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Space & Distance As I Require: The Journals and Prose Fragments of Philip Whalen 1950-1966

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SPACE & DISTANCE AS I REQUIRE:
THE JOURNALS & PROSE FRAGMENTS OF PHILIP WHALEN 1950 – 1966

by

BRIAN UNGER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

Space & Distance As I Require:

The Journals & Prose Fragments of Philip Whalen 1950 – 1966

by

Brian Unger

Adviser: Professor Ammiel Alcalay

*Space & Distance As I Require: The Journals & Prose Fragments of Philip Whalen 1950 – 1966* presents the early journals, prose fragments, and a few unpublished poems and essays by San Francisco Renaissance and Beat Generation poet Philip Whalen (1923-2002). This work includes a scholarly apparatus with both general literary and textual introductions, a critical bibliography that reflects my literary-historical concerns, brief section introductions, annotations, and an informal concordance with Whalen’s poetry utilizing *The Collected Poems of Philip Whalen* (ed. Rothenberg, 2007) as a reference work.

Philip Whalen was an Irish-American writer with roots in small town Oregon, a poet who was, as Kenneth Rextroth once said, as intensely Northwestern in sensibility as the painters Morris Graves and Mark Tobey. Whalen was a poet of complex sources and influences, extraordinarily well-read in Elizabethan and 18th century English literature, in particular the satiric gestures of Sterne, Pope, Johnson, and Swift. During his lifetime Whalen produced a remarkable *oeuvre* of close to twenty collections of verse, twenty broadsides, two novels, eight or nine works of experimental prose, plus several dozen critical essays, lectures, commentaries,
introductions, prefaces, and interviews, an extensive literary correspondence, and forty years of carefully written literary journals, ranging from roughly 1952 to 1992.

Like two of his favorite 18th century novelists Laurence Sterne and Jonathan Swift, Whalen lived the second half of his life as an ordained cleric within a formal religious setting, a “new” religion for the West, Zen Buddhism, a spiritual tradition founded in India at least a thousand years before the birth of Christ. Whalen began his study of buddhism at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, having served in the Army Air Force as a radio repairman during the final years of WWII. At Reed Whalen’s interest in Asian culture was encouraged and augmented by his roommate Gary Snyder, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet who blazed a circuitous trail around Ezra Pound, bypassing Fascism and Confucianism to forge a link between Zen Buddhism, Northwestern Wobblie unionism, and Marxist economic theory. He and Whalen remained close friends throughout Whalen’s life. It was Snyder who probably first taught Whalen how to sit still in the Zen meditation posture, a fundamentally ungraspable, trans-rational, non-discursive, and deconstructive form of introspection that influenced Whalen’s writing and played a decisive role in his poetics.

Shortly after the landmark Six Gallery poetry reading in San Francisco in October, 1955 Snyder moved to Japan to study Zen, leaving Whalen to fend for himself in an apartment he shared in Berkeley with Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac. The journals show that Whalen was clear but shy about his bisexuality. For a period of time he was in love triangle with two married people, one of them a man, the other Gary Snyder’s wife, the poet Joanne Kyger. He remained in the U.S. during the late fifties and early to mid-1960s, a tumultuous six or seven years during which he was unable to support himself financially, alternatively couch-surfing with friends, habitating a shack in the woods on Mt. Tamalpais, bumming free rooms from friends in San
Francisco, Berkeley, and Marin County. He also attempted a ‘straight’ job and career in Newport, Oregon, and lived in San Francisco for over two years with his companion and lover Leslie Thompson.

Finally, in February, 1966 – at Snyder’s behest – Whalen moved to Japan. He taught English for a regular weekly salary in the ancient capital city of Kyoto, spending his spare time reading, writing, and studying Japanese culture, religion, art, theater, and literature. I am presenting here the poet’s ‘pre-Kyoto’ journals and fragments.
Acknowledgements

My mother Helen Marie Baker Unger, an Irish-American woman from Kingsbridge, The Bronx, New York City, was the first person in our family who completed a college education. She attended Hunter College of The City University of New York when it was an elite women’s school, and completed her B.A. degree many years later at Jersey City State College as a working mother raising a family. Her devotion to formal academic education, ceaselessly pounded into our ears, transmitted to me a yearning for formal academic knowledge. My father, Gilbert Thomas Unger, was an Irish Roman Catholic with a partly Jewish background, born of an Irish mother, Helen Knowles Sullivan, and a Jewish father, Joseph Unger, whose own father Solomon had emigrated to Dublin, Ireland from Germany. They raised three sons in Flatbush, Brooklyn.

As an undergraduate at CCNY, Valerie Krishna introduced me to scholarship and the formal study of literature, adopting me personally as a teacher and friend. Also at CCNY Paul Sherwin, just out of Howard Bloom’s tutelage at Yale, introduced me to the philosophical and even somewhat mystical excitement possible in the study of literary criticism.

The independent scholar, translator, artist, and Zen teacher Kazuaki Tanahashi, taught me how to read, translate, and write with greater precision, calmness, and clarity. We translated poems of Eihei Dogen (1200-1250) and other medieval Japanese works while I was engaged in the formal study of Zen Buddhism during the 1970s and 1980s in San Francisco, under the remarkable Zen teacher and polymath Richard Baker-roshi.

At New York University Martha Rust, Richard Sieburth, Harold Bloom, and Lytle Shaw further nurtured and ignited my rather “late-in-life” decision to re-engage a more formal and focused study of North American literature. While at N.Y.U. I also returned to study at the
University of Pennsylvania, where I had quit formal graduate studies in the 1970s. There in Philadelphia I studied poetry and poetics with Charles Bernstein and Bob Perelman. Charles became a friend and mentor.

Anne McCarthy, Ph.D., CUNY Graduate Center, a true colleague and dear friend, encouraged me along this path. Without her stunning example, I would have never comprehended how much commitment and fortitude it would take to complete this project.

Ammiel Alcalay is and has been my primary Virgilian guide, confidant, conscience, and mentor at CUNY. Ammiel is a gift beyond gifts; a poet, scholar, intellectual, political philosopher, and critic with a global perspective; with family ties to Charles Olson, and with close personal ties to hundreds of poets, scholars, writers, and translators throughout the world. This dissertation would never even have been remotely possible without Ammiel’s quiet wisdom, firm scholarship, and his unshakeable devotion to American poetry as a fundamental social and political force. I also want to express my deep gratitude to my committee member Prof. Nancy Yousef for her profound grasp of literature and philosophy. It has been pure joy to study with Nancy, and also with Prof. David Greetham, whose understanding of the manifold subtleties of textuality has deeply enriched my work.

My Zen teacher the poet Norman Fischer has been another veritable Virgilian guide; a poet-monk who can work with the most recalcitrant student, as I am afraid I have been. I have more respect for Norman than I can articulate, so I won’t even try. We both see the development of Zen Buddhism in North America as invaluably enriched by poets and artists. Richard Baker, the second abbot of San Francisco Zen Center, understood this very well and nurtured people like Philip Whalen and Norman Fischer. I first met Philip Whalen as a student at San Francisco Zen Center in the 1970s and later again in the calmer and quieter late 1980s and 1990s when he
was abbot of his own temple. Philip’s quiet, rather humble, but sure-footed clarifications of Zen praxis were, for me, life changing.

My children Emma, Holly, Alexander Carter, and Nora have made my life worth living. They have freely bestowed their wisdom and compassion like flower petals on all my numerous mistakes. My first wife the incredibly grounded, wise, and beautiful Barbara Wallace Winter, and my late second wife, Janice HirsChorn, were and are wise and perceptive beyond belief, grounded in the earth, defenders of nature and animals, raisers of children. Both Janice and Barbara tolerated my many foibles and weaknesses in a manner that, for me, made the institution of marriage a true sacrament. I beg them both forgiveness for my shortcomings.
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General Introduction

What I wanted to do with writing was to write novels and make money like anybody else.

Philip Whalen

I wrote not to be fed, but to be famous.

Laurence Sterne

Nowhere did a soul exist, only no soul. What did exist was a continuous series of discrete moments, essentially impermanent. The moments were agitated, insecure, and evanescent and they therefore caused suffering, were in their very nature suffering.

Vasubandhu

The ‘pre-Kyoto’ journals and prose fragments of Philip Whalen (1923-2002) presented here for the first time offer a fresh, unfiltered lens into the life and work of a highly significant San Francisco Renaissance and Beat Generation writer who authored upwards of twenty collections of verse, more than twenty broadsides, two novels, extensive literary journals, eight or nine experimental prose ‘takes,’ plus several dozen critical essays, commentaries, introductions, prefaces, and interviews. The journals and fragments have some inherent importance as they provide a large amount of new biographical material and previously undiscovered literary works which, taken together, will fundamentally enrich the currently standard perceptions of Whalen as an author.

Perhaps because virtually all of this material has until now remained buried in university archives, biographers, reviewers, and critics have elided much of the true narrative of how Philip Whalen lived and suffered for his art. Pigeon-holed by many as a quiet and scholarly buddhist,
an erudite but cranky native Oregonian with a daft sense of humor, Philip Whalen considered himself nothing less than a literary genius and a prodigy. Indeed, few of his generation have had deeper or more lasting influence, both technical and affective, on so many writers of such diverse and eclectic schools and styles. Whalen’s coterie and literary heirs range from the later Beat poets Diane di Prima and Anne Waldman, to New York School ‘second generation’ poets Alice Notley, Ted Berrigan, and Lewis Warsh, the California surfer-poet Kevin Opstedal, and a score of North American buddhist poets (some of them Language poets) such as Norman Fischer, Leslie Scalapino, Hank Lazer, Andrew Schelling, Tyler Doherty, Denise Newman, and many other bards including, not least, Whalen’s editor, amanuensis, and literary executor, the poet Michael Rothenberg.

Yet poetry was, by his own admission, a second career choice for Whalen, not his first. The journals show that he yearned for the public acclaim and financial rewards that accrue to successful writers of fiction (see esp. 1989, 19-21; 1973, 453-59). Impressed by the success of his novelist friends Jack Kerouac, William S. Burroughs, Michael McClure, Richard Brautigan, and Don Carpenter, and under the spell of his favorite 18th century authors Laurence Sterne, Jonathan Swift, and Tobias Smollett, Whalen struggled to produce a narrative of avant-garde life in San Francisco that would entice a major New York publisher. He reiterated this ambition repeatedly in his journals and correspondence. In fact, many of the pre-1957 notebooks and fragments that have survived consist primarily of what he called ‘takes,’ conceptualizations, drafts, and fragments for ten or eleven different novels he was working on between 1950 and

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1 Whalen entitled his first attempt at an autobiographical novel *The Prodigy*. It was written in 1947, his second year at Reed College.
1956, including one I call the ‘forest service’ novel, which Jack Kerouac referred to as “that story of yours about the mountains” (March 6, 1956).

Whalen’s determination to complete and publish a work of fiction was a problematic issue during the two and a half years from January 1956 through July 1958 as he wrestled with the forest service novel, a story based on his experience as a fire lookout in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington State during the summers of 1953-1955. Kerouac was aware that Whalen was struggling mightily with fiction and he advised his friend to write more spontaneously:

( […] I am definitely speaking a new truth… …in Shakespeare’s time they didnt know what autobiographical naturalism was, and well for us, we don’t know what spontaneous writing is…..)

How else can you spit forth yr. intelligence? In meats, in parcels of meats? In wrappings? In hesitations, in bean-pots, in hooks and hams and ahems and holes of thought? in hems and haws?

(Jan. 5, 1956).

Whalen’s ‘takes’ are brief disjunctive sections of character and dialogue. Much like jazz ‘takes,’ they don’t necessarily track a clear narratological progression or a logical character trajectory. He started work on his first novel while he was in the Army between 1943 and 1946 (Schumacher 213), and then drafted several more independent (or interdependent?) sketches during his years at Reed College from 1946-1951. Now it was 1956 and nothing was ready for publication, or even editorial review. And it wasn’t only Kerouac who took note of Whalen’s creative struggles. One of Whalen’s main editorial promoters in the 1950s was Irving Rosenthal, a novelist and former editor of the Chicago Review. Rosenthal had staked his reputation as an
editor on San Francisco Renaissance and Beat writers, including Whalen, and in late 1958 he wrote to Whalen, “Takes, takes, all the time takes. You know I am of the opinion that you ought to write a novel […]” (Rosenthal 1958).²

Whalen wrote the forest service novel in the dry, factual, masculinist language of the Northwest. The trail workers, forest rangers, loggers, barge hands, and assorted other characters are unsophisticated country men and boys, rough around the edges, focused on manly work projects in the rugged mountainous terrain of the Pacific Northwest. Although it isn’t as raunchy as his friend Don Carpenter’s *Hard Rain Falling*, an urban tale of down and out hustlers, thieves, and jailbirds in the back streets and dive bars of Portland, Whalen’s style is not entirely dissimilar to Carpenter’s plain diction and terse matter-of-factness. One also sees in Whalen’s early fiction something of Gary Snyder’s literalist mountain poetics, a narrative structure, as Robert Kern points out, based in “the external order of things and events in the world rather than from any internal imaginative order…” (1981, 150). Whalen’s characters in the forest service novel are based on real people, and as with virtually all of Whalen’s novels, short stories, and fiction sketches it’s a *roman à clef*. Ryder is Gary Snyder, Red is Whalen, Murphy the Packer is Mac the Packer, etc. But Whalen was a notoriously slow fiction writer and he completed only 100 pages of the forest novel a year after he started it. So when Jack Kerouac became enamored of Snyder’s mountaineering Buddhism in 1956 and quickly signed up for a fire lookout job beginning that very summer, it was only a matter of time before Kerouac’s forest service novel, *Desolation Angels*, based in the same terrain and with the same place names as Whalen’s—the Marblemount ranger station in Mt. Baker National Forest, Mt. Hozomeen, Desolation Peak, etc.

—was written and published to great fanfare, nudging Whalen’s project off potential publishers’ desks. Whalen dithered on for almost two years while Kerouac wrote most of *Desolation Angels* during 1957 and wrapped up *The Dharma Bums* during the last few months of that year, absconding with Whalen’s character Ryder (Gary Snyder), who becomes Japhy Ryder in Kerouac’s story.

I have not found any account of Kerouac’s appropriation of the Snyder character’s nomenclature in Whalen’s correspondence with Kerouac, or in his journals. My hunch is that it was a gift from Whalen, probably discussed and shared casually with his friend and colleague. Whalen clearly liked Kerouac, but he was also ambitious for his own career and chastened by his failure to complete a novel. He commiserated with Snyder in a 1960 letter:

…. I simply haven’t found a vocabulary to use that will get through to them [editors, publishers] & back again. That naturally leads me to what I’ve been worrying about for months, vocabulary, communication, upaya, whatever you want to name it, I have largely failed to find it. […] I keep imagining that I must think up a book that would show some person persons living & acting in a particular situation, doing whatever it is they do in the way I think people properly ought to act… that I might tell this in such a way that the fictional persons might be seen & taken for models to imitate in real life. But according to literary history, that’s a moralizing novel… it might interest a few serious readers but not have much general effect…

Whalen explored characters, plots, and drafts for three or four additional works of fiction between late 1957 and late 1962, with some of the later experiments seeping into a novel he
started in early 1963 with the working title *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* (often referred to in the journals as *YT&T*). Early 1963 was a period of especially intense frustration for Whalen as *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* gestated in fits and starts. By my archival count it was his tenth or eleventh effort at a full-length work of fiction, and by Whalen’s own reckoning it was his fourteenth attempt (Whalen 1961, 31). On January 5, 1963 as he begins to focus intently on the conceptual outlines of *YT&T* he confides in his journal that he has in his possession “unedited & unfinished ms.” dating back to 1943 (Bancroft Notebook 3). We know now that he was referring not only to journal notebooks but also to unfinished and unpublished poems, as well as drafts of novels and short stories dating as far back as his Reed College years.

11:1:63  What I want is enough ambition & patience to operate a typewriter enough days in a row in order to create…… well… twenty {say} novels {& writing THAT word I ask myself, “What in hell do you mean?” I answer the question in parenthesis} by saying: NOVEL, a book about the lives of fictional characters, which book shall be an exact representation of “the world” as I think it “exists” (Bancroft Notebook 4).

At the time Whalen was being subsidized rent-free in writer and fellow Zen Buddhist Albert Saijo’s Mill Valley house. It was a tense and depressing household as Whalen describes it, with eviction a daily threat. One of the household residents, Ann Leh, Saijo’s partner, is suffering from severe depression and paranoia. Whalen finds the psycho-social undercurrents extraordinarily stressful. He writes poems and calms his mind on long walks in the Mt. Tamalpais woods above Mill Valley, a wilderness park. At last, in late January, a significant new narrative thread for *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* comes into his head while he is walking in
the woods. He recalls a “scrap of imaginary conversation” between two characters that he had written down previously, probably the month before.

I began to see who the speakers were, where they were, and I could see or feel what they would do, and I suddenly knew that it could all be arranged in three sections, three blocks of prose (1973, 458).

Yet the creative theoretics, the ‘poetics’ of writing fiction, remained problematic for Whalen. It was his heuristic practice to select and glue together disparate (and potentially unrelated) scenes, characters, and images from various drafts and journal entries, an editorial process significantly more complex than the spontaneous, linear approach advocated by Kerouac. At the end of January Whalen commented, “I also hope that the book will be of its own kind, one unlike any which has been written—” (29:1:63).

But there was now pressure from the influential editor Luther Nichols, representing New York publisher Doubleday & Co. The big corporate publishing houses in New York were mining the San Francisco scene trying to identify writers who could sell as many books as a Kerouac or a Burroughs. On February 18 he received a phone call indicating that Nichols wanted to read his novel.

18:II:63   Jim Murray called this morning & says Luther Nichols (now representing Doubleday publishers) wants to read a ms. book of mine. I hope he does; I hope he likes it; I hope Doubleday will buy it (Bancroft Notebook 4).

The word was out in New York publishing circles, in part through Allen Ginsberg’s tireless networking and Donald Allen’s sophisticated editorial finesse, that there were up and coming
Beat novelists in the Bay Area whose work merited serious attention. Ginsberg had written to Whalen in October, 1958 to report that he was busy promoting Whalen and others, connecting with big shots at the launch party for *The Dharma Bums*, which was well-attended by publishing executives as well as authors like Gore Vidal. Throughout this period Whalen struggled with the novel, while some of his closest friends and supporters like painter Robert LaVigne, the rare book dealer Henry Wenning, and Irving Rosenthal praised his work and encouraged him not to give up (Rosenthal 1958, Wenning 1964). In a particularly warm letter written prior to the publication of Whalen’s first novel, LaVigne, over the years one of Whalen’s most supportive friends, wrote:

> So great novels should be no great task for you to conceive.
> the Earth herself is one big plot to make Maya (herself)
> from sunlight. After that, what is a city? (1964).

Whalen began writing *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* in earnest on February 4, 1963 but twenty-four days later there was not much to show for his effort, and already Saijo was complaining about the great clunking noise coming out of Whalen’s typewriter, forcing him to write by hand.

28:II:63 […] So I keep pestering myself about a novel without having any idea how to get it going, short of beginning at this moment to typewrite – but A. has just complained about noise of typing a letter so I’ve stopped & begun copying old novel note out of last year’s journal— (Bancroft Notebook 4).

By mid-March he’s written only a little more than 30 pages, less than a page a day, “with weekends supplying nothing” (13:III:63). Doubleday editor Luther Nichols is still waiting, and
Whalen is not only feeling the creative pressure, he’s feeling the financial pressure of living in the Saijo household, where he must rely on their good will to feed him and keep a roof over his head.

13:III:63  […] What I want is 100 – pages to give Nichols in order to get an advance. & so much of what’s written so far is only dialogue of the most banal kind […] I’ll have to add a great deal of exposition & characterization & bright exciting images in order to keep the chatter from evaporating off the pages even before I can copy them on the typewriter (Bancroft Notebook 4).

About two months later Whalen schedules a dinner with Don Allen and brings along a partial draft of *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* for Allen to look at. Over the next several years Allen would publish five or six volumes of Whalen’s poetry, several magnificent broadsides, and will include a generous selection of Whalen’s poems in his landmark anthology *The New American Poetry 1945-1960* (NAP).

25:V:63  A memorable evening with Don Allen on Thursday evening 23:V at the Four Seas Restaurant in Grant Avenue […] I had brought him the 150 pages of *YT&T* he had asked me to let him read it. I doubt that he’ll like it, judging from his general conversation about all the things now being written that he’s tired of, not interested in &c. (Bancroft Notebook 4).
Finally, on June 4, 1963, while living in Tommy Sales’ Beaver Street house in San Francisco, Whalen completes the first draft of *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow.*

> 7:VI:63 On the 4th of June I completed the novel, *YESTERDAY – TODAY AND TOMORROW* – exactly 4 months after it was begun at Albert’s house. I continue to live, temporarily, in the Beaver St. front room. I have only the pennies & food that Mike McClure or other friends can find to give me. I have eaten twice today, luckily (Bancroft Notebook 4).

Whalen’s presumptive opinion about Don Allen’s critical reception of his novel is correct. Journal entries and correspondence between Allen and Whalen show that while Allen supported Whalen’s poetry wholeheartedly and without hesitation, he was unable (and in part unwilling) to further Whalen’s career as a novelist. This was difficult for Whalen, who continued to wrestle with a ‘poetics’ of the novel that suited him. In an August, 1963 letter to Gary Snyder he wrote, “My novel is unloved; so far, nobody wants to print it… the entire McClure family hates it; Don Allen only says he likes the first part better than the last part, & that he wont send it to Barney.”

*Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* made the rounds at several big New York publishing houses and was summarily rejected by each one.

On May 3 and 4, 1964 Whalen destroyed most of his pre-1957 journal notebooks, as well as short stories, prose fragments, and novel drafts, some of which may have been written during the early 1960s. Having read through virtually all of the relevant holograph source material, it is

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3 Whalen often refers to his close friend Elizabeth Tommy Sales as “Mme. E.T.S.”

4 Barnet Rosset, publisher of New York’s Grove Press, at his time a premier avant-garde publishing house for U.S. poets and novelists.
my belief that he did so out of sheer frustration that he had not published a significant novel by age 41. *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* was eventually published by Jim Koller’s Coyote Books, in 1967, under the title *You Didn’t Even Try.*

*To add a literary-historical context for this period, it should be noted that the Howl obscenity trial was underway in San Francisco Municipal Court during late August and September 1957. On June 3, 1957 City Lights Books employee Shigeyoshi “Shig” Murao had sold a copy of *Howl and Other Poems* to undercover police, who immediately arrested Murao and issued an arrest warrant for the store’s owner, poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Judge Clayton Horn found Ferlinghetti not guilty of selling obscene material on October 3, and charges against Murao were dropped. *On the Road* was published, with a tremendous amount of publicity, on September 7. In 1958 Neal Cassady was sentenced to ten years in San Quentin Prison for selling marijuana to a federal agent, and was released about two years later. Viking Press brought out Kerouac’s *The Dharma Bums* and Don Allen translated and published his *Four Plays of Eugène Ionesco* with Grove Press during 1958. Amiri Baraka and Hettie Cohen introduced their influential poetry magazine *Yugen* in 1958, and in February of 1961 Diane di Prima and Baraka disseminated the first issue of *Floating Bear,* another important small magazine of the era. Don Allen moved to San Francisco in 1960 upon publication of his landmark *The New American Poetry 1945-1960.* In 1960 and 1961 Brautigan completed *Trout Fishing in America* and *A Confederate General From Big Sur,* and Don Allen began promoting Brautigan to his contacts at Grove, New Directions, Putnams, Dell, Bantam, and Coward-McCann. They all rejected *Trout Fishing,* but Grove’s new avant-garde magazine, *Evergreen Review,* published nine chapters from the novel in 1963 and 1964 (Barber), and Ferlinghetti’s *City Lights Journal* published three...*

By the early 1960s with Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Snyder scattered around the globe, Whalen’s closest friends and colleagues in San Francisco were Michael and Johanna McClure, Robert LaVigne, Don Carpenter, the printer and publisher Dave Haselwood, the carpenter/philosopher Locke McCorkle, and Whalen’s companion, lover, and mountaineering partner Leslie Thompson. Writing in his journals, Whalen frets about the slow output of his fiction. He was almost completely homeless and penniless during these years, cadging rent and meals, ‘crashing,’ and living for free with various friends, not the most optimal circumstances for a writer trying to produce a work of full-length fiction. For a time he lived in a shack on Mt. Tamalpais, and later a tent in one of the park’s campgrounds. Yet despite these intrinsic physical difficulties, Whalen managed to complete two novels, start work on at least two others, write a draft of his Prometheus play, and publish seven or eight major broadside poems. He also published his first and second poetry collections, *Memoirs Of An Interglacial Age* with cover art by Robert LaVigne (The Auerhahn Press, 1960), and *Like I Say* with Leroi Jones’/Amiri Baraka’s Totem Press/Corinth Books (1960), plus 16 pages of poetry in Don Allen’s *The New American Poetry 1945-1960* (Grove Press, 1960), more than the highly celebrated poets John Ashbery and Robert Creeley. Whalen also garnered precious space in the coveted poetics section of Allen’s anthology for his famous take, “This poetry is a picture or graph of a mind

In considering the literary productivity enumerated above, add about a dozen essays, introductions, and book reviews, plus more than three-hundred and twenty-five poems and a thousand pages of journal entries composed during one of the most stressful periods in his life. Nor were the poems Whalen wrote between 1954 and early 1966 routine by any measure. They include the perennial anthology favorites “Plus Ça Change,” “Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” “Hymnus Ad Patrem Sinensis” and “Tara,” as well as bountifully exquisite but less well known works such as “Senseless Commentaries On Chao-Chou,” “From An Envelope Addressed To Charles Olson,” “New York City” (surely one of the great New York poems of the 20th century), “The Art of Literature,” a stunning, dreamlike sequence dedicated to Lew Welch, and Ron Silliman’s favorite, “My Songs Induce Prophetic Dreams,” a twenty-page poem that took Whalen 15 months to complete. This substantial output was made possible because Whalen

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5 Whalen’s ‘poetics statement’ first appears as the poem “Since You Ask Me (A Press Release, October 1959)” in Memoirs Of An Interglacial Age.

6 In a deft and insightful article “The Mimeograph Revolution,” (Times Literary Supplement, Aug. 6, 1964) Eric Mottram described “The Art of Literature” as a “brilliant” poem. Mottram delineates the literary politics and poetics behind the emergence of the small, non-corporate, independent publishing ventures that began to spring up in the 1950s and 60s in reaction against established literary-distributive norms. He cites, among others, Diane di Prima’s Floating Bear, Denise Levertov’s Seventh Street anthology, Dan Saxon’s Poets At Le Metro, Tuli Kupferberg’s Birth Press, and Ed Dorn’s Wild Dog.
refused to work at mindless, time-consuming day jobs when what he wanted to do was read, write, and think all day, plus conduct literary correspondence with his friends and colleagues.

* 

The early journals of Philip Whalen reveal an intensely private poet tormented by his ambiguous sexuality and frequently depressed by the suffering and anomie associated with being an underemployed underground artist in Eisenhower-Truman America. Critics as diverse as Jerome Rothenberg and Manuel Luis Martinez have noted the intrinsically paradoxical nature of the San Francisco Renaissance and Beat undergrounds. As Rothenberg deftly describes it –  

… the mainstream of American poetry, the part by which it has been & will be known, has long been in the margins, nurtured in the margins, carried forward, vibrant, in the margins. As mainstream & margin both, it represents our underground economy as poets, the gray market for our spiritual/corporeal exchanges (9).

“Mainstream & margin both” also defines, more or less, the core of Martinez’ argument that Whalen and his (Anglo white male) colleagues are accurately depicted by the marginality of their enterprise, but that it was the ‘marginality’ of middle- and upper middle-class white men who simply had to wait a decade or two before their marginality was mainstreamed within the structures of America’s white cultural elite. Yet many major figures of the time – though white and male – were from the working classes. These, and even others who were from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds, proceeded to refuse every privilege or advantage that society could bestow on them, culminating in Charles Olson’s address to the 1965 Berkeley Poetry Conference, when he said,
I’m the white man. I’m that famous thing, the white man. The ultimate paleface. The noncorruptible, the good. The thing that runs this country, or that is this country. And thank God—And in fact the only advantage I have is that I didn’t… (1966, 32)

Martinez argues that the Beat Generation’s ‘underground’ was more borderline than underground, a simultaneously “in & out” status unattainable for Latino and Chicano artists; or for that matter, for most women, African Americans, or Native Americans (3-72). In particular, Martinez criticizes Ginsberg, Burroughs, and Kerouac for what he perceives as a regressive and atomistic Beat individualism, an isolationist position that hindered a truly communitarian vision.

During the 1960s under J. Edgar Hoover’s F.B.I., Whalen and his artist and poet friends were spied on and harassed by police and federal agents. The journals and correspondence demonstrate that Whalen, di Prima, Baraka, McClure, Ginsberg and their friends feared and fully expected the implementation of a right-wing governmental pogrom on their ranks as dissidents. These artists were adamantly opposed to the government’s Cold War policies, to the right-wing suppression of free speech, to government/corporate administered art, and to the suppression of all marginal voices, cultures, and “sub-“ cultures, whether African American, Native American, Latino, Chicano, Irish nationalist, feminist, gay, lesbian, etc. Moreover, all of these figures had close friendships or intimate relationships across various dividing lines; Whalen’s close friend Albert Saijo, for example, was incarcerated with his family in an internment camp for Japanese-Americans in 1942. Such relationships were not generally common and certainly provided differential perspectives on dominant societal norms.

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To read Whalen’s journals and correspondence is to comprehend more fully just how marginalized and alienated he and his fellow artists were from the carefully supervised middle-class society that surrounded them. It has been painstakingly documented by Christopher Simpson, Richard Ohmann, Hugh Wilford and other scholars, basing their research on official government archives, declassified C.I.A. documents, and credible journalism, that throughout the 1950s and 1960s federal law enforcement, military, and intelligence agencies implemented a $1 billion per year (plus?) secret program of cultural McCarthyism that included intensive domestic surveillance and prolific cultural propaganda modeled on psychological warfare systems. The programmatic goal was to control and direct the production of art and literature to ensure unstinting support for the official state version of democratic capitalism in reaction against the stunning cultural successes of Soviet Marxism and European socialism. U.S. government agencies created clandestine ideological PR campaigns, financing a plethora of front organizations, key intellectuals, publishers, trade union leaders, and other elements that were in a position to manipulate broad cultural and sociopolitical trends (Simpson 3-30, Ohmann 73-105, Wilford 1-122). Philip Whalen and his friends were aware of and stubbornly resisted these structures and their effects. This is an undeniable fact supported by textual and biographical evidence.

Shocking as it may sound today, the post-war U.S. government viewed Nazi propaganda tactics as a “vital source of ideas” for their own program (Simpson 24). With the right-wing political spectrum in the West eviscerated by the defeat of the Third Reich, and the left occupied by godless socialists and communists, America’s political leadership moved to the right to occupy a new hegemony cloaked in the garb of liberal democracy (Rasula 184). The U.S. had helped defeat the Nazi horror in the heart of Europe, but the detonation of nuclear weapons on
Japanese civilians (resulting in the highest instant body count in history), followed by the Korean War, and the senseless war in Vietnam, were empire-defining moments for the Beats (Engelhardt 5-6, et seq.). They regarded U.S. domestic and foreign policy assumptions as ideologies to be closely examined, critiqued and challenged, not uncritically accepted. Moreover, in the middle of one of the most violent centuries in world history, the college professors hired to teach these young poets and artists theorized an art separate from life, a poetry devoid of history, and personal and social experience shielded from action. This was the context Whalen, Baraka, di Prima, Ginsberg, McClure, and their many colleagues and friends, came of age in.

Meanwhile, U.S.-style apartheid was the order of the day in the world’s self-described “greatest democracy.” On December 1, 1955, just a couple of months after the Six Gallery reading in San Francisco, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white person on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama. It was a highly symbolic gesture that led, eventually, to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that forced the desegregation of public transit nationwide. Peaceful non-violent protests like the Montgomery public bus campaign culminated in the 1963 March on Washington, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered the world-changing “I Have a Dream” speech. Dr. King’s speech was successful in more ways than one, earning him a prominent position in the F.B.I.’s ‘counter-intelligence’ program known as COINTELPRO, which consisted, one must be frank, in the violent repression of minorities and in the eventual assassination of Dr. King himself, the ‘official’ account of which has been seriously undermined by recent investigations (Nelson).

Martinez has criticized the Beats for some of the significant (and even systemic) political and cultural errors committed by writers within their general cohort. But I believe that when one considers the entire contextual span over, say, a thirty year period, there can be little doubt but
that the overwhelming majority of New American poets, including San Francisco Renaissance and Beat Generation writers and artists, self-consciously situated themselves within the political, moral, and ethical vanguard of the broad Left during these decades, seeking new definitions of personhood and politics.

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The following journals and prose fragments, finally dislodged from their archival boxes, are critical to a more informed and holistic understanding of this poet’s life and work, and yet until now only a dozen or so poets, writers, and scholars have been able to read through them comprehensively. They not only serve as the foundational underpinning for most of Whalen’s major poetry, novels, and literary essays, they constitute a unique autobiographical narrative, superseding much of the hagiography published to date, covering roughly fifteen years of his life, beginning with fragmental entries from 1950 and 1956, and ending with his expatriation to Kyoto, Japan on February 24, 1966. That serves as a natural end point for this volume, as the five and a half years he spent living and studying in Kyoto were a transformational period for Philip Whalen, leading directly, I think, to his ordination as unsui, a buddhist monk and priest, in 1973.

Whalen’s 1973 ordination took place within an American monastic iteration of a highly traditional Japanese Buddhist sect, Soto Zen (Ch. Tsao-t’ung), established by Eihei Dōgen (1200-1253), and transmitted through the centuries in an historico-ecclesiastical tradition not dissimilar to the patriarchic model of the Roman Catholic Church. This is a significant biographical point because this branch of the Zen school rooted itself in San Francisco under the guidance of the extraordinarily skilled and subtle Japanese priest Shunryu Suzuki. Suzuki was an authentic Japanese Zen master in the ancient tradition, assigned to Japantown in 1959 to minister to the post-war community. People like Alan Watts and D.T. Suzuki (no relation) had
popularized Zen in the U.S., but there had not been an actual Zen master to practice with and have as a mentor. Gradually, through the ministrations of local artists and intellectuals like Watts, Allen Ginsberg, Richard Baker, and others, dozens of Americans in the Bay Area of all races and ethnic backgrounds began practicing Zen with Shunryu Suzuki. A profound link developed between the utopian political and artistic concerns of local poets and intelligentsia, so much so that the study and practice of Buddhism and East Asian culture became an almost generalized condition within certain avant-garde circles, including the individuals mentioned above, as well as foundational figures such as Kenneth Rexroth, Cid Corman, Michael McClure, Gary Snyder, Diane di Prima, and Joanne Kyger.

American Zen was thus germinated within a self-enclosed, independent, communitarian ‘not New York’ atmosphere, an avant-garde center without financial incentives where poetry became, in Rexroth’s words “an actual social force” (Solnit 43). The gradual but nascent influence of Zen Buddhist aesthetics seen in many artists, including Whalen, reflected a seismic shift in California culture, a counter-Orientalism, a sort of reverse-Orientalism that was no Orientalism at all, involving as it did an authentic turn toward Asia and Pacific Rim culture, a new consciousness stimulated by the “salvationist ideology” of Buddhism. As Lussier has argued, Buddhism first came to the West during the 18th and 19th centuries as a textual counterflow, a “counter-influence” over and against the imperial colonialist project. While Asian philosophy and art may have seemed new and exotic to some, its transmission to Europe and North America had begun about two hundred years earlier, made possible by the 18th century European conquest of India and Ceylon and the subsequent century and a half of rigorous textual scholarship that began with the British “discovery” of Buddhism in the mid- to late 18th century (Almond).
Warren Hastings, India’s first royal governor under English dominion, was a political liberal who gave unstinting support to scholarly translation projects, especially classical Indian legal, philosophical, and religious works. His political leadership resulted directly in the first translation into a European language of the Bhagavad-Gita in 1785. Hastings also supported the founding of the landmark journal, *Asiatick Researches*, edited by Sanskrit scholar and colonial jurist Sir William Jones. Publication of the first issue in 1788 created a sensation among dissenting intellectuals, Republicans, poets, and artists in the European capitals. An orientalizing avant-garde gradually came to include revolutionary figures like William Blake, Percy Shelley, and the Schlegel brothers. Friedrich Schlegel had coined the phrase “Oriental Renaissance,” comparing the impact of Asian art, religion, and philosophy on Europe to the Italian Renaissance of the 15th century. Blake was an especially eager consumer of Indian religion and mythology. He absorbed and borrowed so much in his poem *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* that scholars have dubbed it “Blake’s Indian epic” (Weir; de Almeida and Gilpin 280). European Romanticism had provided the Beats with an immediate historical and theoretical context for the adoption of Buddhism as revolutionary ideology.

One of the more trenchant moves made by the mid-20th century artists was to conjoin a public embrace of Buddhism with strident opposition to U.S. military hegemony and cold war ideology (Gray 12-31). This was a sharp slap in the face of the U.S. power elites who, by mid-century, had succeeded in demonizing the Asian race with massive U.S. politico-military propaganda campaigns generated during three successive Asian wars: the Asian-Pacific Theater in WWII, the Korean War, and the war in Vietnam. Rexroth was one of the first American intellectuals to warn of the political and moral dangers intrinsic to America’s global military and economic hegemony (Cándida Smith 39-44), and another was Robert Duncan, whose life partner
the artist Jess Collins was drafted out of the California Institute of Technology to work on the Manhattan Project as a nuclear chemist, an assignment that was later indelibly inscribed into his pacifist views.

This was the cultural and political milieu out of which Philip Whalen emerged, a profoundly dissident outlook fueled by the spiritual and philosophical outlook of Asian Buddhism and reflected in his poetics more so than almost any other twentieth century American writer. That, in some ways, is Philip Whalen’s truest literary legacy.
Textual Introduction

When scholars editing American literature will bring to their task the careful effort that has been established as necessary for English Renaissance texts, say, then the editing of American texts will become a respectable occupation at long last, and not a piece of hack work for the paperbacks.

Fredson Bowers (1962)

1. Source Materials & Issues

The excerpts included here from Philip Whalen’s journal notebooks, fragments, drafts of unpublished novels, essays, commentaries, and other writings appropriately begin with a 1948 poem, never before in print, about the suicide of the novelist Ross Lockridge, Jr., who had just published his blockbuster novel *Raintree County*. During 1947, in his second year at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, Whalen had made a strong effort at his own first novel, *The Prodigy*, a thinly disguised autobiographical *roman à clef* that he inscribed in a hard cover cloth notebook, the earliest Whalen journal notebook extant today. Thus the journals and prose fragments presented here begin with a poem about a novelist, and continue with sketches of novels and short prose written during the early and mid-1950s until we reach August 4, 1957, when the bulk of the intact, extant journal notebooks resume, and continue virtually unbroken until February 24, 1966 when Whalen boards a passenger ship for Japan to live in the ancient capital of government and buddhist culture, Kyoto. Most of the comments and observations I make in this introduction, as well as in the General Introduction, focus specifically on these years.
in Whalen’s life, roughly 1956-1966, not his later life when he lives and writes as a Zen monk-poet in the ancient tradition.

In his journal notebooks Whalen ruminates on and critiques his own work, explains his literary and aesthetic roots and influences, and provides an autobiographical account of his life as a writer. The largest number of these notebooks, manuscripts, and fragments are found in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley and in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library in Columbia University. Additionally, there are two small notebooks and several fragments at Washington University in St. Louis, including a draft of a play by Whalen based on the Prometheus myth. Together with a wealth of correspondence, miscellaneous manuscripts, drafts, and typescripts for Whalen’s published books archived in the Reed College library, and the collections of other San Francisco Renaissance, Beat, and New American poets, novelists, editors, and artists archived at Stanford University, the University of California, Davis, the University of California, San Diego, the University of British Columbia, SUNY Buffalo, the University of Connecticut, etc., this comprises the literary archive where one can track the trajectory of Philip Whalen’s life and work with the more accurate lens provided by this trove of (mostly) previously unpublished material.

Whalen worked out the initial sketches and drafts for his most important poems, novels, and other prose in the journals, and they are embedded contextually with witty and often biting observations on his daily routine eating, drinking, reading, writing, occasionally working at paid jobs, and hob-knobbing and corresponding with fellow artists and writers such as Robert Duncan, Kenneth Rexroth, Allen Ginsberg, Joanne Kyger, Gary Snyder, Diane di Prima, Robert LaVigne, Michael and Johanna McClure, Don Allen, Don Carpenter, and assorted filmmakers,
editors, painters, sculptors, composers, and interested friends and patrons, including especially Leslie Thompson.

One of Whalen’s closest friends, his editor and literary executor, Michael Rothenberg, summed up the journals this way:

Journals essential to understanding work of Philip Whalen.

Handwritten poetical and narrative (unknown in print) journals, written in calligraphic style taught to him at Reed by Lloyd Reynolds. Include doodles, coloring and collage. Source books for his most famous poetical works, in perfect condition, warrant publication in facsimile. 61 journals cover nearly 30 years (89).

The physical arrangement of these notebooks and fragments across three or four library collections has given birth here to a reconstructed text, a text made from disparate sources, not ‘eclectic’ in the sense of the term used in traditional scholarship. There is only one original authorial document behind each segment of the journals and fragments published here, and no other copies, printed, hand-written, or otherwise, aside from the few excerpts that I have published in several small circulation chapbooks and poetry magazines. Each segment reproduced here is based on an original document written in Whalen’s own hand (an ‘autograph’ manuscript), with the exception of a few typescript fragments, which are for the most part drafts of novels or short stories that Whalen typed on his own typewriter. There are no textual stemmata for this work, no genealogical trail of various competing versions, no attempt to reconstruct a “pure” originary text sorted out from the least corrupt line of textual descent.

But at several points in his life Whalen wrote in more than one journal at a time, creating some manageable complications. At one juncture he designated one of his notebooks as the
“travel notebook,” and then used it on extended trips (see his comments at Bancroft Notebook 6, 17:XII:63, et al.). This broke the temporal sequence of the journals. He also occasionally lost or misplaced a notebook, which he might then stumble across later and copy sections from into a second or third notebook. Or, he might simply resume writing in the first one where he had left off, skipping over a large temporal gap.

While most of the intact journals are located at The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, a few others, and many valuable fragments, are found in the other university libraries, especially Columbia’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library. In some instances the fragments and notebooks outside of Berkeley provide interesting and useful material that fills in gaps in the temporal flow of the larger, main set of journals at Bancroft. If I had simply reproduced each separate notebook and fragment as they exist in their original form, the daily entries would not lay out in calendar sequence, and would not reflect the actual progression of the autobiographical narrative. I have therefore edited them in calendar order, as they were written, so that readers are not burdened with a haphazard and confusing flow of daily and weekly events. This has meant, at times, skipping back and forth between two or more archival sources within a daily or weekly sequence. In order to clarify the source manuscripts for each section, when the notebook source changes I note it at the top of the next calendar entry with a clear indication of which notebook or fragment the excerpt is derived from, e.g. “Bancroft Notebook 1,” “Columbia 19, 7.” In this way future scholars and editors will be able to follow my work quite easily, and make their own decisions, choices, and conclusions.

There is another matter, a twofold issue that I would like to address here as well. It will clarify what drove me to seek out and include fragments that are not located within the main set of intact notebooks at Berkeley, but are from the rather random, loose, mostly prose fragments
scattered around in the other university libraries. For the first few years that I worked on this project I erroneously assumed that The Bancroft Library possessed all of Whalen’s extant journal notebooks and autobiographical fragments. That was the conclusion of the writers, editors, curators, and others I was consulting with, and as no one had yet taken on the task of editing the journals for publication, presumptive conclusions were apocryphal and easy to come by. Yet, I thought it was odd that Whalen’s initial entry in the first Bancroft journal begins on August 4, 1957 because this omits any chronicle of the October 7, 1955 Six Gallery poetry reading in San Francisco, the event that came to “epitomize the spirit of the age,” regarded by most scholars and poets as the inaugural launch of the San Francisco Renaissance (Davidson 2-3). Granted, the Six Gallery event became a publicity-generating marketing vehicle, but it was also a legitimate and important art event and served as Whalen’s public debut as a poet. I was fascinated by this event, the disparate and confused accounts of it, and the spectacle of Allen Ginsberg’s marketing campaign superseding the gallery’s own regular PR efforts. Descriptions of Whalen’s performance at Six Gallery and his presumed aesthetic positioning, contributed for many years to the general reception of his work. It seemed strange to me that Whalen would not record some personal commentary on this landmark reading, especially as he was so scrupulous about writing notes and commentary in his journals on all manner of literary events, discussions, feuds, gallery openings, etc., and even more so as some of his peers ridiculed his performance and the work he read that evening. I began to question whether there were notebooks or fragments from 1955 or 1956, or even earlier, that I had not yet located, and which might include Whalen’s observations on the Six Gallery reading. The more familiar I became with his obsession with the sharp-elbowed politics and colorful personalities of the Bay Area art and poetry scene of his time, the more I was convinced that this lacuna around the Six reading was remarkable. Then one
afternoon while reading his hand-written journals in The Bancroft Library I came across an entry that Whalen inscribed on January 5, 1963. In the entry he confides that he had in his possession “unedited & unfinished ms.” dating back to 1943.\(^8\)

Looking at these & at all the rest of the unedited & unfinished ms. in this room, I wonder what would happen if I commenced typing it all… Begin with the 1943 material & end wherever I choose? …

This proved that there was, or had been, a wealth of written material prior to August 4, 1957. The start date of the Bancroft notebooks now seemed entirely arbitrary. My interest was piqued, and reading further, in an entry dated May 4, 1964, Whalen revealed that in a fit of writerly frustration (and undoubtedly depression) he destroyed a large chunk of his pre-1957 writings, including journals. Whalen describes the episode thusly:

Yesterday and today I burned about 4 reams of paper—journals, short stories, uncompleted novels—junk that I’ve been carting about with me for 20 years.\(^9\)

In retrospect it became clear that Whalen was referring to documents and journals that would have included September 1955, when he moved from Oregon to Berkeley, where Gary Snyder introduced him to Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac. The Six Gallery reading was a few weeks later, and now it was apparent that there was at one time a fairly robust journal for this period in 1955, up to and including the Six Gallery reading on October 7. In a journal entry for October 3, 1962 (Bancroft Notebook 3) Whalen refers to this notebook directly as the Berkeley Journal, apparently a very large journal notebook (“monstrous”), or a series of notebooks, encompassing

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\(^8\) This entry is in Bancroft Notebook 3, at p. 97.
a great bulk of written material. Here again we find the poet highly focused on the conceptual and aesthetic problems bound up with the writing of fiction:

I’ve been rereading BERKELEY JOURNAL which is monstrous.

[…] Now I see the value of that Journal. On a certain page I find an answer to a problem I’ve had lately. I say to myself, “the reason you don’t write more prose stories, novels, & more objective poems is this: you don’t really care anything about other people… & literature, particularly NOVELS are about people & their lives & ‘problems’ & deaths & babies & suicides & money & books & paintings…”

I feel quite confident that Whalen did pen his own account of the Six Gallery reading in the Berkeley Journal and that it was incinerated, along with many other manuscripts, on May 4, 1964.

At this point I determined to go through the Columbia and Washington University library aids in search of additional notebooks and fragments. The Olin Library at Washington University does indeed possess a couple of additional notebooks and other fragmental material, although nothing on the Six Gallery reading. As for Columbia, I became interested in the last box of Series II, Poems and Manuscirpts, Box 19. Boxes 10-18 were labeled “Poems and Manuscripts,” containing the original drafts of around 275 poems written between 1941-1966, and page proofs and manuscripts for the verse collection On Bear’s Head (1969), and notebooks, proofs, and drafts for the novels You Didn’t Even Try (1967) and Imaginary Speeches for a Brazen Head (1972), and for the non-fiction experimental prose riff based on his journals The Diamond Noodle (1980). But Box 19 was labeled a little differently, “Untitled Poems and Manuscript,
1941-1967” [sic], and that designation was tantalizingly vague. Upon physical inspection it was clear that several of the 22 folders in the box were mislabeled and their contents were misidentified. At least four or five of the folders held mixed contents, including both finished and unfinished poems, manuscripts, and commentaries, full-blown essays, and fragmental journal entries and miscellaneous prose. Interesting biographical material surfaced, along with one or two stunning essays, and early drafts of unfinished novels or short stories which filled in gaps in the literary-historical record between 1958 and 1962. I have included some of these fragments and inchoate novel or short story drafts herein, in part because they buttress my conclusion that Whalen was highly intent on publishing a successful novel in the late 1950s and early to mid-1960s. I also found clear-cut evidence that he had shared his fiction with Jack Kerouac, some of which Kerouac then transferred to his own use in *The Dharma Bums*.

