ken and Barbara--

We're home safely, after having seen a lot of Montana new to the both of us--such as the Madison Valley, the Big Hole, and the lower end of the Bitterroot. A few trips like this, and I'll get to know something about my home state.

Am enclosing the copy of the NY Times article you wanted, Ken; try not to blackmail me with it too outrageously around town, hmm? Also am sending a book we thought you might enjoy, as a small finder's fee for your efforts in lining us up with a place to live, and for all other strokes of the Twichel hospitality.

It was good to see you people again; we'll have to do it another time, either at your end of the route or ours.

best regards
Dear Carol and Ivan,

I have not forgotten your last interesting letter, but have been slow in answering.

Now is a good time to write and answer some of your questions and wish you both a very happy Easter!

I think it is wonderful you are writing a book about Montana. And I would like to, in a small way, help you to get material. But my memory is not very good.

Your mother was a very dear friend of mine. She was in the eighth grade when I taught her.
The More Agate school in the summer session of 1926, Beneta was very bright and did her work well. She was more of a friend than a pupil. There were 9 pupils in school and I taught first, third and eighth grades. The school house was a big frame building and was well equipped for a small school. I don't recall the schedule for classes too well. But we opened the day with singing or story reading. The children often did their work earlier so I would have more time to read to them. They loved that and so did I.

I lived in Ringling and drove to school in a Chevron car. The children all rode horseback, I'll never forget the first time I met your mother. On the first day of school I had just arrived. When Beneta came galloping up to tell me not to drink the pumping water as there was a mouse in the well. I sure appreciated her concern for me. Needless to say none of us drank the water.

Yes, the Darig boys were full of life but your father seemed more of the quiet type. He and your mother were very much in love and had a lovely home life. They went to nearly all the dances as your mother loved to dance. Maybe I can fill in more when I see you next summer. And I beg not to have any
things we say talked.
Now you must know Eliza Doig who is now Mrs. Townsend? She wrote a wonderful book, "None to Give Away." Have you read it? I know so many of the characters in the book.
She often spoke of Anna Doig Bestor who was your father's sister. She and I wrote to each other for a long time but have lost touch. Now I would surely like to write to her and tell her how I read the book. Is maybe you can give me her address.

I fear I have not been of too much help to you but think you could get much help from Mrs. Ringer. Mr. Ringer came to Helena quite often and I hope to see her one of these times.

Again thank you for your kind letter and will hope to see you this summer. Please send her good wishes & both. R.D.
Dear Kathryn

I had hoped we would manage to see you during our short Christmas trip to Montana, but the hopes didn't work out. The weather was so changeable and we had a tight schedule as Wally drove us to and from the airport. The day we landed, the fog was so thick over Missoula that the pilot made one approach and then simply gave up on landing there, and even Helena was heavily fogged in when we arrived there.

But if we didn't get a chance to talk, maybe we can trade some bits of information by mail. I've recently started on some writing about Montana, and I want very much to come calling on you one of these days with a tape recorder in hand. I couldn't manage it at Christmas, but perhaps in early summer. As you are one of the few people outside the family who knew my mother -- and my father too? -- when she was young, there's quite a lot of material you could help me with. I might explain that in what I'm writing now, I'm trying to tell what life was like for my mother and father when they were young -- in the days when they began going together, and their early marriage. If you have the time, could you manage to write me briefly any memories or information you have about the following few questions?

--I know you taught my mother -- and I suppose some of the other Ringer kids -- at Moss Agate. Can you tell me what years you taught there, and what grades my mother was in when you taught her?

--I wonder what the school was like; how many pupils you had, in how many grades, for instance? And what was a day of school like -- do you remember in what order you would have the students do certain subjects, for instance?

--This may be hard to remember, but do you recall meeting my father and mother for the first time? I suppose you met my mother when she showed up as one of your students, but what about my father? My grandmother tells me the Doig brothers were a bit of a wild bunch, bronco riders and all that; do you have any memories of them?

--Finally, I somehow got the idea that my mother had something to do the school even after she graduated, that she even taught at some time. Is that anything you know about?