* The Whalen journals reproduced here are profoundly social texts in every sense of the word. This work could not exist were it not for the mediation of many hands — editors, publishers, literary executors, university archivists, rare book dealers, writers, poets, professors, and scholars — who have made possible this version, this temporal textual product, the result of a “continued negotiation” with institutions of “reception and transmission” (Greetham 1992, xv). The negotiation continues today because Philip Whalen was a great poet and author, and is “still the most underrated poet of his generation”, as Ron Silliman has correctly observed. It is sobering to consider the number of hands involved with the textual transmission of Whalen’s work. Avant-garde editors and publishers such as Dave Haselwood, Amiri Baraka, Hettie Jones, Eli Wilentz, Donald Allen, and James Koller were single-handedly responsible for generating Whalen’s public success as a writer during the late 1950s and 1960s. Dismissed by the corporate
New York publishing and art worlds, Whalen and his colleagues turned inward and tended to their own work and their own modes of production and distribution. Whalen was familiar with letterpress and hand-crafted book production through his tutelage at Reed College under the wise and distinguished literary scholar and calligrapher Lloyd Reynolds, who was a deep lifelong influence. In San Francisco, when Dave Haselwood became frustrated by the refusal of New York publishing houses to print and distribute the works of his friends, he taught himself printing and print-making, and began to publish authors like John Wieners and Philip Whalen. The first book under his new imprint, The Auerhahn Press, was Wieners’ *Hotel Wentley Poems*.

Haselwood had a wry view of his new enterprise:

> The first & final consideration in printing poetry is the poetry itself. If the poems are great they create their own space; the publisher is just a midwife during the final operation & if he has to do a lot of dirty work that’s the way it should be. Contrary to what a lot of people including publishers think, publishing is not a gentleman’s profession, it is the profession of a crook or a madman (1960).

Maintaining an ethical and political standard and fostering community, no matter how materially difficult it might become, was something the New American poets could embrace, with Gloucester’s Charles Olson as a model (Alcalay 104-8). For Whalen it was a labor of love with the ground prepared by the years he spent working with Lloyd Reynolds. He also worked closely with Haselwood, trudging across town almost daily to check out the progress of his books in Haselwood’s studio. He had his mail delivered there, and would stop by after a long day of
reading and writing to obtain his letters and have a beer with his publisher. Poet Bill Berkson described the situation thusly:

> The dreary regimens of official magazines and anthologies
> had become dismissible, merely out to lunch. In that respect,
> the Year of Wonders was 1957, which saw the publication
> of *On the Road*, the *Howl* obscenity trial, and the *San Francisco
> Scene* issue of *Evergreen Review* . . . […] Over the next three or
> four years, there would be Donald M. Allen’s *New American
> Poetry* anthology, the first mimeo magazines (the Spicer
> circle’s *J* in 1959, Diane di Prima’s and Leroi Jone’s *The
> Floating Bear* in 1961). . . (Berkson iii).

Whalen corresponded regularly with Jones/Baraka and Hettie Cohen/Jones, who published his second collection of poetry under their Totem Books imprint. His third collection, *Every Day*, was published by poet James Koller’s Coyote’s Journal; and then there was the omnipresent literary guru Don Allen, a New York refugee who left Grove Press in New York and founded Grey Fox Press and Four Seasons Foundation on the West Coast so he could publish work that his New York connections consistently rejected.

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During the time frame covered in this installment of Philip Whalen’s journals a large network of his friends, companions, and sophisticated rare book and manuscript dealers helped him keep food in his refrigerator and a roof over his head. Back then, original manuscripts written by a notable San Francisco Renaissance or Beat Generation author, especially one who had been invited to read at Six Gallery, could be sold to certain university libraries, generating
several months of rent and food for a hand-to-mouth artist. The Whalen papers at Columbia were acquired by the university in several installments between 1972 and 1979 through the agency of Peter Howard, a well-known rare book and manuscript dealer and owner of Berkeley’s legendary Serendipity Books. Howard conducted the sale at Whalen’s behest with the assistance of noted editor and publisher Jack Shoemaker. Shoemaker probably also helped facilitate the sale of the Whalen notebooks and fragments to Washington University in St. Louis, a deal completed in 1970 by the swashbuckling rare book dealer Henry Wenning, a bar drinker and raconteur, a friend and confidant to Samuel Beckett, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams.

As the decades progressed and the Beat and San Francisco Renaissance poets became more ‘professionalized’ by the academy, the remaining Whalen papers, a massive archive, was transmitted to The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley in 1990, with the help of Whalen’s trio of literary executors, poets Norman Fischer, Leslie Scalapino, and Michael Rothenberg.

Yet the transmission of the vast bulk of these papers did not spring from immaculate conception to miraculous birth. Textual scholars from Greg to Bowers to Greetham have used the adjective “drudgery” to describe the absolutely necessary groundwork of textual transmission, and no one knows the materiality of this better than Michael Rothenberg. While Whalen was in hospice, going blind and in failing health, Rothenberg spent weeks on end sitting on a fruit crate with a flashlight in the damp basement of the Hartford Street Zen Center in San Francisco, where Whalen served as abbot from 1991-96. Rothenberg carefully combed through dozens of boxes containing Philip Whalen’s literary records and prepared a descriptive catalogue for Bancroft curator Anthony Bliss and the acquisitions staff at Berkeley. Everyone can, and probably should, complain about these temporary, revisionary texts and all the inevitable
shortcomings mediated by history and humanity. But someone has to do the work or it doesn’t get done, as Rothenberg learned:

  Couldn’t sleep last night
  Heard the rain and imagined a leak
  in the basement
  where Philip Whalen’s journals and books are stored
  Imagine the magnificence wash invisibly away
  Stunning and sad
  to think we can’t hold him forever. (89)

  *

  The inchoate early stirrings of my editorial philosophy began with faint comprehension of the traditional components of textual scholarship, “the discovery, description, editing, glossing, annotating, and commenting upon texts” (Greetham 1994, 2), but I soon came to appreciate the philosophy of social text, the work of creating editions that appreciate and respect the historical primacy of the original work but which also recognizes, inevitably, the textual condition’s “immutable… law of change” (McGann 1991, 9). The Whalen journals are about as idiosyncratic and iconic as any literary journal one can encounter in 20th century American literature, a pure, unfiltered, unalterable account of a poet’s life and work. Most of them are written in Whalen’s trained calligraphic hand in pencil, but some in ink, and some in Whalen’s classic Arrighi hand, with ample color or black & white illustrations, drawings, doodles, elaborate buddhist dedications, classical Chinese and Japanese characters and inscriptions, commentaries, and marginalia. Since the author was inscribing his work in very small notebooks
that fit, perhaps, seven or eight words across a page, he often abbreviates words, and skips or invents new forms of punctuation. He often appears to skip paragraph breaks, or he simply inserts a ¶ symbol without a true break. I have concluded that he adopted these practices because otherwise the many paragraph breaks would create too much empty space in such a small notebook. It’s simply uneconomical to waste space. In any event Whalen is frequently ‘sketching’ live action as it happens directly in front of him. Punctuation and spelling are not his primary immediate concern. Use of proper quotation marks is sporadic and inconsistent. Golden Gate Park is sometimes referred to as “the Park” with an initial capital letter, at other times with a lower-case “p.” I often just follow his lead, but when it comes to the spelling of common names almost anyone would be familiar with such as Pauline “Kale” [sic], I have corrected, as I am quite sure Whalen would have. I have also emended highly technical terms and foreign words such as “Reimann surface” or “Blaue Reiter,” especially when they have been spelled correctly in a subsequently published poem based directly on the journal entry. Sometimes Whalen uses alternate spellings for an individual’s last name, or for a geographic place name. In choosing to edit a somewhat more “public” text I have typically not opted for the strictest diplomatic transcription, and have implemented the correction, which I conjecture he would have approved had he been available to edit or proofread this edition.

The journals presented here cover roughly fifteen years of the poet’s life, beginning with fragments written between circa 1950 – 1954, and culminating with his expatriation to Kyoto, Japan on February 24, 1966. However, at the tail end of the final “pre-Kyoto” journal, Bancroft Notebook 7, Whalen went back to it several years later in 1969 and 1971 and added sparse notes cataloguing the obituaries of Jack Kerouac, Charles Olson, and Shunryu Suzuki. So this was, in my view, a natural endpoint for the text. Philip Whalen’s five and a half years in Kyoto were
transformational for him, leading directly, I think, to his eventual ordination as unsui, a buddhist monk, in 1973.

The presence of unpublished poetry and essays in these journal notebooks and fragments, whether early works written prior to Plus Ça Change (1953), or later lyrics written during the long temporal frame from the 1960s through the 1980s, has to do with how Whalen and Rothenberg consciously structured the The Collected Poems of Philip Whalen. It was conceived of as a sort of segmented compilation of Whalen’s previously published volumes of poetry, but with the individual works set in true chronological sequence, which broke up the poetic sequence of the original volumes, but included all the published poetry. This deviation from the poetic chronology of the original first edition volumes caused a literary dust-up within the Whalen coterie, and no small grief for Rothenberg. Yet the fact that Whalen and Rothenberg decided not to make a concerted attempt to locate and publish the unpublished poems scattered through the archive in some ways made my work as an editor more interesting, as unpublished lyrics, prose poems, haiku, and splendid full-blown literary essays revealed themselves.
2. A Note on Methodology & Editorial Procedures

With regard to the transcription and editing of these journal notebooks and fragments, parts of several notebooks have been copied onto microfiche or microfilm at Bancroft. However, there were material and tactical advantages to transcribing and editing directly from the original manuscripts, so I have utilized and consulted the original autograph manuscripts for ninety-nine percent of this edition. The Whalen journals naturally present a few methodological and ideological issues, including variant spellings, Elizabethan variants, Modern British spellings, use of corn-pone Western Mountain state and Northwest dialects, naturalistic spoken grammar, and an enormous amount of inventive punctuation.

Editorially, I consider the Whalen notebooks from an historical perspective and regard my own editorial preferences as secondary to the author’s use and application of language, spelling, punctuation, etc. I have tried to create as diplomatic an edition as possible, making a strong effort to maintain original paragraph breaks, original spacing, inconsistent headings, spellings, etc., while at the same time endeavoring to produce a comfortably readable text. This has meant that I have implemented corrections and emendations, at times, in recognition of the fact that Whalen was sketching scenes and writing his thoughts down quickly, in a small, relatively narrow notebook. Cultural references are kept to a minimum. However, I have noticed that, while the decades of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s transpired just a short while ago, many of Whalen’s references to books, movies, music, artists, and writers of the period are already fairly obscure. I give these references a footnote citation or list them in Appendix 1 or Appendix 2.
Editorial Procedures

Source  As noted above, each section of journal entries is headlined by its source text, e.g., “Bancroft Notebook 6,” “Columbia 19, 2,” etc. Bancroft Box 10, for example, has loose journal fragments as well as three intact notebooks, so when citing what Whalen refers to as “loose-leaf” fragments there is no attribution of a source notebook, I simply refer to the box number. I have not cited the folder number for each notebook, but I have for the fragments, as many disparate fragments can reside in a single folder, whereas a singular notebook occupies an entire folder itself. I’ve therefore used a citation such as “Bancroft Notebook 2” along with the date of the entry, because Whalen was extremely careful to date each entry, so if one searching for the original text in, say, an original autograph Bancroft notebook, it will be a fairly simple task to find it just by knowing which notebook it is in, and on which calendar day the text was written.

Sequence  Journal and fragment entries are presented in chronological order.

Dates  Dates are presented as written by Whalen, mostly utilize the idiosyncratic dating system he learned in Japan. For example 18:XI:56 translates as 18 November 1956, 25:VII:62 translates as 25 July 1962, et al. At times, however, the author writes out a date in the modern American style of month/day/year, e.g. “January 21, 1965,” and I let it stand. I only correct Whalen’s hand-inscribed dates when he himself notices an error and acknowledges it.

10 For the design and content of this section I am indebted to the editorial procedures section in Fehsenfeld and Overbeck’s *The Letters of Samuel Beckett 1929-1940* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), which provided a model for my treatment of Whalen’s journals.
Place  In the original manuscripts place is typically indicated by the author Whalen at the top of each section, and sometimes at the top of each page. I have tried to follow this practice except where it may be unnecessarily repetitive.

Orthography  Whalen’s idiosyncratic spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviations are preserved to a very large degree, however, because the manuscripts are hand-written autograph documents it is rather often difficult to tell whether he has capitalized a letter or not. In these cases, I simply make a ‘judgment call’ based on my familiarity with his orthography, or I defer to his previous recent use of the same word or phrase.

I have tried to preserve the author’s superscripts, extensive use of ampersands, and contractions written without an apostrophe (“dont” for “don’t”), etc. Also, Whalen’s main practice in citing a written work, play, sculpture, symphony, concerto, book, or movie title, etc. is to underscore the name of the work because he is writing by hand, whereas I have adopted the more common contemporary scholarly practice of italicizing titles of major works of art and literature, which, perceiving his high regard for scholarly textual practice, I believe he would have approved.

Philip Whalen was a very good speller with a clear and unambiguous command of the English language, however, sometimes place names and peoples’ names are misspelled, or have two or even three alternate spellings, e.g., JoAnn, JoAnna, Johanna (McClure). I attempt to replicate the original, despite possible confusion engendered, and where Whalen silently emends a previous spelling, I follow suit.
Authorial emendation  Philip Whalen frequently inserts parenthetical comments, changes, edits, deletes, etc., alongside or above the main notebook text. I have presented this as clear text in the most normative grammatical word order, or sentence order, that I could construe. When a correction or emendation made by the author is uncertain or partly undecipherable, it is given within square brackets followed by a question mark.

Editorial emendation  Editorial emendations are supplied when they are required for a clear comprehension of the autograph text. Editorial ellipses are indicated with three spaced dots within square brackets. I have tried to avoid using ellipses where they could be interpreted as altering or otherwise significantly impacting the information or events described in the original narrative.
On the Death of Ross Lockridge, Jr.

The Great American Novelist
got paid his million dollars
& now he sits there among
monoxide fumes, inhaling his
own despair
steering the immobile car
towards the latter end of time.

After living three lives
One for himself
One for the world
One on paper
& having begotten five men
Himself
& four sons
He is become wise & must die

I shall live in ignorance
& hope,
A working poet, faithful
dope.

Philip Whalen
3:VII:48
I

Circa 1950 – November 1958

Much of Philip Whalen’s early prose, including at least several journal notebooks, were destroyed by the author on May 4, 1964. The earliest intact notebook in the main collection at The Bancroft Library that escaped the flames of destruction begins with an entry dated August 4, 1957, and covers the day to day events of a hiking trip in the Sierra Nevada Mountains that Whalen and his companion and lover, Clarence Leslie Thompson (referred to as “Les,” “Leslie,” “CLT,” “T”, “Clarence,” “C,” and “Thompson”, embarked on with friends Bob Walker and Max Woods. Walker and Thompson both lived in Seal Beach, California at the time, Thompson with his first wife Rosemary. Yet Walker and Thompson didn’t drive up together from Seal Beach to Northern California, which would have spared Leslie’s car, an unreliable machine with a leaky radiator that barely survived the long drive up through Berkeley to the mountainous terrain of Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada. Although the initial journal entry is inscribed as August 4, Thompson picked up Whalen at his cottage on Milvia Street in Berkeley on Thursday, August 1. The two men then spent August 1 – 4 together, camping in Tahoe, Chris Flats, and then finally in Gray’s Meadow Camp in the eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains, near Onion Valley. This was to be their last quiet, private time together for a good stretch of time. Whalen had made a commitment to move back to Newport, Oregon on August 15 to work as a bailiff and a political

[11] In the brief biographical chronology on Whalen published in Donald Allen’s Off The Wall: Interviews with Philip Whalen (1972), the entry for 1952-1953 reads, “… Long visits to Los Angeles and environs, staying with Leslie and Rosemary Thompson, friends from Reed College.” After Philip Whalen and Leslie Thompson became lovers the Thompsons eventually divorced. A decade or more after breaking up with Philip, some time during the 1970s, Leslie Thompson married his second wife, Shirley. There is a small but significant batch of personal correspondence between them and Whalen in the archive. Thompson died in 1975.
public relations man for Judge Ben Richard Anderson (“B”, “BRA”), an old Army buddy. After their several days alone together Whalen and Thompson went back down the mountain to the town of Independence, California and met up with Walker and Woods on August 5. Now a party of four, the group hiked back up into Onion Valley, over the Kearsage Pass, and onwards to trails and camp sites in and around Matlock Lake, Bench Lake, and University Peak.

Since Whalen destroyed several reams of early journals and manuscripts (and probably correspondence) dating back to 1943, we have few formal autobiographical records of his life prior to August 1957. This might have meant that we would have no account of his five year stint at Reed College from 1946-1951, where he first met Gary Snyder and Lew Welch; no record of his first period of residence in Newport, Oregon with his friend and patron Judge Ben Richard Anderson and Ben’s wife Virginia (also cited as “Vi,” “Va,” and “V”) during 1954 and 1955, and no coverage of the historic Six Gallery poetry reading on October 7, 1955, Whalen’s public debut as a poet, memorialized by Kerouac in *The Dharma Bums* and by Michael McClure in *Scratching The Beat Surface*. But we do have a partial record of these periods in Whalen’s life in the scattered prose fragments and fiction sketches in the Columbia University archives. Some of this material is written in the style Kerouac tried to convince Whalen to experiment with – a style Kerouac referred to as “autobiographical naturalism.” While I am not aware of any record or commentary on the Six Gallery reading from Whalen’s own pen, we do have a large chunk of a novel based on his three summers as a fire lookout in Mt. Baker National Forest, a fascinating autobiographical *roman à clef* fragment, a window into his life at Reed College, and a priceless portrait of Whalen as a young boy in the small hamlet of The Dalles, Oregon.

In virtually all of these fictional works the male protagonist is based clearly and unequivocally on Philip Whalen himself, and his character is almost invariably a bisexual writer
trying to figure out the meaning of his relationship with his girlfriend or his wife within a wider social frame set in San Francisco, Portland, or the Oregon wilderness.

The early prose and correspondence provides a fairly secure and consistent foundation for my claim that during this period Whalen was highly focused on the conceptual and aesthetic problems bound up with the writing of fiction. At least one critic has commented on Whalen’s late arrival as a poet and his relatively thin output during these early years (Silliman). While I don’t particularly agree with this assessment it should be pointed out that any perceived reduction in poetic output during Whalen’s immediate post-college years, especially 1956-1958, was probably due to the quantity of time he spent writing fiction.

But he also wrote astonishingly rich poetry during the ‘pre-Kyoto’ years. Some of his best poetical works falls within this temporal frame, and quite a bit of it, upwards of 350 poems. He also wrote several stunning literary essays, commentaries, a play based on the Prometheus legend, literary correspondence, and a hefty literary journal. Astute readers will recognize Whalen’s ‘fire lookout’ or fire service novel, originally conceived of as a fictional roman à clef, because he later revised it into a work of experimental non-fiction published years later as The Diamond Noodle (1980). However, it is not a novel, as some critics have claimed (Falk 846). Whalen himself carefully referred to it as “a book of prose texts” (below, 382). Kerouac read an early draft of Whalen’s fire lookout novel and later referred to it as “that story you wrote about the mountains.”

Included here in Part I is an early piece of fiction that Whalen wrote while he was a student at Reed College, and a sketch for a possible novel or short story set in the Bay Area. I believe that he may have been planning a long, serialistic work of fiction, like Kerouac’s Legend of Duluoz, wherein all these loose ends, characters, plots, images, and strands of his several
fictional sketches, stories, and novels would eventually be tied together in one large work, or series.

Sometime during 1957 Judge Ben Richard Anderson made Philip Whalen an offer, an intrinsically problematic offer that the poet, jobless, penniless, and soon to be homeless, could not refuse. The cottage he had lived in with Kerouac and Ginsberg on Milvia Street was about to be razed. Ben and Virginia Anderson were offering Whalen a second chance, a secure and comfortable place to stay, and a well-paying job as a court bailiff. Anderson pledged that it would be an easy job for Whalen, one that would afford him plenty of time to write. On July 2, 1957 Anderson, the scion of an accomplished Portland political family, was sworn in as a judge in a new judicial district that included Lincoln County, Oregon, where the Andersons lived in the coastal city of Newport. On August 15, 1957, just five days after the end of the hiking trip with Les Thompson in the Sierra Nevada, Whalen departed the Bay Area once again for his home state of Oregon, a place he both despised and loved.

However, in addition to the bailiff job, Anderson used his political clout to have Whalen appointed publicity committee chairman of the local Democratic Party machine, which for a political careerist would have been a very worthy assignment. However, Whalen was a poet and a struggling novelist, not an ambitious PR man, and the pressure of the political work so stressed him out that he finally resigned. “The result has been,” Whalen writes in his journal, “that I waste quantities of valuable time & freedom doing nothing at all.”

In mid-March, 1958 Leslie visits Whalen in Newport. Whalen describes their time together as “a great pleasure,” yet both men apparently fret over how to live within the structure of their complex, overlapping relationships and lifestyles. Along the way we get a concise and somewhat cynical sketch of social life in small town Oregon, and several beautiful
autobiographical riffs, never before published, including intimate portraits of Whalen’s parents and relatives, summers in the family cabin on the Sandy River in northwest Oregon, a memorable poetry reading with Gary Snyder at novelist Don Carpenter’s house in Portland, and finally, a quiet “ancestral Thanksgiving” at his birthplace, The Dalles.

For students and scholars of Whalen’s poetry, the journal excerpts here in Part I are directly reflected in many of the poems published in *The Collected Poems of Philip Whalen* (2007), pages 40-108, including especially “Sourdough Mountain Lookout,” “Soufflé,” “20:VIII:58, In Which I Renounce The Notion of Social Responsibility,” and “Prose Take-Out, Portland 13:IX:58,” written the day after the poetry reading at Don Carpenter’s house. “Delights Of Winter At The Shore” (19:XII:58), “Motion Day” (29:I:59), and “Self-Portrait From Another Direction (11:II:59) chronicle Whalen’s last days in Newport, and three poems, “Take #4, 15:VIII:57,” “Harangue From Newport To John Wieners, 21:IX:57,” and “Letter, To Mme. E.T.S. (aka Tommy Sales), 2:IX:58” reference, obliquely or otherwise, his intimate relationship with Leslie Thompson. “Small Tantric Sermon” (17:IX:56) and “The Same Old Jazz” (6:II:57) paint images of Whalen making love with women, one of them perhaps tagged with the appellation of the classical Greek muse Cleo. We don’t have an historical reference to either woman in the extant journals, probably because the dates of their dalliances with Whalen fall prior to August 1957 and thus within the date range of notebooks that Whalen destroyed in 1964. However, Cleo the muse reappears in the beautiful love poem “To The Muse,” written on April 25, 1962 (CP 243). I am somewhat persuaded that this Cleo is Clarence, as in Clarence Leslie Thompson, his historical lover-muse.
There had been no food for three days. Sam had penned himself in his room, sleeping as much as possible, reading, waiting for someone to find him. Now that he had waited the proper length of time, he could legitimately begin to hunt.

He worked again at picking the lock on the gas meter but he gave it up when he noticed that the metal around the keyhole showed too many scratches. The landlady might get suspicious.

When he turned on the hot water it came out coughing and steaming. He tried to make tea with this, but it was only blood warm. He ate the last of the walnuts to cover the taste.

He supposed that by this time the landlady would be gone. She was out of the house every afternoon from one to four, doing some sort of church work. He wondered if she felt any easier about going out than he did.

There was a letter for him on the radiator in the hall. He hesitated before taking it; then certain that she would know it was gone and that even so it would make no real difference, he put it in his pocket and went out.

As he crossed the porch he saw the curtains of her window fall back into place. He walked down the steps and turned into the street thinking “Touché”.

The letter was from Pook. He read it as he walked along. Army of Occupation: Korea. They dump all the chamber pots into little carts that go out to the fields every morning. We sing to the tune of *The Road To Mandalay*:

> On the road to Yongdong Po
Where the honey-carts all go
They go past steaming while we wait in line in front of the mess-hall.

*

The bar had a white marble front with an octagonal window too small for the neon sign, “Blitz On Tap”. Sam called it after the bar-man, “George’s No-name Bar.”

It was a long narrow room with a bar on one side and on the other an endless mural: sea-green hills before which were posed disorderly clusters of red-coated hunters and their dogs. The picture was temporarily interrupted by a door near the center, and by the pink neon sign about the door: RESTRANT. There was a piano near the door. Sometimes a fat, solemn lady played the Missouri Waltz on it.

Sam and Mel had a table near the piano. There was no other customers.

Mel shook his drink and sighed. “It was particularly distressing around Thanksgiving.”

“I imagine all the holidays are bad,” Sam said.

“Uh huh. This one fellow came in— well, I’d seen him a couple times before— anyway, I made out some tickets to get him through Thanksgiving. We try to place them where they can have room and meals both— it cuts down on the paper work. Anyway, he looked at the tickets and mumbled something. I said, “What?” and he said, “Everybody knows the Great Western is fairyland” and I said, “But wouldn’t you like to spend Thanksgiving in fairyland?”

*

Em was trying to rush down Third Street but her skirt made her slow. She had an armload of books and bundles.

“Hi, Em!”
“Oh, Sam, I’m late for work again. Take these books, will you? Come on. Where have you been?”

“Home, going broke.”

They were separated for a moment by the crowd. Em was cursing her skirt.

“… can’t even walk in them, much less hurry, and a stoplight at every corner in this damn tank-town. Well, I’ll just be late then. The old bitch gets so snotty, and she complains about my reading, too. At least I’m not running out to the potty every five minutes like that other girl.”

The light changed.

“Have you had anything to eat?”

“Walnuts.”

She laughed. “Why didn’t you call us?”

“I didn’t have a nickel.”

“I’ll give you some money. Have you seen anybody?”

“No.”

They had reached the police station at last.

“Here, Sam, give me the books— no, wait. Take this money…” A man passed them, said “Hi, Em” and went into the station. She said, “Hi” and continued, “Take this and get some food. Teddy is meeting me after work; come and meet us and we’ll take you home. Did you notice that man?”

“Yes. Who was it?”
“Oh, he’s a detective. But what I mean was, he was dressed on the right.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Most men let their genitals hang down their left pants-leg. He had his dressed on the right.”

Sam laughed. “Maybe he thought it was more attractive that way.”

“I’ve gotta go. We’ll see you.” She dashed away inside, small but opulently made. She had the habit of receiving guests while in the bath… the 18th Century “informal” manner. (The effect was more Roman when she and Teddy were both in the tub while friends perched on the rim to lay pinochle with them or to scrub their backs.)

*Sauvies Island lies just north of the city, at the point where the Willamette flows into the Columbia. Large parts of it are overgrown with willows and cottonwoods, but most of it is rich farming and dairyland. There are a good many lakes formed by seepage from the river.

Hamsen’s father, a doctor, had a house on the Island near one of the lakes, where he could shoot the wild ducks in the fall of the year. Sam and Hamsen had gone there to spend a week-end away from town.

They had a small fire in the sand beside the river. Hamsen was making a new batch of coffee as Sam walked out of the water to stand by the fire. The water had been heavy and warm, but the air was chilly.

Hamsen said, “Too cold for me.”
“I like it.” Sam revolved himself near the fire until he was dry.

Hamsen smoked silently.

“One of the few nice things you can say about Portland is that you don’t have to travel too far from it to find a pleasant spot to spend the week-end.”

“It’s ok when the weather is like it has been and there’s some light. The rest of the time it’s too green and grey.”

“And wet,” Sam added.

Hamsen poked at the fire. “How are you and Jean getting along?”

“Right now, fine. She’s running around with Mel.”

“What do you want with her, anyway? You could do a little better than that.”

“Oh, I don’t know— we get along. I want to marry her.”

“That’s a great idea. What for?”

“I want a family. I’ve got to get myself squared away.”

Hamsen threw away his cigarette. “You need a family like you need a hole in the head.”

“Well, I just have a feeling…”

“Listen, Sam. Just take it easy. There’s lots of free ass floating around. Work on your poetry and let the rest just come to you, or you’ll get all fouled up. I know— I nearly did the same thing until my wife got sense enough to leave me.”

“I’m going to try— I’ve got to do something.”

“Take up hashish. Take up communism. Try cold baths.”
It was a generally unlucky week. On Sunday young Vernon smashed a finger by slamming his car-door on it. He quit the Forest Service next day and went to work in a garage in Sedro Woolley.

Monday everything got hung up. The City Light highway crew was blasting rock in the gorge; we had to wait for one of their trucks to convoy us through to Diablo. At Diablo we waited again. The big funicular lift that runs up the mountain from Diablo to the access road leading to the top of the dam was being repaired. When we finally arrived at the floating guard station on Ross Lake we discovered that the week’s supply of fresh meat had been left at the ranger station twenty-five miles away.

Tuesday, Murphy the Packer walked (he claimed) halfway up Pierce Mountain looking for his mules without even seeing one. That night the ranger was on the phone asking him if he was ready to pack the lookout up Desolation Peak and if not why not but by god Wednesday for sure.

Tuesday night Chick Marlowe came down with appendicitis. He had to walk six miles of rocky trail from Granite Creek to the Ruby Guard station where he could phone us at the float to come and get him. He had another mile to walk from the station down to the mouth of Ruby Arm where the barge picked him up, then to walk down the steeply switchbacked trail beside Ross Dam and after another boat-ride from Ross to Diablo another walk from the boat-house to the lift. He was driven over the twenty odd miles of rough road from Diablo to Marblemount
where the smooth highway leads out to Sedro Woolley, forty miles away; there is a hospital there. He was back at work in about three weeks.

Wednesday morning the Dutchman who owned the resort by Ross Dam flew Murphy the Packer over the Pierce Mountain country in his little plane. Murphy spotted the mules but when he got to them on foot they turned out to be the dude-packer’s horses. By borrowing one of these to ride he finally located his own string.

While Murphy and the Dutchman were flying around, the ranger phoned the float to explain that since the gorge road was all gowed up the Desolation trip would be put off until Thursday. The truck with the lookout supplies had left early that morning for the Canadian end of the lake and the barge should come up the lake to pick up the stuff around noon. He was also bringing the meat we had left and a load of other supplies for the float.

The Bargee and the Bull-Guard left immediately. It was a long trip, eighteen miles up the lake to the floating logging show that lay at the end of a dirt road from Hope, B.C.

They had to stop at the Ruby landing to pick up the horse raft that would carry the supplies; shoving it ahead of them all the way would cut their cruising speed. When they got back it would be all ready to receive the pack mules and horses – if Murphy had found them by that time.

So there were just three of us left on the float – Ryder, Junior and me – to do odd jobs the rest of the day and to keep the ranger happy whenever he phoned in. Ryder and I had been on the job the year before; we were both supposed to be lookouts but the weather was so wet that we had spent most of the summer doing trail maintenance work. Junior was new in the outfit, a kid
from one of the farms in the valley. He was a member of one of the great tribes of Tarheels that had begun moving into that country about forty years before, mountain people who had left the tired ground of North Carolina for the rich silt and volcanic loam of Skagit County. They brought along their rifles and their whiskey stills and their Elizabethan dialect (complete with the aspirate “h” before words beginning with “I”) to farm a little, log a little, and cook a little moon, but mostly to hunt and fish and trap among the mountains and the tall timber.

[…]

We fiddled around in the warm sunshine, tearing up the old planking from the rear end of the float, getting ready to finish the re-decking job that was about two-thirds done. None of us felt like working; Ryder was naturally lazy, Junior was a Tarheel and I am the contemplative type.

Junior said, “What you doing running around with no clothes on?”

“Yeah,” Ryder said, “Why don’t you get dressed?”

“OK. To keep from outraging your delicate sensibilities further, I shall clothe myself.” I went across the float to the bunk house with Ryder and Junior trailing along. They flopped on their sacks while I got some clean clothes from my pack and put them on.

Junior said, “You and your big ideas.”

Ryder said, “Ah, shut up, Junior.”

I said, “What’s the trouble Ryder? You been straining that giant brain again?”

“Fuck you, Red.”

“Be the best piece of ass you ever had,” I said.

Junior guffawed.
Mr. Englehart’s Living Room, Albany, Calif.

As I understand it, he is a lawyer. Wife & one visible child. They are Jewish, professional class, probably own their house. Books in bookshelf: medical & medico-legal texts, & BMOC novels. Blue Period Picasso harlequin over the mantle-piece, (reproduction) original etchings (poor) two original undistinguished (presumably local or family) oil paintings. Real linen tablecloth and napkins. Heavy but mixed silver. Real china. Mixed but expensive crystal. Vat 69 Scotch, assorted liqueurs. Good local wines. Other guests: two impressive doctors from Boston. (rich) Mr & Mrs Mort Sahl (Mort is a comedian in the cabarets, some TV). Mr & Mrs Mark Schorer (the literary Schorer). Mr. Herbert Feinstein, brother in law to Mr Englehart. Mr Feinstein’s close friends, married students. Heavy wall-to-wall carpet, heavily padded underneath. Poor phonograph (Chopin). Marlborough [sic] cigarettes in universal use. Democratic & Zionist politics. Price and quality of men’s shoes. Silly attempts at literary conversation. Price & quality of different automobiles. Ultimate aims: more gracious living, money.

friends. Marijuana. Travel. good middle class Portland origination. Ultimate aims: more freedom, knowledge, possible creative activities.


Shandel Parks living room in San Francisco: partially self-employed career girl. Divorced, no children. Jewish, but liberated from it. Some good original paintings and prints. Mixture of good books. Fair phonograph. Unimpressive tableware. Interesting furniture. Bibelots. Excellent food and drink. Guests of every description & occupation. All more or less intimate friends of Mrs Parks but seldom more than acquaintances to each other… parties of any size tend to form tight groups of mutual friends who observe other tight groups with Mrs Parks the only connection, floating from one to the next, introducing and chatting but unable to bring about much mixing. Conversation and gossip of all sorts. Ultimate aims: eventual re-marriage (?), preservation of the physical status quo, learning of various orders, meeting and combining new acquaintances. Lions are there but not by design. They like it there.
Tommy Sales living room (before divorce). Business woman & *bas bleu*. One daughter. Rich pre-Depression background, not poor thereafter, quietly independent means since 1952. Good original paintings and prints. Excellent books. Excellent record collection (her husband’s). Handmade pottery dishes, Danish silver, fair domestic crystal. Rented apartment. Good modern furniture. Modest automobile. Excellent food and drink. Liberal democratic politics. Guests either friends, family or business acquaintances who must be entertained & manipulated. No lion hunting, but lions come one at a time & are introduced to a single couple or chance caller. Some lines drawn like this: old friends invited to meet new ones, old friends singly or in very small groups, IMPORTANT business guests and a few friends in the same line of work; in any case careful not to mix old friends & Important Business or old friend and possible uncongenial new acquaintances (uncongenial according solely to her own notions… the people concerned may already have met elsewhere). Business, politics, the arts, gossip. Ultimate ambition, to make money enough to devote all of her time to being a *saloniere*. Pleasure. Education of daughter.


The other houses I know are those of poets, & they are surprisingly decent, paid for mostly by their wives or their own jobs. Some are cleaner than others.

Mr. Locke McCorkle’s house in Mill Valley. Wife & two children. Carpenter, student, philosopher. Furnished by chance. Excellent phonograph & books. No paintings. Guests mostly poets, philosophers and intellectuals of all grades, and heads. Mediocre food, variable drink. Aims, freedom, learning, sex, satori. In comparison with other houses in this list, its physical equipment is on a par with that of Hatch, poorer in things than most.

I have books, two typewriters, alarm clock, junk. House is best I have lived in since leaving my father. Most guests must sit on the floor although there are three chairs they are hard to sit in. Two tables. Yard & garden unkempt. Porch rotting away. Walls inside dirty grey. Visits here by most of the above would annoy or shock them… “enormously poor.”
Bancroft Notebook 1
Sierras 1957

Sunday 4 August 1957

Gray’s Meadows Camp
Inyo Nat’l Forest

Near Independence, California

Sitting on the north bank of Independence Creek – damp grass, gnats, rosebushes, what appear to be evergreen oaks – just under the Kearsage Pass. Granite peaks 13,000 ft. & elevation to the West – Kearsage Peak, Mt. Williamson, Mt Pinchot, University Peak &c. – The Mt. Whitney – Kings Canyon group. Very hot & dry at this elevation 6100+.

We are waiting for Bob Walker, who will arrive in Independence tomorrow, from Seal Beach – bearing fishing poles, packs, camp equipment. We plan to hike up the Onion Valley to Matlock Lake. I hope to have the energy &/or time to cross (or reach the summit of) Kearsage Pass.

We left Berkeley, in Thompson’s cranky Plymouth, on 1:VIII:57 for Tahoe. Camped that evening at Bay View G.S., above Emerald Bay. Hiked a mile inland to Granite Lake on 2:VIII (saw a great buck from the trail) then left Tahoe area via Luther Pass & Nevada for the next camp – Chris Flats camp on the Upper Walker River – a sandy, willow bar in a rock canyon. Fine trout river, pleasant swimming – very hot during the day. 3:VIII, left Chris Flats & travelled here via Mono Lake, with a side trip to Twin Lakes in the east Yosemite country.

The car. It has worried Les since we started – since he bought it, in fact. Somehow it got over two 8000 + ft. passes then stalled on the six mile road between Independence & this place,
the radiator leaks water. And it must be driven out of here & back to Berkeley. . . Les hasn’t enjoyed himself much, on account of it – will it break down & c. (we have no money)

I’m tired today – traveling through hot high country yesterday, swimming & walking – more altitude today, smoking too much I suppose – I’ll take a nap later. It’s too hot to walk around here & there’s a long hike ahead tomorrow.

Even so, the pleasure of being in the mountains again outweighs all the drawbacks. Haven’t been really away from town for almost exactly 2 years.

Here, like the summers I worked on the Skagit, I am conscious of little more than the absolute present. I feel free of the past & from myself. There is a continuous roar of water & a slight breeze, & I breathe & digest food noisily but “I” has temporarily stopped his usual noisy clamor, feelings of irritation, frustration, ambition, remorse, &c. The view of mountains. The view of mountains, the immediate trees & water, & at night the stars – all can be looked at for any length of time & enjoyed as themselves. They require nothing – I feel that I require nothing either. I’ve been taught that they are beautiful, so I consider them so – but for me, they are useful: they destroy “ME”, & cut me loose to drift, high as a kite “high on mountains & poetry”, like Snyder wrote in his book.

The question is, who is writing this now, having these feelings, notions? Naturally, the same collection of habits & history that exists wherever this person happens to be.

Les feels confused, upset. Sleeping & eating outside brings back his war memories – all of them bad. He says “the mountains intimidate me.” He feels all sorts of misgivings about the trip ahead, the walk itself, & the country is alien to him. Probably his memory feels Germans behind every rock & bush – feels that he’s walking into an ambush, into possible extinction any second of time.
I’m aware that all of us are doing just that anyway, wherever we happen to be, but I don’t care as much, or think I don’t care – or keep practicing not caring – whatever…

At Chris Flats, while swimming, I came quite near to a water ouzel running about on the bank – small, very neat grey & white bird with a delicate head, beak & legs.

Just now I was sitting very near the water, meditating on “To what is the one reduced” when Les, who’d been lying here writing said, “There we are” & put his notebook aside. The sound of his voice gave me a great shock – Now a fisherman is directly across the stream & Les has brought goodies for lunch. I look up from this & the fisherman . . . isn’t there. Tall man with a tan Nimitz cap & sunglasses – looks like Boris Karloff.

* 

Clarence is invested by a cold & boredom. He has fantastic plans for fishing – found a piece of leader & tied loops at the ends & has a pole picked out. Now he wants a hook. “Do I have a pin? No. When it is cool we shall walk to 7 Pines & buy a fishing license & some hooks. (Found a jar of salmon eggs already) We shall have fish for supper. We are running out of food, hungry &c.” Now, it is this – we will try to drive the car to 7 pines – uphill, the whole way. Will the car do it, worry worry worry. Bore bore bore &c. He watches for fish in the creek.

The expedition was abortive. 7 Pines is a USFS summer home tract. Now Les has whittled a fish-hook from a twig & is fishing with that, & agitating for food – although the stove is in the hot sun & a strong wind is blowing down the pass – say 4 PM – possibly 5 ?

[…]


We are {9:35 AM} parked in the shade beside the Inyo County Courthouse & Eastern California Museum. An Indian in Levis, chambray shirt, felt hat & work shorts follows a power mower around the courthouse lawn. He also wears long wide sideburns. Independence, Calif. Pop. 1000, the usual fish-skeleton shaped western small town – a mainstreet spine with short cross-streets (the rib-bones.)

Another Indian runs a lawn-edger beside the walkways, similarly dressed, except for hat & sideburns. These are both possibly trustees from the county jail across the lawn, a messy 1920s stucco “mission” with an antique jail in back & Sherriff’s office in front.

The other door to the same building leads to a lawyer’s office. Other principal buildings – a Masonic Hall with tall, warped doors – one bearing a huge bronze knocker – the building a sort of Georgian undecorated. The American Legion Hall, at the opposite (south) end of town is probably grey stucco but looks like it had been poured concrete – ca. 1920? Ugly & square with gable ends. Historical monument on Market St., site of Mary Austin’s home & a quote from The Land of Little Rain {QV} Across the street from the Courthouse, the Winnedumah Hotel, very small pink stucco building about the size of a large house in Piedmont. According to the Austin monument that lady sat in her house telling anyone who asked all about the trails, roads & people for miles around. A useful gossip – now there is an Austin’s Television Sales & Service across the street from the sherriff’s [sic] office.
Walker arrived with his friend, Max Woods, a grade-school principal & rock-hound. After a hamburger & a confused last minute shopping tour, we drive up a winding dirt road past 7 Pines to Onion Valley, where we stop to make up our packs.

A fine trail uphill from Onion Valley (views of peaks & waterfalls) to Gilbert Lake. We talked with a hiker & his wife who were on their way over the Kearsage Pass. A couple pack-strings passed – several parties camping at Gilbert. An easy trail to Flower Lake & a few more campers, then a steep ridge – & we are HERE at Matlock Lake (10,000 ft. +) -- at the foot of University Peak (13,000 +) – clean water – cypress & alpine fir, heather, marebele (?) tiny daisys – soft grass meadows. Walker & I walked a few thousand yards to Slim Lake, in a nearby cirque – Les & Max are fishing – then supper & everyone but me fishes. I climb the ridge to the west -- & or 500 ft. to Bench Lake then along the granite top of the ridge for a general view, Kearsage Peak & the Pass to the North, the University massif West & South, Bench Lake in its cirque, Matlock Slim & beyond Matlock to the East, 2 smaller lakes -- & down East, the Owens Valley & the Inyo Mountain Range. Everything seen clear & brightly colored as if I were on peyote – general “high” feeling.’ Walker plans to spend a day going over the pass to see into the main Sierra & Kings Canyon country. Although the sun has been down beyond the west ridges for an hour or so, a clear, soft light is reflected into this cirque by the high wall of University & the southeast ridge of it. I feel tired from my climb & walk – but very good, “high” -- & at home. Max has caught a couple fish, nice speckled rainbow ? trout – first blood. Bob says, “Brooks,” i.e. brook trout. While he was camping alone here he spent a day at Bench Lake – he characterizes it as “austere,” “spooky,” the “abode of the Abominable Snowman.” I say it is worth being alone, the spooky feeling.
Tuesday 6:VIII:57  I have read a little – bits of Wei Lang & other Mahayana material, meditated some. Everyone is (mid PM) at Bench Lake, fishing – only 4 small fish – 2 brook & 2 rainbow, about 6”, Leslie seems happier. Bob has headaches, Max isn’t complaining. Bob wonderfully incompetent camp-cook. This a.m. he was cooking raw eggs & bacon in one pan at the same time instead of letting the bacon grease the pan first – only the bacon could be saved. Pray god the beans I’m to prepare tonight don’t burn.

Bob & I spent most of the morning walking around the nearby lakes on the level with Matlock. On all sides there is fairly open parkland & meadow. Trees kept by altitude to heights of about 25 – 30 feet at most. Quite a number have been struck by lightning or some blight. Bob says they are junipers but they look like alpine types of pine & fir &c. to me – 1 ½” needles in bundles of 5, smooth reddish silver bark, roundish scales towards the bottom of trunk, small flattish cones 1 ½ x 2. The blasted trees show bright orange through lemon shades of wood. Naturally very tough.

Odd birds, size of California jay – black wings, black & light buff striped tail, light buff head & body, long black needle beak. Looks a little like a gull. Makes a continuous squawking like a crow whose voice hasn’t fully developed. They’re eating bugs &/or nuts off the tops of trees & squawking. Plenty of deer tracks in the meadow at west end of Slim Lake. None sighted yet. No conies, but plenty chipmunks & gold ground squirrels.

[...]
\* 

8:VIII:57 \{cont’d from above\} and down, & onto a ridge above Bullfrog overlooking the Vidette Meadows, Bubbs Creek, Center Basin – the Kings-Kern Divide country – Mt. Brewer 1400+ &c. […] Bob & I borrowed salt from a boys camp at Bullfrog, picked up Max & back over the pass – met the 3 packers on the way. Tired & hungry – & a large supper & bull session.

This AM I felt mouldy -- & still do. Altitude & fatigue, I suppose.

A group of 5 boys left this AM, after having spent the night & caught more fish than our entire party.

I suppose it’s possible I have let the country beat me – it is bigger than I am, I’m helpless &c. – on the subconscious level anyway. Leslie was conscious of this earlier. At the same time, from the Pass you could see that we covered a relatively small piece of ground. By direct line, between Matlock & Bullfrog the distance is actually about 4 miles or less – but the intervening ridges are straight up & down.

The weather has been remarkably clear & warm. I am a little more comfortable in the shade today – getting acclimatized. I wish I weren’t feeling so bushed. Later I’ll try a walk around the lakes on our elevation.

Now I’m on the N. shore of the lake just E. of Matlock. Max is fishing Matlock & Bob is sketching & Les is writing in his book.

Yesterday, climbing the Pass from the West side – each water-bar in the trail seemed an insurmountable barrier. I could lift one foot at a time far enough off the ground to walk – but raising a foot the extra 4 or 5 inches to get over a water-bar was a hopeless task – real despair would set in.
Further problems today & Tuesday – slight agoraphobia, a strong desire to disrobe, feelings of power, & of sexual desire unaccompanied by priapism.

[...]

Later – all of us swim together, white & small in the same pond. After lunch, here we are at Bench Lake, about 500 ft. above our camp.

9:VIII:57  All of us are feeling good today & there is talk now of hating to leave here tomorrow. From where I’m sitting, high on the West bank of Bench Lake I can see the Inyo Mts. in the distance – down through the gap where the creek falls out of the lake. The lake water is clear dark green with, at this side, huge granite boulders tumbling into the water. Les and Max fish in the deep hole below me & Bob is sketching, crouched by a boulder down below at my right. A hundred feet from him is a patch of snow trapped in the rocks.

2:25 AM  10:VIII:57  – Home & fed & bathed, after hiking down the hill to Onion Valley, & driving more or less straight through from Independence to Berkeley via Bakersfield.

First impression – that this house is very small & belongs to no one. John Chance had been here {sox on the bathtub, typewriter out, a box of oatmeal, etc.}

2nd – a wish to be outside, out of doors – a real fit of claustrophobia – & of fatigue, nervousness, & a curious detachment.

3rd – my hearing is very acute & I have aural hallucinations of footsteps outside, voices while the bath-water was running – the voices of Les, Bob & Max.
4 – general feeling of coming down, my mind grasping, trying to keep the mountain feeling.

Terrible vision on the trail coming down – there were ravens about -- & one was swimming in Gilbert lake – his wings sweeping, sculling the water like a man doing a breast-stroke. The other birds payed [sic] no attention. Was it hurt, hung up on a fish-line, hounded by the rest into the water – or simply bathing in order to drown his parasites? He didn’t seem desperate, made no sound. He held his head high out of the water and pulled himself along the surface, with strong, slow flaps of his wings. We were afraid we were scaring him away from shore – he seemed to swim more weakly – so we left.

[...]

Newport 1957
20:VIII:57

Newport Oregon, a reopening of this journal after a new journey.
The cottage in Milvia St. is closed. Ben came on the 15th, & on the 16th removed me & all the moveable contents of the cottage to this place, specifically his house 3 miles south of the town. The house stands on a low bluff, sheltered by two sand hills, N & S, & faces the sea, which roars.

The trip via 101 began at 7:15 PM on 16:VIII & was completed ca. 1 PM 17:VIII. The redwood country, Ukiah to Crescent City, magical even at night. Sawmills make that part of Northern Calif. a part of home – the Sierras, short of water, & lacking mills & loggers, are alien mountains. We stopped somewhere in mid career for coffee in a roadside tavern that was the first taste of home – knotty wood paneling, noisy beer-drinkers, cowboy jukebox. In Fortune, a small
town, we stopped again – ca. 3 AM – rowdy after-dance (saturday) crowd in the greasy spoon where we were. Vi was scared – they were loud, vulgar, liable to start a fight &c. (same at the previous tavern)

[…]

21:VIII:57

the raven in Gilbert Lake – part of the dark water gathering itself, a wave forming without any visible cause

23:VIII:57 I’ve spent the day in the studio – a wing added onto the house, narrow windows at one side & the end, & slanted clerestory windows to the east. Reading an old book. . . i.e. one I’ve read before (Eyeless in Gaza) & drinking wine until it is impossible to do anything but write nonsense here or go to sleep. Although the sun is shining, it’s too windy to walk on the beach.

There are six or seven letters I shd. write, as well as a lot of unfinished poetry to work at – but nothing seems possible at the moment, I feel too much en l’aire.

Just went to pick up another pipe. The phonograph is playing Chopin, Va is reading The Oregonian, B. is supine in his bedroom. George Berthelou was fond of saying, “Mother of God, what will become of us all?” To be as Huxleyan as possible for the moment, the trouble is, we have all become – what we are at the moment -- & “it is not enough,” or I don’t think so.

I’ve discovered in myself something of Jack’s need for being partially drunk or high – either more or less self-conscious, aware, “on” – I’ll write to him about it. And the announcement to Allen that the cottage is gone.12

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12 The cottage at 1624 Milvia was apparently torn down and replaced by a larger multi-unit apartment structure.
I must say this, although I’ve avoided putting it here for various reasons – that it’s almost uncanny – certainly irrational – that the situation of two years ago should be reproduced – i.e. my being in B’s house again, considering the trouble & expense B was put to in the spring of 1955 getting me out of it. For myself, it is a temporary solution of the problem of how to get a living – very fortunate & easy, but for him & for Va, it appears to me like a monstrous complication, the deliberate duplication of a past mistake.

Va just brought me a great slab of hot pizza with anchovy, delightful with my wine. Time out now, for a second piece. Bloch violin sonatas on the phonograph – pleasant. & a third. I had to wash anchovy from under my fingernails, partial-plate, et cetera.

[…]

There is a piano here, an old Chickering upright that groans & twangs but not too terrible for me to spend lots of time monkeying with in my usual, feeble way. It offers an excellent escape.

This studio as whole seems to be the intended solution to everything. As I understand it, I’m supposed to have sense enough to stay in it – or in “my” bedroom: very well, I accept. Many thanks, &c.

Now I’ve hooked up my little radio – some concerto grosso of the XVIIIieme comes out – + or – some interference from other stations. The chief difficulty is a slight headache from this wine. Shall I take a speedball? &c.

It was a Sonata #3 of Corelli.

Peculiar how jazz is an urban sound. In this place, practically in the surf, it has the effect of coming from a closed room; an airless space in the midst of a city, the dirty, crowded, downtown section where the only thing alive is that music, which in turn is expressing
something dead or dying. Music from Plato’s cave. Anyhow it seems out of context here – but all
this is a split I’ve made for myself, probably not a “universal truth”

28:VIII:57

I am hungry or nervous. I gather that Va is growing nervous about my being here & will
remain so until I find a place where I can live in town. She spent the day in town yesterday &
that seems to have made her jittery as it always did. She felt ill this morning – but then she’d
been juicing all last evening (not on the wine coolers B has permitted her, & which she drinks all
day while she’s around the house – 1 can frozen pink lemonade, a pint or so of water, ½ pt. of
wine) on straight burgundy. She can’t be jealous again – B & I haven’t spoken 2 words to each
other since we met in Berkeley. He spends a great deal of time reading or sleeping. This week
he’s been in town all day. It is a little inconvenient for me to be away from town – I must ask
him to bring me small necessities, mail my letters, etc. Even walking on the beach I feel shut
away. […]

It still seems essential to B to felt hat he’s in control of everything.

 […]

Now it is after supper & again I sit in the studio. B has built a fire on the beach & walks
& sits by it, Va sits in the living room. This afternoon I went with B to the courthouse to look
around & meet people – Catherine the court reporter, Ray Hoover & his wife – (the jailer). &
one of the members of the County Court. We took a couple of dishes of coffee in Mr. Hoover’s
quarters. All these people are pleasant & dull, although Hoover has knocked around enough to
know a lot of stories. From there to the store & then to the boat moorage, where Rich Chatterton
conducted us over the sailing schooner 36’, property of Phillip Johnston of Salem – very tight little ship. [illeg.] And back here for supper & a driftwood gathering party – & so to this.

I wrote to Jack – back in Florida from Mexico, having {grâce à dieu} come through the Mexican earthquake, but sick with a strep infection. Long letter accompanied by mss. from LaVigne – stimulating letter, with outline of an excellent poem in 4 parts about his immediate country-side, & its history (mixed with his own present feelings & takes). […]

* 28:IX:57

New situation. I’ve been here in “my own place” for a little more than a week – small 3 room shack {kitchen-sitting-room, bedroom & bath} #3 of three Panama Cottages, a whilom Auto Court – but more like a tiny suburb, since one other house beside this one is “permanently” occupied, & the other one open to transients […] This is at the bottom of the hill from the courthouse & fairly near to the Nye Beach. The street outside is the old 101 Highway. Listening to classical music from KNX Los Angeles {now: Lotte Lenya singing Kurt Weill’s 7 Deadly Sins.} I’ve written one footling poem & a few letters here, & continue to feel disconnected – for no good reason. A while ago, I was taxing myself on my inflexibility – that I can’t adjust easily to changes of place & habit of living, while knowing that I’ll never have a place to settle in permanently, a home – but that’s a sentimental & self-pitying notion. {Miss Lenya sings German nonsense about “Mississippi”, “Lweeseeana”, “Loz Angeles” “Pheeladel’phya” from the pen of Herr Brecht} Some sort of identity problem, I think – that is, connected with writing – I can’t stay interested in what I think about what I see, what I believe – I can’t see myself &
don’t want to? I want to believe that I am as unsubstantial as the world I see {& it’s true} but I must be going about it in the wrong way. Otherwise I doubt I’d feel so hung up in so many ways. I think I can break out of all this & come up with something, even so… I usually do. What bothers me is the sense of its taking an unconscionable amount of time to do so.

* * *

Sketches for a Novel
Bancroft Box 10

7:X:57

I keep thinking & wondering about John Hall – I see him fairly often & of course I begin wondering again.

The general facts: After years of law practice, JH entered the state legislature & gradually worked his way up to being – {speaker of the house or chairman of the senate, whichever it was}. He held this office for several years; then one day, the three chief executives of the state were killed simultaneously in an airplane crash – the Governor, Sec’y of State, & {speaker of the house or chairman of the senate, whichever} -- & Mr. John Hall became Governor. He served out the term (ending 1948?) & either lost the ensuing election or didn’t run.

This year (or last?) he served on a committee or lobby interested in creating a new judicial district – #21 (after having moved to Newport a couple years ago) – B. asserts that it was with the understanding or at least the hope of being appointed to the Bench should the measure pass. It passed, & B. was appointed – the GOP wdn’t back JH for the job.

Now he strikes me as a man in a quandary. 1) he has known power & honor & it is vanished  2) he feels he must appear untouched but he looks outraged & keeps a cynical face  3)
he knows he is extraordinary in some way & is annoyed that it doesn’t show – not enough people show either awe, respect or even interest 4) at times he seems arrogant, at others simply defeated (unfairly) & outraged. (especially while trying a law case)

Anyway this is another angle on my old “everything – & nothing” notion. After being something, now here he is, past middle age, practising law again – having to address another (as it happens, younger) man as “your honor,” to plead with a jury, to be available to whomever chooses to buy his services as an attorney – “working for a living”, a sort of king in exile scene.

I keep wanting to write something out of this but I haven’t any idea about how to begin.

Columbia 19,12
17:1:58 Take I

The trip down the Columbia Gorge, vine maple alter tangle & waterfalls among the basalt domes & pinnacles winding high above the river – I’d be sick the first time at Rowena Loops, only 15 miles from home, still in the high dry rimrock & open groves of east slope yellowpine and again at Mitchell Ponit & finally, if I had any breakfast left, on the big switchbacks & meanders of Crown Point & stop at the Vista House on top {the million dollar lavatory} to wash & look over the stonework edge up & down the river, flat, wide & silent far below, a strayed chunk of Sung Dynasty landscape. So traveling always makes me sick, but I always go because I usually like the place I stop in – except when we drove all afternoon around [illeg.] red bank fern & blackberry burnt over country somewhere back of Portland, the slopes of Mt Pisgah to see old Mr Daigler & his 8 finger Chinese cook – 3 days picking blackberries & boiling jam & jelly in thick August heat – unbearable humid Willamette Valley summer {Lottie whooped & rushed into the house, to undress, “Another of those goddam hot flashes”}
20:I:58 Take 1

One \{1\} is the first mistake, because it is more than itself, it implies Not One – two different things \{1\} & \{-1\} – and since 1 & -1 can be considered, a third possibility is “Neither” \{call that “0”\}, neither 1 nor -1.

One is supposed to be uncontrovertible, Two a logical necessity, Three a conceivable result but beyond that, Absurdity.

I say One is questionable, Two is theoretical, & Three – unthinkable.

Bancroft Notebook 1
Newport, Oregon
16:III:58

& was removed from there back to the beach house, from about 17 November until the 2\textsuperscript{nd} week of January when I was installed in this place, a bijou apartment in buildings belonging to B, situated across the street from the courthouse.

Thompson has just paid me a visit & departed. Seeing him was a great pleasure, I’ve been lonely & blank for about a month… He still works in Hollywood at ETS, & worries as I do about how to live, what to do. We plan another trip to the Sierras – unless I happen to be accepted by the Forest Service for a summer job – I’ve applied for Crater Mtn. Lookout in the Upper Skagit region – looking forward to a possible return to that scene with mixed feelings, but how else can I raise money easily & remove myself gracefully from this present quasi-sticky situation? \{it is currently stickier than usual. I’ve had a bad cold or small flue for nearly a week, I’ve resigned \{after 4 days\} as publicity chairman of the local Democratic central committee – a position B thought I should have, & which he had suggested \{commanded?\} to the committee
chairman that it be thrust upon me. I said yes, unthinkingly, & as usual for me, realized several
days later that it was a 24-hour a day job that as a project it was 6 weeks behind schedule & only
complete devotion & concentration & self sacrifice (MY OWN – BLOOD &c.) could possibly
bring it off – I cringed & shuddered at the thought, & resigned. Now, B was of opinion that that
job would be instructive & entertaining, that it would be tantamount to my having personal
control over the whole party organization, that this might be the start of a fabulously successful
career in Public Relations & Advertising, that MY FORTUNE WOULD BE MADE. &c.

Since I have thrown it over, B undoubtedly in his own warped way probably considers
my action as another personal betrayal – again, someone he has worked very hard to help has
“turned on him”. However, it is an action consistent with his notion of my character, the idea that
I am “afraid of success” &c. In every way this Newport
scene has been the failure I imagined it might be. I came here because I thought I should,
believed I couldn’t conscionably refuse, considering all the past favors I owe to B. Coming here
I simply became further indebted to him; I can’t begin to repay even the least of his
beneficences. The moral of all this seems to be that good & bad actions are to be observed &
used as models for one’s own behavior – a simple response isn’t enough. Nevertheless I’ve spent
a great deal of time having to listen to B & V recount endless instances of B’s having squandered
his generosity on unworthy objects. I feel obliged to classify myself with these, mistakenly or
not.

Contrariwise, I refuse to believe now as I refused 3 years ago, that I am capable of
deceiving him, conning him – he is much more intelligent than I. He’s known me for many
years, seen me & my actions & reactions in a great number & variety of situations. He isn’t,
however, immune to self-deception – suppose that out of boredom with his own clarity of vision,
out of a willful disregard for his own knowledge & experience he refuses to see me as I am? And sometimes I amuse him – does he suppose “Well, all amusements are expensive… P. is expensive but I can afford the amusement”? And he knows from past experience that the amusement can be turned off, dismissed & picked up later….

As I understand it, he proposed that I should come here where there was a comfortable place to live & an easy job that would leave me time to write, & that I might possibly be helpful in planning his political campaign, that I might find this last entertaining if not (as already noted) a start in a new profession, if I chose. The result has been that I waste quantities of valuable time & freedom doing nothing at all. The political planning is largely in the hands of Ben Sr., & professional pols. I can’t stay interested in my own projects, much less in politics, even though I suppose I should, out of gratitude &c be working myself to the bone on the political scene.

I can’t. Time away from the bailiff job is short enough – there is scarcely time to waste comfortably, much less in which to write anything but the few scattered poems & sheets of babble I’ve done since my arrival.

[...]

**Columbia 19,**
**29:III:58**

So what can happen in such a landscape? You sit around or stand around being sensitive & quiet, with occasional outbursts of hysteria. Very feeble response. Or explore it & enjoy looking at it, another passive kind of reaction. Unless you are actively falling off the edge of it or drowning in the rivers and creeks.
Most of the dramatics is internal. There was a watch in a desk pigeonhole. The hands walked around a completely blank white dial, the numbers were raised chrome set in black enamel round the outside. It meant a great deal to me, I didn’t know why then, ..; it was appealing to my future (present) prejudices on the subject of TIME, the watch a small interesting, perfect machine that ran as long as the spring was wound up, & that was the end of it… no connection with anything, least of all with the numbers 1 through 12 painted on it, a forced connexion with an abstract world of arithmetic, & an expression of the culture which surrounded me, all that kind of nonsense.

I liked to carry it, although I was forbidden to, it was a sample my father was supposed to carry with him to show to the merchants he called on, but he never carried it & I thought I needed a watch. I adopted it, packed it around with me on the days my father was out of town. I’d return it to the desk before he got back.

Spent the afternoon with Albert… one of my few friends, a genius like myself, he read books, played clarinet, knew about operas & symphonies (in this landscape, remember the rocks, mountains, Indians, River, arid except for the trees lining the streets of the town & the scrub-oak & pines covering the hill behind, the public schools staffed by infanticidal cranks)… we worked with the miniature theater he had built with a part of his Erector set, scraps of cloth, christmastree lights, cardboard… On the wall above us was a pair of curious pictures in oval frames with bulging glass, medieval battle scenes worked in creamy-white plaster, very high relief moulding. A pleasant afternoon, mixed clouds and sun, a light breeze walking home under the trees.
My parents were in the front room, talking. I went out to sit on the front porch… no one was around, even the neighborhood dogs were out of sight. The colors of everything shifted and changed in the slanting late-afternoon sun and clouds, the little poplar tree near the house a continuous liquid rushing sound like a small creek flowing past that end of the porch. I leaned back to stare into the sky, leaned back with a crunching noise in my back pocket… reached in to dig out the mangled carcass of Albert’s watch. How did it get there… & now, broken & expensive…

I was afraid but I told my parents. “It’s Albert’s watch, I don’t know how it got there.”

My mother said: “You’d better sit there until you can think how it did.”

“I don’t know what’s going to become of you,” she said. She looked aboth annoyed and hurt.

I could think of nothing to say. Complete misery. My parents were silent, looking at me. We all sat very still.

“I don’t know how it got there,” I repeated.

It was very strange, completely unlike some of the scenes of the past, where my mother wept and my father raged. They both sat, outraged as ever in the past, but undemonstrative now, silent injudgment.

“You don’t know,” my father said. “You go around in a dream most of the time, lately. It’s time you started waking up.”

“I didn’t steal it,” I said. I was sick with confusion.

“Well, how did it get into your pocket?”, my father asked; “You must have picked it up.”

I said, “I remember looking at it, but I put it back. I don’t know how it got in my pocket… unless Albert slipped it in for a joke…”
My mother looked out the window and sighed. My father got up and went to his desk, looked inside for a moment and returned with his sample watch. “I’ve told you before about this watch business and about leaving my desk alone. From now on you’re to stay away from that desk. You better give Albert this watch.”

My mother said, “You’d better call him first and explain all about this before you go… tell him you took his watch.”

I went to the telephone…

Maybe that was the first adult day. There’s a temptation to make a great takeout at this point about how the Erinyes became the Eumenides right then with a lot more classical and poetical animadversions on the scene, “a long train of mythological imagery such as a College easily supplies”, as Dr Johnson says. The real story is that I probably realized then the complete breakdown of communications between generations. Or I realized at last that the world I inhabited really was unique, different from that of everyone else, had been living there unconsciously while the real world, the official world was doing something else. Certainly I hadn’t consciously stolen that watch. I can only suppose now that to my unconscious mind & fears the watch was out of place on Albert’s bureau, it’s proper place was in my father’s desk, (that being a day when my father was at home), & into my pocket it went in order to be restored to its proper place in the world at the first available opportunity. Now I sound like S. Augustine fussing about those green pears thirty years too late… and I’m so fond of supposing I’ve invented myself, that I’m not an “expression of the culture”, like that watch, that I can’t be easily supplied by the nearest College.

Well, what else? […]
Staring at the east front of the Wasco County Courthouse by moonlight, its heavy false-Roman portico meaning something like “history is real”, “true nobility” is gone from the earth”, &c. probably carrying home from the library a mess of translations of Catullus & Co. Later I used to walk up the same street after a school dance, very happy to be walking with a girl I liked or feeling an enormous self-pity because she had gone home with someone else. The building was no longer of any importance.

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It’s hard to remember why I’m writing this. Then I remember J. & all the other friends who’ve asked me, “What happened to you, what was it like there, how did you get here? & into your present condition?”

***

I kept traveling, for instance to Cannon Beach. One particular summer there was very great because I wasn’t alone, there were a couple girls, distant cousins. We hiked and swam & rollerskated. (This was before the forests north of the town were burnt.) No specific memories, only general ones… the mile or so of forest trail through heavy timber to Indian Beach, white sand hemmed in by forest on one side & two rocky points a quarter mile apart… very little more than a recollection of sunny days, warm evenings and the music from the skating-rink, “Where Or When.”

***

Part of any summer I was at “The Cabin”, a big barn the family had built in a summer-home tract about 20 miles from Mt Hood. It was begun just before the Depression, my father & some of my mother’s relatives all chipping in to buy the ground and the materials. They built it themselves,
with double floors and double exterior walls, but all the money ran out before the interior was finished. The result was something like a Grange-hall or a big dance hall… a big room with casement windows down both sides, a door, sink and big wood stove at one end and a tall oval tin door in the middle of the east wall, intended to be the main entrance. Long handmade trestle table with benches, for eating. Large round table for card-playing. Fat table-model sprintwound phonograph that used to be ours before we had a radio. Long leather settee, with matching Morris-chair, ditto. Miscellaneous chairs & beds. There were no houses on either side, only deep woods. Several other summer homes on the other side of the road, but seldom occupied. Trees on the east side of our own lot, but cleared on the West to let light in & make room for a vegetable garden, some yeaers. Outhouse. Woodshed, a roof on four poles.

Memories of the place bulging full of relatives & friends, eating & drinking & dancing, playing pinochle, and of being there quite along in the green tree-light of early morning.

***

Wandering around in the woods I discovered vine maple trees divided into parallel planes of green light, wood-sorrel a moving mosaic pavement, beds of complicated moss… doug fir & hemlockcedar and big-leaf maple, alder and larch… the Cascade Rainforest.

After a walk, the river, the Sandy, milky with volcanic ash, the stones of its bed, granite and scoria, diorite, its tributarie [sic] creeks clear mountain downhill springwater swift over mossy rocks & under fallen logs, trout and crayfish water, periwinkles… places to sit and watch moving water, eating berries, maybe swimming if I found a hole big enough… doing absolutely nothing but feeling completely at home & completely free, a strange combination of excitement and complete security.
My aunt & uncle had a farm in the Willamette Valley. The general scene is Constable…
sometimes Corot… placid, medium-sized river down the middle. Groves of oak trees. Clumps of
fir. Fat rolling hills. I couldn’t go out of the house without getting into trouble, I’d leave a gate
open & the calf would get out, or a door open and the chickens would come in, or I’d be over my
shoe-tops in mud & manure. There was hay there & I developed, after having stayed there weeks
at a time during various seasons & hated it thoroughly enough, hay-fever & asthma which
released me from being required to visit the place mmore than a few days at a time. Still don’t
like farms. Beautiful country, nevertheless. People tell me it looks like Ireland.

I wish I could write kindly &/or humorously about the figures in that landscape. They are good
people, like my mother’s family, they came out here from the Middle West and settled, built up
the country. They old American stock, some newer immigrants, all mixed, all good. They
exhausted themselves in the process. What was left over was a Puritanism, Republicanism and a
general cussedness. They sent their children to the “Normal School”, (the teacher’s college) or to
the State Agricultural College & then made fun of them for their learning and their new-fangled
ways until the younger people were gradually beaten into the ways of their elders… fanatically
religious, mean with a nickel, politically backward and mentally blank. They bring up their own
children the same way, or would, except now the children own automobiles and can at least go
look at the city or even at California, and the Draft takes them out of it for a while… maybe
things will get better for them.

[…]

***
I’d go with my father on his rounds through central and eastern Oregon, stopping at sideroad hamlets to take an order for a keg of nailes and a few fishhooks and into the towns large enough to support not only a hardware store but a lumberyard-builder’s supply store as well, the high dry plateau of central Oregon sloping up through piney woods to the big Cascade snowpeaks, Jefferson, the Three Sisters… then east & higher through the Ochoco Forest to Prinevalle, then desert again, along the John Day through the bright rocks of Picture Gorge up into the Blue Mountain country to the towns of John Day and Prairie City, the old mining country.

Everything east of the Cascades bright air and space… you may drop down into pleasant valleys for a town but the roads lead up again into the high range lands broken by pools of pine forest. Not dense, wet woods but spacious rolling parklands, no heavy ground cover, only the crowns of the trees lacing into an openwork roof, the big trunks straight and limbless for the first thirty feet up… ruddy, square-scored bark, sweating incense in summer, all open to the winds: PONDEROSA.

We’d sleep in the local cattlemen’s hotel in ancient iron beds, bathroom down the hall with swinging lattice doors and antique roaring fixtures with overhead tanks, smelling like the back of a livery stable-saloon. Through the almost nonexistent walls, the snores & rumbles of other salesmen & juiced up cowboys on an all-night binge, their first time in town for a month.

The general idea, space, air, freedom… not irresponsible, there was work getting done, but the country it was done in being more fun. Everybody liking the country, not worrying over it like they do in the Valley, they play poker here for more money than any Valley man will admit his
place is worth. Whiskey & poker country. Hard winters and hot summers with dust storms and cloudbursts. My father loves it, my mother never got used to it.

***

Portland the city I loved it when I was little the stores were enormous and held more things than I had names for, theaters and restaurants of overwhelming splendor, streets and houses of a magnificence I never dreamed, elevators and streetcars.

Later, when I had to live and work there I hated it, there was no space, no air, and I dreamed of eastern Oregon. Later still when I was away I’d miss everything, including the city, write poems about the streetcars and the public markets. I came back and lived there five years and hated it again, actively. Now it is just another town, important only because a few people I care about happen to be living there.

[…]

**Bancroft Notebook 1**

15:VII:58

& back to the same mood as above, 4 months later. I have seen the election come & go, have been in & out of the hospital (for hernia repair, same one) & a new look at Portland – & not much else. Today, the story of another Great Betrayal – Mr Oliver MacMillan, sometime builder (re-builder of this apartment), lessee of B’s boat, & lush-head, was discovered to have stolen various odds & ends from the boat & sold them to a 2nd hand store in Agate Beach. B. is disturbed but won’t prosecute of course, OM is “an old friend”.

B’s position:
a) We must help one another – only possible means of building civilization & progress &c. “It is helping oneself”

b) The chances are 20-1, however, that the person B helps will do him some injury – but on several occasions the injury has turned eventually to B’s advantage

c) admits that the backlash in OM’s case is “comic”

d) suggests that helping others is maybe a form of conceit, self-aggrandizement.

I fail to get across to him the idea of doing good for its own sake – that “betrayal in return will pursue the betrayer, like any evil action.” He is unconvinced & says I must go meditate in order to develop a moral philosophy.

He sees the helpless weeping & against his better judgment (knowing they will turn on him) helps them – I tell him that pity isn’t a reason for doing good – that’s sentimentalism, impulsiveness – but he’s still unconvinced.

Since I’m busy feeling guilty about my own revolt against him, I can’t argue well & the conversation deteriorates to nothing.

[ … ] The other day I wrote:

If nothing else, we must submit ourselves

To the charitable impulses of our friends

Give them a crack at being bodhisattvas

In his way, B was getting towards the Mahayana idea – he said (in substance)

“‘You can do good, bad or neutral – but

as long as you are bothering to do some-

thing, do it for somebody else – something

positive.’”
Anyway I had this feeling that he was probably mistaken about what he thought he was doing, & wondered how I might write a story or make an argument that would illustrate my own idea about it all. The only thing that comes to mind at the moment is Bodhidharma’s conversation with the Emperor Wu of Liang who asked how much merit he might have acquired through pious acts, viz. “No merit whatever, sire! … true meritorious deed… full of pure wisdom & it is perfect & mysterious & its real nature is beyond the grasp of human intelligence. Such is not to be sought after by any worldly achievement.” {Suzuki Selected Writings p. 64 (paper ed.)}

& ultimately the problem is myself – “What was my original face?”

* * *

Columbia 13, 1

[...]

26:VII:58

Miracle of Riches 1958\(^\text{13}\)

Although I’ve washed both my shirts & hung them out to dry

I still have one to wear.

I’ve had it hot

I’ve had it cold

I’ve had it sweet & sour

I’ve had it young

I’ve had it old

\(^{13}\) This poem is previously unpublished.
I’ve had it by the hour
I’ve had it hard
I’ve had it soft
I’ve had it long & short
I’ve had it on
I’ve had it off
I’ve had it – *vive le sport* !
seldom & often, late & soon
Drunk & sober, plate & spoon
High, low, under & over
Pigs in clover
Sic ’em Rover

Nobody will ever discover the moon.

*  

In the middle of the night
In those discontented hours
When I can neither write nor sleep
Nor keep entirely awake
A brilliant sphere of specious memory
Whirls maliciously behind my eyes
The value of all I’ve done has disappeared
Not even hope of future competence
remaining.

Death would bring no comfort, I’d
only recreate myself again.
I’d go insane if that would really
help –
I fear I’d only tire of it, returning
bored, to this familiar self.

So I get up and light the lamp,
compose a poem, and commiserate with
God awhile: the idea of order will not let us sleep.

Bancroft Notebook 1
24:VIII:58

It is now more than a year since I first began this & observe with a mixture of chagrin &
a fine false indifference that I have managed to fill in not quite 1½ of its 6 gatherings of pages. I
would like to conclude that composing a page of nonsense everyday from now on until the book
were filled is a fool’s errand – nevertheless, I remember hoping that I would accomplish
something of the sort (not necessarily nonsensical) when I began. With time I changed my notion
& resolved that I would herein record at least all future travels & excursions I should make – but
I failed even in that. There is no mention of our Political Excursion into Linn County last May,
which included a trip through the Santiam Pass country – none of that excursion (except a cople
fugitive notes elsewhere) into the hospital & the Portland scene – Until now it has become only another page on which to prove to myself that I can write grammatical sentences one after another – which in its turn I suppose must prove that I have not completely lost the control of such faculties as I possess.

I write this in bed at 3:40 A.M. after a day of reading almost continuous reading – (re-reading Tristram Shandy) – during which I kept promising myself “I will stop at the end of this chapter & try to begin writing again”. I didn’t actually stop until a few minutes ago.

I got into this pickle by starting a couple weeks ago with the notion that I must mend my prose style by perusing again the sedate pages of Johnson, the ironic epithets of Smollett, & the lively grace of Sterne. All that has resulted is an echoing of their sounds in my empty skull & bent reflections of their kinds of phraseology in current letters to my friends & in this place – a dismal conclusion to my original plan. In addition, (or in diminution, rather) I feel a great lapse of my inventive & authorial powers. Although I have managed a page or two of prose (incredibly bad stuff) I have made no poem for several weeks. There were a few days during which I was able for hours at a time without any reading – a program of deliberate avoidance – & wrote some of the feeblest prose since the time I was writing college essays. I flattered myself that as expository writing – passages of utilitarian description – they would serve as a part of the latest “novel” project – but those pages, & the “project” itself are from what it is I yet must begin & finally complete.

The idea of a long book in the manner of the Prose Take I’m printing in Chicago Review is nauseating to contemplate. A page or so of it makes a sort of prose poem – but even that is annoying, tiring to read. And it was written under a drug & drugs are impossible to come by, & I
wouldn’t risk my health by using a drug for long enough time to write a complete book in that same style. I prefer, I suppose, THIS – which is equally nervous & nowhere.

[...]

Sketches for a Novel
Bancroft, Box 10

30:VIII:58

Nels carefully drove his Porsche out of town towards home through the scrubby woodlands and mouldy suburbs, driving fairly well in spite of being 2/3ds gassed, the radio tuned to The Station & the voice of Alec cheering him on his way, “We’ll spin this one for old Nels, he ought to be herding that elfsmaschin of his back to the old homestead by now, Miss Edye Gorme doing “Little Girl Blue.” Nels grinned to himself, thinking of how Gladys, his wife, hated modern vocalists… “Why must they all whine so?” It’s possibly the most depressing…” He speeded up to make the next traffic light but was caught by it; he stopped the car, racing the motor a couple times. “Never make it,” Nels raced away when the light turned green, recalling what Otto had been saying a little while ago, all of them drinking together at the Press Club. “It is absurd. You are taught to believe that the proper thing for you is to be rich and celebrated men… not simply one of you or a few of you, but all of you expect that this must be your fate at some future time. You do go on secretly expecting this all your lives, although none of you can possibly make it.” (Otto spoke very precisely, even while he was drinking; he had learned his English at Berlin.) “It is why all of you make a first marriage that fails to compose.” This last statement had started Helen raving, “That’s the same old European tripe, Otto, about how America is run by women who ought to be home barefoot and knocked up, “& that same sad
baloney about how us brittle, barren, hysterical females destroy the souls of our men until they’re all slobbering alcoholics or big screaming faggots… I don’t want to hear about it!”

Alec pretended to swish and simper; he flapped a limp hand at Helen. “Now Helen, keep your voice down. You’ll hurt everybody’s feelings.” Otto continued unperturbed, “I say nothing of the sort. You have not let me finish. At marriage your young American finds himself for the first time in contact with the actual world, a world wherein he must consider the wishes and sensibilities of another person different to himself but inextricably now to himself joined… what is it the janitor calls his wife, “the old ball and chain”… Alec interrupted, “And so we make it elsewhere, get a divorce, slob around a little and finally here we are in radio, a sordid compromise.”

“And we marry,” Nels took it up, “again and have a family and here we all are, Nowheresville, just as happy as if we had good sense. I don’t expect to be picked up by the Network and whisked off to New York and an extravagant salary running a TV quiz show.”

Otto shook his head. “You did not listen carefully Nels, I said to you secretly go on wishing for these things. You cannot honestly say to yourself, “I will never make it,” and because you cannot do this…” “I’m on,” Alec said. “I’ve got to go.” “Will you drop me, Nels?” “We’ll never make it,” Nels said as he stood up.

“Want a lift, Otto?” “Yes. I must take over at the board now. We have five minutes.” He stood up and bowed slightly to Helen. “My dear,” he said. “Later,” she replied with a cool nod.

Nels was driving quite fast, feeling a little guilty towards Gladys… Alec had said “sordid compromise” and Nels immediately thought of her. Their marriage had been a compromise, not sordid by any means, but affectionate and (as Gladys was proud to put it) “intelligent.” Tired at last of being very secondary stars in the local Civic Theater, and growing conscious of their
respective ages, they married on the strength of Nels’ picking up a part time announcing job. Now that he had programs of his own and was a top-paid announcer, Nels had bought a house at Oswego, on the “good” (formerly the “expensive”) side of the lake. Alec and his family lived on the same road, a little further up the lake. Helen was fond of explaining Oswego architecture to Otto.

“If you ever go to Eugene, Otto, you’ll see the prototype of those houses all along the Mill Race that goes past the campus. Fraternity houses. The boys who built them at Oswego kept the old college spirit right up til 1930 and the Depression put them down. I suppose you might be justified in making a few of your remarks on our Cult of Youth at this point?”

Otto replied, “I will admit that such a “cult” was one of the chief characteristics of your “20s.” However, these houses when compared with the painful Tudor cottages for which your suburbs are so noted, come off rather well. They are large but not over-elaborate. Their Georgian style blends nicely with the surrounding greenery and your very British climate… I can’t find much about them to complain of. But I never cease to wonder at the way an American’s feelings toward Europe changes as his income grows higher… In Massachusetts I have met what I took to be True Blue Britons only to be informed that they were of the purest American stock, the very rich descendants of 18th century merchants. You have noticed that the men from the agencies are wearing English shoes, while their employers wear not only shoes from England but tweed clothing as well. I believe that only those whose wealth is inherited are entitled to drop their “r’s” and use the Continental “a,” however.”

Helen laughed. “Very nice, Otto. I’ll buy you a large drink.” Nels got out of his car and listened for a moment to his children screaming in the side yard. One was weeping vociferously; he went to investigate. The two boys and their older sister were dancing in a ring around their
youngest sister who sat on the grass howling and weeping. The older children were chanting
“Poison! Poison! Rotting poison,” dancing close to their sister and darting away again with
exaggerated grimaces of terror and disgust.

[...]

**Bancroft Notebook 1**

**14:IX:58** After a trip {Durham drove down & took me away} to Portland to see GS & Co. – &
we produced produced a sudden READING of our poems before a crowd of 60 in the basement
of a friend’s house (Donald Carpenter’s house in 72nd St.). Wine, people, some excitement –
more, anyhow, than has been in Portland for a year or so.

[...]

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**30:XI:58** about 1 AM – Chez Crowley – Portland, after pious pilgrimage to ancestral
Thanksgiving in The Dalles – Beer in the afternoon with Charley Leong, dinner here –
A pleasant old Portland house.
Nothing is more manifest than the hidden.

Lao Tzu

II

March 6, 1959 – May 20, 1962

Towards the end of 1958 Philip Whalen was still living in Newport, Oregon under the auspices of Judge Ben Anderson and his wife Virginia, fretting over his latest novel project and a long “prose take” written under the influence of drugs. By March 7, 1959 Whalen has moved back to San Francisco, forsaking the career and relatively normal middle-class life that might have been available in Newport. He writes the long poem “I Return To San Francisco” (CP 127-32), muses on Horace Walpole’s correspondence with his boyfriends, and then addresses a few verses to Leslie Thompson:

The complications of living with love

& without it—an absolutely even balance?

[...]

Something will happen if we let it

Everything happens no matter what we decide.

By mid-April Whalen is destitute, living in a Zen shack christened “Marin-an” in the woods of Mt. Tamalapais, but he has some financial support from Thompson and Allen Ginsberg to help him with basic daily needs. Then, in early July, Marin-an is discovered by the local government authorities and they order Whalen out, commanding him first to take down the outdoor latrine. That evening the poet Joanne Kyger stops by for a visit and she and Whalen patch up a
“wretched parting quarrel,” which may have been over the personal situation they found themselves in, for Kyger must soon rejoin her husband Gary Snyder in Japan, while Whalen is in a romantic relationship with Thompson, a married man. The journals in Part II constitute a long subtextual discourse on Philip Whalen’s love for Thompson, one of the major loves of his life and the only partner he lived with for a significant amount of time in a sustained, committed relationship. This subtext, rarely declared but always palpable, often exceeds the above the line narrative, vindicating the tension, both erotic and romantic, felt by Whalen.

Leslie Thompson leaves his wife Rosemary at home in Seal Beach, Southern California, several times during 1959 and 1960 to take extended hiking and camping trips with Whalen in the Sierra Mountain wilderness, often for weeks at a time. At one point Whalen compares his relationship with Leslie to Allen Ginsberg’s relationship with Peter Orlovsky, but he isn’t convinced that the Ginsberg/Orlovsky relationship is permanent, although Ginsberg and Orlovsky famously remain together as a couple for the next fifty years.

After the eviction from Marin-an Whalen has a brief lay-over at Michael and Johanna McClure’s apartment in San Francisco and then moves back to Mt. Tamalpais, this time taking up residence in a tent in Rifle Camp. He spends September as a guest in Alan Watts’ East-West House in San Francisco, and in early October Thompson abandons Rosemary in Seal Beach and moves in with Whalen in San Francisco, sharing a house on Buchanan Street with Lew Welch, Albert Saijo and a couple of other friends. On Buchanan Street Whalen pens the famous summary of his poetics in the poem “Since You Ask Me” (CP 153), later published in Don Allen’s The New American Poetry 1945-1960 as a statement on poetics, a brilliant blend of buddhist phenomenology and Charles Olson’s special view of history:
This poetry is a picture or graph of a mind moving, which is a world body being here and now which is history … and you.

Or think about the Wilson Cloud-chamber, not ideogram, not poetic beauty: bald-faced didacticism moving as Dr. Johnson commands all poetry should, from the particular to the general. […]

My life has been spent in the midst of heroic landscapes which never overwhelmed me and yet I live in a single room in the city—the room a lens focusing on a sheet of paper. Or the inside of your head. How do you like your world?

In early November, 1959 Whalen and Michael McClure fly to the east coast for a series of college poetry readings organized by Allen Ginsberg, which will earn them both some decent income. McClure and Whalen read at CCNY, Muhlenberg College, Wesleyan, Tufts, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Fordham University, and Connecticut College, with side trips to visit Charles Olson in Gloucester, museums in Boston and New Haven, and a sojourn with Julian Beck and Judith Malina at The Living Theater in New York City, where he composes the poem “New York City” (154-55). Back in San Francisco he acts in Michael McClure’s play The Feast, staged at the Batman Gallery. Also performing in the play are local artists and writers Johanna McClure, David Meltzer, Kirby Doyle, Robert LaVigne, and the composer Morton Subotnick. He also spends a romantic weekend with Joanne Kyger. Subsequently, at the end of January 1960, Kyger departs for Japan and her husband. Whalen describes his failure to keep her as “a regression in my life,” with an opaque reference to Leslie as “Buchanan Street.” Whalen is
clearly torn by his close friendship with Snyder, but also by the ramifications of his romantic love for both Thompson and Kyger.

Some time during the winter or early spring, Leslie splits from Whalen and returns to his wife in Seal Beach. Whalen inscribes virtually nothing in his journals for several months, except the poem “A Vision of The Bodhisattvas,” which emerges in the journals on March 31, a spontaneous whole, with virtually no subsequent edits (CP 163). Then on June 24, 1960 Whalen and Thompson set out for another hiking trip in the Sierras and in the journal entries for this trip Whalen obsesses on Leslie. Memories surface of sexual ‘transgressions’ that he was punished for in childhood and through middle-age, including “various wretchedness in the army & at Reed later […].” Thompson has to break camp on June 30 with an abcessed tooth, and heads back to Seal Beach and Rosemary, leaving Whalen alone in the Sierras. Upon his return to the Bay Area he again moves in with the McClure family while trying to figure out how and where to live. There are only scant journal records for July and August, but later we learn that Kerouac was bouncing around Northern California during those months, living at Ferlinghetti’s place in Big Sur. There was assuredly heavy drinking, drug-taking, and partying when Whalen, the McClures, Neal Cassady, Victor Wong and others headed down the coast to hang with Kerouac and Ferlinghetti in Bixby Canyon.

In September, 1960 Leslie and Philip move in together again, this time in a tiny two-room storefront flat at 24th and Douglass, in the Castro district of San Francisco. They live there together as a couple for just over two years, Whalen’s first and only taste of romantic cohabitation. In October he embarks on a second “reading tour,” this time in New England, where he studies ancient Chinese drawings and paintings in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Yale University art gallery. On the way back he spends a few days in New York hanging out
with Allen Ginsberg, Dick Gallup, Jack Kerouac, Irving Rosenthal, Larry Rivers, Brendan Behan and other literary luminaries, including a stop at Grove Press, presumably to see Barney Rosset and Don Allen.

The journal for this period is proudly headlined “24th & Douglass” in large block letters across the top of the title page. Whalen is happily settled. The poem “The Pleasures of Rage” (CP 186) records a comedic domestic scene with Leslie, and soon after they spend a week at Bob Walker’s Seal Beach house, perhaps in order to remove Leslie’s possessions from the house he had shared with Rosemary. In April 1961 Whalen writes sketches for a possible novel, and in May completes a new book of poems he calls Angelflame.14 Inspired by the novels of Sterne and Somerset Maugham he starts drafts and conceptualizations for another novel, comparing this effort to James Joyce’s aesthetic design in The Dead. That summer Whalen works on his prose ‘takes’ and spends a lot of time in Golden Gate Park, taking long walks to the park and back from their apartment under the ridges of Twin Peaks.

In September there is some indication that Leslie wants to leave Philip again, and Whalen experiences extreme distress. But the winter and spring of 1962 are domestically stable for Whalen and Thompson. They attend parties and social events together, go to the theater, the movies, and roam the city’s bookstores on rainy days. During March Whalen writes a long commentary on theater and an essay on the novels of Burroughs and Kerouac (Whalen 2013). In early May he plans a trip to rural Oregon to visit friends and relatives and gather up a trove of books he had left behind in the Anderson’s house in Newport a few years earlier.

In the last entry in Part II, May 20, 1962, Whalen goes to the movies to see

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14 Viz. poem “Itchy” (164-65).
Alain Robbe-Grillet’s *Last Year At Marienbad*, which he describes as a movie structured as a poem, “… [s]urrealism watered down even thinner than Cocteau at his worst.” “In American terms,” opines Whalen, “it is the poetry of Stevens. . . chic, a trifle *fade*; it sees itself as languid but is actually long dead & being swayed by the wind from an air conditioner, stream of water from the swimming pool filter.”
Bancroft Notebook 1
March 6, 1959

Another departure for San Francisco. Newport bus-station waiting with coffee, 1 hour before bus time.

* * *

Washington University, Yellow Spiral Notebook

Saturday 18:IV:59

Locke & I have walked this far on our ceremonial circumambulation of Mt Tamalpais. We began walking from Marin-An at about 11:30 – Don’t know the time we arrived here – 5 miles away from Marin-An. We have had hot tea & dried dates & now Locke has gone to sit in the sun on the meadow & read Wei Lang while I paddle my fingers in the creek, watching water-bugs, “periwinkles” {caddis fly larvae}, & sit now beside water in thin sunshine, find a piece of rosy quartz. Tomorrow we will continue on around the mountain. Although it is very early, it [is] growing cold; sun disappearing back of a low ridge behind me.

So now I’ve climbed to the top of the ridge on the south side of the creek/canyon on a high domed meadow covered with grass & an odd lavender flowering plant {5 petals, leaves like chrysanthemum} after flowering, they grow a green crane’s head, the beak pointing straight up, the neck (stem) growing up, then a 90° turn & then the “head” & “beak” straight up from there […]

Across the valley to the east, the West Peak of Tamalpais. To the west, a series of green meadow domed headlands down to the ocean. There is Bolinas, & due north many E/W ridges, intersected with smaller gullies – all green & wooded. I spooked a small mule deer on the way up here – a strong, cold offshore breeze, big red tail hawk, & some sort of car on the road below.
June 11, 1959

The meadow opposite Laurel Dell camp, Mt. Tamalpais. – Venus & 1½ moon – a single fir tree with wind in it, the other trees are silent. I write by flashlight –

Now I turn it off a while & try hypnotizing a star.

* * *

June 12, 1959

At a picnic table in Laurel Dell camp, mid-morning tea. No smarter than I was yesterday, & the same problem, how to make a Sierra trip on no money & what to do when we return… I’ve been in San Francisco since 7 March, Leslie paying most of the bills, & since May, Ginsberg… at the moment I have a few dollars from Grove Press, distant prospects of more money from other publishers, record copanies etc. Ginsberg has read & read, & now busy with making a phonograph record for The Fantasy Co., also typing up ms. he wrote in Europe… He is much less disturbed now than he used to be… plans now to live anonymously for quite some time. Will Pete stay with him? Will he continue keeping Peter? . . . He realizes that these questions will be answered soon; he’s content to be having Peter for the present.

He wants me to come with them to NY but I won’t go until later… if they still want me to come, several months from now. McClure wants to go too. . . and we might make readings together in L.A., Chicago & the East Coast circuit. I doubt that he’ll be able to make it, but I like the idea.

Right now I’m sitting here in the woods drinking green tea, a dinner for all the bugs. Many birds about. Last night, 2 deer on the trail, I near my sleeping-place -- & a game trail past

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15 Ginsberg’s life partner, Peter Orlovsky (1933 – 2010).
my feet in the morning dewy grass. Airplanes of every description day & night, just now, a very large one.

I can’t stay here. I’m due to return this evening to the zendo – where L. & I don’t have permission to stay, & where there must be some sort of explanation scene with Sandy, a pure drag, & will result in our going to gaol or worse, no doubt. Where shall I be this time tomorrow? Bug on my forehead.

Sierras 1959

17:VI:59

{Wednesday night} Tuolumne Meadows campground, arrived about dark {7:30 ?} & now have had supper & we drink tea under ¾ full moon. Endless delays all day – Revard was late picking up CLT & me at Marin-an, then we must shop & fiddle for an hour in the city, finally departing therefrom about 1 pm. From Manteca we took the ‘wrong’ road, up through Chinese Camp & Big Oak Flat . . . & from there the road worsened. 21 miles from Tuolumne, a rough-looking detour discouraged Revard, who wanted to get out of the woods before dark. We had him drop us at White Wolf camp, where we repacked our last minute purchases & he left us. After a light lunch, we hiked back to the detour sign & began walking the Tuolumne Road until a photographer gave us a hitch to Tuolumne.

Between White Wolf & here, mountain peaks & buttes each a distinct, solid piece of rock. . . not piles of rock, each mountain is a separate rock of smooth granite.

Here we are near the bank of the Tuolumne River, which sounds like a steady surf. We will sleep under four big cypresses, & start early in the morning for Donohue Pass. We hope to
meet Bob Walker on the other side of the Pass, at 1000 Islands Lake or one of the other lakes nearby.

    We’ve met 2 men who plan to make the whole Muir Trail trip. . .  hope we meet them & see what they’re carrying, in order to get some notion about how our own grub might last.

    If we should meet Walker, we may go out with him from Mammoth lake & ride down to Bishop – from there we could get into the Evolution Valley country we hadn’t hoped to be able to reach.

    So tomorrow, 12 mile hike. . .  what’ll I write then, if any? Cold now, & must drink tea & sleep.

[...]

*  

19:VI:59

    Arrived mid-afternoon at Thousand Island Lake where we are now camped {El. 9,850} after having crossed Donohue Pass this morning {El. 11,100} & Island Pass {10,250} this pm.

    No sign of Walker.

[...]

    There was a very light rainsquall just as we arrived here but now the sun’s quite hot. The lake water doesn’t seem too cold, considering the elevation. . .  these are the headwaters of the San Joaquin River. A couple sea-gulls here! & small lichen-like rock flowers, heather, & fairly large yellow flowers {stonecrop?}. Fish jump once in awhile. Two other young campers also here; fishing. . .  they invited us to tea. & I’m too tired to draw or write this & too early for bed.

    Leslie fishes.
20:VI:59

Left Thousand Island Lake early & camped here at Shadow Creek {9,000 ft.} among mosquitoes. Banner & Ritter peaks to the NW & the row of the Minarets directly above us. I can do nothing but fight mosquitoes & think of taking a bath.

[…]

After a light rain I have a bath, not quite knee-deep in water too cold for swimming. A clean shirt & sox improves the world but the mosquitoes are the chief event/value here & now. & Leslie has caught some fish.

*

21:VI:59

Left Shadow Creek early & down to Shadow Lake, where the creek was impassible – high water we took the river trail down to Agnew Meadows & then hiked up the road almost to Minaret Summit, where we caught a lift to the road junction near Mammoth P.O.

After a milkshake we set-up camp in the campground behind the Ranger Station – a piney woods fool of car-campers, including Wilma Perrine the egg lady from Berkeley & her husband Obie, camped right next to us – a pleasant surprise, & an evening of travel conversation.\(^{16}\) Thunder storm again & a little rain. Gone now. CLT washes his sox in honor of the day {Sunday}.