Sorry to bother you with this by mail; it's much simpler on both sides to do it in person. Anyway, I have a maintenance trip to do some work on Grandma's house sometime this summer, and we can have greater leisure then. Our Christmas trip was fine, though hurried. Grandma seems to get along quite well. Wally keeps an eye on her every day or so, and she has good neighbors. As for Carol and me, we both seem to be thriving. She continues to teach at Shoreline College. My writing these days involves mostly work on books rather than magazine articles; I'll have a textbook coming into print later this year, and several other ideas are being looked over by editors at the moment. So all is well with us; we hope it is with you, too.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Dear Kathryn

Just a quick note of thanks for your helpful letter. Since it's hard to stitch together what's happened in the past, every bit of remembered information is useful.

I'm planning a trip to Montana in mid-May, and will hope to see you then. I'll do some fixing up on my grandmother's house in White Sulphur, and also will tape record some people about earlier times in the area. By the way, I hope I can talk you out of any reluctance about talking with a tape recorder on. I have a machine which can be used so that you won't really notice it; both my dad and grandmother talked easily to me while I was using it, for instance, as did Taylor Gordon.

It's been busy for Carol and me recently; we're buying a house, for the first time in our lives, and there are endless details to be done.

All for now. Thanks again, and I'll see you in a month or so.

best regards

Ivan Doig
722 West Babcock,  
Bozeman, Montana, 59715  

Mrs. Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue S.W.  
Seattle, Washington 98177.

Dear Sir:

I have had the flu and it settled in my eyes so I could not do much writing, hence the delay in answering. To answer your questions I will take them in the order that you wrote them.

Yes, Walter Badgett was from Texas. I do not know the town or the county and I do not know anything about his family.

Walter Badgett got into some kind of trouble in Texas because (my husband) Tom Morgan tried to get him to go back to Texas to see his family (father, mother, brother or sister), but Walter told Tom that he was afraid to go back to Texas on account of the law.

Walter Badgett and my husband enjoyed fishing so they went fishing in Sixteen Mile Canyon Creek.
many times. My husband was an expert dry fly fisherman.

Walter used bait.

Yes, Walter worked for the Higgins family at Ringling and for Frank Morgan on his ranch on
Sixteen Mile Canyon and over Black Tail Divide on
Pade Morgan’s ranch. Frank Morgan’s father ranch.

My husband, Thomas Morgan and Frank Morgan
were cousins.

When Frank Morgan ran sheep in the Bridger
he leased forest range land.

Frank Morgan’s daughter, Patricia Morgan,
teaches Home Education in one of the schools in
Laurel, Montana.

Almost all the people, also relatives the age of
Frank’s Morgan are dead, so it’s hard to give you
very much information. I telephoned several families.

I hope you are able to finish your book.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Thomas (Tom) Morgan.
March 17, 1977

Mrs. Thomas Morgan
422 W. Babcock
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Mrs. Morgan,

I believe Meta Huffine of Willow Creek phoned you recently, to say she’d had a letter from me seeking any information about Walter Badgett. I ought to explain that when I was a boy, I lived next door to Walter and Kate Badgett in Ringling for a couple of years, and they were very close friends with my grandmother, Bessie Ringer, and my father, Charlie Doig. I’m writing a book about those years in Ringling and White Sulphur, and since I remember Walter and Kate with such affection, I’d like to include some material about them. Do you suppose you could help me with a few questions?

—My memory is that Walter was from Texas. Can you tell me where (what town or county) he was from, what his family did there, and about when he came to Montana? Also, I have the feeling there was some unusual reason Walter went away from Texas — that the family went broke there, or he ran away from home, or something of that sort. Does that bring anything to mind that you may have heard? I ask this only because it’s important to a writer to know as much background of a person as possible.

—Also, I remember Walter telling stories about being a ranch hand, at the Higgins ranch at Ringling and other places, probably as a young man in Texas, too. Am I right that Walter was quite a ranch hand and cowboy in his day? Do you know some of the ranches he worked on?

—Finally, if you can remember anything else at all about Walter, I’d be glad to have it, too: any favorite sayings of his you can remember, any habits (I remember him chewing tobacco all the time, for instance), any stories which happened to him.