Tuesday 23:VI:59

Left Mammoth Ranger Station yesterday by thumb to Casa Diablo where we caught a bus to Lone Pine. By thumb again to ½ mile below Whitney Portal & so by trail 4 miles to Mirror Lake

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\(^{16}\) Wilma Perrine (1908 – 1993) worked as a poultry husbandry technician in the U.C. Berkeley’s College of Agriculture (now the College of Natural Resources). Whalen knew her because he briefly worked in the poultry lab, as well.
where we are camped on a rock shelf {10,000 ft.}. This is a small cirque nearly surrounded by 12-13,000 ft. granite spires – clean beautiful rock. Water comes down from the snow patches on the big southern mountain {possibly Mt. Irvine?} Fat gold mantle marmots around our camp. Big as housecats.

[...]

**Wednesday 24:VI:59**

We left Mirror Lake about 11 & stopped at Consultation Lake where L fished & we were caught in the rain & thunder storm again. Then after a long tedious walk over trail crest {13,500} we arrived here at a guitar-shaped lake in a barren cirque a thousand or 1500 ft. above timberline.

[...]

**Thursday, 25th June**

At Lower Crabtree meadow in good shelter & campsite, about 3 miles below our last camp. Plenty timber & birds. . . light rain & distant thunder. [...] We rest until tomorrow.

Must mention 4 fat golden trout CLT caught for breakfast – delicious.

[...]

**26:VI:59**

Friday – Same address due to my sick foot – give it a day’s rest & try walking again tomorrow {about 9 miles to Lake South America}. Hot sun & cold wind again today – San Francisco weather. CLT is laundering more clothes.

& now T walks away to Wallace Lake, 5 miles up the valley from here, to fish. . . “if he can find the trail,” &c. . . .

Night before last we had a long conversation about Faulkner’s books. The up-shot of it was a momentary great revival of my own ambitions to write a book -- & recollections of all my
past failures & deliberately wasted opportunities. . . (must have been deliberate, otherwise I would have chosen something else). . . McCorkle says “The trouble with all of us is that we’re afraid to come out & try something & fall on our faces,” imagining (I now add) that we’d never rise again, never be able to face up to the world &c. . . . which is a mistaken notion. We get up every morning after having failed (fallen) into sleep (which is to say “unconsciousness,” i.e. “ignorance”) . . . & I keep stumbling about trying to find a place out of the wind & yet neither too shady nor too hot. . . Rather than to go on looking, or go on writing, I’d take off all my clothes & lie in some sunny space, to dissolve into oblivion &c. &c.

[...]

The other day I was thinking of the different kinds & qualities of sexual sensation & response felt by a person at different times of his life. . . . in childhood, adolescence, early maturity, & middle age. . . & how many I could remember vividly. . . & could I remember every instance of sexual contact with another person. . . I nearly can. . . I suspect I know (& sincerely care about) little more than pleasure – However, I did remember {after the Faulkner conversation} a number of unpleasant past events, for a change – getting slapped in the face on various occasions as a grade school student – getting punished on various occasions for sexual activities – the death of Rome Morris & of my mother – various wretchedness in the army & at Reed & later & I’ve kept worrying for months now over the question “What have I learned from all this?” – taking for granted the notion that “experiences teaches,” & the idea that I have some capacity for learning. . . what? – & so I begin by attacking in my own mind these very notions: why or what should experience teach? Am I capable of learning, & if I were, how could I change my way of living &/or feeling into patterns I considered more admirable, or at least more aesthetically satisfying. . . & how would I do & feel THEN, &c.?
It seems important at the moment to sort this all out. . . & it probably isn’t, after all, of any final interest. As usual it is a general fit of jealousy & remorse growing out of pride & vanity. . .

I’ve now re-read, paginated & headed each of these pages & made up a table of their contents. Out of these 70 pp. there is possibly a single sentence or observation worth the trouble of noting & keeping? Where?

So you accept, now, that you are such a person, & not likely to be anyone else – & that your life has been very small in range or depth of experience, that you have squandered most of your time & have been in general ridiculous & of little worth to anyone. . . & then what?

Bright shadow of pine-tree on its own needles (dull bronze/green). The rocks here aren’t waiting for anything. . . lichens grow on them, the weather splits them. . . here they are, for a while. Tree, shadow, needles, dirt & bugs. Wind, sun, cloudless blue sky. . . Big creek water sound. Meadow grass bird-bills & daisies. My shadow on the needles also.

& of course a great deal more beside. . . that governments are corrupt, that our present social system is not only hypocritical & immoral, it is destructive of human life & culture. . . that government in general is a fraud, that organized education & religion are at once fraudulent & restrictive. . . that wealth & power corrupt their user. . . what else? That in spite of all this we do occasionally see through our own self-deception & spend at least half an hour of some day considering how things are & how (by making a few very small changes) things might be more reasonably, equitably, or humanely arranged – & that we are capable of such activity gives just
enough space for the growth of a hope for actual improvement as to prevent our falling permanently into despair.

& what it is I really have to say still escapes me. I put down these platitudes & journalistic nonce-phrases & imagine I’ve been writing – but where is it?

[…]

I keep thinking & acting as if I had the final truth about life & the world at my complete disposal. Do I have? I have a little knowledge of history & a great many prejudices.

*

27:VI:59

Saturday. Last night L brought back 7 trout from Wallace Lake – we had 2 over 12” long for supper & the rest {8 – 12”} for breakfast this morning. Then a long hike from Wallace Creek up over Bighorn Plateau & Tyndall Creek to South America Lake, where I now write this. 9 miles over rough country. Present elevation 12,000. Here we are really “inside” the mountains of the Kern-Kings divide – just at the bottom of Harrison Pass. Extremely rough walls, pinnacles, sawtooth ridges. & the lake is actually shaped like South America. Here in the pass to the south, blue flowers as at Trail Crest. They smell like stock, very fragrant. Polemonium, “sky pilot.” The flowers grow in a circular cluster & I need a bigger book to put them in.17

*

17 Whalen clips little wild flowers that he is interested in and places them between the pages of his journal for later research or appreciation. The flower he mentions here is too large for his notebook, which is only 5” by 8.”
28:VI:59  Sunday – Back at Tyndall Creek & camped; having found no way of crossing Harrison Pass – snow in the chutes & where there was no snow, bad looking rock over-hangs. So here we are & after lunch & a foot & sock washing party – a comfortable camp under the pines by the creek.

[...]  

It was fearfully cold & windy by the lake last night . . . we hope to sleep better here {elev. ca. 11,000, or a little less}.

The banks of Tyndall Creek at this point are horizontal slabs of granite that come down like steps into the water . . . which flows over a series of solid granite whalebacks.

I smoke one of L.’s pipes while he reads the *Diamond Sutra*.

Tomorrow we hope to make it over the Foresters’ Pass into Vidette Meadows . . . a ten-mile walk. Probably by resting this afternoon & getting some sleep tonight we should make it ok.

[...]

30:VI:59  Tuesday – A 15-mile hike brings us to Copper Creek -- & a short ride to Cedar Grove, a large family car-camping place – big pines & cedars. We glut ourselves on beer, hamburgers, coffee, pie-a-la mode. Stellar jays & other birds. The view of this canyon from the Bubbs Creek trail is stupendous. Great domes & cones & walls of granite hemming in a big tree valley.

Tomorrow we must try hitchhiking 90 miles to Fresno & so to our various ways, L. to L.A. & I back to Marin An.
4:VII:59 Saturday -- & after dinner with Hogan & Thea, two days at Marin An; to be more or less thrown out of there by County health officer who demanded the destruction of the privy – so here where I write, viz. chez McClure in San Francisco.

Joanne came this pm and we appear to be reconciled as if there had been no wretched parting quarrel.18

& now I must find bed & board elsewhere soon -- certainly I can’t stay here more than a day or so longer.

What I need is money . . . & there’s none in sight . . . even if I were to find work on Monday, I’d need cash for a month’s living before I’d begin getting paid.

BRA writes that he’ll be here in the first of August. I must reply to him . . . & can’t face the idea of asking him for money right now . . .

In any case the correct thing is to remove myself hence at the first convenient moment…

Ginsberg says he’s broke – no chance now, it appears, of a trip to NY with him, unless his luck changes.

M & J [McClure] reading tarot for me tonight – a strange correspondence between the cards & the horoscope Gavin Arthur19 cast for me: justice, adversity, good [illegible]20, & finally the Mage.21

18 I.e., the poet Joanne Kyger.
But now, the return of, an old situation – broke in the city, living on the charity of people who can’t afford that virtue, & no prospects beyond the possibility that this pencil might get up & write (virtually overnight) a piece or so of saleable prose... i.e., no prospect of immediate relief. So I give up and go to bed.

* 

Tuesday 18 August. Rifle Camp {Mt. Tamalpais} getting my sleeping bag unrolled in the fog, deer all around... I’ve left Mike’s house, don’t know where I’ll go from here.

Rifle Camp 1959

Wednesday 19:VIII:59 I must backtrack there being very little water here – try Barth’s Retreat. Three deer this morning. Last night on the trail a little owl in a tree right beside the trail flew past my face. & there was a handsome black & white skunk pattering around Laurel Dell. On the way here from Portrero, a huge buck stood in the road until I was 20 feet away & then he took off into the brush...

[...]

19 Gavin Arthur (Chester Alan Arthur III (1901-1972), notable San Francisco astrologer, Haight-Ashbury character, and author of the astrological primer on sex, Circle of Sex. He was the grandson of President Chester A. Arthur (1829-1886).

20 My best guess for this partially illegible word is “hope,” in that case the full phrase would read “justice, adversity, good hope.”

21 Mage as in magician; the tarot card known as The Magician. The tarot reader might well interpret this card as telling the querent that they will be given a vision, an idea, a magical, mental image of whatever it is they most want: the solution to a problem, an ambitious career, a love life, a job.
October 3 – 4

Albert, Lew, Leslie, Jay, Tom and I are installed in our own house, 1713 Buchanan St. – “a room of one’s own” – after a month & some days living in the East-West House – one week job at the post office beginning tomorrow – part-time, 4 – 8 PM . . . & projecting trip with Mike to NY & Chicago for late this month or early November, make readings for money. . .

*  

San Francisco – New York 1959

5:XI:59  – about 9 pm & MM & I wait in airplane at Oakland, having just flown from across the [illeg.] in the way to NY. MM reads Esquire; I fidget & pop my chewing gum. Nothing’s happen [sic] & stewardess is somebody’s Sunday School teacher. The watercooler a source of nothing conversation & aspirin or bufferin. . . plane smells something like a funeral parlor or hospital. . .  […] & Salt Lake 12:40 [illegible], coca cola w/ natives, Stetson hats & flash cameras for guys leaving as missionaries? Freezing cold 23° like Colorado Springs. . . the Book of Mormon on sale {paper covers} 50¢ & now taking off for Denver. MM wrapped in blanket, head wrapped in window curtain to see stars. . . Coffee in Denver after a nap in rough air, 3 am & now somewhere on our way to Omaha, I read the New Yorker & eat crackers & cheese. Lovely new stewardess brings coffee. Venus high & bright in east. . . & before & during dawn, the River Platte & now Omaha & Mississippi dawn, 10-12”. Some snow in patches. […] 

*
7:XI:5922 […] Landed in Chicago, an hour’s wait, then over high continuous bumpy clouds -- & break out at last over the Atlantic & so to Idewild where Allen, Peter, & Irving Rosenthal met us. To 2nd St. apt. first & then Grove Press -- & then the tour began. . . Monday CCNY, where we met Mary Caroline Richards, a great lady, translator of Artaud, former colleague of Olson at Black Mountain – then Allentown where we read in the hotel instead of Muhlenburgh [sic] campus23 (due to appearance, 2 weeks before, of Bremser & Schleifer who shocked the board of trustees) & to Aronowitz house for supper & the drive to Princeton with ugly reading scene there -- & to Wesleyan for an unreceptive genteel crowd, after which, all night drive to Gloucester & Olson – by B&M [illeg.] to Boston – glass flowers & Mayan sculpture at Harvard & oriental bronze & Tun Hwang sculptures & frescos – reading at Tufts – by plane to NY & readings at Brooklyn College, Queens, Fordham, & at last to New London on Sunday for Connecticut College – then to John Clellon Holmes’ house at Old Saybrook for the night & pleasant morning conversation -- & to NYC via NY, NH & H into Grand Central, via 5th Avenue bus from library to Washington Square – read Living Theater Monday as Mike {dead of bronchitis & allergies since Tufts – Allen did last 6 readings with me} flew home. Tuesday, the Museum of Modern Art. Wednesday Metropolitan Museum of Art. Thursday night, flew home. Friday pm to work at P.O. & then party at Hatch’s Berkeley & home to bed & JEK arrived later & the remainder of weekend with her – a week of work, another large weekend come to rest on this page tonight – again, to worry about not writing -- & a great feeling that I have a great deal of writing to do – that I’ve wasted more oceans of time &c. -- & what is it I’m so excited about saying/writing? I still don’t know, still haven’t begun.

22 Original has date of this journal entry as 7:VIII:59, but this appears almost certainly to be an error.
23 I.e., Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania.
31:I:60  Memoirs of An Interglacial Age 2/3ds printed. Awaiting proof on Like I Say – J.E.K. has gone away to Kyoto & G.S. – a regression in my life – which continues in Buchanan Street & the post office.

Columbia, Box 19:14

[…]

28:III:60  I say now I’ve ruined my life, wasted it, thrown it away scheming conniving cheating to find place & time to work the magic that would set me free from work & what a statement! I’m mad if I believe it’s true, but I keep asking now, “after I’ve done all this,…what? A fairly funny act, what do you do for an encore? […]

A feeling all time’s past. I catch myself repeating & say my god, another go-round on the same idiot ride? & resolve to stop eating, sleeping, waking, starving over & over again

A fond condition. A hoax — & as though blindness, illness, death did not exist.

*   *   *

31:III:60

They pass before me, one by one, riding on animals

“What are you waiting for?” they want to know.

Z--, young as he is (& mad into the bargain) tells me

   “Some day you will drop everything & become a rsi, you know.”

I know the forest is there, I’ve lived in it

   more certainly than in this town? Irrelevant—
What am I waiting for?

A change in customs that will take 10,000 years to come about?

Who’s to make the change but me?

“Returning again & again”, Amida says

Why’s that dream so necessary, of walking out of whatever house alone

Nothing but the clothes on my back, money or no

Down the road to the next place, the highway leading to the mountains

From which I absolutely must come back

What business have I to do that? I know the world & love it too much

It is not the one I’d find outside this door

*B * *

Bancroft, Notebook 1


I am about to quit work at the post office & go hike in the Sierras. It is now 5:30 am & I have not yet been asleep – no further inclination to write anything here.

24 “A Vision Of The Bodhisattvas” (CP 163).
8:VI:60  Insomnia – although I have worked hard lifting mail sacks {walked all the way to post office, besides} have eaten well, typed up a letter & bibliography for BRA, had hot bath. I think of leaving for the mountains. I would quit work next payday {ca. 18 June} & after planning a rendezvous with CLT at some Sierra camp, take off on my own by car or bus -- & simply walk alone, live alone for a few days at least.  

[...]

Columbia, Box 19:14
16:VI:60

Z is angry with me; I can’t guess why. Although he continues to see me, even receives me into his house, the tone he takes with me is contemptuous. I suspect him of having done me some injury, or of contemplating some such action.

The book he’s writing upsets him, he says. A vast number of petty annoyances beset him: he needs money (his wife is about to stop working, he will need to find employment for himself); his pet bird isn’t feeding properly; one of his poems was on the verge of being incorrectly printed. He feels discomfited not only by these accidents of the moment but also by the perennial neglect and scorn of the world at large. Neither the exercise of his genius, his strict adherence to the highest principles, nor his careful practise of the great moral virtues has brought him the fame, honor and emolument which (he has been taught to believe) the world is obliged to bestow upon the diligent, the righteous & the just.

On the one hand, Z – professes to feel the highest regard for my works and for my abilities; on the other, he has taken great care to express his total rejection of my principles & my modes of conduct. He has performed the offices of friendship with diligence & tenderness; yet
on other occasions he has been guilty of what I considered deliberate malice & treachery towards me – acts which I suffered without remonstrance, conscious as I was of the obligations of friendship I had undertaken towards him. Another reason I could not complain of base treatment: Z has always maintained the idea that each person must follow with the utmost rigour the dictates of his own principles; otherwise he must deserve not only ill treatment but scorn as well.

I suspect that eventually he must find himself wither compelled to alter his ideas of righteousness or to eschew my company. I doubt that he can continue our friendship at the expense of ignoring or moderating his own most profound sensibilities; hence I must prepare to suffer his enmity: he is not a man to simply ignore another. He is actively friendly or a confirmed and embittered enemy.

[...]

Z has explained to me that he is at this moment exacerbated, half-mad with worry, etc. – I have not chosen to take those statements seriously but have instead taken his whole attitude as being inimical solely towards myself – I have mistaken my importance to him; I realize that I do not actually occupy such a forward place in his imagination as I supposed. A further mistake: I imagine that I was obligated to him -- he has repeatedly made it clear that I am not. Moreover, it is my feeling “that virtue is its own reward”, & that I am quite unable either to repay him for his good actions towards me nor to deprive him of any benefits of his righteousness.

The temptation is to leave him alone. He has explained that he has lost the art of conversation, he describes himself as having “become completely inverted”, it seems impossible for him to communicate with other persons. There is a greater temptation, to try some way of helping him out of what he feels to be a serious difficulty, a state approaching illness, madness. I
imagine that it is my duty to do this, yet nothing helpful occurs to me – “Quite naturally nothing occurs to you”, I tell myself, “you have none of the arts of the psychiatrist, the priest, or even of an ordinary man – you are 2/3ds mad yourself.”

**Bancroft, Notebook 1**

**SIERRAS**

**Thursday 23:VI:60** was a failure, in that the car (i.e., Ann Leh’s car, A. Saijo driving) broke down at Tracy, 60 miles from home. We returned home to dinner. At 12:30 AM Friday 24:VI:60 CLT & I took the Greyhound to Bakersfield, Mojave & Lone Pine.

By hitch-hiking we’ve only gotten this far, viz. the Lone Pine Creek campground, 7 or 8 miles below Whitney Portal where we hope to arrive tomorrow. Tonight we are tired out with bus travel & hot weather. We trust that tomorrow everything will be better.

* 

[…] 

**26:VI:60 Sunday** – We grunted & sweated 2 more miles up the trail, stashed our packs & spent most of the day goofing & fishing at Consultation Lake. Then more groaning & slightly freezing we are set up in Trail camp, Pothole Lake, at the foot of Trail Crest. The primus at last recovered from its unfortunate noon bath in pea soup. CLT caught 2 trout at Consultation, 10 – 12” long. We shall presently be regaling ourselves with more soup & fried fish. 12000’.

[…]
27:VI:60  **Monday** – A hard & tiring trip from trail camp up over Trail Crest Pass & down to Guitar Lake. CLT went on up to fish at Arctic Lake, caught one 11” golden trout. This lake – Guitar – is above timberline & although the sun beats in hard, the nearly continuous wind up the Whitney Creek Valley makes it chilly in the shade. Forest Service map shows it’s 11,500. We stayed here overnight last year. Now I notice small, sparrow-like birds about, tan on top & light yellowish tan on throat & belly. Long sharp bills. Very tame. They have a high, 2-note cry, & also a chatter or scolding noise.


* 

28:VI:60  **Thursday**  Camped now at Whitney Creek camp, a mile & a half below the Guitar Lake. Trees – Sierra pine, a pleasant shade in a stony meadow. We saw a party of 3 hikers on the trail ahead; we feared they would be here when we arrived, but they had gone on. Here we have done our laundry & now, daubed with repellant against numerous mosquitoes, we keep our journals. The morning mush was mostly spilt, the primus stoves wouldn’t work so we couldn’t cook the fish CLT had caught last night at Arctic Lake. CLT has blistered feet & sore bones. I a slightly sprained & swollen right wrist. Both of us have bad sunburn on the back of hands & neck. We hope to rest a while here, & probably tomorrow try hiking without packs to the Crabtree Lakes or some other side trip – CLT hunts new fishing grounds.

[…]

Discontented to sit still, CLT went off with his fish-pole across the ridge to the East – he had seen a trail on the map that leads from here more directly to the Crabtree lakes than our planned route. The sun’s going down now. I climbed the little hill behind the camp {West} & had a splendid view of the Kaweas & the great peaks southward. Directly below this camp, a small lake in the woods. {map shows it to be just above Crabtree Ranger Sta.} 2 hikers came past
here, stayed on the opposite bank of the creek, talked a while & walked on. Just before this, I had been ringing the prayer bell & reciting the refuges, vows, & *Prajnaparamita Sutra*. I continue re-reading *The Ambassadors*, walk up & down for a rest now & again. Dark-grey/light grey bird plays about the edge of the creek.

Now the 2 hikers reappear, coming up from Crabtree way. They met CLT on his way up to the lakes – they say he will be some time getting back, it’s a rough trail 3 miles. They go on to Timberline Lake to fish. I must start a fire soon; so there will be some soup when CLT gets back. Although the sun will be back of the ridge soon, it should be quite light for a few hours yet.

*  

29:VI:60  **Wednesday** – Last night CLT brought back 3 small golden trout for supper. We remain here at Whitney Creek. CLT has hiked away to fish at Hitchcock Lakes. I shall read & write & explore around.

Hiked to small lake, actually no more than a pond, maybe ¼ mile down the trail from camp – exhausting. Many tadpoles there. Apparently a snow pond, it lies in a shelf above the creek, no inlet. Came back to camp for a rest & then, in hopes of getting into better condition for walking tomorrow, I hiked up to Guitar Lake – about a mile & ½. On the way, talked with a boy at Timberline L. – He & friend & burro plan to take John Muir Trail all the way to Yosemite. Burro followed me as I went on, I helped catch her. Boy was worried about the creature’s health, but it didn’t look sick to me. Nobody at Guitar Lake except large marmots. Came back to camp & had lunch & read, but the headache I’d picked up at Guitar lake this morning got worse – I’ve taken anacin pills & have now climbed atop a boulder on the w. ridge behind camp. I want a sketch of the Kaweahs & what I imagine is the Kern-Kaweah divide, south of here. – this is a poor attempt.
Back in camp. While I was drawing I heard the boys driving their burro past below. I gathered an armload of wood for tonight’s fire & carried it here – most fearful of gathering a few wood-ticks as well – I saw a huge one on my coat yesterday.

CLT came back with 6 big golden trout from Hitchcock Lake -- a feast.

* 

**Thursday 30:VI:60** I am alone at Wallace Creek camp. This A.M., CLT was taken with a tooth abscess & so packed up & took off towards Lone Pine & L.A. . . . He said he might be able to come back in via Kearsage & meet me at Vidette Meadow – In any case if I don’t see him in 5 or 6 days he won’t be back. So I have my solitary mountain trip after all. . . What next? Getting started was messy & got worse. Here I sit. Now I go look around.

* 

**Friday 1:VII:60** It is very pleasant in this valley, but there are too many mosquitoes, they drove me early to bed & early out of it. The Kaweas have much larger snowfields than last year. The grass in the meadow here is short & fine – a park – but with out mosquito netting, uninhabitable. & the wind is almost continuous. Oh well. I shall be off to Tyndall Creek presently, a day ahead of schedule but perhaps it’ll be less buggy there. From Tyndall Creek it is only 2 or 3 days to Cedar Grove – I can goof about in that country & the upper and lower Vidette meadows. But not here in Wallace Creek. Maybe later in the year it’s better.

[...]

So I contemplate rambling about here for the next 3-4 days – I fuss quietly concerning CLT, the future, the present – blah.
Saturday 2:VII:60  Tyndall Creek – no rain yet, but again, the clouds are piling up -- & from the North, this time, as well, over Forester & Harrison Passes. The night was dewy & rather colder than I expected, but the sun is hot today. Wind, of course, SW. It must be about noon or 1 PM. I spent the morning walking to just above Lake South America to get pictures of the Divide & Harrison Pass. Snow at the top of the little pass just before the lake below L. South America.

Anyway, here I must be for several days, having nowhere else to go. I should be at Vidette Mdws. Tuesday & Wednesday to see whether CLT is to show.

Read for a while, then old man back from Wallace Lake fishing trip. We had along conversation about mountains & weather. He’s given me 4 small goldens for supper. I have tea & soup water heating on the fire. […] Now I am immensely fortified with fish & onion soup & swedebread & having tea, & a cigarette, a somewhat larger fire.

I fear it will sprinkle more tonight. Old man saw frost this morning, which explains the cold & damp I felt. Cloud hangs among the crags of Forester Pass. Old man carried his load of fish home in a sack of snow from Bighorn Plateau  {I saw none there}. Tomorrow I must gather a new load of firewood.
Monday 4:VII:60  Hot & clear – breaking up Tyndall Creek camp & heading for Forester Pass.

A long tedious walk over the pass & I’m bushed but installed in a well-sheltered campsite at the head of the canyon leading into Vidette Meadows – at about Contour 11,200 ft. on the topo map. Although this camp is fairly large & well used – there’s even a wheelbarrow stashed here – it doesn’t show on any of the maps. Now I must make some soup.

[...]

* * *

Tuesday 5:VII:60  Camped in Vidette Meadow, just above junction of Bubbs & Vidette Creeks & not far above trail junction to Bullfrog Lake. I’m engaged to be here today & tomorrow – but I grow more fidgety, having run out of cigarettes [sic], & think of going to Cedar Grove tomorrow – a 20-mile hike unless luck would provide a ride from the road end at Copper Creek.

[...]

* * *


Thursday 7:VII:60  At home. After a fast walk, & 2-mile ride, I reached Cedar Grove about 1:15 PM. Had a milkshake & washed up a little, & after waiting about 4 hours, got a hitch to Fresno – took 10:10 bus & arrived San Francisco 3 AM today. Taxi home & bath.

* * *
20:IX:60

In white light storefront living room

    a vision of myself, red faced & fatuous, reading to students

3000 miles away

    what can I tell them about freedom & love

Down wind from Twin Peaks school kids in cut down shorts

    Rattle my windows

    Free to do, to love… what?

Friday night booze without love, they kick their way through

    Bill’s glass front door across the street, nearly get

    killed – he has a gun, must keep them off his wife, his sister –

    (paintings & sculpture

    living there too)

They claim he threw a rock, dented a fender, they

    want money now, crash in

They claim he’s a beatnik – the newspaper tells them

    Beatniks a communist menace.

    Lazy communist dope fiend artist fakes –

    Bust them!

Columbia 19, 14
I holler at you because you pester me all the time

& I see why you do it –

You’re half insane from being pushed around, bamboozled

People are getting rich, keeping you dumb – keeping

you ½ drunk on cut beer, distracted with the joys of

TV, the movies, the threat of war, actual confinement

in uniform, giving you toy thrill-ride cars & water skis

& games until you’re too tired to think, too muscle-bound

to sit still & look for a minute at what’s going on

you’re being used & wasted, & you take up my

time as well, roaring up & down the street, sitting

outside my door blaring your car radio

the schools only let you know that there’s too many subjects

to learn. The church says you are naughty with your body.

The government says you are my property.

Somewhere you’ve got the idea life is somewhere else, some other time

the things you believe: “I gonna do whatever I want

right now. I don’t have to do anything I don’t want to.

I got to have money to have a car,

love fun, without money I’m dead” –

which other people

want you to believe, so you’ll work mindless & ½ content the rest
of your life to get money to give in exchange for all the
things they want to sell you.

Bancroft, Notebook 1

28 Dec. 1960 -- A good day to catch up with my life & times. April weather, a long walk through Golden Gate Park, the Arboretum: blooming this day, the Chinese *Camellia Saluensis*, shapes resembling Tudor rose, vivid pink-tipped creamy blossoms *Rhododendron* x Countess of Harrington

*Prunus* x *Blireiana* {Apricot plum}

“ x *Dawn*

*Luculia Gratissima* {from Himalays}

spicy sweet smell, very pale delicate pink

[ … ] Also much cistus, cyclamen, Brazilia, Glory-bush, amaryllis, calalilly, heathers,

CLT & I now living in 24th St, under east slope of Twin Peaks: storefront, 2 rooms, kitchen & bath.

August – September – JLK was in & out of town – stayed at Ferlinghetti’s Bixby Canyon place; Mike & Jo, Lew, Larry, Victor Wong, Neal, all of us visit him there several days {Paul Smith there too} & swim at Slater Hot Springs, Sunday PM at Nepenthe &c.

September CLT & I moved here to 24th St.
[Below, in the entry for 11:XI:60, Whalen mentions that he lost the journal notebook that covered events after July 7, 1960, including his second “reading tour” of New England from October 10 through November 23, which ended with a brief visit to New York City. There are two fragments dated September, 1960 from Columbia University’s rare book and manuscript library. The lost journal included descriptions of visits to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and Asian art gallery at Yale University to study the ancient scrolls, paintings, and calligraphy, described below. Whalen later found some of these notes in a second, smaller notebook, and then apparently copied them into Bancroft 1, which explains why the entry dates inscribed are not in true calendar order. Whalen mentions this episode in the poem *Minor Moralia, The Final Part of Minor Moralia* (at CP 266), 27-29:X:62.]

**Boston Museum of Fine Arts 5:XI:60**

“Niao-k’o meditating in pine-tree,”

attrib. Yen Hui {fl. 14 c.} figure reminiscent of Bodhidharma pictures

“A Temple Among Snowy Hills” attrib. Fan K’uan {fl. Ca. 990 – ca. 1030} like cover picture on *Spirit of the Brush*.

“Returning from a Village Feast (color) attrib. Li T’ang, early 12th cent. {Sung}

“Hsiao Ssu-hua on a rock, playing a lute before Emperor Wen Ti” attrib. Ma Yuan {fl. Ca. 1190 – ca. 1225} {Sung}
“First Emperor of Han Dyn. entering into Kuan-Chung” – Chao Po-Chü, first ½ of 12th cent. [Sung] – Long scroll (8’ ?) polychrome – gold lines for rocks – soldiers wear pants. Mongol-style helmets – also turbans – some Saracen-style helmets with chainmail neck curtains

Ma Yuan – “Bare Willows & Distant Mountains”

! “6 odes from Ma Shih painted by Ma Ho-Chih” – late 12th cent. Calligraphy by Emperor Kao-Tsung, Sung Dyn. 1107-1187. In court scene at extreme left end of scroll, behind central figure of Emperor {or judge?} is shown the bottom of a screen decorated with shapes [of] ceremonial jade axes?

“Ladies preparing newly woven silk” – Emperor Hui Tsung {1082 – 1135} Sung Dyn. Live color. Ladies wear somewhat “Empire” style gowns, & each has turquoise colored Ü in center of forehead. Natural eyebrows {not “moth style”} A mulberry leaf?

“2 boys herding waterbuffalo” {2 & 1 calf} Sung

“Listening to Mountain Stream” – Chou Ch’en – Ming Dyn.

“Man Trying to Catch a Horse” – Hao Ch’eng – Early Sung

“Sailboat on a Lake” – style of Li T’ang

“13 Emperors” – T’ang scroll, attrib. to Yen-Li-Pên – 7th cent.

“9 Dragon Scroll” – Ch’en Jung – dated 1244 – Sung. Black & white, some
red flames, mouths. 1, waterfalls & rocks in 2 in air & fog 3 with rocks 4 in swirl of water, with Pearl, 5 in swirl of mist curling off water. 6 in air & mist. Reading from right to left. 3 are rolled up. About 9 feet of scroll visible in glass case.


6 leaves of Al-Jazari’s Treatise on Automata, Arab Ms. Dated AD 1354.

“Rue Ganguet” – Nicolas de Stael {about 6’ square – greygreens, greys blue-blacks

“Soyez amoreuses, vous serez heureuses”
P. Gauguin, carved & painted high relief wood


All of this from small extra notebook that survived.
Visited G. Stein ms. collection & talked with D. Gallup. Most enlightening.

*Portrait of Basket* by Marie Laurencin, portrait of Alice B. Toklas by Sir. Francis Rose, etc. in Gallup’s office. Met Norman Holmes Pearson, brilliant, “rustic” – like Snyder.


[San Francisco] 22 December, acted in first 2 performances of McClure’s play, *The Feast* – presented at Batman Gallery to invited audiences. Among the actors were Jo McClure, Bill & Joan Jahrmarkt, Ron Loewinsohn, David Meltzer, Rick Duerden, Alan Russo, Kirby Doyle, Robert Brannaman, Tom Hix, Morton Subotnick, Robert LaVigne. Perhaps photos of it will be printed in *Holiday* mag.

Since returning from the east I’ve written 2 chunks of prose, *Goofbook* & *Fogbook* & have commenced a third as yet nameless. I continue writing & reading – currently reading ms. of Bill Brown’s novel, *Honeytown Diaries*.

While I write this I boil meat bones preparatory to building a pot of [illeg.]. Something else happened this year, rather momentous –

*Obit* Virginia Anderson, end of August 1960

*Aet. Suae 49.*

---

25 Virginia Anderson . . . this Latin tombstone inscription translates as, “died at the age of 49.”
Bancroft Notebook 2

JOURNAL
San Francisco

18 January 1961
20 May 1962

NB – That CLT and I were then living near 24th & Douglass Sts.

24th & DOUGLASS

18:1:61 Strawberry Hill, bright sun, cool wind, some fog but I can see breakers at ocean edge a mile away. Great magnolia tree in Japanese Garden nearby in full bloom, & lots of buds. Crimson rhododendrons, azaleas, heather, cyclamen. Plenty ducks in Stowe Lake beneath me – mallards, Peking ducks, black (pintail?), red headed one. Great artificial Hearst Waterfall in full operation. Those black squeaky ducks don’t have web feet but long wide floppy toes, yellow/green with black bars. Rather long legs.

Hooked beak. Many blackbirds. The mallards are pairing. Hydrangeas. Beside entrance to Arboretum, Bleeding-heart & some kind of primrose. Abyssinian Banana leaves 7’ – 8’ leaves, many ragged. 2’ wide. Hybrid primrose, primula x polyantha. Hybrid plum primus x blireiana
nearly full bloom. All heathers raving. Purple crocuses. Magnolia campbellii. Blue & black pansies. 100 robins all at once. Small tree Cotoneaster x cornubia & others, dense clusters of scarlet berries.

[ . . . ]

26:1:61  At night. Warm, after all day rain yesterday. Walk over Castro, 18th. & Dolores to 24th. Moon waning little less than ½, long cloud banners and banisters, silver bar of Heaven  Mr. Rosetti. I mean warm & only a jacket, no sweater, no {or few} puddles, a pleasure.

*  *  *

Bancroft Notebook 1

14 March 1961

CLT & I spent the week of March 5 – 12 at Walker’s house in Seal Beach. Now home again. Seal Beach much enlarged in some directions, quite unchanged in others. Walker has done a great deal of interesting work. As a technician & as a colorist he has achieved something good – I keep peering into his canvases for vision, for poetry, for prophecy – & I seldom see any of these. Perhaps they are all there, but I fail to catch them, hear them. Mariella looking wonderfully young & pretty. Sunshine down there – here all is cold fog. Ed Durham staying the night with us before he goes back to Portland tomorrow. {he’s been in SFO 6 weeks} His new wife expects a child in May.

I must decide whether to make another trip to the East. What I had rather do is plan a trip to the Sierra for mid-May. Perhaps take Haselwood over Donahue Pass? etc. etc.  A mood of haste, rushing, to make decisions that have no excuse for presenting themselves at this time – imaginary decisions, imaginary urgency, a general mental & moral confusion.
8:IV:61
Confusion noted above degenerated into series of acute depressions, weeks of bad digestion, back-aches &c.

On 19:III:61 Tut was lost while flying his plane from Lebanon to Newport. I have been hoping that he might yet be safe but I’ve heard no further news. I can’t bear to think that he’s dead, & it seems impossible to believe that he isn’t; I only can hope that the old saying is true, that “you can’t kill a goddam bullheaded Swede, they’re too tough.”

[...]

Today being Buddha’s birthday I have sat, recited sutra & vows, cleaned the house & now sit drinking tea, wondering what I shall write. I’ve been able to compose only a few lines of poetry since finishing the Goofbook stuff in January.

Warm sunny Saturday. CLT visiting our friends in Mill Valley.

Columbia 19, 15
Sketches for a Novel
9:IV:61
Paradise isn’t lost, that’s our problem. We waste our time creating heavens we don’t need. We transform the Regency dining room into a Moorish salon with marble-screened balcony overlooking hot Mediterranean Sea. Lonely in our claptrap empires we create robots to serve & entertain us, but soon their simplicity & efficiency wearies us. We build a few that have a more complicated design. They begin winning arguments & must be destroyed. The most complicated ones we can imagine & construct become alarmingly independent; presently they escape control, run away to set up heavens of their own which sparkle dimly just beyond our night horizons,
their bad jazz not quite audible throughout our eternities. We must move out, scrap the whole works & invent another.

Repeating this activity becomes more difficult, after a certain number of failures. Scraps of old inventions haunt us—recollections of light & shade as case by that Moroccan screen, dreams wherein we hear for a moment the insistent maniac tinkle of robot jazz—our doubts as to our powers of invention persuade us to demand a little less.

The library is 18th Century & cold but the chairs are good. The master bedroom facing on the South Pacific is a final choice despite the hourly arrival & departure of jet airliners full of juvenile criminals from Kansas City; their beer cans, underwear & zip-gun bullets make the beach itself unapproachable. The living-room has settled simply & elegantly into straight Japanese: mats, shojis, garden & all. It’s possible to doze there in the afternoon, far beyond the airplanes—only a few mosquitoes are about.

There we are. Frightened, guilty, raging, we sit alone in heaven, as far as we can remove ourselves from the world in general and from any other person. No wonder that when our telephone rings we are likely to answer:


& return to considering whether to have peonies in the right or lefthand corner of the garden.

Once I heard the following testimony in court. The witness gave her name & address, then her attorney asked,

“What is your occupation?”

& she replied without hesitation,
“I deal with intangibles.”

It developed that the woman was a real-estate broker who bought & sold real property, mortgages, leases & the like, but her answer had sprung out of whatever tacky paradise I was inhabiting until that moment, bringing me back into the courtroom where I belonged.

For a great many years I believed that I had a very clear notion of what the world was and what was my own nature. By “the world” I meant not only the rocks, trees & air that everyone else can see, but also the bodies and minds of other persons. I felt that I was meant to investigate all these things and persons, find out how they worked, what was their motive power. I wanted to be left alone to contemplate & experiment with natural objects, to read what had been written about the world, & to enquire of older persons what had been their experiences.

I knew several boys my own age who had the same kind of curiosity. We served as experimental animals to each other; we compared & exchanged our findings. On rare occasions I’d meet with a girl who had the same turn of mind & as the result of such meetings I began to form the opinion that in spite of certain apparent disjunctions & contradictions in nature, these were neither illogical nor disruptive. There were natural polarities with more or less fixed and calculable limits of power which, if one properly understood them, could be intelligently manipulated.

[...]
Bancroft Notebook 2

14:V:61 I have completed a collection of poems: *Angelflame*.

20:VI:61 A day spent mostly out-of-doors, walking from home to Golden Gate Park & then on through the park to Ocean Beach – walked back as far as 18th Ave & took bus.

   I have been doing nothing since finishing *Angelflame*. I feel nervous & guilty while doing nothing, waiting to begin some new piece of writing.

   I have agreed – tentatively – upon another tour of the East beginning in October, “Somewhere in Wisconsin.”

   I must add: Tut & airplane were found on 17:V:61, crashed in Santian Valley near Mill City. Instead of a funeral, a memorial proceeding was had in Circuit Court at Newport – ashes of Tut now reside at Riverview Columbarium in Portland.

   Non-sequitur: Melvin “Bud” Ward, a sometime college acquaintance of mine was stabbed to death in his apartment here in San Francisco.

   On all sides Death keeps hunting & grinning; I feel older & more foolish every day – but I must continue – I must believe that, in my small peculiar way, I am great & necessary & doing what I ought to do. . . my presence here is {oh yes} justified &c. . . .

Why can’t I write about this without joking, exaggerating, lying?

* * *
At the no-name bar, Sausalito, having rushed into this town to see the proprietor of Tradefare about a job as night watchman {Tradefare is the ferry-boat Berkeley, moored to a custom-built dock in the center of Sausalito shopping district} since the job is open & all my friends have decided I should work there – they are tired of supporting me, I suppose. . . hélas for them. . .

2 other customers here & Errol Grover on record/radio {KJAZZ Jeanie Blevins croaking away between records} the other two patrons, one a beautiful brunet, not too big, guzzling daquiris at the bar, white pique summer dress, wickerwork basket satchel with sweater escaping from it, her shoes soft black leather medium heel, dusty & worn.

Sitting here writing in my notebook, I feel odd – this is {everybody says} Phoney City USA, that is, any number of nowhere impostors linger about these & the neighboring premises, telling anybody who’ll listen that they are writers & artists & beaux esprits – although in real life they are children of rich parents. They’re having a continuous party on money they get from home, an allowance, a remittance fund, a small inheritance. . . in terms my father might use, “they are finding themselves”. . . It pleases me to consider the difficulties they must have undergone in order to become lost, so that they might justify to themselves this trip, this sojourn in North Beach, Paris, &c. wherein to search for themselves. . . they should stay lost, I think. They clutter up the landscape, make the bars crowded & noisy, & upset the police. They have no style, unless the term “slob” suggests a particular set of shapes, forms {“The Manners,” Mr. James cries out, “The Manners”}. No manners whatever, a general projection of boredom, dissatisfaction, malaise, inchoate unshapely jellies. . .
... & the beer I’m drinking is mixing strangely with the 15 mg dex [illeg.] I took earlier today. ... I feel like at least an immortal genius if not something newer & more interesting & exciting than that. ... & of course it is true, in some world or other, some possible set of probability coordinates. ... that woman was attractive as long as she sat still & kept her mouth shut. Her walk; her manner of speech are ugly however interesting her body might be. She’s telephoning now.

[...]  

**Monday 14 August 1961.** Golden Gate Park, great meadow between tennis courts & Kezar Stadium, the sun is dissolving in fog, about 5:30 PM.

[...]  

Now at the ocean the sun is bright, the fog blowing inland past it cuts the glare only a little bit, & not too often. The tide is out, the sea not quite as flat as yesterday – a little more wind but not unbearable as I have seen it – A fair-sized cargo vessel is heading for the Gate. Low black fog bank curves out to sea from Pedro Point to Bolinas. Not as many birds today, the breeze is fairly warm. 2 men in the surf, swimming – although it must be 7:30 PM or so.

[...]  

Small train of cloud/fog forms several miles outside the Gate & fattens as it heads inland. Mt. Tamalpais & Bolinas Ridge quite in the clear. Now I go hunt for some ice cream. & have eaten it. Time 7:15 PM. I wait for bus although the sun will be up for another 20 minutes.

* * *

[...]

----
17 August 1961, in Castro bus, on way to Haselwood’s shop. . . Bougainvillea now having a large season. Sat drinking coffee while David lunched. . . we spoke of literature & writers, not too dully. . . Ideogram, constellation, etc. We are sitting about the fire, talking, eating peanuts & drinking beer, having a fine time, paying no attention to the children, they’ve been grubbing about on the floor, finding unbroken halves of peanut shells & fitting them onto their fingers, noses, & ears, pretending the shells are boats, cars, money. . . Suddenly one of us, seeing that all the peanuts are eaten (or maybe it’s bedtime for the children?). . . begins clearing up all the shells in sight, & throwing them into the fireplace. The children scream with rage & frustration, the shells are “theirs,” belong to them, the shells aren’t garbage, they are magic talizmata [sic] which have produced an hour’s hallucination. . . not happiness, but a freeing of the imagination, an escape for the attention away from a ‘reality’ which was boring to them (no one was talking to them except to shugh [sic] them or threaten them – the adults had been talking exclusively to each other). Manipulating the shells & fingers had created a world that could have been found by using any one of a thousand other means or none at all. . . relaxation or sleep. . . however, the peanut shells seemed capable of producing dreams, made the imagination work easier, . . . & someone is destroying the shells. . . how can these precious things be destroyed. . . toys jealously gathered & used. . . Scream, rage, weep, hysteria from the children! No wonder we had to have jobs, make money, buy peanuts & beer & eat & drink it all in an expensive house in order to get ourselves into a condition somewhat resembling the pleasant magic land where the children have just spent the past hour.

[…]

19:VIII:61  At night, at home, no regular outing today, except a short trip to buy cheap hamburger in Fillmore St. Call on Cid, look at reproductions of Chinese paintings. Rainy & very
warm in A.M., hot & sultry now {10:25 PM} although the sky cleared at sunset. Real bad New York smell outside. […]

 […] When I got back here from Cid’s, I found a white porcelain rice bowl standing before my door – bowl decorated on outside with 3 painted prawns, dark grey-green. Who left it? I’m drinking tea from it as I sit here. * I recall (with annoyance) that the Oxford Shakespeare I bought is lacking one word in one place I would want it most: Fool’s song in Lear: {III, 2, 14}. “He that has and a little tiny wit – with hey, ho, the wind and the rain,” &c. &c. [quote marks mine, he capitalizd to indicate text, and drew a square box around word “and”.] The editor {W.J. Craig, M.A.} has seen fit to discard the AND. [he has the “and” capitalzd] Kittredge says “The AND has no meaning. It merely serves to carry a note in the tune.” & Professor Kittredge lets the word stand in his text. It stands also in the Cambridge text, & in the Collier edn. Oh dear, & Collier is also thumb indexed. Alas, covetise! Perjury! Deception, &c.

FOR HIS TRAVAIL SHALL COME UPON HIS OWN HEAD, AND HIS WICKEDNESS SHALL FALL ON HIS OWN PATE {Ps. 8, as given in the Anglican Psalter} […]

21:VIII:61 on top of South Twin {of Twin Peaks directly above the city} Red rock – the crown of this mountain has been sliced through from approximately north to south, a trench 18-20 inches wide. Layers of red rock, quite rotten, titled towards the north strata ¾ to 1 inch thick, breaks off in square chunks […] Fine view of Bay, ocean, Tamalpais, top of Mt Diablo shows blue sharp pyramid through clouds above Oakland. Very fast wind {W} here, 20-30 MPH. […]
I start down the East slope of the peaks. Quail! Meadowlark, big squirrel {Marmot, greydigger?} Big as a cat. Bird with white tail & russet wings * Bottom of hill, hear quail cry -- voices of people on the summit -- intersection of Burnett & Hopkins Streets.

[...]

* * Home, past midnight -- Not only was there a rice bowl (see entry above for 19:VIII) I heard a flapping clack yesterday PM, while I sat reading in the living room -- clackety flapping from the transom above the front door which is usually noisy when the wind blows -- some time later, a crash & clatter as someone had thrown something at our door. I look out the window & see a flat wood framed object on the sidewalk directly before me. I go out to discover that it’s an oil painting by Jean Conner (bust of a woman & vase of flowers) which I bring inside & hang on the wall. CLT feared that it might have fallen out of apartment upstairs, but he went outside to find all the upstairs windows shut; nevertheless he said it might belong to someone else, & that we might expect the police. . . however, I intend to keep it & the rice bowl as well. . . after all, the Conners made a public announcement that they were getting rid of all their belongings before they set out for Mexico. . . & they had told me they appreciated the Ratprose [?] piece I made for them. . . even steven.

24:VIII:61 Arboretum. Still breezy. I’ve been lying on a lawn, decyphering Chaucer, very slowly & painfully. I can scarcely hear him above the learned hum of his editors & scholiasts & commentators. The presence of fresh air, green grass & sunshine help to amplify Chaucer’s distant singing.

[...]
13 September Wednesday  {this is according to CLT his computation}  I have walked to the zoo & now sit on the shore of the ocean, reading Keats, his letters & must presently go home – we attend the theater tonight in Berkeley – a company of actors from Athens is presenting Aeschylus (Choephori & Eumenides) in their own language. . . also a play of Sophocles. * Clouds over the sun & almost annoying wind. Summit of Tamalpais, & south, Pedro Point visible just below the fog.

* * *

15:IX:61  Sophocles ELEKTRA. . . seeing this, & the performances of CHOEPHOROI & EUMENIDES, I get a real notion of what “theater” (as an art form) ought to be. viz LARGE. (Wagner, O’Neill & Artaud are justified). LARGE but SIMPLE  A + B + C. As elemental as he is, perhaps Aeschylus is too verbose? * *

C L Thompson’s idea – that the chorus is human nature, mankind, that doesn’t change, it endures & continues in its own way, while meteoric murdering princes, their plots & tiny suffering appear & vanish.

I hope human nature is more various, capable of more visions, changes, revolutions. . . but the idea, “that human nature remains the same,” is one of the notions essential to our civilization – & our insistence on this idea – repeating it in our art, religion, & laws – is one of our most serious defects. . . the ideas of permanence, perfection, stability, how we treasure them -- & how false, how contrary they are to our own knowledge & experience of the world.
21:IX:61 on Clipper St. hill, towards the zoo. Last night I dreamed of standing in the dark on the deck of a great ocean liner {although it was of wood} & could see lights of other ships a great distance away, some below the sea’s horizon. Black moonless, starless night, an idea of cold without feeling cold, feeling of great forward speed, of precarious balance, of carelessness & fear – fear with a great security far below it – First part of dream involved travel in automobile, to Boston, to make connections with boat. Jay & other friends in auto. . .

[...]

I start homewards -- or anyway back to a place where I am permitted to eat a share of whatever food is there available. My home is here in the sandbank beside the ocean, right this minute. . .

* I rest in the big east meadow behind Kezar Stadium. I didn’t know where that ship was going, or that it would ever arrive at any port – I wasn’t thinking of a particular destination – I had to be in the boat, wherever it was headed.

* * *

28:IX:61 -- Looking for a house, apartment, room in which to live.

28:IX:61 Arboretum. A tall shrub with spikes of pink & petal turned back blossoms. A herd of Monarch butterflies is feeding {Bomarea Caldasiana, “Climbing Lily” is name of plant} Gardner has arranged sprinkler now to squirt butterflies & me out of the way.

* Fallen leaves in the paths. Cotoneaster shrubs {from SE Tibet} now have red berries. *

Hoheria Populmea tree {var. Osbornii} drops white star blossoms. Flowers in braits [sic] of 6 – 5 petals with 2 sets of 5 stamens & pistils. The stamens {the male parts} are blue the center shorter pistils a lavender color, yellow white tips {stamens fine brown tips} not a very attractive perfume but sweet. The petals whorl from right to left.
* Arbutus canariensis resembles madrone, but has berry/blossoms like Manzanita.

* Correa Backousiana Yellow Australia fuchsia – hard, elongated yellow bells. *

Jasminium officiale, Poet’s Jessamine, strange double flower, same as jasmine tea.

* Hydrangea arborescens flowers, 3 petals in long, watch-spring stalks hang out beyond broccoli clusters of tiny green flowers {see Bartram} * big tall pink 6-petal

lilies grow in cluster at top of tall thick stalk – resemble amaryllis – very long, broad leaves.

[...]

The sun makes a bright silver island. . . Seal Rocks are getting sunshine. . . but right here by the foot of the seawall, the sun hasn’t quite broken out of the fog. . . I shall sit here a while & find out whether it arrives. The tide is high, & turning to recede once more. The water is very lightly choppy, some white caps beyond the surf line. Small freighter heads towards the Golden Gate, & here, very nearly sunshine! * A few people are here, like me, occupying these steps, these wide concrete thrones at the end of the world. All men. One has his son with him. An old woman walks past before us, at the edge of the sea, a yellow coat & red head kerchief, she strides along quite fast. . . out of sight. Pelicans flying & landing in the choppy water, which they hit with a great splash. They soar, their great beaks angle downwards. . . I think of pterodactyl pictures. . . SUN burst & back into cloud, 2 more pelicans. I suppose they’re fishing. Window of a parked car, (maybe house window) a white diamond appears on crest of Bolinas Ridge & gone again. Too many clouds hide Mt. Tamalpais.

[...]

At home. I didn’t mention that I had a lot of difficulty deciding whether to walk all the way to the beach. At Stow Lake the fog bank looked thick & I thought I was too tired to walk further. . . I turned into the road leading up to the west shore of the lake & then turned back, headed for the
ocean again, decided at last, the fear / doubt “limp” feeling departed, then returned, then
vanished as I stopped to look at the pollarded eucalyptus, returned for a short while thereafter,
vanished again at the pine tree beside the Mallard lake & stayed away until I was heading up the
hill on Clayton St., when I became suicidal – “the impulse which produced me has come to an
end – or has passed on & left me here – I am finished – I shall kill myself a week from now if the
employment office doesn’t begin paying me unemployment benefits, et cetera”

So until I reached home, had a shower, washed clothing & ate supper. I’ve been cleaning &
fiddling in the kitchen since dinner – my potted plans, the garbage, cut fingernails. . . I decided
that I would walk all the way to the ocean in order to find out
why I was afraid to do it, why I felt that it required a decision. . . what would I see, what would
I learn of myself during this particular walk? I discovered, for example, that seeing a cloud bank
from the east end of the park doesn’t necessarily mean that the beach is totally under fog & cold
wind. . .

[...]

7:X:61  [...] Yesterday I had to wait upon the employment section at the post office. . . an
interview, & at home, filling up endless official inquiry blanks. Another interview on the 16th, &
then I may go to work for them on the 23d. What I’d like is to be left alone so that I could
continue reading & loafing. But I’ve reached the end of another period of unemployment &
dependency. I shall be involved with money & the “real world” again. Is it simply a matter of
attention & energy & patience? I wonder. I wish almost anything else were to be done at this
but I need money, my father needs money, CLT needs money, it is all impossible, hopeless &c.

[...]

15:X:61 At home, the day sunny & oppressively hot, as the weather has been for the last 3 or 4 days. […] CLT has gone to watch TV at Bob Miller’s house. […] * Long monolog by David Meltzer about philosophy, literature, politics, writing, his magazine, &c. * I unwisely smoked 2 packages of cigarets this week & am just beginning to recover from their ill effects. . .& wishing I had a smoke right this minute. . .

[...]

23:X:61 at home. I must go to work in about an hour, beginning again as a clerk in the post office. I shall make $80 a week – in return for $80,000 worth of bother, vexation &c.

* * *

* “NOVEL” NOTE

24:X:61 at home. I found the job as bothersome & vexatious as I could have hoped. I feel as if I’d never been away, man in parcel post section, Harold, says he didn’t know I was gone. Now I wait to begin Tuesday. . . & at 9:30 PM, I won’t know that it’s ended. I don’t know why the notion of being tired should be so frightening or upsetting. . . I’m not tired now, but I’m no more intelligent, no more creative right now than I shall be, 12 hours from this time. * I want to write a story which will express the feeling of change in one’s mind, change in one’s viewpoint – I doubt that Joyce really accomplished this in The Dead – anyway, I have a different feeling about it & must calculate an image train, whatever, to carry it. . .

[...]
* “NOVEL” NOTE

25:X:61  at home. [ . . . ] A story or novel concerned with rates of change in feeling, the consciousness or awareness of actual change &c. – like a calculus Δ - - but it must be plain that it is the AWARENESS, & not simply “change” per se which is important.

[...] 

26:X:61  at 2 AM – last night, abut 8 PM I took 2½ gr. leaper\(^{26}\) & here I am wide awake & thoughtless – very tired, physically, from throwing heavy parcel post off the belt into tubs. . . this room is infested with mosquitoes & gnats. I must wear bug repellent to bed. I suppose that the insects come up from the damp dirt directly underneath my holy floor. I fear that I’ll feel moldy the rest of this day. My lungs already wheeze, full of dust, & trying to breathe faster, following the leaper.  * Noon. I sit in the bus, outside my house, waiting to be carried to work. A light rain. I’ve forgotten to put on my big shoes.  * I can’t start this “change” story from the IDEA. . . I must begin with someone – imagine somebody not myself – & go from there. who is anybody. a line in the middle of his lower lip. curly hair, like Locke’s.

[...] 

27:X:61  At home. The light but thorough raininess has let up & the sun – now the sun’s gone again; it shone for a few minutes, however. My fingers are sore from handling letters.  [ . . . ]  I was awakened by dream of Bummy telling a story about the birth of one of her children. I feel a slight earthquake & interrupt her story {I’m a child?} Bill, in the character of a strong but slendeer young man goes to the door in partition wall leading to next room & by shaking very

\(^{26}\) “Leaper” is drug slang for an amphetamine pill.
hard moves it a little, but says that yes, there must have been an earthquake[,] then were my mother & aunt there also, there in the dream? There was the feeling that one or both of them was present. I awoke with fright, anxiety sensation &c. * [...] quite preoccupied with the arrival or non-arrival of the morning mail. I have all this time, before & after work, in which to accomplish miracles of beauty & genius but I’ve let it all melt away. * Where is Mr. Gallagher, our comic mail carrier?

28:X:61 Legion of Honor, fast wind but not cold, small fog streamers. The art exhibit costs 50¢. Our comic mail carrier collected 69¢ postage due on a copy of Kulchur which JLK sent from Florida – contains a sudden rave review of my books. Sorrentino writes it. But it leaves me penniless today. I shall walk down the beach & home through the park… […]

7:XI:61 I sit waiting inside the work bus. I’ve been in the post office two weeks. Last night I met Durham there at checkout time; he began to work yesterday – his family will move down from Portland later. Smog today, thick, the Los Angeles hills were afire & burnt 250 homes & Richard Nixon almost. Mike & Joann are back from NYC, now live just over the hill from me, they have a fine apartment with a view of trees & the Golden Gate.

[…]

*   *   *

13:XI:61 In an hour, I’ll take a bus into the real world. What happens there: CLT’s mother, here on a visit, was mugged & thrown down in the street, her purse stolen –

A couple of teenage thugs. Beth Walker was hit by a car & sprained her ankle. Shandel’s friend Lamory was stabbed by the rich Texas queen he was living with – but not fatally. Joan Duerden fired from her job. EW House evicted as of 1:XII:61, they look for new place. Roi Jones & Diane Di Prima under federal indictment for sending obscene matter through the US mail. Olson starves in Gloucester. Creeley slowly being driven gaga teaching in Albuquerque. All this is about to be demolished, atomized by giant bombs which will burn us to death slowly. Ron Loewinsohn read us his new book, The World of The Lie, Saturday night at Brautigan’s house. The book shows considerable technical & emotional growth beyond Watermelons, his first book, yet there’s only a little news in it – I believe that if he keeps writing, more excitement will be forthcoming. I feel, behind his work, a little of that baleful New York aesthetic – the over serious literary thing – coming, I suppose, from long association with Basil King & Fielding Dawson – but he’ll outgrow that if he’s any good at all – I could wish all the young more independence of my generation, & the Olson/Pound/Williams axis – if there must be a dependency, a leaning on past work, let us depend on really good work – stuff no later than 18th century England or France. * Now I must build my sack lunch for “work.” * These sentences are poorly made, flat pulp magazine phrases. . . I’ve been re-reading The Wings of the Dove & Thos Browne’s Garden of Cyrus. . . There’s no point in trying those decorated styles, they tire me, they have already done what Browne and James wanted them to do. I must follow my own EARS. I imagine, still, secretly, that I shall achieve fame & fortune in this way, while consciously telling myself “Don’t kid yourself any more – you’ve spent twenty-one years at it, & it’s brought all kinds of trouble on yourself & most of your friends.” * Real world – last night CLT & I talked to bus driver at end of Divisadero line – someone had just shot a hole in his windshield at 20th &
Castro – glass sprayed in his face – police said the bullet had ricocheted off not gone through. Fortunately the man was wearing spectacles or he would have got glass splinters in his eyes. […]

* * *

24:XI:61 At 3:20 AM. Awakened yesterday morning, Thanksgiving, by children hollering jump-rope rhymes as they played outside my door – waiting, I suppose, for the Thanksgiving feast. CLT said that for once they were behaving as children did thirty years ago, jumping rope & pinching each other, instead of comporting themselves like gangsters. He says maybe holidays are good for them. * I fret about work tomorrow […] & Hatch reports with photos about his Japanese expedition – Joanne & Gary look happy – Joanne’s book for Mary Ann Hatch a fine satire (with love) upon GS as well as Hatch – thinking of her, of them, makes me restless, but in a happy way. * Cooking chicken for Ann Leh a week ago, long conversation – a more complete take on her Ladies Home Journal history. . . atmosphere of the soap opera &c. How 2 people lapsed into total non-communication &c. . . . […]

26:XI:61 Up early & to the beach. Romantic Goya storm clouds over the city – it’s been raining the past two days – the clouds break out into miles of round fleecy fan right above the shore, & the sun shines on the ocean. All the sky over it is clear. Bolinas Head & Mt. Tamalpais in sunlight. Farrallon Islands barely visible. Walk back through the park to 8th Avenue. Wet paths, water drops at end of pine needles & cypress lace points. Many bison are

[…] * Yesterday CLT and I wandered to bookstores in the rain, Chinatown dinner & visit to EAM Durham. I came home alone, drank brandy & went early to bed, hence early happy morning today. There are so many things I ought to do, so many people I ought to visit &c. – I indulge myself instead by staying home this PM, reading John Muir’s *The Mountains of California*. EAMD is to call sometime today. C. Leong is to visit us sometime this month, perhaps next week? […]

* * *

**29:XI:61** Sun & breeze, after heavy rain. I sit outside post office before work, drinking chocolate milkshake. A flock of pigeons struggles up Spear St. * Interview during rain with prospective landlord – do we or don’t we have a new place to live, apartment below Bob Miller’s? * When I leave here tonight will it be raining again? * When shall I be translated out of the parcel post division? * The wind flaps my hair. The mind falls with the water drops, rain worries me. . . or turns itself inside out when I vomit – & vomiting scares me. Palacio says he’s become a vomit expert, never bothers him.

* Pigeon tracks preserved in cement sidewalk here. * Fat low clumps of fog, uniformly spaced, slow nowhere freight speed. They didn’t stop the sun. Heavy fog bank over bay, though – more water coming.

[…]
Good weather holds. I have just bought a piano {88.40 cash} What shall I do with it? Hopeless, a toy, a distraction.

Columbia 19, 16

Hydrangeas momentarily in the sun-path between redwood trees – blossoming or dead, always a question. We are too far from them to inspect them closely. Let us suppose that the appearance is true, life or death. Howard Hanson’s 2nd Symphony {the “Romantic”} accompanies this breakfast.

* 

The shower of redwood seeds, two months ago, was a wonder. Now the seeds are grown into small, black-hooded birds which devour their unhatched brethren.

* 

There I am. I want & inquired of the Pythoness & this is what appeared. How shall I dismiss it {it is not my great Aunt Hattie} & explain to the oracle that she’s come up with the wrong message?

* 

Bancroft Notebook 2

QUIT POST OFFICE II’ 62

A half-inch of snow in the back yard this A.M. The weather has been cold again, & I’ve been having influenza & feel insane & cranky. The piano serves well. I want to quite my job. I wonder how I can dispose of the piano, library, &c. ?

* 

The cold continues. My illness continues. I bought an electric blanket today.
Saturday {20:I} I caused Leslie to bring me Swami Nikhilananda’s translations from the
*Upanishads* – I’d seen it marked down to a reasonable price – 4 volumes $10. I wander now
amidst the benign haze of Swami’s prefaces & introductions. Tarradiddle.

* 

26:I:62 A milky sky, faintly warm. I must work tomorrow & Sunday also, have next
Wednesday & Thursday “off.” I’m tired of the job & afraid or “too prudent” to leave it.

* 

12:II:62 3 days after I wrote the last entry here, I received a check for $500 from The Poets
Foundation in New York. I quit the post office & have been vegetating ever since. It has rained
for several days. Today is dark & damp & I’m exhausted from entertaining my friends for 2 days
in a row. I was on my way to bed when I stopped to set down these notes, 5 PM. Day before
yesterday McClure read me a new poem of his, an explanation about how men & women see &
feel the world in different ways, twined up with commentaries on Plato & Darwin. . . I had
supper at the McClures & after an evening of talk & M reading Rilke, I think about writing again
– & in my present re-reading of *Genji*, I’ve just reached Lady Murasaki’s definition of the
novel, which reminds me again of what might be written. . . & of all I have left unwritten, except
for countless {& pointless} pages of notes & journals. Vaguely I feel like writing on this page
for the next several hours, but tired & no images, “ideas” &c. – except this morning’s dream – I
thought when I got up that I’d write it here, but I went out & bought a newspaper & avoided it –
it was a time/journey? view of city as it might have been before World War I, rather like Seattle.
. . Then I’m with many friends in lobby of big gothic public building where I’m to testify in
some trial. Courtroom rather more like the House of Commons. The building is badly damaged,
& a demolition crew is working at removing the walls. The judge or whoever he is, is very
friendly, the people in banked benches on either side of the hall seem to be in an amiable mood. The court or commons is investigating some awful charges against my father, some affaires he had long before I was born – I examine small sheets of metal with raised type printing on them, some sort of dossier of my father’s past, one dated 1905 {when he would have been 6 or 7 years old}. The judge worries about whether I or a friend who’s with me should testify first, then decides that I shall – we stand near the judge’s chair but there’s no witness box – the people in the hall are all busy laughing & shouting at each other, the judge {a short fat man} in a white shirt calls for order. My friend and I are in the lobby again, I see the metal dossier sheets again, I open the door into the hall & shout, “It’s all false – this is only a big plan to railroad my father!”

Everyone cheers, my father is automatically exonerated, the wall at the far side of the hall is torn down, a summer day, everyone happy, I am a hero. . . waking, I suppose it is all very interesting as symptom, of mental state &c., but I can’t make much sense or use of this dream – the earlier part, of houses, city as it was, bridges {looking like the St. Johns Bridge in Portland, rather fanciful suspension spars} over winding river. . . Joe Kreplick said that in the other dream of bridges, it was poetry, art & order that I was symbolizing. . . as “time travel” –

Was it the Irish Parliament of the 18th cent. & I some goofy patriot. . . or the city & the falling-down building representation of San Francisco & the earthquake, stories & pictures of which have always fascinated me? . . . &c.

14:II:62  It’s raining straight down {about 10 A.M. now} & no let-up in sight, & I need supplies from the Safeway store, 2 blocks away. * Evening of the 12th I wrote several pages of poem, first material arrive in months. McClure & I had been saying – about the Duino Elegies – “I wish that Yeats had written 10 long poems – meaning, I suppose, 10 long connected pieces as
Rilke had done. My idea is to write a series without quotes, without abstrusities [sic] &c. As usual I tell myself, “I have no SUBJECT MATTER.” Happily, I have time to sit here alone in the living room & wait for the “subject” or whatever else may show up on the page.

[...]

Columbia 19, 16
9:III:62

I walked home from a theater about ten years ago wondering, “what’s wrong with me?” I’d just seen an excellent production of Ibsen’s *When We Dead Awaken*. The play was well performed, the scenery, costumes, lighting, sound effects & music were well chosen & well executed. I went away feeling that I couldn’t care less – wondering, “what is it that I expect? What can I get out of going to the theater? Obviously the trouble is with me, that I want something else, & whatever it is the theater doesn’t have it. This isn’t the fault of the theater.”

That same season I had seen a couple plays by Christopher Frye, & they hadn’t impressed me. I saw Gertrude Stein’s *Yes Is For A Very Young Man*, a play I’d read a couple of times – I was surprised that it played so well on the stage – but I told myself, “You like Gertrude Stein anyway so your judgment of this play is prejudiced.”

In my monumentally slow way I worried for years about what do I want to see, hear & feel while I’m at a play. I answered the question myself, much later, in the course of a conversation with a friend. He was worrying a great deal about how to paint, how to write. He was complaining about being “down” & nowhere. I was hollering at him about how the radio was too loud, about how here he was on his way to the movies for the 18th time that week to sit on his ass & be entertained when he ought to be writing or painting if he was as worried about art s he claimed he was. I said there are producers & consumers & you’re wasting your time consuming
when you really believe you should be producing something. He said I was right; & how he’s a success in business & no longer paints or writes anything. Maybe he’s found out that he really is a consumer & is content to consume.

I saw this is an answer to my own question only recently. What I want from the theater is a place where I can act, or for which I can write plays or where I might direct a play.

I also understand that if I’m not doing any of these things, & simply go to the theater as a spectator, a consumer, what I expect is to be hypnotized into a dream state. Some of my dreams are worries I haven’t had time to bother with during the day so my dreams are problem dramas. Some are horror plays in which I see myself destroyed, but usually the dream is of such nature that I’m conscious of myself dreaming, & the destruction (though inevitable) isn’t final – I’m frightened or terrorized into wakefulness, but the waking shock is, of course, a pleasure – a very pure Aristotelian shock.

Recently I’ve seen two plays which give me that same dream/shock sensation – *The Choephoroi & Eumenides* of Aeschylus; & *King Lear*.  {Something like this happened while watching Ben Jonson’s *Alchemist.*} The feeling of becoming absorbed, hypnotized by the play, the feeling of absolute necessity for one action following another, or the results of an inevitable action becoming manifest – that’s something of the pleasure I anticipate. Visible manifestation, visible transformation.

I don’t have a theory of dreams, I’m not a surrealist, not a Freudian. What I have known, what I know, are various states of consciousness. First there is the quotidian, “normal” wakefulness of day, but it is not uniform – daydream, woolgather, fall into “abstraction” while awake. Another state is that of conscious waking meditation, the kind of meditation that the Indians have written about. When I write I can be in one of several moods or states – in an
angry, gossipy or inquiring mood – in a state of depression (wherein I worry on paper) – in a state of exaltation, when I write what I must. Add the dreaming state, the condition of dreamless sleep, & finally the hallucinatory or exalted states produced by fever or by certain narcotics.

Dreaming is a pleasure, & I can experience the same pleasure at the theater if the play will drown out the usual stream of sensations, thoughts & internal monologue that I ordinarily feel to be “myself… my consciousness”. Apparently I’m such a snob that nothing but classical drama can do this to me… or a middling-good movie. But I’ve also found that acting in a play or {on some occasions} reading my own poems to an audience will produce the same pleasurable sensations of self-forgetfulness, the sense of inevitability, the sense of action manifesting itself, & of consequences manifesting themselves – answers to my almost insane internal demands for an ordered world of significant meaning & worth, & for total personal security.

While others act & are punished or pleasured, however violent the action, however much the action may suffer & I, too, vicariously, I’m protected by my distance from the stage, by the fact that the plot in a play is mechanically perfect {the “real” world is only partially mechanical – crime isn’t always immediately punished, some trains are late, people forget to do something, or they fall in love & forget to revenge themselves on their enemies} it is “there” & I am “here”, witnessing the dream or story … “total personal security.”

The usual metaphor “I was transported to another world” means to me, “my attention has shifted to an area of my own mind which I think of as being different from the usual present here & now of which I’m aware.” (There is a natural tendency to think of the mind as being partitioned or divided up into more & less pleasant or “socially acceptable” areas – I say natural, but there are great forces outside ourselves which not only the forces of religion, law, custom & education insist that this division is real & necessary […] )
Our law, religion, science, education, customs, – insist that the mind occupy itself with the perception & manipulation of a common reality – a reality that is legally prescribed & legally protected. Our own sense informs us that our laws &c. are concerned with only a portion of what we know & can feel. Ideally the arts, including theater, address themselves to the whole mind, the complete person, & assert the greater importance of this mind, this total consciousness. Quite naturally the community tries to protect itself by setting up a censorship of theater, movies, books. The arts show up our laws & customs for the temporary expedients & conveniences that they are, rob government of its illusion of absolute power, absolute permanence.

Art that’s any good at all tends to corrode established authority. The work in question, whether poem, play or symphony doesn’t have to be about authority or government officials, or the struggles between labour & capital; the manifestation, the very existence of a real work of art – one which is capable of projecting a vision of life as apprehended by a totally functioning person – will influence whoever contemplates such a work & responds to it affectively or intellectually.

A man in the audience will receive confirmations of his own hitherto inexplicable or unusable dreams, thoughts, feelings which lie outside of that reality in which he is the subject of a tyrant. The subject will grow more intractable the longer he thinks about the true size of the world, the exact amount of power his rulers have, about his own size & worth & power.

* 

In Greece, the state eventually subsidized & controlled the theaters. The performances were in honor of an officially recognized God… a god of enthusiasm, exaltation, “insanity”… one that needed, I imagine the more the Greeks must have thought, considerable watching, quite a lot of controlling. The drama, under the auspices of the state, was, I say, the recognition &
regularization of the Dionysian spirit., (the incorporation of an opposing force to balance the Apollonian drive towards total – and as such, static order).

I have a hunch that actual life in classical Greece wasn’t as ordered as it looks in the museum or as it appears in the volumes of the Loeb Classical Library… (the killing was done off-stage {the holy sacrifice}) the slain bodies that wheeled into view neatly layed [sic] out on the ekkyklema were really dead…

I doubt that the Athenian government would have got away with more than half its political hanky-panky – particularly the various dictatorships – if all the people who attended the theater were also voters… & if all the people took their superstitions as seriously as Miss Harrison proposes that they did[,] too many people would be too conscious of the range of possible human action & experience to allow themselves to be swindled by a one-eyed government.

The so-called Greek Theater in Berkeley is probably the copy of some Roman or Hellenistic one in Europe, I don’t know. At any rate the stage is five or six feet off the ground & a wide, white painted wooden staircase had to be built between the stage & the semi-circular orkestra in front of it. There are too many doors in the skene for it to be a classical Greek theater, etc. etc.

At any rate, it is out of doors, there are trees & grass all about, & the great semicircle of concrete banks will seat a mob of people without crowding. In the first place the banks rise at a very steep pitch from the orkestra, each tier about 30 inches above the next. The hardness of the banks for sitting is outweighed by the sense of freedom – one can turn about & resettle oneself without disturbing other people. There is air, & stars.
The actors were a company from Greece & they spoke Greek of some order… I don’t know modern or classical Greek, but that didn’t matter. They were speaking i poetry, you could hear the meter, the changes & variations in rhythms, you could see what happened very clearly… although I sat very high, I wasn’t terribly remote from the stage, & the actors had enormous, well-trained voices.

The entrance of Orestes & Pylades {this is in Choephoroi} starts the show, rather too slowly. The thing really comes alive with the entrance of the chorus. It’s hard to explain their effect. I had supposed beforehand that it would be an annoyance, a distraction… “modern dance”, “poetic theater”, &c. … a tiresome convention like a backdrop with perspective painting… Instead, here were real women, in a procession, in action, they are servants of Electra, they aren’t the Bryn Mawr Daisy Chain or Miss Gladney’s Thursday Class in Modern Dance & Refined Deportment. They are making a procession to the Tomb of Achilles {down stage center} & they mourn him as they come. They also have strong, clear voices & enunciate their words clearly…

The effect is this: (the audience, like the chorus, doesn’t yet know that Orestes has returned) – even though we’ve seen Orestes & Pylades walk up the parados & then onto the stage, to the tomb, & heard his opening speech, there is a strange space & time shift when the chorus enters. It is as if Orestes hasn’t yet arrived. Elektra prays that Orestes will return, finds the lock of hair – & I experienced something of the excitement she and the chorus express on seeing this evidence of Orestes[,] his presence.

This curious “shifting; was my first recognition of entering the dream state in which I was held throughout the play – that Orestes seems to arrive, he fades out, & then, when the chorus has sung & danced & they, with Elektra, have made him clearer… say “produced” him for us,
he substantially appears, & the course of the action is established. We know the story, we know what will happen, what must happen. Experience has taught us that any number of things could have prevented Orestes from killing Klytemnestra & Aegisthus, but the author says over & over again, “No. In this particular case, these motives lead to these actions with these particular results, & this is necessarily so,” the ambiguous dream feeling that “this ought not to be so, but it is & I can’t do anything about it.”

The chorus urges & admonishes & doubts & commands, while the principals – Elektra & Orestes – hesitate also, but on another level. But the chorus also presents that insistence on inevitability, that dream of helpless fate.

The intermission between *Choephoroi* & *Eumenides* was like pleasant sleep between dreams – one gets up & gets a drink of water, go to the john – or a transitional dream… bright lights in the night, a sociable crowd of people variously bundled shawled & blanketed against the cold, milling about, calling & talking…

The dream starts again with the invocation of the Pythian priestess. We find ourselves in a monstrous fantasy of pursuit by Furies, mother’s ghost, helpful father gods that don’t take the ghosts away. There’s another radical shift in tone & feeling – the whole play, up through the long *stasimon* of the Furies, suddenly changes with the re-entrance of Athene guiding the citizen jurors. I’m presented with a “waking” world, a play, a pageant – the ghosts are converted into the Eumenides, the court of the Aeropagus is established, the Eumenides march out singing a proto-Christian hymn to themselves, Zeus & Destiny… a lapse into that Girls Glee Club feeling that I’d been expecting, that I had’t got until then… fortunately that’s the end of the play & I can remember them as Erinyes. I expect the Greeks remembered also, no matter how thick & classical the whitewash.
The next night might as well have been Racine, Ibsen, Shaw… Sophocles Elektra is, as far as I can see, merely an early example of that thing we still have to look at or hear about on stage, on the radio, on television – or even in the kitchen with our friends… “The Tragedy of a Woman Who…” &c. &c. &c. whether her name was Elektra or Eliza crossing the ice, it is straight conventional drama – exquisitely acted, fine poetry, the choral work splendid… but little or no elation to it… all speculation & refinement… a remake in the movie sense of that term, not a real re-vision… Sophokles turns on in the Oedipus plays, the Antigone &c. but he ought to have left Elektra alone. I’m reminded of the difference between Shakespeare’s Antony & Cleopatra & Dryden’s All For Love. I think Dryden was a splendid poet, but All For Love is a preposterous play…

I want to be elated, liberated by what I see at the theater or I won’t have it – & only a few great plays have done this to me. The classical Greek plays are seldom acted, the classical English ones rarely appear. Very few actors are now alive who will subordinate themselves to the idea of the playwright & who will try to deliver their lines clearly. I have no patience with amateur theater & even less with most of the [professional] – ideally I had rather write & direct my own plays, two years ago I began one in the subject of Prometheus, then heard that another contemporary poet more learned & experienced than I had not only written a long poem on the same personage but also had a play of Prometheus nearly completed. I abandoned the project… I’m superstitious; the theater is still sacred to Dionysus – God of the Mysteries of Discovery, Transformation, Regeneration – at the moment I imagine we are suffering his displeasure.

I want to dream because I feel free, unencumbered when I wake up & get out of bed – the dream reminds me that the world is larger than the parts of it which I customarily see & handle.
There are times when the dream will lead directly into a poem or other composition, because the imagery of the dream was so vivid, & because it came from some area of my mind so far from my usual {& to me, tiresome} “self” that I feel it might have a significance, a delight, some use to other persons.

The Greeks went to sleep in the temple of Aesculapius in order to dream a cure for their diseases. I imagine that people have always been nervous.

I don’t believe that the theater is only illusion. What we see is actually there, temporarily – just as the world we see when we are in love or happy or gloomy is a world temporarily there – large, impossible, uncontrollable. It becomes amenable only when we are awake enough to say to ourselves, “I hate having that chair beside the window” & having seen & said this, we move the chair elsewhere. {instead of chair-moving, you must supply “run for Congress”, “blow up the Pentagon”, “write an anti-clerical novel” etc., depending on what’s bothering you}. The actress is, temporarily, Elektra, & is suffering & doing certain things.

This temporary, “created” reality in the theater has apparent limitations, a known time-span, for example – but it is also likely, if it succeeds in hypnotizing, engaging the audience, the time becomes infinite & unreal – the audience is released from the usual idea or feeling of time… & someone has written, “time is anguish.” For an undetermined period we’re freed from it. But we know that the play has started & stopped, that it happened between 9 & 12 PM. We seldom are aware, on the other hand, how long a mood of depression, elation or quiet will persist, in the course of a day. These moods seem unlimited & thus become obstacles to action or thought… in which case we need to get drunk, go to sleep & start over again tomorrow. I don’t go to the theater if I’m feeling confused, depressed, & hung up. I don’t believe art is therapy – or if it is, it’s too strong & total a cure to be used very often.
The work of two writers – Burroughs & Kerouac – has been discovered & dismissed by the critics & by most readers as of only momentary interest – or as sheer nonsense. These two men are “concerned with inventing” a total vision of the world we’re stuck with & at the same time they’re suggesting a variety of possible programs of action whereby we might preserve ourselves & our human values. It isn’t too surprising that their ideas, their visions, should have been overlooked, considering the enormous blather & yak in the press about beatniks, dope, zen, self-destructive impulses & “what’s the younger generation coming to.” Their messages haven’t been heard because their books have been cut, censored, or left unpublished; furthermore, they are both involved with writing a body of works rather than a single book & the work isn’t finished. It’s very hard to find out what, for example, Burroughs is after, considering that his books haven’t been presented in their proper order – two whole volumes come between *Junky*, his first book, & the book called *Naked Lunch*. Two volumes separate that book from its newest installment, *The Soft Machine*. *The Word* is unpublished. Auerhahn Press has printed *The Exterminator.*

Kerouac has fared somewhat better – we have about half a dozen volumes which give us an idea of where he’s going – but two of these do not appear in the form that the author intended. *Visions of Cody* is a selection from a book, not a book complete. *On The Road* is the publisher’s version of a book. The companion piece to *Dharma Bums* is unpublished, the *Visions of Gerard*, which would complete the cycle of Lowell *{The Town & The City, Dr. Sax, & Maggie Cassidy}* hasn’t seen the light of day.
It frightens & annoys critics – & other writers – to discover that a man should have written a number of books – & that he {in spite of other’s praise, blame, success, failure &c.} should continue to write. They don’t want to listen to anything or anybody for more than a few minutes – & here are 2 writers whose works demand attention, thought, & a feeling response as well – it is much easier for all of us to discount & dismiss B & K as irresponsible beatniks with logorrhea than to regard them as serious writers.

I’ve already spoken of the public use & public value of artistic vision. We need B & K, & all their books. The books are inventions, new findings concerning the nature of man & the world. Neither man is offering a complete solution to all our problems. Each of them describes how a number of people are managing to stay alive {or unluckily, perish} as human beings.

Both of these men, despite their unorthodox writing techniques, are conservatives – they’re trying to preserve what Burroughs has called “the human image” – & curiously enough, both are concerned with the feeling that this image must be transformed… they say, in effect, that it isn’t a true image, but a false one, constructed by an evil social system for the purpose of misleading us.

Several critics have told us that Mr. Burroughs is simply an unskilled pornographer. They conclude that Mr. Kerouac’s idea for the improvement of mankind is to permit the young to leave home, take dope, ride around the country in boxcars or stolen automobiles, indulge in sexual intercourse with anyone who’ll stand still long enough, & read Buddhist literature in the mountains between whiles. That either man is trying to tell us that human beings ought to be free, & should free themselves from the meaningless slober which now passes for Western Society & Culture never seems to have entered the tiny brains of their critics.
Let’s think for a moment of what we are told we ought to be… what comes immediately to mind are advertising pictures – the butch type with a tattooed hand, the skinny dame dreaming she’s lecturing Congress in her maidenform bra, the man who makes up his own mind about which cigarette {he can afford to sit around reading Marlowe – he wears a $200 sportcoat, sits in a $500 Swede chair set in an apartment that rents for $250/month – naturally he can make up his mind, he’s too rich to care what anybody might think of him}; the real photographs of the man from our bank whose specialty is dealing with gumdrop manufacturers: dignified, self assured, charming (perhaps he reads Marlowe?)… more photographs, the Sports page now, ballplayers who look like movie stars… the front page, politicians who look like movie stars (shown with movie star politicians) & at last, to the theater where we see the movie stars themselves; beautiful, vacuous dummies performing meaningless drama… The general message is, “Be rich & you can do anything you like – & you can also be irresistibly beautiful.”

Burroughs & Kerouac, on the other hand, say “Take a look at the world, take a look at yourself, ask what’s happening, try to stay alive, try to find out who you are & what all you can do, see, learn, love, & make connections with people doing the same thing i.e. discover that you have friends everywhere, not in a single town – which, by extensions, becomes a real society under/over/in place of that false movie image – the basic postulate: a living man can do anything, & whatever he does, passionately, compassionately, lovingly, will be beautiful & valuable.

Mr. Pound writes,

Here error is all in the note done
all in the diffidence that faltered,
He doesn’t mean – & I don’t mean, that action is essentially good. But we must be able to act, & free to act as occasion demands. We’re given to understand, as members of society, that there’s less room for action, fewer possibilities – & that understanding -- if we accept it – prevents our physical & mental growth as human beings. If we fail to act, through diffidence – shyness, feelings of guilt, of unworthiness – we fail as persons, & some other person suffers on our account. If we act according to our own necessities, realizing & accepting the consequences of our actions, the result will be a mixture of good & evil. Can we accept that?

What about evil? Kerouac shows {in Dr. Sax} that evil as a principle is transformed into a vision of benignity – he does this in symbolic terms. In hs other writings, evil is more direct, concrete – it is the lack of trust in other persons {e.g. the narrator in Subterraneans}, the breakdown of communication between persons {e.g. the relationship in Tristessa between the narrator & the heroine}, & finally, poverty & political tyranny.

For Burroughs, tyranny is the central evil, the whole notion of one person controlling another. In [illeg.], he shows up the tyranny of politicians, doctors, psychiatrists, of the dope habit, of neurotic homosexuality. Burroughs shows that these are only a part of a struggle taking place on a cosmic scale. He uses the magic of politics – there are several parties or groups who are struggling for control over all physical & mental life. One group wants to accomplish this end by psychological means, another group is trying to forestall them, using similar means, a third group is fighting both, presumably on behalf of those who want to be free from all control, & finally a fourth group, who know what’s going on, observe the struggle & try to avoid being caught in it. Burroughs admires these last as much as any of the other groups – but he tells us that even these are frightened & unhappy & not very admirable persons according to our social
standards. They simply watch & enjoy themselves however & whenever they can. Burroughs
seems, in fact, not to approve of them himself, although he identifies with them.

I think that our present liberal/intellectual views about action/passivity are mistaken.
There’s a great deal of talk about the values of learning, creativity, love – all kinds of action –
without any real belief in them as values. It’s no longer fashionable to believe that ideas
expressed in art have any influence on the world, or that love has any force outside the bed. It is
still a received notion that action is properly – & only properly – group action – protest meetings,
petitions, picketing &c. The prevailing idea is that the individual is hopelessly isolated from “the
real world,” & from the politicians & industrialists & bankers that govern us. The prevailing
sentiment is of futility & disgust, distrust – we form a committee, it starts off well, but presently
it is only an arena for the personal struggle between Mr. X & Mr. Y for control of the committee,
its policies & actions.

It should be absolutely clear by this time that we are free only if we make ourselves free,
only if we set out to act, or decline to act, as the occasion & our own individual beings demand –
not “as the soul requires”, but as living, thinking persons – compassionate of all other living
persons, creatures, things… We operate in a world which is partly “real” as we commonly say, &
partly ideal; we can do this very well (i.e. without hurting other beings or damaging ourselves) if
we try constantly to remember this mixed nature of the world we see, the corresponding mixed
nature of our own selves (physical & mental), & that our actions (or inactivity) necessarily
have consequences, “real” & “ideal”, for other persons, & for ourselves. Our most meaningful
acts are to respond – to ourselves, to the world, to other persons: to remember & to create a way
of communication & the feelings of love & compassion. When we don’t respond, when we
forget, when we stop loving & feeling compassion, we make room for tyranny, oppression,
aimless destruction… every imaginable evil.

I think Burroughs & Kerouac have written enough so that we can see which side they’re
on. Because they’re making demands for freedom, understanding & love, they must not only be
heard, we must respond.

Burroughs’s work, on the whole, is not pornography; Kerouac’s work, likewise, is not simple
autobiography. They present us with visions of life in possible worlds, remind us that the one we
have is more than half illusory, & stir up our brains & feelings in order that we can invent some
better kind of living than we’re putting up with now.

**Bancroft Notebook 2**

**30:IV:62** Rhododendrons at climax of blossom; cyclamens petering out. I slept late today,
reading too much last night & night before, Gaddis’ *The Recognitions*, a book I’m enjoying &
which I thank God I never got around to writing {however nearly} which is what I used to think
I ought to write in the way of a novel. . . if I were to write one or a series of prose books, it
would be quite different I HOPE. […]

[…]

* * *

**4:IV:62** De Young – Chinese Imperial Treasure {selections} {14” x 15 ft.}

*Ten Views From A Thatched Lodge* {attrib. Lu Hung early 8 cent. T’ang}

hand scroll.
Deer In Autumn Forest {anon. – Five Dyn. 906-960}
hanging color painting, 40” high, 2’ wide. Shown with Deer Among Red Maples, same manner, same period.


Palace Concert {anon. – 5 Dynasties 906-960} Ladies as in scroll of court ladies winding silk {Boston} one wears the same blue beauty mark on forehead as in Boston picture, others wear gold spot circled with blue.

Travelers Among Mountains & Streams. Large hanging scroll 6’ by 4’ {Fan K’uan {early 11th c. Sung} waterfall about 2’ long n chasm, right side of picture. Traveler following mule train, wears ‘kelty pack.

Early Snow On The River {attrib. Chao Kan (ca. 970, 5 Dyn. South. T’ang)} “Naturalistic’ or caricature faces, even among horses which windblown travelers ride on riverbank. A handscroll approx 12” high, 10’ long, green water, brown weeds & clothing.

Market Village By The River {anon. 17 c. Sung} app. 12” x 15’, light blue sky & water. Minutely detailed boats & buildings. Horses & camels going into mountains. Caricature faces, although the figures are very small – think of the sketchbooks of – {Japanese 19th cent. Old Man mad about painting} Hiroshige?, no, -- {Hokusai}.

8 Gentlemen On A Spring Outing {attrib. Chao Yen (d. 522) 5 Dyn., Later Liang}
“natural color” – equestrian portraits, as if done for Philip III of Spain 6’ x 3’}
At home, near midnight. My plans for the trip north are now complicated – I must borrow cash from EAMD for bus fare, & Albert Saijo has proposed to meet me in Newport on Monday 28 May to help carry back books from there – if the books are still there, & if Albert’s car will go there & back without collapsing. * To Oakland & Berkeley today, spending some of the last of the gift money on “plain editions of the poets,” as Robert Graves has told us we should do. * I sold some old duplicate copies downtown this morning – meeting Duerden by chance at Dolphin Bookstore – & later in the day, Meltzer at store in Clement St. – & so to a steam beer with him, literary talk – he enjoyed *Big Sur* also. * Once more to the DeYoung Museum & the Chinese Imperial Treasure. . . & a walk to Stowe Lake & so home. . .

***

Returned proof of *Big Sur* to MM who lent it to me yesterday. It’s a sad book – JLK explaining why he’s been sad, & about his fit of madness here in town & at Big Sur 2 years ago. As usual, he’s completely honest with the reader, readily displaying his “bad” sides as well as the “good” – but his interpretation of the “world” is all wrong as far as I can figure out.29 Then to Henry Evans to look at old books, then back to the park – but it’s cool & patchy fog, I sit inside a bus now, waiting to be taken home, where I must sit & worry about where I shall find money enough for the trip into Oregon. * There are 1000 things (or a thousand dollars worth of

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28 In two of these May, 1962 entries Whalen has, in an error he remarks on several pages later, used the wrong year, at 15:V:63 and 18:IV:61. The next entry is correctly dated 20:V:62, and continues nine pages to the end of this notebook.

29 Michael McClure, and later David Meltzer, were given proof copies of Jack Kerouac’s 1962 novel *Big Sur*. McClure appears in the novel as Pat McLear, Whalen as Ben Fagan, Albert Saijo as George Baso, Allen Ginsberg as Irwin Garden, etc.
things} which I imagine that I need & want. There’s no more money. Alas! & what about next month’s rent? Where will that money come from? None of this is of the least importance. I’ll live. . . I suppose.

* * *

18:IV:61 [sic]30 At home, near midnight. My plans for the trip north are now complicated – I must borrow cash from EAMD for bus fare, & Albert Saijo has proposed to meet me in Newport on Monday 28 May to help carry back books from there – if the books are still there, & if Albert’s car will go there & back without collapsing. * To Oakland & Berkeley today, spending some of the last of the gift money on “plain editions of the poets,” as Robert Graves has told us we should do. * I sold some old duplicate copies downtown this morning – meeting Duerden by chance at Dolphin Bookstore – & later in the day, Meltzer at store in Clement St. – & so to a steam beer with him, literary talk – he enjoyed Big Sur also. * Once more to the DeYoung Museum & the Chinese Imperial Treasure. . . & a walk to Stowe Lake & so home. . .

[...]

20:V:62 […] * Last night to the movies for the first time in years – Last Year At Marienbad – which Brakhage recommended highly. It’s good to see a full-length picture handled as a poem. In spite of its “art movie” over-tones, & its atmosphere of pre-1939 Europe. . . the smell inside of a poem by Rilke, story by Kafka. . . Surrealism watered down even thinner than Cocteau at his worst. In American terms, it is the poetry of Stevens. . . chic, a trifle fade; it sees itself as languid but is actually long dead & being swayed by the wind from an air conditioner, stream of water from the swimming pool filter. Nevertheless it is a positive joy to see a picture without

30 The next entry is correctly dated 20:V:62, and continues 9 pages to the end of this notebook.
Vacant-looking STARS, without continuous “dramatic” musical score, without unnecessary
dialog, unnecessary explanation, wasted illustration.

The costumes are rich & beautiful. The settings, apparently real chateaus & gardens, 18th
century. […]
As Whalen mentions above in the entry for 18 April 1961, he required a road trip to Oregon to secure his library at Judge Ben Richard Anderson’s house in Newport, Oregon and ferry it back to San Francisco. Ed Durham was tapped to lend him the necessary bus fare, and Albert Saijo and Ann Leh volunteered to meet him in Newport on May 28 to cart the books (and Whalen) back to the Bay Area. On May 21 Whalen meets Durham and Martin Schneider for lunch and obtains his bus ticket. During this road trip to Oregon he visits with old friends, stops in his native village The Dalles, his birthplace and alma mater city Portland, and finally Newport itself, on the Pacific coast, where he packs up his personal library at Anderson’s house.

Whalen’s descriptions of Bend, the Cascade mountain range, the Oregon countryside, and the high plateau are highly evocative, at times trance-like, reminiscent of Wordsworth’s description of the Wye River Valley in Wales. Whalen depicts the sky with its “high grey ceiling, a medium warm light in the tan hills and coulees * We are high on the plateau now. Space & distance as I require. Horse Heaven Hills across the River & to the East * Orange flowers, white flowers, grasses & sage on this steppe land * ”

The period of May through August 1962 is not an especially prolific time for Whalen’s poetry, yet he begins work on the extraordinary poem “Technicalities for Jack Spicer” (CP 351), and he is undoubtedly pleased that his poem “Historical Disquisitions” (CP 168), with its

31 Whalen’s dear friend Judge Anderson had died around this time, “disappeared in the Santieam Valley” (see entry for 26 July 1963, p. 292, below). Presumably, this is why Whalen must obtain the remainder of his library from Anderson’s house in Newport. Possibly, Anderson’s death was a suicide. His wife Virginia had passed away at the age of 49 around one year earlier (see entry at p. 131, above).
Olsonian final verse “History’s now,” is published in the *Evergreen Review*. But a shift is perceptible in his relationship with Leslie Thompson, who is spending less and less time with Philip at their apartment in San Francisco. In June he learns that the New York publisher Scribner’s has rejected *Angelflame*, his newest collection of poetry, and on July 13, at a private party where he is slated to read from his work to raise much needed income, Whalen gets stoned and drunk and suffers a nervous breakdown. By the end of the month it is clear that he and Leslie are breaking up and Whalen is trying to figure out how and when to vacate the apartment they have shared for over two years. Then, in mid-August, in a final *coup de grâce* for *Angelflame*, Lawrence Ferlinghetti of City Lights Books also rejects the book, bluntly telling Whalen that he is no longer “new,” and that his recent poems are not as good as the ones he published in *Like I Say* in 1960. In September Whalen takes a hiking trip in the Sierras with Locke McCorkle and works on a new prose piece, called *Invisible Idylls*, throughout the month. On October 1st Leslie tells Philip that he is moving back to Seal Beach to live with friends, and when they vacate their apartment at 24th and Douglass, Whalen temporarily moves in with (Elizabeth) Tommy Sales at 123 Beaver Street. Yet, despite these several professional and personal challenges, Whalen completes the long poem “The Art of Literature” (CP 251), an ambitious work in five movements that earned favorable comments in the *Times Literary Supplement*. He also resumes work on the complexly structured *Minor Moralia* (CP 257), finishing the second part on October 27, the day after he moves across the Golden Gate Bridge to his new digs in the Saijo household in Mill Valley. It’s doubtful that Whalen was closely familiar with Theodor Adorno’s *Minima Moralia*, the celebrated essay Adorno wrote during WWII while living in exile in the United

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States. However, he may have read a review or article about it, although I have not found it as yet. The German edition came out in 1951 and there was no English edition until 1974, yet the parallels between the two works are striking. Forced to flee their German homeland, Adorno felt that he and his intellectual comrades were personally, psychologically, and spiritually damaged by fascism, “mutilated without exception” in Adorno’s words. Both Adorno and Whalen conclude that modern society is inhumane, and that the ‘good life’ is no longer possible. Whalen is also an exile, a virtual exile in his own country; surrounded, misunderstood, and stifled by a reactionary, conservative society. He is continually fearful of arrest by the San Francisco police and their vice squads, afraid to carry his journal notebooks with him in public for fear the content will earn him arrest and jail.