While I’m writing, I should ask whether your husband was a brother of Frank Morgan. My father and mother (Charles and Berneta Doig) were herding sheep for Frank Morgan in the Bridgers when my mother died in June, 1915. If there’s anyone you know of who would know anything of the Frank Morgan ranch back then, I’d much appreciate their address.

Many thanks,

Ivan Doig
10 May 1977

Mrs. Thomas Morgan
422 West Babcock
Bozeman, Montana 59715

My dear Mrs. Morgan --

Your response to my letter came today, and I thank you immensely for the time and trouble you took to answer a query from a complete stranger.

The information about Walter Badgett is helpful; little by little, I find myself getting a clearer picture of Walter and Kate, who were large but mysterious figures to me when I was a boy.

I also appreciate knowing of Patricia Morgan's whereabouts, as I thought there was little chance of finding anyone who would know much about the Frank Morgan ranch. I believe that my father, Charlie Doig, knew Frank Morgan well; probably he would have known your husband, too.

Again, many thanks
1024 South Grand Ave.
Bozeman, Montana, 59715
March 21, 1977

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

Dear Mr. Doig,

Your letter received concerning information on the Badgett family. I am sorry to say that I cannot help you at all, as I did not know them personally. The name sounds familiar to me, but that is all. I did know Georgia Higgins and her son Arch Middleton, as Arch and I were in the same class in High School, and we all boarded at the same home. I knew they were from Ringling, but am not acquainted with other residents of the Ringling area.

I just talked with Mrs. Morgan, and, so far, she has not received your letter. However, she was well acquainted with them, so I hope she can offer you some assistance.

Mrs. Morgan's address is 422 West Babcock.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Cha M. Wright
March 17, 1977

Mrs. Harold Wright
1021 S. Grand Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Mrs. Wright,

I've been in touch recently with Meta Huffine of Willow Creek, to see whether she has any information about Walter Badgett, and Meta suggested writing to you and to Mrs. Thomas Morgan. I've just written to Mrs. Morgan, and will put this in the mail to you at the same time. I ought to explain that when I was a boy, I lived next door to Walter and Kate Badgett in Ringling for a couple of years, and they were very close friends with my grandmother, Bessie Ringer, and my father, Charlie Doig. I'm writing a book about those years in Ringling and White Sulphur, and since I remember Walter and Kate with such affection, I'd like to include some material about them. Do you suppose you could help me with a few questions?

--My memory is that Walter was from Texas. Can you tell me where (what town or country) he was from, what his family did there, and about when he came to Montana? Also, I have the feeling there was some unusual reason Walter went away from Texas -- that the family went broke and split up, or he ran away from home as a youngerster, or something of that sort. Does that bring anything to mind that you may have heard? I ask this only because it's important to a writer to know as much background of a person as possible, and why a person makes such a move in life is quite important.

--Also, I remember Walter telling stories about being a ranch hand, at the Higgins ranch at Ringling and other places, probably as a young man in Texas, too. Am I right that Walter was quite a ranch hand and cowboy in his day? Do you know some of the ranches he worked on?

--Finally, if you can remember anything else at all about Walter, I'd be glad to have it, too: any favorite sayings of his you can remember, any habits (I remember him chewing tobacco all the time, for instance), any stories which happened to him or Kate.

I appreciate your time and help. Walter and Kate were special people to me, and my only way to do them justice all these years later is to ask around to anyone who might know something about them. Many thanks.

sincerely,

Ivan Doig
March 13, 1977

Dear Ivan:
How strange that you should write to me—when just a few weeks ago—had thought of you—wondering where you were, what you were doing & if you hair is still red.

I met Walter & Kate in the 30's when they lived in Maublow & had a rooming house there also boarders—as they later had in Ringling where you knew them. Walter never talked about his past—There was some reason that he left there—but why I do not know.