Whalen and Adorno also share an affinity with a social and political philosophy that sees causality as non-linear and synchronic, “operating not so much with causal chains as with causal networks” (Jameson 83). It is an epistemological faith that Whalen comes to from his grounding in buddhist phenomenology and psychology, also reflected in his aesthetics. Adorno confirms Whalen’s intuitive distrust of American neo-facsism, the shallow, unreflective, anti-cosmopolitan culture of the American middle-class living in the delusive “magic spell” of late capitalism.

As Adorno declares that Minima Moralia is a book of contemplation, a “testimony to a dialogue interieur,” so Whalen’s poem begins with a contemplative and epistemic gaze inward: “Looking at a man trying to decide what he knows.” Adorno meditates on the holocaust’s erasure of his historical self, while Whalen attempts to dodge the brutality of the American polity:

A world collapses not a minute too soon
I dodge the heavier fragments as they fall
“THEY ARE MURDERING YOU!”
I say they’re welcome to, although it’ll bring them
No luck

* * *

Once settled in the Saijo residence, below the ridgelines and trails of Mt. Tamalpais, Whalen started work on yet another abortive novel and then from February into March and early April, he struggled with a new novel with the working title *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*, which he has been conceptualizing and jotting notes for since late 1962. During this interstitial period he wrote the exquisite poem “Letter, To Michael McClure, 11:III:63” (CP 287-91), and “For Brother Antoninus” (CP 291). Much of the imagery utilized in the poems written during this time directly reflect the flora and fauna of the Mt. Tamalpais hills, woods, and trails that he walked almost daily.

But there is an enormous amount of psychological stress in the Saijo household, and it is a difficult environment for a writer who requires long stretches of peace and quiet. On April 1 Whalen flew into an uncharacteristic rage. He shocked the Saijos, smashing dishes and kicking a hole in the kitchen wall. On April 22 a letter arrived from Jack Kerouac offering to show *Angelflame* to his editor Bob Giroux at Farrar, Straus and Giroux, the venerable New York publisher. On April 24 Whalen is ejected from the Saijo residence and moves back to Tommy Sales’ house at 123 Beaver Street.

Back in his beloved San Francisco, Whalen gets word from Doubleday that they are not interested in *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* “in its present state,” but he soldiered on and completed the novel between June 4 and June 7. Ruminating on an idea for his next novel, one that would be based loosely on a populist political movement reported on in *The San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper, Whalen cites André Gide’s *The Caves of the Vatican* (see journal entry
below at pg. 272-73), which was also based on sensationalistic news reports, in this case false reports that mobsters had kidnapped the pope. What interests Whalen is that in his satire Gide discards the conventional processes of narration and, “in cubist fashion,” “borrows heterogeneous elements from reality and reorganizes them according to an abstract design,” creating the new relations from which each apparently unconnected part derives its significance (Bree). In summary form, this becomes the ‘poetics’ for Whalen’s novels. Yet he continued to worry about structure, tone, and overall aesthetics, and reconciled himself to writing more novels “of this kind,” until he can get it right.
Bancroft Notebook 3

JOURNAL

San Francisco – Mill Valley

21 May 1962
6 January 1963

“Technicalities for
Jack Spicer”

p. 94 – first jump
at You Didn’t Even Try

21:V:62 Cliff House: heavy surf against the rocks, throwing spray ⅔ ds of the way up the sea wall. A few drops blown up by the wind hit my glasses.

* I’ve had lunch in Chinatown with EAMD & Marty – have bought my ticket at the bus depot -- & now fresh air here [& soon in the park] before I must go home to pack my suitcase. * Very bright day, like yesterday, but the horizon & Montara Point disguised in thin blue fog * Mallards shove the rough soupy green water, heads down, feeding, leaving wide crooked chocolate paths on the surface. * Mourning doves in the trees on an island. * Here’s a new buffalo calf. An orange tawny, camel color. Two yearlings have short horns. The mother buffalo grunts at the calf, shoves it about with her chest, among greener grass than this beside the fence, where are now red deer, rain deer &c., goats, blackbirds * In the bus, under way at last, on the
Bay Bridge ½ exhausted already, nervous collapse, feeble mindedness, idiot forebodings &
superstitious terrors. Why can I never travel without going through this train of imaginary fears
which wreck my physical system for days afterwards. * Right up the coast like the blood in a
thermometer.

* * *

**22:V:62**  Sunrise all over Mt. Shasta  Red-wing blackbird at weed. Threads, smokes & ghosts
of steam rise out of a marshy lake  * Conical trash burners at mills around Mt. Shasta – pine &
fir trees the beginning of what I feel to be home  * Xerxes, Yale & Addison {in that order} are
streets in Bend [Oregon]  * 39 people live in Shaniko [Oregon], more prosperous looking than
it was 10 years ago  * I’d forgotten the black stone – or brown – buildings at Bend  * also the
junipers between Bend & Redwood  * a rest stop in Grass Valley. Clerk in drugstore wears a
cowboy hat & wide silver belt buckle, both worn & comfortable looking – not a tourist –
possibly a rodeo worker  * Biggs Junction – bridge being built to Maryhill. The Castle appears
dusty tan, on its river terrace I pick a wild blue bachelor’s button in memory of Sam Hill &
Queen Marie.\(^{33}\) Lady boarding the bus: “I know the ticket says Pendleton; just take me to
Umatilla.”

* Locust trees in full bloom at Arlington. . .  * Huge old Lombardy poplars at Grass Valley

* Stonehenge is lost in this country – like an arbor in some garden. * Bulldozers are removing
the southern half of Arlington. * This morning a cloudbank covered most of the Cascade
peaks, but glimpses of 3 Sisters & Mt. Jefferson. Now going up river, a high grey ceiling, a
medium warm light on the tan hills & coulees. * We are high on the plateau now. Space &

\(^{33}\) Oregon entrepreneur Sam Hill started construction of Maryhill, a stone chateau, in 1914. It
was later converted into an art museum and was dedicated in 1926 by Queen Marie of Romania,
grand-daughter of England’s Queen Victoria.
distance as I require. Horse Heaven Hills across the River & to the East * Orange flowers, white flowers, grasses & sage on this steppe land * Ochoco or Blue Mtns, south & east of here? * McNary dam at Umatilla, spouts of white water at various levels; façade in continuous limited motion. * We head south towards Blue Mountains * Mesa topped with rimrock a crusader fortress entering Hermiston. * Myriads of Locus blossoms; this part looks more like Connecticut * a couple buildings of the square cut native basalt. . . known in California as “Gold Rush Style.” * Very handsome large black & white bird flies from a post beside the railway. * Now the steppe is green with strip farming. . . the highway is too rough; I can’t continue writing here. * Stanfield – all through this part of the world there’s a tree with narrow grey leaves, rather curly, rough bark. The village elders watch the arrival & departure of the bus. Some sit on a bench in front of the general store, others lean on the front of the post office where the bus stops. * * *

2:VI:62 Home on the night of 31:V:62 & more than half sick since. […] I must go to Berkeley later this morning to pick up the Oxford Blake which I ordered before I went on this trip. * In The Dalles I missed seeing any of my school friends. I visited Weigelt’s bookstore & talked to Gus Weigelt for a minute about One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest, which he didn’t have. I can remember when Mr. Weigelt used to entertain grade school assemblies with his magic tricks. He must have been younger then than I supposed, for 30 years later he looks much the same, & still has some dark color in his thick hair.  

34 In Independence I visited Marcella Bush Cobine for a few minutes. She hasn’t changed much either. . . her voice, in particular, sounds exactly as I

34 In 1927 the Weigelts purchased Ingwert Nickelsen’s bookstore, which Nickelsen had opened in 1869. In 1981 the Weigelts sold the business to Philip and Linda Klindt, and it became Klindzts Book Sellers and Stationers.
remember it. When we were children Aunt Clara more characteristically herself than she was 10 years ago when she seemed senile & lost. . . Thelma has aged, & grown somewhat sharper -- although wider. Her son “Scampy” {Marcus} is 30 now, & looks exactly like I remember his father, Peter Tallent. . . thin, wiry, short, curly-haired, hawk-nosed, silent. . . But the silence is more like his grandfather’s {Uncle Clyde Williams} in that same house. . . benign, patient, & movable only when it chooses to move itself. Young Marcus, like the old, spends much time doing work with the Masonic Lodge. * Near Portland – Bill Bush, my uncle, looks as he did in the mid 30s, and sounds that way again, -- fatter than when I saw him last. 10 years ago he was thin & small & at that time resembled his father; now he’s looking more like his mother, & speaking more vivaciously & carelessly. His daughter, my cousin Phyllis, will be married next month to a medium blond medium/to/skinny/sized young man called Marvin – both Pinky and he are devout Roman Catholics & ought to be very happy. Pinky’s mother, my Aunt Louise, has aged very little, considering her exciting life & adventures. * In Portland, or Collins View – Caroline looks a little younger than last time; perhaps they are happier? Blickle looks very well indeed; promises that if I return for a visit this month, when EAMD goes up, he’ll organize a “Bal Tzigane” [sic] & barbecue a sheep & a few dancing girls. Ben Anderson Sr. looking well also, composed, chestnut head on top offers me much encouragement. Charlie Leong looks whiter haired, & he chooses to appear more antique than he actually is, in the celestial fashion. Lloyd Reynolds much recovered & although tired, full of great spirit. Virginia Reynolds very little changed. * Newport – the Richardsons quite the same except that the children are larger & Billie, having been ill, is a trifle faded & wrinkled & longer in the nose, but I fancy that this is only temporary since she’s actually very beautiful. . .
Gene opened Tut’s house for Albert, Ann Leh & me to stay in overnight. It was sad, but not too much so. Long drive home from Brookings to San Francisco destroyed me – that & my eating far too much spicy food. * Note from JLK when I got back, announcing his indefinite arrival here to look for mountain cabin in Northern California or Oregon – I hope for the latter. *

*   *

3:VI:62 GG Park. [...] I got up, washed, ate some clam chowder, fussed for 20 minutes about what book to carry with me {16th cent. poetry [?] anthology} & having set out, shall I call on MM – I plan to go to an art opening of R.R. Brannaman later today & could see MM there – but a nail in my shoe commands me to stop at MM’s & borrow a hammer & pliers. The household is only just arising. M congratulates me on the appearance of *Historical Disquisitions* in the new Evergreen Review. We discuss prospects of future readings & how to get more money from them. About the unreliability of certain mutual friends. About LW & how LK has left him alone. About when shall MM read *Angelflame*. The Ms argue for a while about strawberries – both sound cranky. They recover some semblance of good humour before I leave. Now I sit in the park & O, I felt like it was possible to get an idea to write down. I was shaving & was being myself & eating breakfast & it did seem quite clearly possible that I might write something new. * A man has set up his blanket & sack of lunch quite nearby. He’s removed most of his clothing. I shall move on. * I met a man who was reading a book while he walked, His mouth was open; he looked stupid & a little surprised. {I sit on what I think of as the Bench of

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35 Whalen took the bus up to Oregon, but he drove back with Albert Saijo and Ann Leh so he could load the car with the books that he had stored in Newport.

36 The artist Robert R. Brannaman and Whalen were actors in Michael McClure’s play *The Beard*. Editor Alastair Johnson spells this last name “Branaman” in *The Bibliography of the Auerhahn Press*. 
Desolation, out of Henry James – actually a pleasant spot -- & here I’ll read a moment * * 
From the park a walk to Geary St. & [illeg.] Ave. Bookstore {closed} & so to Albert Henry’s Bookshop by bus to [illeg.] & buy Norman Ault’s Elizabethan Lyrics & H. James’ Art of the Novel, my first copy having disappeared from Newport, & at last 3 PM at home – but soon must be away after I’ve practised some Mozart.

4:VI:62 But impossible – I must finish “Yesterday” before I can begin again! * I practiced. Martha came to practice. EAMD came to visit, we had toast & tea. I went to RR Brannaman’s painting The Room, a combination oil & collage on the wall paper wood & plaster of a small room in Hayes St., floor doors walls & ceiling. I met Sterling, Mike Agron [?], the McC’s came later, & after a little time I left & spent a few hours with the Durhams before returning home to read, to [illeg.], to talk with Leslie, to avoid writing.

“Technicalities”

* Today, a trip to the local postal substation. Then Michael came to read my Angelflame ms. We had tea & much conversation, then together we went to the main post office / Federal Building 7th & Mission Sts to look at those who are picketing & starving themselves as a protest against war, against the government’s unnecessary test explosion of fusion & fission bombs. M & I talked with them – they say they’ll have to think up something new to do because the government & the public are not paying enough attention. I believe they are trying to carry out a non-violent protest – I hope that the army & the police wont harm any of the protesters. […]

6:VI:62 Hot sun, occasional wind, but pleasant here beside Stowe Lake. I spent the morning reading & beginning a poem Technicalities For Jack Spicer. He has a use, at last. . . I saw a ms.
of his at Auerhahn Press yesterday – very literature: reads like a translation from Cocteau. So I address him, or, at any rate, thinking of him & his poetry & other concerns served me as a start on something to write. In connexion with this I got very involved with Evans-Wentz’s Tibetan books & spent several hours involved in his nugatory footnotes. At last I wrote no more, so ate lunch & walked out here with Shakespear’s comedies in hand. Loud foghorns on the Bay. I read at random – scenes from *Taming of the Shrew, Merry Wives &c.* --  

\[\ldots\] * The fog starts here & extends to the beach. I’ll go on. . . * How I love nasturtiums! * *

7:VI:62 In bus on way to dental school, early in the morning – I was working at my new poem but had to stop & catch this bus which, now, simply sets here going nowhere. I’ve bought *4 in America* [sic] with me, but I want to listen for my own morning voices – I wont read for a while. \[\ldots\] * For *Technicalities*: the aureole in the shape of insect antenna or spray from a lawn sprinkler issued from the upper end of the figure. * yellow is the color of thought the human world light path * Do you want a world without mothers which is to say no energy, no wisdom, only will power, character, that very phallus of Mexican granite, a tree stump overgrown with mossy lichens – as distinguished from that winged snake who is flying in a specific direction,

\[\ldots\]
east to west. The Indian {Lloyd used to tell us} had a word for the boorish incult [sic] man, “He never knew his grandmother” {i.e. never learned proper manners, never heard the morality tales of the tribe}

“The Technicalities”

*

8:VI:62  Yesterday’s dental session was a sequence out of a horror movie or Fox’s Book of Martyrs – my mouth is still swollen out of shape. Only slight progress with Jack’s poem . . . however this is a better day – I’ve been at least trying to write, then practiced at the piano for several hours. I just took a break to wash the breakfast dishes – now I listen to concert music via the radio John Seaver left here -- & drink coffee – But the radio betrays me: it has decided to regale me with Schumann’s C Maj. Symphony – a composition which I find dull & repetitious, as I find all the rest of Schumann’s work, alas! […] Today is celebration in honor of Auerhahn’s newly extended quarters in Franklin St. – & later, the next to last concert in the Bach Festival {the final one will be Sunday night, the B minor Mass} […] *  Tommy dinner 7:30 PM Saturday

*

9:VI:62  On the bus, Berkeley to San Francisco. As the last note above shows, I am to dine this evening with Mme. E.T.S. whom I met quite unexpectedly last night at the Bach concert. She says that she has an extraordinary proposal to convey to me, an opportunity of some sort is opening upon the horizon, she believes that I am the proper person to gain riches & pleasures

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39 This section from “yellow is the color” through “east to west” figures in the poem “Technicalities For Jack Spicer.”
therefrom. . . what? * I’ve been selling surplus volumes from my library. . . & buying other books {foolishly} with the proceeds. I shall never learn to do better.

* 

[...] 

**12:VI:62** {12:45 AM} I’ve squandered this day sleeping late, reading – scarcely any sunshine out at all – fog & darkness lend me an excuse for staying in the house – then lo, here comes John Seaver momentarily to visit, then Martha to practise, then it is supper & night, I practise Bach, & read. . . & here I am, with a stiff neck {from reading Spenser through a magnifier & a frustration & sadness, having wasted my time. * Late afternoon – I’ve spent the rest of the morning at the employment office -- & visiting Haselwood – later, to coffee in North Beach with Dave Meltzer, & so home & as I began to eat lunch here were Martha & Sarah. They’re gone now, & I’ve washed the dishes – I proceed to avoid writing letters or anything else. [...] 

[...] 

* 

**15:VI:62** Friday in the park, the fog dissipating fast. Yesterday to the dentist & to Mme. ETS again, to be introduced to Mr & Mrs Maybeck, friends to an aged up-country banker who’s looking for a houseman/companion – Mme. S, her notion of providing handsomely for me, who always need place to live, & who enjoy the country. Mrs. Maybeck’s account of the house & surrounding countryside, -- and Mrs. Maybeck & her friends there present – couldn’t sound less interesting. I can’t stand to be around nice rich people for more than ½ an hour. They are educated & “artistic” & charming & ought to be put to death right this minute. Selah! They are so educated & have read just enough that they imagine that they know what they’re talking about – their grammar is correct, their diction sometimes approaches distinction, their enunciation & pronunciation leave little to be desired – but they babble – they all have tender sensibilities, they
would forgive the less fortunate, the silly, the presumptuous [sic], they are gently wise & learned
& calm & NICE -- & should instantly be put away, as I’ve just said. […]

After I got home last night I asked myself, “What would you have those people {the ones I’d just
met at Mme. S’s} BE? What is it about them that really bothers me – except the sense that they
are exerting themselves to create a social scene, a scene wherein all the rest of us will be
charmed by that effort, those agreeable smiles, those delightfully completed sentences, the
degree of education, culture, &c.? I hear what they say, but I’m worn out with feeling that strain,
that earnest endeavour in which they are engaged -- & in which I presently find myself engaged;
I’m carried along by it, caught up in it – I find myself bowing & smiling & grimacing &
babbling platitudes & remarks about the weather as fast or faster than anyone else – I get into
this false position & put on a distorting mask – the conversation becomes less & less meaningful
– I myself become further disengaged from any sense of what’s happening, what’s interesting,
what’s important – everything disappears into this great feminine will to create the nice, the
pleasant, the charming – which is to say, the innocuous, the banal, the flabby medium.

[…] These women […] speak in the most self assured tones and quite as if they knew exactly
what was happening, what was going to happen, & how everyone ought to feel, think & behave
in relation to this totally nowhere world they were speaking about – as if they were in complete
control of REALITY, TRUTH, &c. * Very likely they are. * So much, then, for truth &
reality – let their highly intelligent nuclear physicist sons blow it all up. * Gertrude Stein says,
“How do you like what you do?” […]
Home at night, eating ice cream. [...] This afternoon & evening I read from Conze’s translation of the first part of the *Large Prajnaparamita* – a salutary dose for a proud & haughty stomach. Spiritual pride is a most besetting sin, &c. &c. [...] 

[...]

23:VI:62  Searsville Lake {a few miles south of town, “down the Peninsula”} a bright Saturday in this lily pond in oak tree dry hills, rather pesky wind which makes the shade too cool & the sun too hot. Rick & Suzanne Duerden have brought me here to swim & picnick. I sit in the shade & eat & write while they stew in the sun & tickle each other. * I got home late this morning, having met Charlie Leong at the SF Depot. Lincoln Wong & I waited in the small mid-western depot 3rd & Townsend St. – Lincoln making sounds like Allen Watts about education, government the true meaning of life &c. like a lecture. I was bored & nervous & kept thinking of times we met Neal here.

*  

26:VI:62  “Now that my testicles have descended, I am a culture-bearer” * which are words I said to D. Haselwood in conversation & he asked were they original & I replied yes & wrote them here. * After I’d got up early & gone to the employment office to see about my claim, I went to the offices of the Auerhahn Press; David & I had coffee & conversation; he’s printing the Jonathan Williams pamphlet right now    * So home & John Seaver came to call & we moved things to his new studio, then came back to my house & began to drink. Presently he decided to stay away from work, & I created a large dinner – after which we go to Albany in search of Bruce McGaw -- & after many adventures have a séance with him at last – I am
allowed to borrow two pictures, *Orpheus*, & an *Interior Looking Outwards*, which now rest in the living room, oho!

27:VI:62 3 dreams: one, wherein a buddha or bodhisattva appears & tells me something which frees me – a sense of satori while dreaming. Second dream, the following morning, a nightmare, in which I have a nervous breakdown of despair, grief & frustration/rage because it seems that I’ve lost my little *Nonesuch Blake*, absolutely gone & it’s out of print again & I’ll never have enough money to buy it again &c. 3rd dream practically an opera by Dr. Jung. Old Mage & pre-adolescent boy in “medieval” costume. It is night but these two are plainly seen as on a stage. The boy points out a star & the Mage catches its reflection in a round mirror/plate & projects the reflected rays against the buttressed wall of a small stone gothic church. The reflected rays become brighter (the boy sees them brighten, that is – to the old man it is only a faint gleam) & the light is soon more intense than daylight, & the church is become larger & now four men appear to be carrying an enormous casket up out of the crypt beneath the floor of the church, The Return of Arthur, of the Fisher King, somebody is coming back to life in this brightness & calm joy, solemn (if stagey) beauty. *

Today, a trip with John to install his easel in the new studio, & then I go to Chinatown to see Charlie & so home, where I’ve finished reading the first part of the *Larger Prajnaparamita*, practised the piano, carried out the garbage & hung pictures in the living room. I listen to some delightful opera of R. Strauss which I’ve never heard before, coming from the radio, while I write, CLT works at his translations. Tomorrow I must spend with the dentist.
* I feel momentarily free & easy – & at the same time, I’m conscious of having fallen into another pattern which I repent from day to day & see that I must break it – or foresee [sic] that it will presently be broken by the weight of my poverty. . . right when I have books, piano &c. all in order, all more or less under control & ready for use, here I’m about to be thrown out on the sidewalk again – into {I suppose} the usual sad series of guest rooms, living rooms, couches, rainy mountain campsites &c. until I can get another bundle of money together wherewith to set up another house. The prospect frightens me, although why it should, considering that this is the nine hundredth time I’ve found myself in this same position & having the same feeling of despair mixed with a baseless hope that I shall be saved at the last possible moment. * CLT has decided not to go back to the post office. Next week I may or may not begin to receive unemployment compensation, but I know that I haven’t the nerve to collect it for many weeks, even if my claim is good. […]

* 30:VI:62 Red’s Place, is full of booze, & Saturday reflection sunshine, & booze, roast boeuf Chinese magic notoriety wait for first dinner drink on me & maybe the second, too, & {at this point} , a 3-way conversation all in Cantonese breaks down into enraged shouts, good natured rage, & “give him a drink, give him a beer!” {with an indescribably expressive put-down tone on the word “beer”} & hear! “I work for CIA, worse than the police, burn down all Chinatown right away chop chop & don’t forget the shrimp. I cannot piss in your sink again – if you imagine that you had roast beef.

* A low ceiling landlord green walls & bar top, late {now, all afternoon} have one on the house, called Red’s Place on account father’s Chinese name Ah Hing {quaere Charlie is Ah Hing
Red in Cantonese} Herbert is the uncle. Hey! Hey! & so {I write this later, waiting for Castro Bus} to Ah Hing’s house where he {Ah Hing} comes on {in Cantonese} [illeg.] RANK that I leave his house in tears, Mrs. Ah Hing apologizing, “for my husband who says... & you are sensitive, you are a poet”) & here I stand on corner of Sutter & Divisadero wait for Castro bus, to go home, still weeping... I say to myself I never communicate with Charlie again, ... then I say, it is Ah Hing’s problem – I shall call Charlie in the morning or afternoon, evening, & night, until I can talk to him.

* 

17:VII:63 Polk & Clay Sts., waiting for the bus. Charlie has gone home, I run aimlessly about, thinking of books to buy instead of books to write. Sunshine. Tooth repairs hurt my jaw – HOT & sweaty, collecting leads & pens & stuff to write with. [...] & now sit at the bar in the Edinburgh Castle in Geary St. ... I do need out & away from this town & life here – for a time, at least.

[...]

* 

19:VII:63 [...] * when shall I see that very young girl again? – her name was something like ‘Maurine’ – I must ask Marian or Mike Agron about her. * I have fulfilled my promise to Nanda Pivano – I called her tonight to meet Neal at my house. I was able to deliver Neal’s manuscript & journal & letter collection to him [sic]. After conversing with Neal & Nanda for several hours I feel {1:30 AM} nervous & sleepy & sleepless... I’d like to read something beautiful, some poetry – I looked at my library, & settled back on Creel’s Birth of China [1954]. ... & then decided to write something – beautiful... in the silence of the night &c. ... blah...
my eyes hurt. I’m afraid Neal & his lady & Nanda are all going to reappear & demand further
speech, sympathy, care, &c. . . . [ . . . ]

[ . . . ]

24:VII:62 at a bar called Tommy’s Joynt on Geary St. at Van Ness. I read Walpole’s letters &
drink Guiness, & have just been to collect from the dole & to buy Yeats his essays & a [illeg.]
book of Mediaeval poetry. [ . . . ]

25:VII:62 at home, waiting to go to dentist. Scribner’s has rejected Angelflame, however I can
submit it to Ferlinghetti, who has asked me for a book. * Yesterday got copy of WB Yeats
Mythologies & have been reading it ever since, by fits & starts – the first part, a reprint of The
Celtic Twilight. I can see why James Joyce had so little patience with it -- & with the whole
Revival scene. . . yet I immediately remember the elaborate, the labored English of Dubliners &
A Portrait, and feel that Joyce was as “bad” as the rest of the Irish Revival. Joyce has a notion
about LOW LIFE, very much as Kenneth tried to tell me about his own sense of social level &
his desire to write of it – Anyway the language of those 2 first two books {& add the play Exiles
for good measure} is as disconnected from the Dublin scene as the Celtic fog. Sometimes I get
flashes of what kind of life The Dubliners had – impossible, deadly, dirty &c. – as I get flashes
of reality in Yeats. Neither man could do what Gertrude Stein accomplished for Baltimore; what
Stephen Crane & Theodore Dreiser did for other American cities – [...] 

* Maurine Caegwyn, the pretty lady I remembered on p. 30 above, came to visit me Monday
morning. We had a fine conversation. She’s very beautiful, & married to this wretched artist in
North Beach who is now showing a few of his constructions at Batman. So she talked about
traveling & how much she wants to go again, & the rest of the time lie in the sun or swim – no
need to write books or read them, no necessity to paint pictures or look at them – wonderfully
ignorant & uncurious – the revelation of her almost totally uncultivated mind, & of her vanity & presumption – I feel as if I’d discovered that she had a wooden leg & a glass eye & the clap... but so beautiful, so engaging that I could happily {at that moment} destroy myself &c. for her.

We met on Friday 13 VII at Marian Weston {formerly Bunnell} her or Barra’s [?] apartment in Clayton St. where I read poems to a large select audience in order to get money for rent {which by Friday I didn’t need, the employment office having just begun paying me the dole 2 days before} & I became very drunk & smoked some marijuana & began having a nerveless breakup worsened by a hallucination of fire & burning brought on by a chance remark of Marian’s -- & it seems that Bob LaVigne actually had nearly set fire to the house, not many minutes before, but I hadn’t known it.

I screamed & wept & Michael Agon comforted me for a long time & then brought Maurine to me -- & kept insisting to me that she looked like Joanne Elizabeth, which I denied... but in some ways, I saw then {& saw Monday} there is some very small resemblance... she has, at any rate, a strange goofy beauty that reaches me... & I’m always susceptible to weird beauty.

* The bus to the dentist has {12:30} just left without carrying me & I was to arrive there at 1 PM & now I shall be late &c. &c. I fly into a rage & throw things.

[...]

* 27:VII:62 I walk in the park although it’s foggy & cool – pigeons & starlings bathe in the pond near Stanyan St. gate. * In the south shallow/bank of pond behind the Hall of Flowers, a stand of flat-top iris, intense purple flowers & tiny dwarf rhododendron plants barely blossoming
– 6” high and less, flowers the size of a nickel – *R. Impeditum Compactum* A.M. {purple flower} & R. Microleucum F.C – C. {white flower} *

Great square delicate white flowers {turning pink as they grow old & die} *Denothera Acaulis* *

*Gentiana Tianschanica*, as if high in the mountains * some sort of tall, long-stemmed flower with very delicate multiple pink petals. […] * Dawn Redwood leaf needles like a sensitive plant * Scotch thistle 6’ high -- flowers 3 inches thick!

**28:VII:62** In the park again – wasting time, I tell myself. . . exercising, breathing fresh air, but nothing like I ought to be doing. I’m on my way to the beach to eat pie & ice-cream. *

Earlier – breakfast *en famille* – CLT’s sister Mary, her husband & her youngest son stayed at the house last night & will again tonight. * Plan to disappear tomorrow morning. & I wrote a letter to Charley, after everyone had gone out to look at the city. Then I called on Keera McClure for a few minutes before coming here. {Mike, before going to Mexico, asked me to see after her a little while he was out of town.} I have the horrors out here, panic, whatever; I wish that I were home. I believe it’s because I’m hungry – when I’m indoors I wish myself away.

High thick overcast sky encourages my claustrophobia – […]

[…] [31:VII:62] Now I’m riding buswise toward the Employment Office – today I’ll either be payed [sic] or kicked off the dole, however the whim of the interviewer strikes him. *

CLT is gone into the country, to do some carpentry work at Gina Barclay’s houseboat, & then to take care of the Greensfelders house & mice while they go a journey [sic]. I’ve been invited to join him there. Much depends. . . well, certain decisions of some interest will be taken, when I’ve
gone through this interview. Either I’ll be able to stay put or will be required to move all my belongings from 24th St. *

*  

1:VIII:62 They payed off – no sweat. EAMD & family back from Portland. CLT out of the house. I’m actually able to sit here & practise composing. Presently I must go help EAMD unload his trailer full of books & junk, & carry it up 18 millions of stairs. Then shop downtown for THINGS & return SOFT MACHINE to Andrew.

The book is a beauty. I can still hear several sentences from it echoing about inside my head – quite an accomplishment on the part of Mr. Burroughs. The book organizes itself like a poem, but I could wish for some thickness, solidity, unity (?) to it, an “ending”? He slides into generalities. He has plenty of what Blake calls those “minute particulars” which are the proper, authentic materials of ART {& except for a very few of our friends, NOBODY writing today is using this true STUFF, material &c.} […]  

*  

Columbia 19, 16  
1:VIII:62 MM’s life is a series of secrets which come out later in some sort of edited form – the facts are all past & their truth or falsity isn’t important: the shape of the present must have been influenced, to some degree, by those facts which MM will retail to you in person – SO HE THINKS – but alas, the facts were these:

“I had a headache Wednesday & could do very little except  
I typed 500 pages of ms.
“Two weeks ago I discovered that Robert Schumann was the greatest composer of music whom the world has ever seen.”

“X came to my house yesterday… X is a jinglebell”

{“jinglebell”, a person who uses narcotics who speaks indiscreetly of his habit, who expects MM to turn him on – also, a shallow, giddy, silly person.}

& the effect of these facts up on the world we have in common is nugatory, because MM’s opinions about these so called “facts” or experiences will change or become

{“I went to West Covina on the weekend. Have you ever been there? Wow. Man. Anyway, I met CP Snow there & we had lunch with Artie Shaw, a really great man. You ought to &c. …”}
meaningless to him as they become further off in time – & as he repeats his announcement of them {these facts, revelations} to more & more people – or as when & if he writes them into an essay, a poem. No doubt his manner of operating gives him some feeling of control over {or at least of sensible pattern in} the chaos which he apparently sees about him – a chaos which terrifies? … yet he’s much braver than I, much quicker to “test reality” {Joe Kreplick’s phrase} … How could I write this into a character in a book without sounding ill-natured, myself, – or making the character into an unbelievable grotesque, or camp-figure?

Bancroft Notebook 3
6:VIII:62 […] CLT temporarily at home from Marin County, writes to Rosemary. He sprained his back on Tuesday last. *

[…]

13:VIII:62 Flowers trumpet love from the midst of the hedge. * Hot quiet breeze [?] day. I’m trying to remember that I like to write, that I have news to tell; as I was thinking yesterday: Rejections, being a Manifesto by Negative Degrees. . . a few minutes ago I thought, better yet say “Gratuities,” Things I Got No Call To Say” – such as how & why I reject some of the basic notions of Western Culture, almost all of contemporary U.S. ideas & wants & frames – the Church, the State, the Family, the separate person, the psyche {except as it is its own history, its own hallucination – an artifact of greater or lesser interest. . . on days when I think of myself as having interests; & that those interests are important, or I choose to invest them with feeling, mood, emotional tone. . . } * Green & brown, sand, pine needles, dead grass, twigs, boards [?] & papers here under the pine trees {near Stowe Lake} I walked along thinking of a poem to give to Albert, beginning “O keeper of the [illeg.] return. When will the fireweed blossom” […]
I tell myself, begin an extensive work. Exert yourself. You are dying faster than you realise, &c. &c. “much as I used to do 15 years ago. * Flower trumpet from the hedge love love &c. *

[…] outside the park it is quite simply another hot dusty ugly windy day. * I am ugly sweaty & ill tempered. Someone hollered some nasty crack at me from a passing car & I screamed back, fuck ya, fuck ya! * So I’m home. Dinner is finished, the kitchen cleaned & the laundry done. Tomorrow I ought to pay the light bill & then flee into the Yosemite for the rest of the week. I’m sick of reading, I don’t want to talk to any of my friends {except whichever one might consent to spend 48 hours in bed with me} & I have no means of writing. I am afraid to write or don’t have anything to write or don’t care. . . whatever.

[…] I keep telling everyone {& I’ve been feeling this quite positively} that I have 10,000 things to do. How & where shall I begin? Secretly I say “I begin, have begun, HERE in these pages with this pencil. A foggy, windy night obtains in 24th & Douglass Streets, Monday evening the 13 of August 1962

* No stars. Fog.

* I whistle No Moon At All, pour myself another cup of coffee & think that I might be able to stay interested in a prose piece if I kept asking myself questions about it -- rather like Walter Shandy. . . what color? when was it. how did it look? How smell? Was there any sin in it. Why is he doing that? What is it called? Why isn’t he mending the broken guitar?  ?  ?  * et caetera *
I distract myself, temporarily, with Norman Mailer. *

[...]

16:VIII:62  Still at home, noontime, just finished breakfast & composing a letter to
Ferlinghetti forgiving him for not publishing *Angelflame*. He says I am not new, not as good as
*Like I Say & Memoirs*. I imagine it must be fairly poor stuff in *Angelflame*. He likes 6 or 7 of
the poems. . .  *  So I’m in despair & have feelings of failure & castration & anger at having
all my little dreams shattered & broken & slithering down the black enameled metal slide
{caved-in side of automobile door} & some sense of freedom from the idea of “career”, of
“being a professional writer”; no longer a hangup. Maybe I can begin to write seriously now?
[...]

Columbia 19, 16
19:VIII:62

I hear singing and its echoing trees & rocks
where I stand in endless meadow
sunshine

*  

Bancroft, Notebook 3
20:VIII:62  at 1:50 AM, after dinner with the Durhams & CLT, & supper at home, & cleaning
the kitchen, I am headache & tired. . .  CLT to be here until Tuesday PM. He is contented in the
country.  *  MM is discontented, his wife & daughters having gone a visiting to Tucson.  *  I
missed seeing Lewis & S.C. Doyle tonight, they talked with CLT a moment – Lew to go to live
in the Trinity Alps, goodbye to the city at last, etc. In his note to me, Lewis is very jealous of Snyder & others because they do what they please & live where they will, in spite of the tyranny of the system, the force of circumstance or whatever adverse natural forces which block us from enjoying the world as we ought to, as we DESERVE to enjoy it – although what are his {or my} qualifications which would earn for us such deserts he does not say.

Snyder took the trouble to learn languages & to study buddhism & then to secure himself patronage. Others have done creative work of such worth & interest as will command the admiration & assistance of the wealthy & the Great. Neither of us has taken care to continue improving ourselves or to perform remarkable feats of art; consequently we languish in obscurity; our present lack of industry & application enchains us in misery & want. . . However, it appears that Lewis’s mother has rescued him from the dangers of starvation, while I continue, for a space, to receive the public dole – but I must very soon find other means of subsistence, the dole being limited.

*  

23:VIII:62 [...] * I’m cooking Chicken Cacciatore against the return {tonight or tomorrow} of CLT. I’ve bought new sunglasses. I’ve read through the Writers At Work, for the 2nd time in 3 years. . . I like that kind of reading. . . also Lectures In America, Narration, & other remarks of Miss G. Stein about the art of writing. * Tuesday & Wednesday, 21 & 22, were occupied with entertaining Lewis P. Welch, the James Astons, Martha, et alia. […] 

Right now it is quiet. . . but I’m sleepy, tired from walking, tired from reading & trying to stop reading: doing both these things at once is exhausting. Those things, & also tired of heckling myself about writing, not writing, NOTHING ACCOMPLISHED, NOTHING EVEN
STARTED. . . WHEN? WHEN? WHEN? * “I bet you’re afraid”, they used to say. I expect that’s it, afraid of the discouragement that’s bound to follow, afraid it will not be finished, afraid that if it were, no one would like it, etc. Which is nonsense. As I write this I know perfectly well that any number of people would love to read the forgoing notebook pages, & could gain much pleasure & instruction from them – so I’m blocking myself for some other reason?

*  

24:VIII:62 in a black pine tree above a lake in GG Park. I’ve been eating blackberries around the lake below the casting pools – a great day, hot & delightful. * Joan Duerden woke me up, Richard Duerden came to call, & then John Seaver. John & I drove to the Ocean Beach, then for a look at China Beach & Bakers Beach – he left me at Ocean Beach so I could walk up through the park, still testing my new shoes. I don’t know how I shall get down out of this tree. The tree I sit on is nearly 3 feet thick, 10 feet above the ground. * The ducks are making a great fuss, beating water with their wings as they balance on their tails – all of them taking baths instead of mopishly [sic] gliding about. * I got down with more ease & grace than I had clomb [sic].

*  

[…]

27:VIII:62 Noontime. On Saturday I read a great deal of this material to MM. He giggled sometimes. I don’t know how he likes it, but I found some interesting solid particles. I could see what ought to be cut if I planned to publish this.

* On the 24th, Friday, I was able to come home from the park & write the beginnings of some prose object… well, anyway, I wrote about 3 ¼ pages single space WORDS, & I must re-read it
in a little while, to see if anything is there. I wrote fast & with pleasure & was cooking a pot of chicken Cacciatore at the time. The dinner was very tasty & today, hot smog, & I am coughing although I stepped out the front door for only a few seconds to inspect the weather. I feel that I ought to take a trolley to the beach for some fresh air. * I’m eating an omelet of eggs cheese tomato & scallion so that I won’t get too hungry & spend lots of money while I’m out walking.

* CLT has gone to work in the country, just for today – returns tonight or tomorrow AM, most likely tonight; he’s left his Gladstone bag at home. * I was frightened Saturday night, overhearing some of the neighbor hoodlums talking in the street 2:30 A.M. {Sunday actually} about how they could kick out Leon’s window, this is naturally what they’d want to do – they’ve grown to be men 6 feet tall by eating the cold cuts bread soda pop & candy which Leon gives to their mothers on credit… they pay him when their alimony check arrives… or their unemployment compensation or GI insurance payment or wellfare [sic] check arrives. […] They say “Don’t yell, you don’t have to holler.” I learn to speak in a normal tone. They say “You got no call to say that.” I’m silent. They say “Why don’t you speak up? Why aren’t you behaving like a responsible intellectual? Why don’t you lead, why don’t you write straight away?” & at last I say to myself why do you listen to these people? Why do you believe what they say? You’ve fallen into the habit of saying to yourself that they’re all no-talent nitwits, yet their voices are in your head, telling you what to do, holding up your parade with their pointless lectures about what they think is proper & what are the absolutely unbreakable rules of the universe.
Mr. Maugham says that he was able at last to relax & listen & watch, not only forgive them but enjoy their company & still go about his own business with zest & delight. Why not? Also that he was able to make books out of their foibles, actions, “lives”.

[…] I’ve been insanely silly & cranky with other people for several months in a row. I was able to talk fairly seriously with Michael on Saturday… for a wonder… I was having to beware, to mind my manner &c.  * Daisys & cloverblooms in the grass a dead mole & honeybees. I can hear a tinkling or splashing as of water, but I know there’s none about here except in drinking fountains & water taps where garden hoses can be attached.  * I have Spenser with me but have no patience to listen to him today.

# A man with a portable radio walks at the opposite edge of the meadow. He listens to a basketball game? He carries a newspaper… insects bite me.  * I get up, stiff & itchy, to walk again, & discover to my surprise, ½ a dozen other persons quietly inhabiting this end of the meadow.  * The great casting-pools are clean & filled with water. The creek runs again through the eucalyptus grove where the humming birds lived last Spring. Red dragonflies. Old men reasonably provided for { not poor & old & drunk } sit in the shady corner beside the pole rocks, gossiping. A young fat man, blue shirt & green pants practises [sic] casting in the farthest pool.  * Small orange Chinese lilies appear wherever there’s the right amount of sun & water. They give an impression of delicacy, but when I look at them closely I see that they’re very tough… but joyful anyway, red orange / yellowish, nasturtium color.  * small purple flowering plant like mint in the stream bed, add milkweed.  * I’ve been washing my feet in the ocean along
with half of the town who are here with me, some are in bathing dress, others in more formal
dress; but I bet the heavily clothed ones are unhappy for it is very hot right here at the seawall.

# Back in the park the air is hot & still, about 5:30 PM. I hope that the fog is coming in my
front door in 24th St. * No fog, very clear warm night. There was a wind at sundown but there
is none now. John Montgomery was here to tell CLT about the telephone book delivery job.
CLT has gone to the fights. * I came home, ate dinner, drank beer, played the piano, took a
bath & then John arrived. I’m trying to get back to reading Grierson\textsuperscript{40} again but I tell myself,
“Read some original text for a change, why don’t you? Why spend so much time on this piece of
dull speculation &c &c”

[...]

* 

\textbf{28:VIII:62} Far too early arrived at the unemployment of
cice. Nobody is here, not even the
usual early arrivals… although some of them are beginning now 13 minutes before
1 PM – to appear. I wait nervously. One customer is explaining how he dealt with one of the
window clerks here – how she was impertinent & he reprimanded her in strong language…
“She’s not here anymore,” he says. * At ten minutes to 1 there are a man & a woman, the
beginning of the line in front of window M. The belligerent customer is explaining how he
consulted his attorney & again was able to humiliate, destroy, put down some wretched creep
who had roused his righteous ire. Righteousness, pride, an exaggerated sense of personal honour

\textsuperscript{40} Probably Herbert J.C. Grierson (1866-1960), Scottish scholar, editor, and literary critic. He
was credited with increasing contemporary interest in the Metaphysical poets, esp. John Donne.
anger, fear, & cowardice all speak in that voice… I TOLD THEM, I SAID LET ME TELL YOU, I AINT GOING TO TOLERATE &c &c.

1:IX:62 Air smell of dust & flowers here & The Dalles also, dry golden earth & locust blossoms.

3:IX:62 Labor Day. Walk up the Panhandle I suddenly remember Boston Commons * I spent most of the day at Bob Miller’s Labor Day breakfast. Many people whom I love were there. Now 5 o’clock or so I sit below seawall, & the sun keeps breaking through the clouds, the water changes color grey green black & blue. Mt. Tamalpais nearly invisible, a layer of ultramarine wash across the northern horizon. Pedro Point a mass of cloud. I’ve walked here from Bob’s apartment in Beideman St. Tomorrow night I leave for Owen’s Valley to meet Locke and climb over Kearsage & Glen Passes. I have all the usual pre-travel horrors, combined with pre-interview-day-at-the-employment office-shakes. Shall I remember to pack everything. Will Locke be in Independence, how can I afford the money for this trip etc. etc. etc. Everything is impossible. *

Bancroft Notebook 1

3:IX:62 Labor Day, at night. I plan to leave for Independence tomorrow night, to meet Locke McCorkle there on Wednesday for a trip into Sixty Lakes Basin & surrounding countryside. I make preliminary lists, put various items into my rucksack, feel helpless – how shall I remember everything, etc. Yet I shall have most of what I need – including this book.
Bancroft Notebook 3

4:IX:62 I’m packing for Sierra trip, trying not to forget anything. Ech.

5:IX:62 1:45 AM, at the bus station with an hour to wait. Some hassle about checking luggage – “where’s it near? {Independence.} I sit outside in the loading dock; the station proper is occupied by a large audible jukebox… & it’s cold out here, alas. * It was about all I could do to walk from the house & down to Church St the pack is so heavy… & I’m carrying various breakables and meltables in a large paper sack, & carrying a rain parka as well – the air’s full of low fog or fire rain, but not too cold. * 2:45 we are loaded onto the Albuquerque bus… I hope that my rucksack is also. I took a single Dramamine pill at 2:20 in hopes of escaping the usual motion sickness routine… or at least that it might make me sleepy or calmer.

Bancroft Notebook 1

5:IX:62 Lock & I pack up & eat grapes at Onion Valley, early evening. We haven’t yet decided on a campground for the night. We go, presently. *

6:IX:62 At first camp, Gilbert Lake. A long slow morning, headaches & mountain sickness, but fine weather & good camping spot. * We left about noon & crossed the Kearsage Pass {11,000 + } & have made an early camp beside Lower Kearsage Lake, facing the pass. Kearsage Pinnacles to the SW. Locke has washed his sox & hanky. Now we drink tea & after a short rest, I get dinner started. Locke is fishing. Although the sun is going down, the air keeps warm. The ravens have stopped croaking & skolding [sic; partially illeg.]. The most noisy object hereabouts is the primus, bubbling & hissing like mad. *

* 

7:IX:62 We’re now camped at the upper one of the Rae Lakes, our destination. A hard pull up & over Glen Pass this AM & early PM. The wind is quite fast here, & several parties camped on
the isthmus between here & Upper Rae Lake {which has a beautiful Granite island.} A dead mule on the south side of the pass, a dying one on this side. Locke & I both have had a certain amount of altitude sickness. He fishes now. * I found the half torn down camp of the Park Service people, including an outdoor privy which I enjoyed although it was marked “Not for public use.” * Locke has caught 2 small fitch [sic]. He is cold. I am chilly. The wind blows. There are clouds north of here. I ought to draw everything, this -- & particularly Glen Pass being wonderfully beautiful. It is removed, but a number of walkers & packers have found their way here. This is a long glacier basin full of lakes, here, higher up & lower down. Granite, mostly white. There. *

*  

8:IX:62 We repose at Rae Lake. The wind is a trifle annoying, but the sun shines. I’m thinking of home * This is a more elegant trip than the one I made into Oregon this May? Certainly this landscape is more spectacular.

Bancroft Notebook 3

8:IX:62 At Rae Lakes. Wind in trees, sound of waterfall, birds & chipmunks. Hot sun & a continuous south wind, enough to make me wish it away. Flies, wild bees. Indian paint brush, gentians in the meadows. Purple fuzz flowers, purple daisies & some kind of Lavender cup-shaped flower, four petals, above 10,000 feet around Glen Pass. Many more than I can remember; flowers which I didn’t expect to see at all, this late in the year. * Wild Larkspur in shade beside small creek. * Wild yellow proto-snapdragon in rivulet. Fin Dome granite thumb above Middle Rae, where I now stand, 10,559 ft. Many shooting stars plants without flowers. I’m having after breakfast walk {breakfast was trout & bacon & [illeg.]} & tea * About a mile
below our camp the valley is hot & dry, except for steam emptying the lakes. Red & brown
mountain walls straight ahead fall into Woods Creek Canyon & Paradise Valley. [illeg.] turn
back. * The next lake below our camp is Middle Rae. * I see deer hoof prints & [illeg.].
Woodpecker drums in [illeg.]. About 2:30, while Locke is fishing I have a splendid bath in a
tiny cove & dry off in the hot sun. Now back in camp an hour later Locke has a headache & I
feel pleasantly drowsy. * After a short nap, Locke goes fishing again & loses his reel in 8 or 9
feet of icy water. Neither of us feels like diving after it. Happily, the neighbors have made us a
present of half a dozen trout, so we have fish anyway. *

* 9:IX:62 Back at Kearsage Lakes. We plan to leave the mountains tomorrow. The weather
remains hot & clear.

Bancroft Notebook 1
9:IX:62 Camped in beautiful site beside the largest Kearsage Lake, at foot of the Pinnacles.
Both of us were tired from the hike across Glen Pass. We cross the Kearsage again in the
morning & go on down to Onion Valley & out. It was very hot today – but all our days have
been beautifully hot & clear.

Bancroft Notebook 3
10:IX:62 Mojave. Wait for bus. Locke has gone home to Tucson & I’ve been drinking coffee,
coca cola, & beer. The sun is setting but the temperature is in the middle 90’s in the shade.
Except for a clean shirt shorts & sox, I’m remarkably dirty & unshaven. The natives don’t scare easily, but they look at me with uncertainty. * This town {a sign says} was the outer terminus for the 20 Mule Teams which handled borax between Death Valley & the coast. * The Dallas Express now loading: “Seats 43 Standees 15.” Spanish gentleman, young, arrives in a shirt equipped with full chest & wrist ruffles & black tie, very grand. * That barefoot girl with pink shorts & a tiny blouse, pony tail hair bounces past again. * The stage driver has great ado with baggage stowal [sic]. It is far too hot to do even light work. * I continue to wait. The sun has come to heat up this waiting space; the breeze is no help. * I guess the chief business here is the railroad – Santa Fe & SP seem to share some kind of switching yard & probably the loads of chemical gunk from Owen’s Lake is routed out of here? * As Locke & I were walking over Kearsage Pass this morning I thought of Darwin – or felt like something out of one of his books. Near the crest, Locke asked me “Did you ever give much study to the theory of psychological types?” * We had a big lunch in Lone Pine. Now I’ve had a bus terminal supper in Bakersfield & about to leave that city via express [illeg.] bus for home at last. I feel full & happy; however, the air conditioning system poisons my lungs; at any rate I’m softly & continuously coughing. I wait. Fresno, Modesto, Oakland, & home. * Recall this A.M., “That the future opens outwards like a fan (or into a bigger sphere ?) at any rate not a single track/line” * Moon’s not quite full. Will there be rain in San Francisco? * Kern River at Bakersfield is dry.
Bancroft Notebook 1
11:IX:62 Arrived back in the city early this morning, & so to bed. Then the employment office, bookstore, visit with Haselwood. & home after a short visit to the grocery store. New spectacle frames, also. $9. *

Bancroft Notebook 3
11:IX:62 I reached San Francisco at 1:35 AM today. Got home at 2:40 AM. Took bath, ate, talked with C, went to sleep… Today spent at employment office, optometrist’s, Geo. Fields, Haselwood’s, & Safeway. Now home, where I bring this book up to present date/time. Now level. *

* INVISIBLE IDYLLS

12:IX:62 Early morning in the Park. Giant mullein, foxglove, dahlia, snapdragon, hydrangea, nasturtium. Blue fuzz thumb flowering bushes. New seedling 3 foot stalks of mimosa. A zoo poem. We scarcely know each other, here are these four people we don’t know at all. * I visited the ocean: High tide & many fishermen. Seagulls chase anchovies in school 1000 ft from shore. A pair of large, almost tawny snipes or avocets (or whatever) probe the sand with long beaks. Their legs bend “backwards.” * Now I ride slothbus to zoo. Everyone is very well indeed. The inmates of a seminary for ladies of the feeble minded persuasion are visiting the animals, & now they eat sack lunches all at one long picnic table… forty lady feebs & 2 or 3 attendants.

*
Saturday 15:IX:62  No help for it.  I’m so funny looking that I can’t see the trees.

Columbia 19, 16
15:IX:62

I’ve cooked the morning & swept the bed
I feel money & power coming to me.

Bancroft Notebook 3

Monday Night 17:IX:62  In state of horrors & greebies without spectacles, having smashed the left lens this morning.  the afternoon had to be wasted with dentistry & I’d said all that the prose extravaganza I’ve been writing wanted to say.  Tomorrow, with any luck, I get my last unemployment check & the spectacles & can begin retyping the prose piece, INVISIBLE IDYLLS.  I began writing it before I went to the mountains & now I want to begin something that will have a different shape.

Bancroft, Notebook 3
22:IX:62  A busy week.  I’ve been writing & rewriting a prose piece.  On Thursday Kirby & Diane took me to Larkspur for dinner.  Friday morning, Carpenter took me to Moss Beach to find abalone shells – beautiful beach & reef alive with sea plants & creatures – 2 white bull sealions & their families – rare birds, a purple sea urchin, fog, mystery, beauty, sun gradually hot breaking through.  Vast & intimate beauties, invisible joys.  & Jay & Hisayo came to call in the evening.  They plan to visit Lewis at forks of Salmon.  *  I vexed and bothered myself all day about my slowness in getting my work done.  It is nearly finished; I can leave it until tomorrow… a few more pages.  It is extremely irregular, hypnotic, vague, nonsensical – yet it is
something or other different & strange. I must manufacture more… better, I should try to think rather more clearly what it is I’m trying to say – what is it I see that interests me, etc.  *

24:IX:62  Deathly ill with sore throat & whimsy. I’ve just returned to bed after a short trip to talk with the dentist. CLT is due to return today. Dinner & drunkenness last night at EAMD’s house. Martin Schneider also there. Ended in great Martha fit who wanted to go out to a bar & no one would take her. She was most annoyed. I came away. My throat was already going then. Actually, I suppose, I got a chill by walking for several hours, hot & cold, without my coat. & now, alas, I can do nothing but sleep, read, gargle, drink soup & fruit juices. I am “enjoying ill health,” as my father used to say.  *

*  

1:X:62  The Park. I’ve had an entertaining lunch with Mike & Joann & Sterling Bunnell at Mike’s house. I razzed Sterling about the meaningless cruelty of experimentation on insects {he has found that sensory cells react to stimuli even after the sensors have been detached from the individual which grew them}, about the lack of either vision or philosophy on the part of scientific researchers, etc.  * He was talking to Mike about the difference between the “subconscious” and the “unconscious”… that the subconscious is more readily available to some people – I got a visionary flash.  * CLT has decided to remove to Seal Beach & environs, where rich friends will take care of him. We must have the house dismantled & stored by 12:X. That task must commence very soon, now. I can’t tell where I shall be living two weeks from this time. So what.  * Bright warm day.  *

*  

*
Wednesday early afternoon. Beautifully high on T. Laughter & music & the bright 
lights from French windows outside the Crystal Ball Room. * About noon, Mme ETS came to 
invite us to a dinner for Lee Forbes Hosford,41 who is looking for old friends. She has 
volunteered to give me her spare room in the basement. * I wait here for Bruce McGaw to 
come & pick up the paintings that he loaned me. He has possible buyer * I’ve been rereading 
BERKELEY JOURNAL which is monstrous. I’m still high, 2:15 PM, since 1 PM. AHHHH! 
* Now I see the value of that Journal. On a certain page I find an answer to a problem I’ve had 
lately. I say to myself, “the reason you don’t write more prose stories, novels, & more objective 
poems is this: you don’t really care anything about other people… & literature, particularly 
NOVELS are about people & their lives & ‘problems’ & deaths & babies & suicides & money & 
books & paintings… anyway, I said in that old journal, “he {Grover Sales} is interested, like 
me, in how people tell things, what their style is, what relation their speech has to actual 
happenings.” * McGaw came with a 6 pack of Miller High Life Beer & we talked & he 
carried away his pictures & now I am alone & drunk & high & sleepy & vaguely hungry? I tell 
him my problems, he simply smiles & listens at length goes away. “I must run,” he says. He is 
working several days a week at the art school here & most evenings at the Coop in Berkeley.

First stay at Beaver St.

11:X:62 at 123 Beaver St., temporarily, through the kind offices of ETS who owns the place, 
the kindness of Bob Miller & Don Graham who moved me & a minimum amount 
{7 tons} of working equipment to this place, the kindness of Don Carpenter who is storing most 
of my library in his own house, & Edwd. A.M. Durham for the use of storage space in his

41 A literature professor from Reed College, Whalen’s alma mater.
garage. Thompson will live temporarily at Miller’s apartment then remove soon to the South where he hopes to live in Walker’s cabin at Mt San Gorgonio. I shall {unless I am to become very rich very fast very soon} end up at Albert’s house in another week’s time. I can’t afford to stay here; ETS always complains for years after one has allowed her to do me a favor. * […] * In any case, here I sit with no breakfast. Tomorrow & the next two days after, I have reading engagements which are supposed to pay off to the tune of $75. I shall have food. I am supposed to have kitchen privileges here, &c. &c. &c. * I write this to kill time, waiting for Bob Miller to take me away to 24th Street where I shall pack up the kitchen utensils & my pot plants. *

* * *

20: X: 62 JoAnn & Michael & I shop for a desk & fishtank which Mike wants to buy. Smog day & all of us having birthday trauma & taking ourselves very seriously. I hope that we shall presently eat lunch at the Commerce Cafe – we’ve parked across the street, Hayes above City Hall. * Party for Creeley last night at Brakhage’s house – I got away early; no hangover today. * Next door to the Estrella Apts. {just west of Commerce Cafe} a blind façade with & [sic] life size Atlantean figures which hold up an un-ornamented cornice. The pilasters beneath the Atlantids rise from a plain green concrete wall which is beveled at the top.

Columbia 19, 16
20 October 1962

If I did know
Would I tell you of course
I never could keep my big mouth shut
21:X:62 Morning “at home.” Fog. My back aches, & other joints are creaky. My eyes don’t work good & my head is wooly. I slept too long, 10:30 PM to 7:30 AM. * I’ve been unable to find Bob LaVigne who offered to let me stay at his house – I must leave this place {lower front room of Mme. E.T.S. her “rooming house”} before Tommy throws a fit. I told her Thursday that I intended to move today, but today finds my plans in abeyance -- & Tommy is sick with bronchitis. Here we sit. * An orchestra, harpsichord, pipe organ, viola d’amore {or da gamba} soloist, all accompaniment for this trumpet sonata by Heinrich {Beiber, Weiber?} * The fog hereabouts is now burnt off, 12:20 PM. Smell in the air as of Los Angeles, California. Foghorns. Melancholic warmth & dark humors. Shall I walk to the park. * Trip to Big Sur Hot Springs Lodge. * then to Lucia to Re Barker’s cabin through storm & wind, but only $50 that weekend, the reading scheduled for Monterey not having been possible – Ring’s was closed for vacation of owner. Fine hot springs bath on Sunday 14:X. Talk with Gia Fu, invitation to come for a week &c. Met Alberta Barrier again, after 10 years. She was visiting Emil White. * Saturday the 13th, LaVigne offered to put me up at his own flat, he says he’s rich now & has money & space & food. I’ve been trying to find him & talk to him for the past week, in order to confirm & accept his invitation, but he avoids me.

Consequently, I am temporarily immobilized here in Beaver St. I suppose I must finally ask Albert to take me away, if he will – or simply demand that ETS let me stay here indefinitely. Ach! * And the dental school wants $130 more than I gave them, & I’ve already delivered $200. Where that money is to be found, where I shall be living & what I shall be eating 3 or 4
days from today I don’t know… but why should I know; what good would it do me? Even if I were paying rent here, & had $500 in my pocket, that particular information would be nugatory

* shall I go for a walk. Why not. Why not stay here. Why not go out. I am upset, insecure, “sad”, excited, sexually frustrated, “nervous”, I hear something rattling about in my head which ought to be written down; what is it? Fidget & fumble, scratch & writhe. *

Columbia 19, 16

22:X:62

It takes me all day to do everything without hurrying.

Bancroft Notebook 3

REMOVAL TO MILL VALLEY
ALBERT’S HOUSE

23:X:62  Nothing is arranged. I haven’t found a job. This morning I visited CLT who wanted to give me money because I have none, & he hasn’t enough to get himself out of town; he’s loaned it to Molly & others… who will pay him back? Finally he insisted that I take a dollar. He goes to Albert tonight, & will warn A. about my request. I shall phone A tonight & ask him to let me stay chez lui. I’ve burnt this one down, almost. * So I find myself too distracted to write. The President of the United States has, for all practical purposes, declared war on the Cubans, the Soviet Union, & very nearly all the rest of the world as well. I have no idea what to do or say… our action in blockading Cuba is illegal… when shall I find money for dentist… how to live, what to do. *

25:X:62  I talked with Hisayo on the telephone. She didn’t understand that I wanted to come “forever.” I suppose CLT must have explained it all to them – but now I feel that it would be
impossible to stay there as it is for me to be here. * I have 39¢. The dentist wants $177.25, he tells me today.

*  

26:X:62 Albert came for me & CLT helped also. Essentials are now installed chez Albert where I write this in bed.

*  

27:X:62 Monstrous early in the morning. I kept awakening during the night. Long continuous movie about problems of rich people & something to do with gangsters & dope & weird queer bar scene. Some parts of it a musical comedy type arrangement, a huge structure of hollow cubes, some inhabited by people & some by bathtubs, cars, slot machines &c. suspended high in the air… but this soon turns out to be on a real sound stage & is in process of being photographed. * Dream runs out into conscious phantasy… I must stay in bed & contemplate my own imagination going past, not write it, not do anything except get with myself… but now I am up, fixing coffee, looking into the garden, marking this paper. * My nose runs. * As I sit here I feel my thoughts & feelings flying in all directions, attending to everything & nothing. * what do I want, I asked just then, & slid away into a phantasy of pianos & electrical organs & recollection of the organ at Aunt Clara’s house. *

[...]

*  

anthology $17.68. Höllerer-Corso anthology $13.96. Paetel anthology $4.00. Barker readings $50.42

16:XI:62  Bus to Mill Valley Drunk Having Left Don Allen on corner of Lombard & Van Ness Streets; I sit on bus [illeg.] home i.e. Albert’s house Mill Valley, after too much booze. People across aisle argue about possibility of reading book which was re-written & revised & substantially changed too many raw & balmy San Francisco air of November night so many times until the printer or even the compositor, his ninth grade education.

[...]

Bancroft Notebook 1

26:XI:62  I write in bed at Albert Saijo’s house in Mill Valley. He is giving me room & board for a little while. I am totally broke, & owe the dentist $165 + more or less change & my false teeth hurt, & I’d rather be living alone in the city. Was removed here 6 weeks ago. What am I going to do; CLT inquires, “What are your plans?” I have none, beyond a dream of endlessly goofing, reading, writing... which I know is impossible...

I can’t stay here too much longer, & haven’t food or shelter elsewhere... What, then?

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Final moments of November, followed
immediately by 7 days of just setting here
singing little sanskrit jingles & burning that
blue smoke.

Each of these “poems”, each of these “takings” might be metaphors
representing whole volumes I haven’t written, won’t ever produce.
Nevertheless, I treat myself, think of myself as a person who has
written a great deal of interesting – or at least, clear & definite material,
“Stuffe” – everyone can see what I’ve done, I say to myself. I esteem
myself as a person who has accomplished all this; it is only in the past
few days that I see how I’ve been deceiving myself. All I’ve done is
write a few disjunct sentences.

Cromwell & Sylvia won’t marry, Mason said. I knew that, I replied.
Mason tried not to look disturbed. Sylvia told me, I said, that she won’t marry Cromwell.
Cromwell is fucking Howard up the ass whenever he isn’t with Sylvia.
Mason said, “I’ve heard that’s what she’s been telling all over town. The real truth is that Cromwell’s in love with Sylvia & Howard’s in love with Cromwell who has no eyes for him.”

All I know is that Howard claims he’s worried about just one thing – how to pay the orthodontist who’s un-bucking his children’s teeth, I replied. But it’s none of my affair. I thought you were Sylvia’s great friend, Mason remarked.

You are my only friend, I replied.

Don’t be a tease, Mason said. Then he laughed.

I can’t stay interested in all this, I told him. Let’s go.

Columbia 19:16
Thursday
20:XII:62

early afternoon
sunny & breezy
after a succession
of dark & rainy
days. I sit
here telling my-
self I ought to
be writing something
that I can sell for
money, & I want
to take a walk
before the sun’s gone
away. It occurs
to me that a “sub-
ject” will come to
me. I know now
that I must meet
it with patience,
courage & resolution
… meet it so,
everyday until I
have set it down
on paper.

[…]

*  

**Bancroft Notebook 3**

1:I:63 a beautiful bright morning, after a party at Bob McCorkle’s house in Tiburon. Albert is
going to prepare New Year soup with mochi. A tangerine has been set on a pile of mochi; the
whole business stands on a white cloth on a white table square in front of the entrance door.  *
New Year soup a fair success. A. has rushed a sample of it to Mrs. Leh. Hiko remains away,
getting drunk with Bill Tickell  * Sun stays with us. A party at Jean Greensfelder’s this PM.
* I was telling Albert that I thought it odd to be seeing Allen Watts at a New Year festival…
Gary and I were Allen’s guests for the 1958/59 celebration.  * Pipeline Trail. I’ve been a
little way above the water tank on Throckmorton Ridge. Too much haze to see far below, but from here to the summits of the mountain it is hot & sunny. Doves & dragonflies. Small birds, hummies & lizards. Scotch broom, fuchsias, toyon berries, various kinds of acacia. The ocean scarcely more than a flat dull shine at Mt. Home Inn. Summit of Mt. Diablo rides above bank of smog & haze across the Bay. * Bluejays in redwoods at beginning of pavement Edgewood Ave. * & very near the reservoir, {& very ear the head of Cat Creek ?} I looked over the edge of the road & down into a new house. Suddenly I smelled something that brought back a whole army base, the recollection of it, somewhere 20 years ago – a witer, Ft. Lewis, Sioux Falls.

*  

2:1:63 at fountain & parking lot just below East Peak of Tamalpais – I’ve climbed the peak & circumambulated it & read the sutra & dharani & vows. Bright sun, not quite hot. Lots of fog & mist & smog above Bay & ocean. Mt. Diablo & mts. to N & NE show up well. * Yesterday I walked from Albert’s house to Mt. Home & fire station &c. then to the Greensfelders house for short New Years Day afternoon party – & so back with Hisayo to their house. * Alcatraz & San Francisco now appear faint, mirage in mist.

*  Mt. St. Helena? to the north, above clouds.

5:1:63 In the beginning was the desire, the necessity to explain. The words came easily. In our opinion the necessity was imaginary, although we expect almost anyone to challenge our competence to judge that point.

“However instead of “although…” “we expect an immediate challenge”
So anyway, a first sentence. why does the third sentence begin in the same way as the first. The words arrived while I was walking up the canyon on my way back from the post office. I was about to look for one or two more elegant phrases when I was interrupted by the insane desire to find out where it was I recently read a remark unfavourable to Wordsworth. The sudden unexpected arrival of Elizabeth Kaline & 2 daughters put a stop to all my projects. Now it is nearly 5 PM what have I done instead of returning immediately to this?

1. I have washed & dried all the dirty dishes & put them away. 2. I have taken the clothes which had been left in the dryer & put the clothing which was in the washer into the dryer & put them on the davenport. 3. I put the clothing which was in the washer into the dryer. I had to light it & then re-light it later, & check its operation from time to time through one whole hour. 4. I rearranged & swept the guest room. 5. I rearranged the disposition of a number of odd possessions. 6. I removed the clothing from the davenport to the top of the dryer. 7. I put a new rope handle on my teapot, reheated the tea. 8. I went back to the guest room to get my sweater. While I was there I rang bells & clappers & recited a sutra & a dharani & an eko & vows & burnt incense. 9. I came down stairs & poured tea & began writing this list. * Everyone is home from shopping, from working, from city & town. very nearly a half-moon, & Albert is grilling fresh mackerel over charcoal hibachi on the deck outside. Mrs. Leh is sleeping nearby me on the davenport. Hisayo broods & pouts over the rice pot in the kitchen. The day has been warm but I’ve got scarcely anything done. I’ve numbered the rest of these pages & now return this book to the guest room. * The guest room is going to become very crowded on Monday or Tuesday. Albert’s mother, sister-in-law, niece, nephew, old school friend, OSF’s wife & two daughters will arrive one day early next week. Duerden invited me, on Christmas Day, to come
to his house for a visit… perhaps I shall… But here or there, it will be INCONVENIENT, I feel like being very quiet & sitting still, keeping away from all confusion, “society”, life & contacts”. Sick as a cat. *Que voulez vous.*

* I find that I’ve nearly come round again to where these notebooks began, 18 January 1961. Looking at these & at all the rest of the unedited & unfinished ms. in this room, I wonder what would happen if I commenced typing it all… Begin with the 1943 material & end wherever I choose? … but I’m side tracked into looking up a line of Milton’s *Comus* which Coleridge speaks of in one of his notes… I stray about in the Coleridge prose takes, feeling guilty & frustrated & wakeful & disorganized. * I look into Blake’s *Jerusalem* & find myself staring into a mirror. Beetle beetle beetle beetle.

* I check back through the preceding pages – vast amount of repetition & excelsior. Please pay attention to what you’re saying, as well as to your style, your manners. * Last night or this morning I dreamed that the Christmas box which I received from Ruby contained, in addition to the cookies & candy, a copy of Pope’s Homer done up in the format of a large thin Oxford Press book… I couldn’t understand how it could be in that package, the book bore the stamp or seal, in a fly leaf, of a San Francisco or Berkeley bookstore… why that last should be puzzling or interesting I don’t know… I’ve found a number of books here which were originally sold in Portland or Seattle. However, I’m not really very bright, sleeping or waking, what else is new? My right thumb scalded & blistered by boiling water, tonight after supper. ca. 1 A.M.

Mill Valley 6:1:63
10:I:63 Berkeley, on a visit chez Duerden. This afternoon I walked up Shattuck Avenue to Berkeley Way to Milvia St. to see the house where Jack & his mam used to live 1957, then to look at the grassy backyard where the cottage was, behind the brown house at 1624 Milvia. I visited the Buddhist Church in Channing Way & so back here to Blake St. The weather is mild but smoggy. I find myself totally disorganized, unable to concentrate, to continue reading or to begin writing anything. I read the first part of Tolkein’s *Fellowship of the Ring*, which is interesting for its detail-work & very careful design. I find the language very mildly personal, curiously dull. The “machines”, the details are interesting, the dialect passages {the condescension which these shew towards the Lower Orders} gently comical I suppose – as opposed to the “Lower Class” caricatures in T.H. White. Tolkein’s Lower Classes speak dialect, but not {so far} too objectionably. Moon just past full, cleaer & damp cool to chill air. The windows are steamed by the gas heater. Cat-dandruff makes me sneeze, makes my nose run. I
keep trying to remember that sentence which I wrote in the last pages of the notebook preceding this one – it was actually a short paragraph that I thought of as the beginning of something. Now I must begin again. Get a clean sheet of paper.

*

11:1:63 What I wrote on that paper won’t bear repeating, i.e., is best forgotten. Now, 6:18 PM Friday night. Ricky boo has drunk himself into sickness & stupor. He was supposed to have reported for work at 4 PM. His wife was due here at 6 PM. What will she say when she arrives {I say this quite as if she were a kind of Aunt [illeg.] who would have the power to punish me and Rick. Our drunkenness being a transgression against good order, money & security – i.e. Suzanne, 19 years old, is [illeg.} I shall read Tolkein while I await developments. I envision myself {for example} being transported back across the Bay to Albert’s house by silent & “outraged” Suzanne Duerden. {Wishful thinking – I am disorganized & disoriented & generally unhappy here, for no REASON. Here I am, out of the cold. I am provided with beautiful food, wine, admiration, love, &c – nevertheless, I wish myself away… & at the same time, I wonder what will happen next. For example I have a fantasy about Suzanne coming home & flying into a rage & having a great break with her husband.

What I want is enough ambition & patience to operate a typewriter enough days in a row in order to create…… well… twenty {say} novels {& writing THAT word I ask myself, “What in hell do you mean?” I answer the question in parenthesis} by saying: NOVEL, a book about the lives of fictional characters, which book shall be an exact representation of “the world” as I think it “exists”.
Suzanne has come home. She read the telephone book while I explained the present state of the world… But she attributed it all to a cigar which R.D. smoked in the last 25 minutes [illeg.] and [illeg.] things about the kitchen. I must presently have some coffee. I decided that I am not afraid or embarrassed by this contretemps. * & that is the utility of a rug with a definite, repeated pattern {or the tight patterns of wallpaper} that looking at it reminds one {when we’re feeling uncertain about our own decisions} that we are right… {i.e. our feelings about a given situation are correct.}

13:1:63 at 2 A.M. After that, I walked to the Coop Bookstore & chatted with Bruce McGaw. He is as usual quiet, caustic, a trifle pompous. * I finished reading The Fellowship of the Ring – very slow moving for an adventure story, & far too much of it is concerned with noble beauty. I told R.D. that it’s too much fake Tennyson horns of elfland blowing. I shall have to read all the rest of it, 2 more volumes, although it is very time-consuming & contains a great deal of moralistic hogwash. * About quarter past 11 A.M. I find that I’ve slept too much. I feel vague & disconnected, no sense of continuity in my own thoughts, my own “being” and the appearance of “outside” objects – the furniture, the rooms, the weather – also want composition, lack any sort of meaning or pattern. […] it is hard to keep my mind &/or attention fixed on this page in order to find words to write on it – and the words are few & refractory. They’d just as soon be left alone & not be called upon to appear in this place at this moment. How is it that I’ve chosen to be bored to death? I have a great deal to do, many things to think about. Why is it impossible to act or think in these rooms? I feel stifled. I feel uprooted & displaced. it seems that I as doing something interesting & important a few days ago & that I was suddenly interrupted. The interruption has extended itself in all directions; here I sit, inside it, waiting for it to come to an
end. I fear, of course, that whatever activity I was pursuing before this hiatus occurred, the train of thought or imagination is absolutely lost & destroyed. At the same time, I’m aware of another motion of thought, knowledge, set of images proceeding on their way inside my head but I cannot reach them, they don’t show up or sound clearly to my waking conscience. I feel tired & discouraged. I sit and wait for the time of my departure… the kind of emotion I used to feel when I had to visit relatives I didn’t much care for… people who know me, that I “like” well enough, & who, I believe, “like” me, but at the same time we don’t really see, or understand each other – I suppose that is the word and the feeling, they came together just now simultaneously “A TACIT MISUNDERSTANDING – quite as if they might be saying, “Basically, we disagree with you about a great many important things – however, it suits our purpose to keep you here, entertain you in our home… it isn’t hurting you, you are being fed & warmed & admired {with reservations} & it is doing us a kind of good which we aren’t disposed to reveal to you at this time. Please relax & enjoy yourself. We shall provide you with every means that will add to your pleasure & well-being… But you must be here until we’re pleased to bring you back to where we found you.”

Actually, these folks have a very strange idea about who I am & what I’m doing… an idea of their own manufacture, an idea so complicated & interesting that it obscures or at least, confuses, their view of me as I am at this moment… I dare say that on other days, at other moments, I’m larger & louder & funnier than that design that idea which they have of me – & which they seem to want to keep. Why should their illusions – or want, perhaps, of illusion – trouble me? Suppose there is none – in either case, I am {I still imagine} inconvenienced, interrupted, hung up – I wish myself away. I’ll tell them so in a little while. *
here I am in Albert’s guest-room again. Duerden & I took a walk & then we came all [illeg.] to Suzanne’s mother’s house in San Francisco. Met Suzanne’s grandmother, had a few drinks of Sherry. Dinner in Chinatown {fair… quite plentiful} then back to Mrs. Kerr’s house for a small dose of TV & lots of mixed Vermouth & china cookies & so “home” to Mill Valley. I don’t suppose RD & Suzanne are going to invite me anyplace again. I was uncomfortable the whole time & I think they were aware of it. My discomfort wasn’t their fault, however, only my own indecision, nerves, lunacy. I shall write them to that effect. *

[...]

* 15:I:63 at night, before 11. I talked myself into writing a few sentences today – nothing that I can really use, but at least I feel that I’ve “made an attempt”, that I’ve tried to remember what it is I want to do, what I’ve told myself for years that I ought to do. Time goes past so swiftly now that I’m nearly in despair. I feel that death must come at any moment, & I haven’t done – I haven’t become – what I ought. This is what my parents must have felt at those times when I wanted them to talk to me or listen to me, & they said “Run on, now, I’m busy” or “I’m feeling very nervous today & you’re not helping it any by being such a pest.”  * * *  I was having uncharitable notions about Duerden this afternoon. he must have had me come for a visit so that he could decide what it is I’m “all about”. Having made this decision, he’d feel qualified to speak of me {&, undoubtedly, of my poems} at great length to people like Spicer, Brown, Loewinsohn, Brautigan… all the young. I mustn’t be surprised if any & all of these begin to “cut” me, or to begin reacting to me in some weird way… All this is a great piece of vanity & simplemindedness on my part. Why should I suppose Duerden has any other motives than
hospitality & good nature… Contrariwise, most of his conversation is of writers & writing &
direct questions about history & science, to which I kept replying “I don’t know” or “there was
an article on it in such a place, I don’t know anything about the subject beyond that little” &c.
&c. over again… I mentioned the scientist, Willard Gibbs, in the midst of my ravings about
something or other. I saw Duerden make a note on paper while we talked, later I read “Second
Law of Thermodynamics – Walter Hibbs”. Does R.D. hear that poorly? Was he making a joke?
I must have said much the same thing to him, i.e. about Willard Gibbs – Now I fear indeed, that
we had something like this same conversation in 1961 at his house in Tennessee Valley. Also
the same conversation about Pound. No doubt he kept notes on all that, too – the 1961
conversations – & has picked up on the idea that I haven’t learned or forgotten very much in 2
years’ time… […] I grow more fatuous every minute. I feel insecure about my appearance as a
learned person, as “an intellectual”. I know fairly well the limits of my learning, what things I
don’t know. But I don’t know the things I believed I knew, neither as well as I used to, nor as
precisely as I supposed. Do I mean, “I don’t remember anything very clearly any more”? […]
Of course, my feelings & notions about learning & intellectualism have changed considerably.
Learning & culture mean different things to me than they used to do. Some time ago, Lew said,
“you are full of words, alls stuffed inside of you. That’s what’s wrong with you.” & I see now
what he means. I still believe that they must come out in a certain order, must assume definite
shape.

* 

Although I am here at Albert’s house very tenuously, very much on sufferance, & I know that I
must contrive some way, sooner than I can like to think, to make my own living, get a house in
San Francisco, remove myself & belongings there & stay independent… in spite of this worry &
continuous bother & am I by rattling about in this room at this hour, keeping Albert awake &c? I feel freer here, more able to at least THINK about writing {or do what I imagine is thinking}

29:1:63  […] Part of a preface to this novel: I intend to write this book in English. I hope that I shall be able to avoid using any American locutions, or the kind of phrases which are customarily used by journalists. I also hope that the book will be of its own kind, one unlike any which has been written – I am aware of the ephemeral, nay, diaphanous nature of these hopes, yet I must do what I can to realize them.

*  

30:1:63  Chez Albert. […] Ann is in hospital, having fallen into an hysteric fit – literally. Her womb &c needed scraping, it had hemorrhaged again; consternations! Right on Moving Day, almost. She & Albert have decided to have the job performed by paid furniture movers. *

Among other friends, Blickle & I went to call upon Wm. Hobart Dickie, who is now teaching English at San Francisco State College. He has a wife {she’s a nurse} an expensive apartment with fairly expensive furniture; & a month or so ago, won a prize from Poetry magazine {Chicago}. He is ten or twelve years older, not so blond, much heavier & solider appearing. He used to look like the hero of Brideshead Revisited. He was very cordial & friendly. *

Albert’s mother stays here, now. She has just celebrated her 72nd birthday. She cooks beautiful Japanese food.

She does sumi painting & writes poems & writes many letters to her grandchildren and to her friends. We get on reasonably well together. Hisayo spends the week in Sacramento, being trained for her new temporary job with the state welfare bureau.
* The light today – & on well into evening – was of that kind which makes the bushes, ferns, trees & grasses appear independently luminescent. I feel that the New Year & Spring have begun at once. I feel ridiculously elated, optimistic. The air is so fine I’d like to be out walking, but the rain is so heavy I’d be soaked by the time I got to the road. […]

3:II:63 Last night, Ann was busy having a nervous breakdown. It continues today. Albert believes that “we have avoided any recurrence of her serious depression”. I believe that the girl is a raving lunatic right this minute. I am very disturbed by my own responses to all this – fear, rage, guilt, shame, annoyance &c. Very much the same kind of response I feel in the company of rowdy quarrelsome drunks… a re-echo of childhood fear of my father & general insecurities felt from childhood – 10 to 19 years of age. When shall I forget all that old bullshit & start being myself, acting my own age {nearly 40}. When shall I recognize my own freedom, my own real capacities. […]

* I thought last night, about how her sense of the past & of the future is very like JLK’s. & I had the idea for a variation on Mrs Woolfe { & T. Wolfe’s short story in 2 parts, “the thing imagined” & “the real thing” – story called “Homecoming” in The Hills Beyond } viz. a person plans a specific “case”, plans it all well in advance, VERBALIZES the whole scene of that future “case”. Next, I “present” the “case” as it does actually, “on schedule”, occur. At last, there is the person’s analysis of the occurrence, & finally, their recollection of it years later. […]

18:II:63 on way to post office: eagle, mimosa, juncos & sunshine be my help

*
Jim Murray called this morning & says Luther Nichols (now representing Doubleday publishers) wants to read a ms. book of mine. I hope he does; I hope he likes it; I hope Doubleday will buy it. There’s possible record/book combination… JM says good possibility of fair sales on college campuses.

24:II:63 Thorny bush/magenta pea flowers. Matt Davis Trail. * At 2 different places there were wild iris, delicate lavender, with yellow stripe narrowing from the middle of the petal to the center of the flower. As I was walking back home I saw the fat little girl who had picked them & was sad to think that they were gone. I saw one again, quite unexpectedly, where I’d left it – something distracted me from hunting the second – but where had she found 2 where I’d seen two… there must have been 3? Or she’d been on the Nora Trail?

PROGRESS ON YOU DIDN’T EVEN TRY

28:II:63 {earliest} Nichols wants a novel but will read this Angelflame instead, newly rearranged & with “Minor Moralia” completed at last, by additions nearly typed etc. But he will reject it – if he does not: the New York office will. * So I keep pestering myself about a novel without having any idea how to get it going, short of beginning at this moment to typewrite – but A. has just complained about noise of typing a letter so I’ve stopped & begun copying old novel note out of last year’s journal – in addition to the beginning I made from note of 3:II:63 above – & keep thinking of last year’s Idylls, & also of copying all past prose mss. that I like, with the idea of possible collection of short proses, if there are enough pages. * But I would want to know there were more than one novel that I could & would write & I do know, now, the idea of writing less than a dozen or so is ridiculous. * I tell myself that surely a beautiful
autobiography ought to be a saleable product. And failing everything else, I think a publisher might be found for some such thing as “A Poet’s Notebook” etc.  Hey ho.

*  

4:III:63  Mr. Luther Nichols telephoned to say that he will send *Angelflame* to New York with a “strong letter”. *

*  


Yesterday {5:III:62} sad to read of Dr. Williams dying in Rutherford.43 We lose a member of the family. No more Bill, & what a world is left to us – Henry Rago, Delmore Schwartz, the Trillings, Jacques Barzun – the booby professors will reign from now on. BAH. *

[…]

NOTE FOR YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW

I mailed a poem to Loewinsohn’s new magazine – *The Spring Poem to the Memory of Jane Ellen Harrison*. I showed it to Rick & Suzanne Duerden who came to call yesterday afternoon.

*  

Mr. Kongo Abe has returned, bringing some of his paintings – very chic material, decoration, “beauty” et cetera. Photographs show a couple very large decorations in black & white oil paint which look like art-student design class layouts – or Matisse cut out, borderline between a real & a false thing? No – it is plain decoration – that kind of stuff was a real vision once. For Mr. Abe

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43 William Carlos Williams, the modernist poet whose work deeply influenced Whalen’s generation, died on March 4, 1963. Williams had visited Reed College when Whalen, Snyder, and Lew Welch were undergraduates there. He read their poems and greatly encouraged them to continue their work as poets, just as he had encouraged a young Allen Ginsberg years earlier.
it is a theoretical discovery to be used, a possible way to paint, but not a thing made, not a statement.

[…]

* The shock I had Monday, of walking along, making invocations, state just below extasy [sic], some kind of fairly high concentration of attention, when I disturbed a great swarm of horseflies off a pile of dog shit on the shoulder of the road – panic/thrill/ ‘electric charge’, “flash”, etc.  * Today: horse tails & miner’s lettuce, Steller’s Jays fly fast & expertly. Juncos, tits & sparrows are terrorized. Robin sings anyway. Also a lark or a wren, a great raven croaks in hilltop eucalyptus. {Not a raven at all – simply a Steller’s Jay making an unprecedented croaky buzz! I see him right across the street. }

* Vine with long leaves has yellowish white 4-petal flowers, yellow centers {prominent stamens & pistils} fragrant, but not as loud as honeysuckle  * It was on or about March 1 that John Seaver came over & we had a fine trip to Stinson Beach, & to Mountain Theater where he’d never been. I don’t know how I left the day unrecorded, it was such a delight. I found a quantity of grey quartz pebbles which Albert’s mama begged for a present. Now they live in a pretty jar in her room.

[…]

*  

7:III:63  12:45 AM I find a smear & crumb of spaghetti sauce in the book I’m reading, & recall with a pang of sadness the years of excitement & worry & starving in Portland, 20th St. where the stain was applied.
That little voice was going full blast by the time I got up & washed & shaved. Apologies, explanations, NOISE. I lay in bed trying to find who this was that was being hurt, this I who was so enraged, so “persecuted.” I cant find that person or being. Just a second ago, I thought: It is EARS that are suffering – & because they are torturing HER?

Right this minute she is fussing about forks, she can never find forks in your house, where are the forks are they out there? {i.e. in the dining room} Sneez. O Albert. Why cant I find forks. Are there enough spoons. Where are the grapefruit. These spoons are hard to do grapefruit.

{N.B. That she didn’t put the word “with” at the end of this last sentence – or in my confusion, my pencil wont put it there. } * Charming letter full of praise from J.E.K.S., but she threatens a visit in December or January. The prospect makes my eyes water, my heart unsteady & ballooning.

[...]

* 

**Sunday March 10**   Why should I want to leave all this beauty – & yet I want to see a greater world than Miller Avenue, although this street has a flowering Himalaya Magnolia & moreover, sunshine among the other trees      * Driving a new automobile the same color as the expensive cigar he was smoking, his newly crewed head & white T- shirt gleam in the sun      * I had to cope with a world of total insanity until I was 19, then I went into the army – a mildly schizophrenic interlude – & I tried to make it in the free world, the outside, REALITY – but I failed. I didn’t want enough & now I have nothing, not even the necessities – food & a woman.

* Huge iris, pale blue. Color of Claire de Lune porcelain.

[...]
* “I wanted to get a Ferrari this year but no such luck”, he said. I found out later that he’d just bought a nine-room ski hut at Lake Tahoe.

* Mike & JoAnn came & spent most of the day. I read The Open Collar novel or novelette – & found it very well done. They were reasonably pleasant today, although the conversation was almost entirely about literature.  
  * I’m very sleepy although it’s only 8:07 PM. I was up late this morning reading One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest by Ken Kesey, a man from The Dalles {actually Eugene}. A fairly good book, much better written & generally sharper than the very popular Catch 22. The writing in Catch 22 is thin & slick, but the “message” is important (“defy authority because it wants to kill you, IS in the process of destroying each one of us”, very like One Flew – both men, I think have been influenced considerably more by James Jones than by any other writer although in the case of Kesey, I think there is a strong Faulkner touch.  

[…]

* Full moon last night & tonight, the greatest possible splendor fills the valley. The eucalyptus trees became absolutely transcendental, & the other odd subtropical & exotic plants show up a huge variety of textures & reflectors; glints, gleams, velvet glows.

* 

YT&T

11:III:63 I sit on the deck at Ann’s house, half in sun, half in shadow of a little plum or cherry tree, trying to think about this novel. Nothing happens. Ann has gone to work for the first time since January. She’s supposed to be better. I hear her car or Albert’s & it’s lunch time.  
* Messing fitfully with the YT&T ms. & checking in this book also. I find that Saturday was a blank. I did write letters that day, though, & I find a oem of that date in the green folder.  
* My head has hurt since yesterday morning. Quiet general facial & skull pain.  
* I MUST WRITE THIS BOOK, {THIS PRAYER TO PLUTUS GOD OF RICHES}  
* Loewinsohn called earlier
this PM to congratulate me upon the poem I sent him. He says Nichols hates Brautigan’s new book. He says Brautigan will write me a letter of praise & acceptance of my poem later. Wants to see JEKS’s poems. * Albert has just bought a light blue 1957 VW. He is happy. * I’ve been able to find a few sentences to write into YT&T, also start of a large poem *

[…]

*  

13:III:63 for YT&T – the reason Marilynn & Helen are friends is that Kenneth gave her a short [illeg.] once in the past & Helen & Marilynn & Kenneth all had long explanations about it * This note happily expanded itself into 4 or 5 pages of holograph ms. I wrote 9 pages of it today – plus a new section of a poem started yesterday.

[…]

YT&T

* Pencil, from the Latin “penis”, ink & semen, pee, spit, blood, snot, mucus, smegma, the wet slick excited cunt, the thin shining clear streaming counterpart from a man – McClure calls it, or said somebody called it “the fore-wad”, he can’t remember experiencing it. [ erased line] It is like the material a man ejaculates when beginning puberty – the thick, yellow-white-opalescent shot appears a little later in adolescence & remains, apparently, through the active life of a man * Can I use the story of Snyder jacking off at college & displaying the results in biology lab class immediately thereafter * “The come of the poem”, Ginsberg has written somewhere – a very exact statement. * Since the note of 3:II:63 above, I’ve managed to write only a little over 30 pages of holograph ms. of the projected novel, Yesterday – Today & Tomorrow. – The actual writing began 4:II:63, which is 6 weeks {4 Feb. was a Monday} That’s something less than a page a day, with weekends supplying nothing. How am I going to start tomorrow, as I should, to
find ten pages of new stuff as I did today? For I must speed up if I want to get this thing done. It is very small & simple & MUST NOT be allowed to drag on & on. I don’t want or need a 400–page book. What I want is 100–pages to give to Nichols in order to get an advance. & so much of what’s written so far is only dialogue of the most banal kind – I have an idea I may keep it all, but I’ll have to add a great deal of exposition & characterization & bright exciting images in order to keep the chatter from evaporating off the pages even before I can copy them on the typewriter. * And what can I make out of the foregoing lines? Yet I must practise, I must learn to SAY everything, I mean I must learn to write it down clearly & in order. There’s the use. It’s also a pleasure. I enjoy marking these pages while drinking coffee & listening to the radio. I look out the window

[...]

* Duerden told me once, “I’ve been trying to fuck my brains out, but it doesn’t work. * Kerouac claims that he must come every day in order to feel well; “that old stuff in there it isn’t good for you if it stays in.” So if he isn’t making out with somebody he masturbates – or so he claims. [ erased sentence] He told me that he had discovered a very fast & efficient way of doing it. [ erased paragraph ]

I think that’s another story or another character or something – this me is complicated enough. I must keep summoning up the aid of Benjamin Constant, Balzac, Colette, Maugham & Ford, their ghostly precisions & compressions. But not too tightly, either – I must spew it out onto paper FIRST – I can cut & polish LATER! * I learn this afternoon, by overhearing a telephone conversation, that Kongo Abe San will be here at least another week. Who will replace him? He requires breakfast early in the morning – or at least mama finds it convenient to
get up early in the morning & feed him. * I’m defenseless against any ordinary sounds of work or conversation in the main part of the house. Living in a charming *entresol* may be stylish but it is very noisy. * It seems impossible that I should have written so little of this story *YT&T*. I keep writing this, instead. *

[…]

*  

*YT&T*

**17:III:63** He said I hope this isn’t one of those days of confusion & disorganisation. She said what do you mean. He said I often used to look out the window, see that the sun was shining & decide immediately to go out walking. But then I’d have to shave, & then take a shit & then the phone would ring & I’d say “yes” to some invitation I’d regret having accepted {three minutes later I’d remember all the things I’d been thinking I might accomplish int hat day & now I’d just promised to attend a party or go with somebody to the museum -- & I’d see that the garbage had to be taken outside, it had spilled on the kitchen floor it was so full.

By the time I got out, I was exhausted & enraged – unless I stayed inside & raged & broke things & was cranky to whomever came to see me then.” [sic] * Happily Albert & family have gone to the Valley of the Moon to visit the home of “JackerÔndon”, as Mama & Abe call him. Mr. Abe admired Mr. London’s writings a thousand years ago. Mr. Abe wrote inscriptions yesterday, including “don’t seek, don’t cling” for me & with dedication & seals &c. I think it a scandal the way he retouches the characters after he’s written them. He used beautiful paper – but Pelikan india ink! The McClures & Jane & Master Steven Foss came to visit yesterday & I was feeling less than sociable. I hope that they aren’t offended. & they brought a huge pot roast
& potatoes & I cooked that & Mama-san cooked sukiyaki & it was all INTOLERABLE boring. To top it off, Mike insisted on reading one of his tiresome *Ghost Tantras*. I suppose that particular group of poems must be considered interesting & delightful, but I can’t listen to them.

* Today the sky has large slow cloud masses moving back & forth across the sky, which turns the light on & off. A day every bit as annoying in shape & color & size as yesterday when it rained almost continuously, & some hail fell – Actually it is a gorgeous moment here on the road, the eucalyptus trees are blossoming, & various other kinds of Australians. The madrones bloom now, too.

* She said, “I don’t honestly know why it is you decided to marry. Why? he asked. “You seem so self-sufficient, she said. “You don’t really depend on other people, you don’t really like them – I doubt that you are, truly, deeply interested or intrigued by me.” He said Don’t be silly. You know me well enough by now to know that I’d walk out of here if I didn’t want to stay here with you.” She looked at him. “You know, you kind of scare me when you say things like that.” “Why?” “Because you do funny things often enough as it is.” “I guess so,” he said. “I’m about as funny as everybody else. But I’m here because I want to be. Are you all ready to go?”

* He didn’t tell her that other people often appeared to be not very cleverly programmed automata. He knew very few persons who were aware of where they were & what they were doing. They were strange, in the midst of the fairly regular Riemann Surface he looked out upon whenever he sat still & looked around him. There were these discontinuities, sudden multi-dimensional warpings which indicated the presence of a field of action or force that was operating continuously. * He didn’t say it. He didn’t want to explain all that right then.
He was in a hurry to get to the store & back so he wouldn’t need to hurry later to get ready for
work.  *

Every once in a while he’d seize an edge of that surface, that fabric, & shake it, give it a
flap, resettle it to suit himself. He hadn’t touched it, hadn’t looked at it for some time.  * It
occurred to him, at last, that what he wanted was a quality of life something like the sight of a
small brook tumbling down over the rocks. You see it there among the trees. The ferns & moss
are green.  * 5 PM early spring.  * Nothing will sustain me, my entire weight & being,
except the unexpected.  *

18:III:63  I sit on a rock beside the first creek on the Matt Davis Trail; exhausted after a hard
scramble up out of the canyon. I took the s. fork of Old Mill Creek, but lost the trail as the
canyon narrowed. I had to bore almost straight up to reach the top of a little knob leading to the
fire-road & Throckmorton Bridge. The sun is quite hot, but I breathe steam, it is fairly early
morning for me – 9:30 or 10 o’clock. By the time I found the little piece of trail on top of the
canyon wall I was about to have a heart attack. As I was walking up the little knoll behind the
fire station, I was contemplating an immediate return to the house. I wonder whatever possessed
me to write to the Forest Service to ask for a job again – I’m considerably older than I was that
year I first went up to the Skagit country. 1953, exactly 10 years ago – 29 instead of 39 years
old. But I was in much worse shape, physically & mentally then – I think. that was long before
I’d made any trips over the high passes [48 ] in the Sierra – Whitney Pass between Mts. Muir &
Whitney, Forester Pass, Glen Pass. Even Donohue & Kearsage passes are higher than most of
the peaks in the Cascade Range.
* This spot where I’m writing is pleasant enough, although these are redwoods instead of Douglass fir, & laurel & oak instead of Vine Maple & alder. I popped a square hole in the sleeve of my sweater as I passed the barbwire fence around the great covered cistern, junction of mountain trails & Cascade Drive. *

I thought, here I am, blowing up energy I ought be using to drive my typewriter. I MUST find those hundred pages to try out on Nichols or somebody, in order to try at least for an advance. [...] 

YW & T

* 

19:III:63 Having been with you I’m happy as these yellow broom flowers fern frond light the smell of cool sun down here. The opposite wall of this canyon is another day.