Both of them enjoyed playing cards—any time and any place— at home, at friends or at card parties. Enjoyed a good story now & then. He enjoyed fishing in Sixteen Creek, Smith River

He was related to the Morgans & Metcirs in the Gallatin. The older ones are gone now. Mrs. Thomas Morgan is
cousin by marriage. Her husband and Walter were quite close. Tom passed away several years ago. I talked with her by phone today and she said she'd help in any way she could. It takes awhile to recall the past. Her address

Mrs. Thomas Morgan
422 W. Babcock
Bozeman, Mont. 59715

She also mentioned Anna Metier Wright, another cousin of Walter's. Her address

Mrs. Harold Wright
1024 S. Grand Ave.
Bozeman, Mont. 59715

Walter used to visit a brother and his family who lived and farmed at Broadview, Mont. Presume a letter would reach some one there by the name of Badgett as it is a small community.

Sorry that I can't be of more
help - but will keep your letter and address should I learn more.

It has been a mild winter here but last week it snowed nearly a foot. Then today it has been snowing (almost rain) all day long.

Oh yes Kate was a very good cook and Walter could cook also. They both enjoyed sharing with friends and neighbors.

Sincere good wishes to you and yours.

Meta Huffine
February 28, 1977

Meta Huffine
Box 63
Willow Creek, Montana 59760

Dear Mrs. Huffine

Lenora Cramblit of Roundup passed along your name and address to me, when I wrote her recently to ask for some information about Walter and Kate Badgett. When I was a boy, I lived next door to the Badgetts in Ringling for a couple of years, and they were very close friends with my grandmother, Bessie Ringer. I'm writing a book about those years in Ringling and the White Sulphur area, and since I remember Walter and Kate with such affection, I'd like to include some material about them. Lenora was able to help me quite a lot about Kate's background, but said you would know more about Walter than she does. So, could you help me with a few questions?—

—My memory is that Walter was from Texas. Can you tell me where he was from, what his family did there, and about when he came to Montana?

—Also, I remember Walter telling stories about being a ranch hand, at the Higgins ranch at Ringling and other places, probably as a young man in Texas, too. Lenora's information about him is mostly from the years when he and Kate ran hotels or boarding places. Am I right that Walter was quite a ranch hand and cowboy somewhere along the way? Do you know some of the ranches he worked on?

—Finally, if you can remember anything else at all about Walter, I'd be glad to have it, too: any favorite sayings of his you can remember, any habits (I remember him chewing tobacco all the time, for instance), any adventures which happened to him.

I appreciate your time and help. Walter and Kate were special people to me, and my only way to do them justice all these years later is to ask around to anyone who might know something about them. Many thanks.

sincerely
March 17, 1977

Meta Huffine
Box 63
Willow Creek, Mont. 59760

Dear Meta,

Many thanks for your letter, and for passing along the addresses of Walter Badegett's cousins. I'll get letters off to them, to see what they can recall.

It is strange that you would have thought of me out of the blue a few weeks ago. Like so many people who knew me when I was a boy, you remember the red hair. What's left on top has gone to a sort of golden-brown, but there's still quite a bit of red in my beard. For the past several years, I've had a short-cropped beard, and at the time of the funeral of my grandmother, Bessie Ringer, a couple of years ago, old-timers came up to me and said the beard makes me the image of my father's father, Peter Doig of Sixteen. This surprised me, as Peter Doig died in 1910 and I had no idea I took after anyone on Dad's side of the family in looks.

Again, thanks for taking the time to pass along your information. This is quite a labor of affection for me to try to write about folks such as Kate and Walter, and I'm pleased to be able to do it.

best wishes
Dear Sarah Calhoun--

Great to hear from you, in your gracious note. I hope you can come by the Country Bookshelf a little early, so we can get together at least briefly. I'm usually busy quite a while after a reading in inscribing books and talking to people, but beforehand I often have some time--if I'm holed up in the back room signing stock when you get to the store, have the front desk folks send you on back, please.

You may already be acquainted with the friend Carol and I will be traveling with, Marcella Walter of Helena, a faithful and enthusiastic attendee (and reporter to us, complete with pics) of the music festival. And I know Carol is going to ask you where she can get Red Ants pants in Bozeman. So, we all look forward to seeing you.

Until then, best wishes.
(Butte, page)

Jerry O'Brien

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