* Around a corner of this shady road I meet the sun, face to face. Shock. Take Pow. Not to mention the S.E. face of Tamalpais. * It is I who sink the sun, it doesn’t set because the air-raid siren blows. * The TODAY section will be a working-day. K is at his job. He must work. He doesn’t like it. He got it in order to pay for a [illeg.] doctor – a divorce – a powerful reason – In whatever case, Helen & Kenneth are no longer married. Probably she’s now married to somebody else – anyway, Helen & Kenneth as a couple are now really “YESTERDAY”. Today Kenneth is trying to get along in “the world”, and trying to re-adjust himself or has just about re-adjusted himself to life without Helen – anyway. What I want to show is that the quality is changed. In the TOMORROW section he’ll be married to another woman. Children are already born or about to be? * By poking about among the leaves & weeds, I found, I think, those fake orchids of mine beginning to sprout. *
If I’ve had nothing else, known nothing else, I’ve at least experienced this afternoon. I can’t claim the sole credit. Most of it happened the way it did because of the love & help of my friends. Yet I see & have & know all this. Here I am, higher than a kite. No booze, no drugs. Fresh air & writing do it – & memory & landscape – & probably the false sense of security brought on by having had breakfast & lunch, & the fact that dinner & a bed are assured for tonight – all this helps as much as any of the other things.

* 

YT&T

 […]  * The family left at noon for Rafu, but I have yet to sit quietly in the now comfortable & pleasant house & write what must be written today. VIZ. * She was talking. She was looking forward to going to Seattle on his [partially illeg.] vacation. Then she said, “What would you do if I got pregnant?” “I’d be delighted,” he said. “No really – well,” he said, “if it’s a boy I’ll breed it up to be a Navy man. If it’s a girl I’ll put her into a convent until she’s nubile, & then sell her at a great price to a rich jaded old voluptuary.”

She wondered what he’d say if she told him that when she’d last been away to Seattle she visited her mother, as she claimed she intended to do before she went. What would he say if he knew that she had also had an abortion while she was there.

* 

21:III:63  Inbound to Soko. He was thinking about fucking Marilynn. It was naughty & rather uncomfortable, rather like playing doctor with the neighborhood girls when he was a young boy. But Marilynn could never repel him, turn him off sexually, with a few words, the way Helen could. * The cypresses & redwoods are black at the crest of the hill. Acacias, oaks laurels &
young eucalyptus are tones & shades of green & yellow green foam down the hill & so to grass, 
green yellow, the earth ochre & sienna in this place, sure enough.  *  But having what we want 
makes us nervous.  I wished for years I could see further into, be inside a piece of agate, a crystal 
ball, a gem.  Now sitting in Foster’s Clement St. among mirrors & tile, that’s where I am.  The 
narrow front window is the transparent section of a rock seen from the inside – interrupted as it is 
by a pillar of mirror.  A women in a red coat passes by a woman in yellow.  A woman wearing 
gray.  *  Some of the finest cardinal red rhododendrons are blooming today.  {Golden Gate 
Park} and the jap cherries half-way popped, & very good azaleas.  

*  

YT&T  

24:III:63  She said “why are you so gloomy today.”  He said he wasn’t.  & she said there, you 
see?  What’s bothering you so much?  ” “Oh I was just thinking,” he said, “That I’m not doing 
anything.  I never write anything or paint anything or build anything anymore.  I don’t even 
study – ” “You read practically all the time,” she said.  “Yeah – but not to any point, any aim.  I 
wanted to learn harmony – & see, there’s a copy of Schoenberg’s Harmonielehre, a copy of 
Hindemith’s Composition, Piston’s book – you can see the music paper sticking out of the top of 
Schoenberg, it has a couple of exercises written out on it…” “Well why don’t you do 
something?  All you have to do is to sit down & begin.”   *  

Light & dark shadows cross on the surface of the lake – I look north from a point just under 
the summit of East Peak Tamalpais.  The Farralones & Bolinas Head very clear.  Clouds & storm 
around Mt. St. Helena.
* “It’s all my fault,” she said. “I ought to go out and get a job so you wouldn’t need to work all the time – you could get a part-time job – that way you’d have time to do whatever you want to – at least you’d feel better.” * If I want to look at trees & landscapes I can – imagine a camper truck or smaller car; sleeping-back, chow, small rain-tent – & the Oregon coast. I could imagine myself going to cheap motels if the weather really went bad – for an address I would give my father’s house-number in The Dalles – although I’ve never lived there for more than a few days – I feel oddly happy at this idea – that there is this number I might use if I need it – I never can much use or inherit the house itself, which I consider Ruby’s property.

* He said, “It isn’t your fault, honey. I just don’t really have enough imagination or attention.” But he would sometimes find that her endless reminiscences, explanations, lists of wishes were intolerable to hear. He would find a pretext to leave the house – or just say that he had to go out. She would plead to go along. She would promise that if he stayed home she wouldn’t say another word – she’d do the laundry, the dishes, vacuum the living room. Having tried to listen and not kick her out of the way, he’d leave, at last, and drive either to the turn-around at Land’s End, & sit looking out over the ocean, or into a fairly quiet part of the Park. He’d sit in the car & read. If he did this in the park he’d fall asleep and wake up after sundown, wake up with a great hard cock, pee with pleasure into the dirt behind a tree, & return home. [ long paragraph erased]

* He knew that if she didn’t make much fuss whenever he was leaving, she was bound to make a scene of some kind when he returned. Sometimes he found, on returning, that some actual crisis had arisen – all the electrical fuses had blown, she had burnt her finger lighting the
oven – or there were one or two of their friends who had dropped in unexpectedly – the house looking suddenly strange & seeming not his own when he would come in from being away & see them there. * Jack & Thea Hogan came to night & the way they talk, Gary & Joanne are coming home sooner than I supposed.

26:III:63 I wrote NOTHING yesterday. I painted & made collages, no writing. WHAT am I going to do about this novel? * 10:25 A.M. inbound for Soko to see dentist – he probably has a summons-server at his side – or at least has prepared a long & persuasive speech. * I return to Albert’s house & find that CLT has been here, Albert has retired to bed with a cold, I must have dinner with ACRL & here I sit on her deck, drinking sherry.

I had a long interview with Michael this afternoon, about novels, & then to the park for another view of the cherry blossoms in the Tea Garden, & so home. I called Martha to see if CLT was there. I told her I’d come to town Friday & visit & eat dinner – my income tax refund {a little less than $7} is arrived. * Kenneth punched his time card. He walked away with the group to the station where they worked. They talked & laughed about their cars, the weekend in Reno – how much won or lost – the grandchildren. The youngest ones talked about what Huckleberry Hound had been doing last night on T.V. Kenneth handed his cards to the Supervisor, fat, pop-eyed man in a brown suit who shouted & waved his arms at the people coming to work. When he wasn’t shouting & waving his arms, he was bellowing [sic] into the public address system, which roared & squealed with feedback because he never learned to set the [illeg.] control to a reasonable level – consequently, most of his message was lost. Everyone who was supposed to hear & obey his commands did what they should whether he shouted or
not. There were assistant supervisors who shouted & waved their arms but never were heard on the P.A. system. They were in direct command at all times. They reminded Kenneth of KP [illeg.]… They were very hurried & haggard people who had to extract the response of the workers to the commands of the supervisor. Like non-comms in the army, they had to take a great many scoldings and threats from above, the workers were free to hate him, abuse him verbally, & appeal from his authority directly to the supervisor or to the shift chief. The position was not attractive, even to men who had both the necessary brains to pass the civil service test for the job, & who had the necessary experience in the Department.

Kenneth handed in his card & began working in his usual place. He was thinking that the job might simply be reduced to printing rows of figures on that card, the card with its numbers was read into a machine that printed his paycheck. Unfortunately there were a great many persons – & written regulations {some of them enforcible} – which governed the manipulation of that card. The supervisors & the men in the time section who took care of all the cards presumed as a matter of course that the workers had taken the trouble to get jobs with the Department in order to shirk, to go on sick leave, to take vacations – & to defraud the Government of the United States. Not only defraud the government of the amount their salaries came to, but also to steal government supplies & equipment, to waste it, to destroy it.

The supervisors were constantly dogged by security checks, property checks, efficiency checks, time studies, secret FBI, CIA & Congressional investigating agents, all working under cover, all presumably unacquainted with each other.
Culture, civilization, education, wisdom &c. – evidence of these is shewn in the way people treat each other, how they behave towards each other, how is the family arranged, how are crimes punished, what sort of government is there, if any. If there is a national government, how does it behave itself toward foreigners; or toward other national governments. WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF LIFE which prevails there, & are different qualities possible.

As hallucinogens change one’s senses, vision &c., so my poetry or other writings must change, entrance, hallucinate the reader. * But this last is absurd. I can’t take credit for inventing what already “is”. Seeing, perceiving the world is one thing. Looking at it, saying or feeling “I”, speaking of it, RE-PRESENTING it – all these are mistakes. The world is mind. The brain is an expression of mind, not its exclusive habitation. * But here’s the paradox, then, – changing the brain alters the world. The brain treated with yoga or drugs etc. sees a new world ? – & contrariwise, that “new” world is only what’s already known, more clearly seen & heard. The drugs “change the ratio of the senses”? So that the (is it Madhyamika) school idea of there being senses which have some sort or acquire some sort of autonomy. These senses project perceptions into the alaya-vijñana & a world springs up, etc. etc. * All very romantic. The paradox that seems nearer my taste is the “Form is Emptiness” in the Heart Sutra.

Now I’ve written a short poem {to Bro. Antoninus a short poem & a letter to go with it}, had a walk to the post office & the bank & several stores, & now I’ve perfected the new hanging lamp for the living room. I want to do something about the prose book – & I’m exhausted. I’m
tired of being “busy”. I want to do nothing for a while. I try to read but I keep getting up to do other odds & ends – I’m {I say} “exhausted”.

[...]

\[ Y T \& T \]

* 

She was talking {nevertheless she was extremely (he was watching her reflection in the toaster) beautiful & he was comparing her with the reflection, bright but distorted}.

“Isn’t it so?” she said.

“Um”, he said.

“You haven’t the least notion what I just said!”

\[ Y T \& T \quad J. BOYCE \]

appears

“You asked if it wasn’t so, whatever it was – the former, I believe.”

“Why do you have to be so unpleasant all the time?”

“Must you speak 40 words with every breath which you exhale? I’ve been trying to count the words, you go so long & so fast that I’m not sure whether it’s 40...”

“You certainly talk enough yourself,” she said. She was offended.

“I was only trying to tell you about the things we must do tomorrow.”

“I don’t give a hoot about them. If things must be done then, I
dare say that you or I will do them if & when we can, one at a time. What
I want to do is read the paper & be quiet.”

She replied that he could take the paper & his quiet & his ears & nerves & stuff them. She ran into the bedroom and slammed the door.

He was immediately miserable. He hadn’t told her exactly how he felt, that he loved her, that she was beautiful, that he could read the paper anytime or have quiet if he wanted it.

[…]

*  

1 April 1963  Lew showed up yesterday screeching & gabbing about a new scheme to make money. He had a very drunk friend with him, Jack Boice, who lives on the river – a painter with an independent income. Long blond hair & beard, red faced, rough looking, 23. One who loves to get drunk & then beat up on everybody. He is about a head shorter than I am. He claims to have beaten another man to death in the boxing ring as an amateur. He says that he’s the greatest painter in America today. * We got very drunk, drinking wine here, beer & hamburgers at Sam’s Wharf {Tiburon} & more wine at the Bob McCorkle’s & the Greensfelders & so home by about 10:30 & in a horrible rage I broke 2 dishes, bent 2 cookpots & kicked a hole in Albert’s kitchen wall.

YT & T

Today I feel awful & I fear that Albert –who told us today that he must begin to cut his expenses – is trying to find some gentle & easy way of asking me to leave. His brother & sister-in-law & their 2 children – & most likely Mama Saijo – are due to arrive here any minute so that the children can enjoy the Easter holiday in the country. God knows how long they’ll be here. I
do, in fact, know what the next time-consuming excitement will be for Albert’s house – I thought, a few pages back, that some new horror was bound to come, & there it is. it was all I could do, to listen to Lewis more today. My nerves, my frantic feeling about writing, all keep me from doing more than ½ a page or so.

*  

2 April 1963    Today arrived a postcard from Duerden, denouncing me. I tried putting a burr under his saddle with a postcard I sent him {in reply to some sort of incomprehensible letter of his} on the 29th. It annoyed me for a full three hours, I suppose. I wish I knew what it was he was trying to tell me in that letter to begin with – I had a hunch when I got it & I was about to answer it, that I ought to have written “I’m sorry I don’t know what it is you’re trying to tell me – come & see me” – or I should simply have telephoned. Now done is done, & it has taken up all this time & energy that I owe to my crummy little book. * Loewinsohn finally came for a visit, but shortly after his arrival, Lew burst in demanding that I make him 3 posters for $5. So I did, & had little chance to talk with Ron, what with Lew yakking & hollering. I learned from Ron that he has already had some sort of misunderstanding with Duerden. * Everybody went away. I took a walk. I typed an apologetic letter to Duerden. I walked to the village after supper & mailed it to him. * I came back & began typing the first part of Yesterday – Today & Tomorrow – about 1200 words typed, about 1/50th of what is the least number I need to get a contract. O Muse guide me! * I need a great – well a fair number of paragraphs of description, images, jolts &c. to go in between all these pages & pages of feebly cute dialog. Time is less & less. I must try harder to concentrate, to see & feel. *
5:IV:63  Lew & Kirby read at the International Music Hall.  [illeg.] & Philip Lamantia there together.  Philip finally had a screaming fit of roars & howls, & scared the audience away, or half of it.  *  Duerden & I have more or less made up our “quarrel”.  He says he doesn’t write letters to me any more, but he will talk to me in person.  *  Diane di Prima wants to publish some poems of mine in Floating Bear.  *  Barker’s Aquarius is going to appear soon, & so will the Brautigan/Loewinsohn magazine.  *  Ferlinghetti said he should have some poems from me for his new magazine but that this year’s issue has already gone to press.  I am too tired & nervous to sleep.  Albert’s brother et alia arrive tomorrow.  

[...]

10:IV:63  after dinner.  The moon was full on Monday {Buddha’s Birthday} but the weather has been wet & cloudy.  Right now the moon has just come over the hill only to become entangled in a thick shoal of clouds, black & white curdy clumps like snow melting above black mud.  *  I have written only a little more than a page of the book today.  I typed none because Albert can’t stand the noise.  He slept in the afternoon & this evening he reads in his room.  His brother etc. are to leave on, perhaps, Friday.  Then what kind of disturbance?  Looie again.  All kinds, every kind…  I must contrive to go on typing anyway.  *

[...]

21:IV:63  I’m still desperately bronchitickal, but I have the first part of the novel drafted & typed.  I see a shape to it now & again…  but it seems thin & hopelessly silly.  I have less of an
idea or feeling about the 2nd section, already under way. I must give myself a pep-talk or take a pill… Something over 20,000 words in 2 months isn’t a very good showing.

*  

22:IV:63 at Mill Valley bus depot, 10 AM, I wait for bus to take me to town where I must find a place in which to live. Albert told me this morning that he is broke and can help me no longer. Whither shall I fly etc. I suppose I must try Bob LaVigne et alia until I find a place to set up in business again. Today I intend to take the first section of the novel to Luther Nichols and see whether he’ll read it and if he reads it will he like it and if he likes it, will Doubleday give me an advance on it. Why did he call me on Thursday – I expect nothing but bad news. The Angelflame book must have bounced back on him. * It did I left the first third of YT&T, & fled away to LaVigne’s house, which was occupied by LaVigne, Lamantia & that nasty redhead red beard bookstore clerk whose name I always forget. We blew up quite a nice mess of pot & I had to return here. * ACRL, & Hisayo were both apologetic and shy when they came in later, on their way to the library. * Letter from Jack offering to give Angelflame to Bob Giroux at Farrar. I think I’ll send huge Ms book that combines all poems. * No more Angelflame as a separate book. *

Bancroft Notebook 1

24:IV:63 Albert has asked me to go away because he is broke, he can help me no more, he will probably sell his house to his brother. So today he kindly removed me to 123 Beaver St. whence I came to him last October. I am supposed to be busy writing a novel, but I’ve had bronchitis for 2 weeks & now this moving & confusion.
RETURN TO BEAVER ST.

*  

24:IV:63  I find myself once again at 123 Beaver St., Tommy Sales’ roomy house. There are still tons of books and ms and pictures & dead laundry to be moved, but my bed and toothbrush & typewriter & paper are here. I must remember that I’m trying to write a novel.  

[...]  

DEODAR TREE POEM ↓  

*  

1:V:63  Golden Gate Park. O Deodar tree, I haven’t learned how to live. Both of us far from the mountains I haven’t learned, but no one must blame you.  

* Meconopsis Betonica a faded blue denim poppy, tall, 3 foot high  

* Nichols won’t take YT&T in its present state. The dentist is probably starting proceedings today to get a judgment against me in the amount of god knows how many hundreds of dollars.  

It is hot & sunny in the park, also a stiff breeze. I must think what is the next paragraph of YT&T.  

* I’ve come around to visit the tree I think of as a healer. Big black pine over the central mallard lake, middle drive. The ocean was yellow green, high surf with white caps all the way out to the black fog bank which is shortening the horizon.  

* Article for Lew’s Bread book: I was born by mistake, among poor people  

A friend of mine says, “The trouble with you is, you were educated above your station.”
* I rest, seated on the “bench of Desolation” – late afternoon sun & deep shade but not cold. I’m tired of walking & have a mile of pavement yet to go. But what a huge and splendid living day! * At home I drink tea & write & eat fig bars, having had a bath.

* 

2:V:63 Brautigan and Loewinsohn brought me the first copy of Change, which looks very nice. I think the sound of it is something like what Brown wanted for Foot – but Dugan made it too literary?

* 

[...] 

5:V:63 I looked out the bathroom window, just now, into the hills behind Oakland, thinking of John Muir hiking south to the Pacheco Pass. I also thought of walking in the Sierra, & what a short distance 100 miles is – a flash of memory: as a child I could imagine leaving home in The Dalles, where I felt mistreated and misunderstood, and walking down the Columbia Gorge to Portland, where I could live with my grandmother, who (I imagined) loved me without reservation and understood that I loved her. She would punish me if she thought I misbehaved, but do it immediately, without threats & promises. Afterwards she never held a grudge. Later in her life she used to threaten and prophesy evil days to come, but by that time I was no longer totally enchanted by her.

* 

[...] * A bad show of drawings by Lobdell, Bischoff and Diebenkorn. All of the drawings might have been made by Bruce McGaw, on a bad day. Nowhere near the quality of LaVigne or Charles Stark. * Down Clement St. to the used bookstore for Chaucer’s World, then a walk to a grocery store in Arguello St. where I bought a tomato, a roll, & a can of anchovies & had a
picnic in the park. […] Walk home through Haight St. & take shower. Phone Tommy who won’t see me today but certainly tomorrow “for a drink.” She sounds business-like and impersonal. I don’t know what she’ll decide about letting me live here; I must ask her to allow me to stay for no money, & tell her that she also must feel free to decline to help me. I don’t know what I’ll do then beyond clearing this room out. I guess I’ll simply be out in the street. Very well. What?

* Back to Haight St. for bad Chinese food. Home. Out to Market St. for a small expensive jug of vermouth – I want a cold soothing drink. Home, no ice. Out to the grocery store for a jug of 7UP and a box of matches. Home to drink 7UP, burn incense, drink vermouth, write poem, now I worry about not writing novel, worry about tomorrow, about the morning rush to bathroom & kitchen, all the other worries. Gah! *

* 6:V:63 This morning I was able to write and copy out on the typewriter the missing scene of YT&T, Part I, the explication of what happened to Helen in Seattle, what her mother said, &c., but no resolution. It floats, I hope, admirably – cantilevered out over a shocking void &c. * Of course I must admit to having eaten a dexamyl spansule 15 mg. early this A.M.44 * I look forward with dread to my interview this PM with Tommy.

* 44 Dexamyl was the brand name of a pharmaceutical product introduced in 1950 as an antidepressant, anti-anxiety, and diet drug. In the 1960s it became popular on the street under the pseudonym "Christmas trees."
7:V:63 That interview – Tommy kindly took the trouble to make it easy and pleasant. We talked until 3 A.M., quite like old times. I must move to the small dark room behind the kitchen, however – when Dick Mayer moves out, Donn will take this room & Dick’s as well. * Now I must contrive to get on better with Donn, and to finish my story and be prepared to go to gaol for debt – […]

* 

17:V:63 The dentist writes to say that 21:V is the “cut-off date.” I don’t know what will be cut off except my own throat &c. * Gutenberg Galaxy arrived today with a bill for $5.50, & I hoped it would come for free. I should have made my letter say “a complimentary copy” &c. * Michael arrived at 0830 to inquire whether I was still alive. Then lunch took time, & a haircut & conversation with Jim & Caroleena, to whom I return, later today, for supper. About all I accomplished yesterday was the typing of some poems to send to Gordon Lish. * The novel is hung up or something. I must right this minute get it un-hung. *

[…]

* 

21:V:63 I am frightened & nervous. I expect either a summons server or Bob Orchard in person to give me a long disappointment harangue. * Last night to the home of John Hamilton, at the invitation of Alberta Barrier. “He is a painter & engraver,” as Beckett says. His wife Marilynn, from La Grande, Oregon, is also a painter… of the Blaue Reiter school, with an undertone of [André] Derain. John specializes in organic forms, flowers, insects – can’t do figures, he says. Big works in encaustic. Colored etchings & engravings, heavily embossed prints. Drawings with the finest crow quill pen, very beautiful, & pencil. Big hangup with technique of encaustic, oil &c. He says he can do anything, now, get any effect. He shewed me a
beautiful series of colored engravings with poetical captions. The poetical captions were of the portentous kind that photographers use to attach to their pictures when they’re shown in a museum. All about life & beauty & death &c. He wants to make beautiful books. He wants me to write texts for his pictures or he wants to make pictures for a text I might supply. I told him I don’t like the idea, that his pictures are clear enough without any text, that poems are a kind of picturing, that if I feel the need for a picture I draw it myself. But I said I’d show him mss. of mine, & let him know if I had any ideas. *

[…]

*  

25:V:63  A memorable dinner with Don Allen on Thursday evening 23:V at the Four Seas Restaurant in Grant Avenue. Barbecued spare ribs with martinis, pressed duck & cherry sauce, beef & vegetables with black bean sauce, shrimps with snow peas, many more martinis. * I had brought him the 150 pages of YT&T, he had asked me to let him read it. I doubt that he’ll like it, judging from his general conversation about all the things now being written that he’s tired of, not interested in &c. * Except for the dollar Don gave me for carfare – & it was spent on a streetcar ride, yesterday’s lunch & a candy bar later – I’ve had no money & have had to spend quite a lot of time walking to visit friends who would feed me. *

YT & T

*

31:V:63  I still need another 40 pages. I can’t afford them. I got a few groceries from Michael which fed me yesterday and today – & Carpenter gave me a lunch today, too – but tomorrow & tomorrow & tomorrow? * Mainly I don’t see these novel characters any more – seldom enough HEAR them, as I used to. Having to break up the train of writing in order to move back
to the city very nearly wrecked the whole project. I see now, that only by paying very strict
attention to business am I going to finish the book at all… if & when I do, I just thought – &
reply immediately, that I must. I’ve got it to do.

* I was about to begin writing today when Carpenter arrived. He finally got round to telling
me that the naked fucking scene in the book is bad. I agreed. I’ve removed a paragraph of it. *
Carpenter & I saw an escaped Wallaroo hopping along the edge of the road near the zoo. *
He let me out at the end of GG Park & I spent the rest of the day walking home in the sun & wind.
From time to time I read a piece of *Hekigan Roku* {very small response to this last} * So I
have come home & took a bath & wonder where I shall find 40 pages, i.e. eight days more of
writing, if I wright [sic] 5 pages today…

*

**1:VI:63** I typed for a while this morning – that’s part of my trouble, all this holograph ms
lying about uncorrected. I think I see the way the end of the book will fall into place – the rest of
my trouble was solved by beginning the final section, under the heading

*YT & T*

TOMORROW. This is a detailed take of Joan & Bruce Chadwick discussing Joan’s plan to
marry Kenneth. The next takeout must be a long detailed piece of Kate, the last must either be
Kenneth alone, or Helen and Kenneth? {Possibly, in the penultimate section Kate & Helen argue
about who’s to get Kenneth – they agree it mustn’t be Joan ?} Must the final 10 or so pages be
Kenneth ? I think so, *faut de mieux*… * Michael came today & I gave him a drawing & 3
poems. He gave me a dollar, 99¢ of which I’ve eaten; or will eat sometime tomorrow. LaVigne
& I have a dinner date with Shandel Parks tomorrow night. We met her last Monday at the
Bolles Gallery opening of Wm. H. Brown. {Brown’s 2 canvases of *The Judgement of Paris* are
very beautiful.} She’s looking very well, if somewhat heavier. Rather ornery. I can’t guess what her age must be now. is she only a little older than I – or a couple years younger – like Jack Spicer seems & looks much older than I but he’s younger  *

*

2:VI:63 Chez LaVigne. The Lautrec poster in the Beaver Street hallway is a portrait of Jane Avril & Edouard Dujardin, the journalist. Was this the Dujardin of Les Lauriers sont coupés ?  

YT & T COMPLETED

(holograph)

*

5:VI:63 Wednesday. Yesterday between noon & 1 PM I completed Yesterday – Today & Tomorrow – finished writing the holograph version. I’m now slowly typing and correcting the last 30 pages or so.  * Yesterday Brakhage sent me a check for $25 which I’ve spent – almost all of it – wildly. I have enough left so that I’ll be able to go down and do my laundry after a while.

COLLIER SHAKESPEAR FOUND !
* After years of searching & bother, I found at last a copy of the Collier Shakespeare – the thin, tissue paper & fake leather edition like CLT’s… which book I’ve coveted for 15 years or so. It fits the pocket nicely. It is undated * Only in the past few minutes – showering, clipping my toenails, thinking of Yeats {I’m reading his letters to Dorothy Wellesley} – that I feel myself beginning to relax. I’m beginning to feel free to act, to write again. I hope that within the next few weeks I shall see my way clear to starting another book, one as different from YT & T as is possible. * I’m hung up on this notebook – I hate wandering with it in my pocket because I’m always liable to arrest, & an official reading of it would rather mess me up with the authorities – a simple vag charge – or a dope charge, at worse – could snowball into a giant screeching mess with the help of this book. I must carry another one in my pocket & leave this one at home. I’ve spent all but 28¢ of the Brakhage gift. I feel freer, I think, on that account. I need so many things… I ought to have bought pants and shoes, instead of beer, books, trolley rides, food in such quantities… I have food enough for breakfast and lunch tomorrow: what luxury! * What a quantity of high-class hay is blowing around town – & I’ve been getting high with greater frequency & on better grade grass than any other time since the season of 1956-7… I’m sure that it’s having a therapeutic effect, in some ways; contrariwise, consider the horrific paranoia shots I was getting on Sunday night, coming home from Shandel’s house. I had to go through the Tenderloin & then stand for a half hour on a safety island in Market St. There were so many cops around, I was almost sure I was going to at last get stopped and questioned – and I was afraid being caught in the 2 AM “sweepdown” of Market St. I was practically in a fit of the mother by the time I got here, & had to read for quite a time, tired as I was, in order to settle my head enough so that I could try to go to sleep. * I have no idea why I am such a total coward. So much of the time I’m afraid of everybody and of everything. I must figure out
a way of converting these phobias into some use, beauty, heroic action. I’m tired of spending so much time trembling like a school girl. *

* *

Finishing You Didn’t Even Try

7:VI:63, 12:55 A.M. – Yesterday I typed all but the last 21 pages of the ms of YT&T. I shall finish the job when I get up, later “today” *  A pleasant evening talking to David Haselwood, Mike, and for a while with Mort Subotnick about music. We all played & sang. Miss Catherine Jane seems to be recovering from her tonsillectomy. David enjoyed his trip to Kansas. A piece of Mort’s will be performed at Carnegie Hall next September. The moon is nearly full – comes really full at this hour, according to the newspaper. * I must write to Lloyd Reynolds & to Kerouac about my poor book – to Lloyd for not having done it earlier {“You’re supposed to make all those mistakes before you’re forty years old”} and to Jack just to say that it did turn out to be possible. * 6:15 PM – the job is done. The very last section seems very mushy. I hope that it’ll solidify if I don’t look at it for a while. * CLT writes that he arrives for a short visit Tuesday noon. Duerden brought me to his new house for lunch – he wants to begin publication of a mimeographed magazine and is writing again. * I have written to Jack. I must find something nice to send to Lloyd. * I’m still counting the blank pages in this journal. It frets me to death that I must fill up eight more pages of this one before I can allow myself to begin a new one. * My system is still turned on with the dex I took, yesterday and today. I’m tired & my neck hurts, but I feel a great pressure to keep busy, to stay awake. How I should enjoy playing the piano now! Reading words, writing aimlessly as I’m doing here is a drag. * I noticed today that Duerden is getting deaf or goofy again. I don’t imagine that he understood half of what I said to him. {Did I say anything important, useful, illuminating?} *
I’ve been re-reading the sentences which I thought of at the time – & for some weeks afterwards – as containing the first general statement of the idea for YT&T – It has nothing whatever to do with the book which has at last arrived. Shall I take this same couple sentences as a start, again, and write out the story I thought I had to write? Good grief.

* I worked YT&T, the greatest part of it, by looking {inwardly, of course} at the characters and asking why they spoke and acted as I pretended that they did – or as I pretended to hear and “see” them doing. I rather consciously tried to imagine details about them, about the houses where they lived… I didn’t have to exert myself to do this; it all came fairly much when as and if I needed it.

* N.B.: That the first – almost 2/3ds – of the book was written as independent “segments” or “takes”, and that I put them into an order after they were on paper. This temporary ordering of parts showed me what parts were missing, what turns the book might take. But N.B. again, that I missed an important gap that Carpenter, reading the first 90 pages, printed out to me his simple question: “where would Helen get the $300 for an abortion? Most likely from her mother, for example “provided me with a new character and quite a few more pages of ms. I’m hoping that Tommy Sales’ reading it, or Don Allen’s reading it might bring up a few more points – contrariwise, I don’t feel that I want to bother any more with YT&T except to cut it or to re-arrange the segments. I had much rather begin to write another book.

* I read a few lines of Shakespeare. I ring my elephant bells – the sounds cheer me up. I keep thinking of reading Upanishads but they seem to me almost as annoying as the 4 Gospels. Even the sutras as presented by Mr Conze are rather more attractive. They insist – the Upanishads do – on the division between God and the Universe – a division in which I can’t believe when I’m in what I believe is my “right mind”. If I hadn’t read excerpts from them
years ago, & been delighted with them… if I hadn’t read Bhagavad Gita &c then – twenty years ago – would I be smarter or dumber? Certainly I’d be considerably unhappier and confused than I have been than I now am. * I’ve become of asking, “what shall I do {or “you do”} for an encore?”

Immediately I return to Pound’s “put ideas into action”, or to the Zen tradition of immediate insight, instantaneous illumination / total compassion. What more is there left except to particularize these things, act them out, illustrate them in performance. Act with absolutely propriety in the circumstances that are {as Olson says} “given.”

* I look at the others in this grouping of notebooks – the first of which begins on 18 January 1961. What am I going to do with them? Mostly I babble, explaining that I have nothing to say. *

Bancroft Notebook 1

7:VI:63 On the 4th of June I completed the novel, YESTERDAY – TODAY AND TOMORROW – exactly 4 months after it was begun at Albert’s house. I continue to live, temporarily, in the Beaver St. front room. I have only the pennies & food that Mike McClure or other friends can find to give me. I have eaten twice today, luckily.

8:VI a fog slowly burning away then reforming. Quiet hungry Saturday. A pleasant letter from Joanne. I walked to the post office just now in order to mail a letter to Kerouac. Later today I shall carry the last part of the book to Don Allen. * It’s a pleasure not to feel driven and gaga. The book, poor child… I keep worrying whether I left out a pancreas, a lung, a knee-joint. There it is. I found, while I was walking, that my head is casting back & forth {in Mr. Faulkner’s phrase} listening & sniffing for a subject. I have a number of them, a list of possible

45 Whalen here refers to Bancroft Notebook 2.
“ideas” written down – but I feel I want something else, something “new.” * I know I damned well better find it, too. I’m going to need another anchor, another weight on top of my head to occupy the mornings, to keep me distracted from the problem of food & rent & razor blades & pants & shoes.

* I know I have a flock of poems that I can type and perhaps even mail some of them to a rich magazine. * I just wrote a very short little poem about the green plums I see just beyond the windows.46 * I had a hunch a while ago that by walking to the post office that I’d probably miss a visit from some friend who might be bringing food. Nobody has appeared. *

*

10:VI:63 I sit here & wait for Mr. Bob Ross to arrive. He comes from NY to see us all. He is supposed to be an old Reedy and an artist of some kind. Although we have been corresponding, we’ve never before met. * Last night, I attended the Bach Society performance of the B Minor Mass. LaVigne & I went there together & in the distance we saw many friends & acquaintances. Como no? & I wonder why I feel so queasy about seeing Olson, Ginsberg et alia once more? I guess it must be that I’m incredibly jealous, competitive, & will presently show myself up for a giant megalomaniac. * What has any of this to do with total perfect enlightenment of all sentient beings? There’s a bee in here, it’s trying to get out & can’t find the way even though one of the windows {thin and tall} is wide open * I’m tired of goofing, not writing, running around looking for people & food. I’m going to have to sit here for a while. If Ross brings neither money nor food, I shall dismiss him summarily. I must have a little food, sometime today, so that I can think until 12 tomorrow when CLT is supposed to come. I must

46 This “very short little poem about the green plums” is absorbed into the longer poem in memory of William Carlos Williams, “Plums, Metaphysics, An Investigation, A Visit, And A Short Funeral Ode” (CP 304-8), a tribute to Williams.
begin another book & this time I must try to tell more, instead of letting the thing boil up into sugar candy the way I feel that $YT&T$ did…

I feel that it displays an irregularity of tone, of sensibility, which will make it seem sillier or more feebly conceived than it actually is – there is, I told myself before I got into this novel that I should reconcile myself to the necessity of writing more than one book of this kind. Now that I must begin, I feel much as I felt last Tuesday when I finished $YT&T$ – both excited & dragged.

* I do know that it turns me on if I concentrate on writing every day. So I must, simply to stay happy, spend several hours a day composing. Saturday I thought that I should devote this day to poetry & / or getting a new book of prose started. […]

* Although I’ve opened almost all the windows in here, the bee flies in the wrong direction or chuses [sic] to sit on such windows as are closed. Avocado leaves and branch tips poke through the open window. From the next window I look down through a leafy jungle tunnel. A sweet country smell, or at least fresh kind of greenhouse odor blows into the room – I want to say “chamber,” but that word belongs to Mike; the shape and proportion of this room, the high ceiling… a chamber, the word used to belong to Edgar Poe. I’ll use it anyway, pace Michael, pace tanti viri. Each one of the nouns & verbs I’ve placed here belongs to the Oxford Dictionary anyhow

* Here’s the morning, them, remembered – or more accurately, the first six months of this year – I see that this book started on 10:I:63. Today, 10:VI, is a nice place {temporarily} to stop.

San Francisco

Monday Morning
IV
June 18, 1963 – February, 1966

While he is looking for a publisher for *YT&T*, Whalen is also at work on a new novel, *The Sandblast*. Storm winds of ignorance and fear have blown up a moralistic *cause célèbre* in the form of a populist anti-smut campaign. He imagines the campaign as driven by “nice,” “half-educated” people, like those he met in Lincoln County, Oregon working for Judge Ben Anderson. They are an essentially blameless people who, in Whalen’s view, erroneously seek “purity & control & innocence” on behalf of their children. This, as he sees it, is the fundamental delusion of state religion, and he cites André Gide’s work in his journal entries for June 20 and 24, apparently aware of several new articles and books by or about Gide, including Paul de Man’s review of a new translation of *Prometheus Misbound* (*Le Prométhé mal enchâiné*) in the May 6, 1965 issue of *The New York Review of Books*, and Germaine Bree’s cogent analysis of Gide’s “cubist” aesthetics in her 1963 book. Whalen would soon begin work on a play based on the Prometheus myth and was deeply drawn to satire, as was Gide.

As with Gide’s *The Caves of the Vatican* (*Les Caves du Vatican*, 1914) the plot of *The Sandblast* derives from news accounts of actual events. Like Gide, Whalen is highly focused on the form of his work and is determined to work out an aesthetics that extracts “heterogeneous elements from reality” and reorganizes them into an “abstract composite” (Bree 176-93). This cubist literary mode drove much of Whalen’s fiction writing, and the following year he undoubtedly gleaned more details about this novelistic approach in an essay by Eric Mottram that he read in the *Times Literary Supplement*. Mottram praised Whalen’s “The Art of Literature” as a brilliant poem, and then described a Gidean strategy for fiction writing adopted by Fielding Dawson. We know that Whalen read Mottram’s essay because he cites it in his
journals, and for a work by a San Francisco Renaissance poet to be described as “brilliant” in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* was certainly noteworthy. Whalen, like Dawson, wanted to break through conventional literary forms “by constructing a continuity of short fictional anecdotes, references to literary and critical sources, and concrete relationships between them… to penetrate the apparent limits to perception” (Mottram 714). This is supported by Whalen’s several references to Joycean aesthetics and other comments, including but not limited to the entry for 7:VI:63 (pg. 266, above), and his generally continuous efforts to break down the perceptual barriers erected by traditional Western conceptions of time. These essentially modernist influences comport with Whalen’s background in classical buddhist psychology and phenomenology, and his effort, as Leslie Scalapino put it,

… to break the mind apart… in the instant of and being the act of disjunction… the occurrence of time as being, or being as time… being as past/present/and future, which are occurring separate and simultaneous… An implied vast space and terrain—which is history, the outside at present, his memory, dreams as their occurrence or unfolding (not as their having been interpreted after)…” (xvi).

Yet this ambitious and highly cerebral approach to the composition and structuration of a novel, both Joycean and an extension of Olson’s theories of history (*istorin*) and open field versification, may have hurt rather than helped Whalen’s fiction writing. He weathered scathing critiques of his narratology, plot, and character development from a nearly unanimous assortment of editors, colleagues, and friends. In addition, it is telling that in the excerpt above Leslie Scalapino was referring not to Whalen’s novels, but to his dense but productive
phenomenological buddhist poetics. Replicating this approach in fiction would prove to be a challenging proposition.

* 

In July of 1963 Whalen travelled to Canada for the three-week Vancouver Poetry Conference held at the University of British Columbia, organized by Professor Warren Tallman and Black Mountain poet Robert Creeley. Whalen describes it as “a warring & a love-feast, among mountains & straits & rivers & islands. Red berry mountain ash trees, dogwood blooming for the second time, berries & salmon & warm beer & the best pastry I’ve yet found in North America.” For some undisclosed reason, Creeley and his wife the poet Bobbie Louise Hawkins were angry with Whalen, or so Whalen imagined. He also feels alienated from Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, Denise Levertov, and Allen Ginsberg, who, he says, alternately praises and attacks him.

Whalen’s rift with Olson appears to be about language, about technical aesthetic differences in the application of a philosophy of language and cosmology to poetics, rather than anything personal. The two poets had enjoyed a warm relationship since their first meeting in 1957, and several years of friendly correspondence and shared epistolary poetry, much of it centered on deep epistemological and ontological inquiries into ‘Reimann surfaces’ and ‘Moebius strips.’ From what I can deduce from the textual evidence, this discursive track was initiated by Olson with his 1946 poem “Moebius Strip,” followed by the inside/out ontotopology of “As the Dead Prey Upon Us” (April, 1956), which Whalen heard Olson read at the Vancouver poetry gathering on 16 August 1963 (Butterick 658). Their discourse continued with Olson’s “The Writ” (spring-summer 1956), which cites Reimann directly. Whalen read these
poems and studied them quite closely, for in the journals he notes that he obtained additional scholarly resources related to this subject matter (see entry for 4:IV:64 and Weyl, Appendix 2).

On November 17, 1957 Olson wrote a letter to Whalen that begins with a reference to Whitehead’s process philosophy and the perceived seriality of time. After several observations and insights on Christological theology and Hoyle’s theory of a dynamic steady-state universe, Olson brings up buddhism, asking Whalen pointedly if there was any evidence in the buddhist or Hindu traditions that “any man had so definitely replaced myth by history?” (2001, 256). Then, before delving into Northern California history and the Donner Party episode, Olson enters into a riff on plane geometry (Reimann surfaces) that makes clear this discourse is not merely about abstract geometric surfaces, but about the human “soul,” “being,” life and death. Whalen, as we know, has been quite frustrated over the composition and structure of his novel(s), and the reception of his poetry, and Olson praises his work, encouraging him to keep writing both novels and poems, not to be “buggd abt putting work together” (256). Whalen’s first formal response to the discourse is his poem “Letter To Charles Olson” (1958) (CP 97-100).

And the mind a Moebius-strip, a single surface

Turned through itself—or better, a sphere inside a sphere

That can be a torus (like the body) without losing anything

No wasted material

Reading between the lines, it’s apparent that Whalen was trying to convince Olson that his buddhist poetics were a meritorious extension of Olson’s, with the additional ‘discovery’ that mind is not simply ‘contained’ in one plane of the field, and is not simply a boundary, or one more perceptual point in the poetical process; it is the process. Whalen’s school of Zen was based, in part, on an earlier philosophical movement called Yōgacāra, “mind-only” (or
“consciousness-only”), which posited no separation or difference between inside and outside, internal or external; with the mind perhaps structured phenomenologically like a Moebius-strip; a surface with only one side and one boundary, radically open to the universe but contained within its boundaries. Whalen saw that Olson has relegated mind to a subservient position in his major essay on poetics “Projective Verse.” In the first few pages of this work Olson talks about form, content, perception, breath, syllables, etc., and when he finally gets around to mind, the biological and phenomenological foundation and root of all perception and human functionality, Olson declares that the syllable is king (not the mind), because the syllable is the net result of “the union of mind and ear,” and is “spontaneous” (1997, 242).

Whalen must have deeply appreciated Olson’s analysis in “Projective Verse” because much of it reads like a Zen treatise on poetics via breath, perception, and mind. Tying breath to mind, breath to ear, and breath to syllable sounds like a fundamental primer on Zen aesthetics. Yet Whalen would have insisted that mind is necessarily a priori to breath, perception, and syllable. After this long disquisition Olson finally admits that it’s “the PLAY of a mind we are after… (243), and Whalen would have agreed, for in the “instant by instant” what could be more spontaneous, more present in every instant of time than mind, “a single surface / Turned through itself—or better, a sphere inside a sphere / That can be a torus (like the body). . .”

In my view, their theoretical differences were small, and Whalen probably felt that Olson had circled the target and come very close, but had failed to capture the essence, which is that the crucial poem is “a picture or graph of a mind moving, which is a world body [a torus] being here and now which is history…” (1960, 420).

Olson was suspicious of anything that smacked of what he termed “objectism.” He may have been concerned that Whalen’s focus on mind would objectify a subject, leading to the
“lyrical interference of the individual as ego.” He had concluded that T.S. Eliot failed as a dramatist (and Whalen as a novelist?) because “he stayed inside the non-projective,” having as his root “mind alone,” and thus failing to go “down through the workings of his own throat to that place where breath comes from, where breath has its beginnings, where drama has to come from” (248-49). There is no doubt in my mind that this part of the discourse would have captured Whalen’s close attention, reading as it does like a 20th century disquisition on Zen aesthetics. Whalen made it a practice to meditate with his breath, on his breath, quite literally, utilizing the Zen methodology that views the individualized ‘separate’ person as an empty socio-biological construction, “empty of own-being.” The writer, for Whalen, is a mere “lens focusing on a sheet of paper,” or an empty head (1960, 420).

But Whalen did not want to reply to Olson with conventional buddhist jargon. He appreciated Olson’s brilliance and originality, his ability to absorb Whitehead, Reimann, and the cosmology of the new physics, and recapitulate them in his own language and poetry. So Whalen, too, wants to find his own language to rebut Olson with:

What I want to tell Charles is, that I could answer him in terms of the Abhidharma dialectic, for example – but I must not do so –

I must digest or rediscover my own terminology, my own vocabulary, I must answer in my own voice or being…

(Bancroft Notebook 5, below at 290)

The other theoretical difference these poets had in their respective poetics was in the broad categorical binary of order versus chaos. Olson prefers to stress the geometric order of the universe, which he sees as an absolute orderliness, while Whalen could not help but observe the universe’s random chaos; it was his artistic bailiwick, his canvas, his poetry and poetics all in
one. For Olson, the poem can “draw from the variety of order in the world… But no randomness, or any least traffic with the chaotic” (2010, 17). The following excerpt is from Olson’s second version of the stunning poem “The Writ” (1957).

The place of the clear concept is taken by image. Anima

*Telluris* is the secret of correspondences. The word has gone out:
empty, to fill. The earth shapes ships, fishes, kings, popes, monks and soldiers. The practice of geometry is also known to her: she produced the five geometrical bodies, six-cornered figures in crystals…

He adduces a number of proofs. Among these are: the constant temperature below the surface of the earth, the peculiar power of the earth-soul to produce metals, minerals, fossils, therefore every kind of natural or living force in bodies can be said to have a divine similitude. (CPCO 417-18)

*In August and September Whalen was still somewhat obsessed with the perception that Creeley, Olson, and Don Allen do not value his work, and Whalen’s friend the poet Richard Duerden stoked the fires of paranoia. While sharing some wine with Whalen, a sarcastic Duerden picked on Whalen for participating in a new poetry anthology Donald Allen was putting together with Creeley. Whalen responds that he is aware that Creeley and Allen think of him as second rate, as a “lightweight,” and Duerden then tells Whalen that Olson wishes he would stop writing, a truly mean and devastating comment, no doubt completely fabricated by Duerden. Whalen*
writes in his journal that Olson’s essays are “troublesome.” Their philosophical differences remain unresolved.

*  

In the entry for 28 August 1963 Whalen sketched the unpublished “Notes for an American history,” a meditation on American literature sealing his debt to Olson, and the following spring, frustrated with his work and his career, he destroyed a large cache of notebooks, novels, letters, and other papers in his personal archive.

During the summer of 1964 Whalen embarked on another ten-day hiking and camping excursion in the Sierras, this time with Gary Snyder, Lock McCorkle, Barbara Sommers, and Locke’s brother-in-law Rod Garrett. Back home from the mountains on July 31st he stops at the McClure’s place in San Francisco, socializing with Bruce and Jean Conner. Mike McClure informs Whalen that he had a recent conversation with Norman Mailer.

Norman Mailer tells him that the fascist revolution is very near – & all of us are likely to wind up in the stockades. The conservatives want power; they are angry & frightened & can buy the presidency &/or anything else they want – but now they’ve decided they do want, they are very mad & dangerous. If Senator Goldwater wins election, we must expect an era of even greater repression, conservatism &c. &c.

In August, LeRoi Jones comes to the Bay Area to read from his work and hob-knob with the West Coast scene. He reads his poems for the San Francisco community at Don Allen’s house on Buchanan Street, and then at a more public event at the Buzz Gallery, where Allen got “reeling drunk,” according to Whalen.
Toward the end of this journal account, on February 24, 1964, Whalen sailed on the S.S. Cleveland from San Francisco to his new home in Kyoto, Japan.

I descended at Yokohama on 10 March 1966 – see Looseleaf notes for account of trip, first impressions of Japan &c.
Tuesday 18 June 1963 – After a nasty breakfast of smoked oysters, & a better lunch of pork & beans & buttermilk  *  Happily Michael arrived this morning & presented me with a dollar for food. Then Carpenter arrived presently to tell us about the fund for destitute writers… all of us are broke.  *  I’ve mailed *YT&T* to Paul Brooks at Houghton Mifflin, after being introduced to him by letter from Gerd Stern. I must hope for the best, although I’m naturally pessimistic – I’m always too afraid of disappointment. It’s hard for me to hope anything.  *  I sort of pretend that I have a new book under way. I have 18 pages of gibberish and no ideas i.e. no overall vision, no characters &c.  *  A rib roast of beef at Duerden’s house. Suzanne & their new daughter, Cathleen  {born on Sunday, 16 June} will probably come from hospital tomorrow.  

…

19:VI:63  There’s some sort of agitation here in the house… is Donn Whistler moving? Tommy is phoning him & leaving notes… he was gone all last night & didn’t return until late today. I suppose that I must look forward to moving out of this chamber into Donn’s room if he goes.  *  Wait & see.

*
20:VI:63  Apparently all the confusion I mentioned so darkly (see above) is taking place elsewhere – at any rate, nothing’s happening in these purlieus. But I must expect any day here in this house to be my last… ETS may change her mind suddenly & violently about my continuing to occupy this room. * I fear she doesn’t like YT&T, which she’s reading. That – her dislike – wont help my case at all. * But why do I sit around prognosticating calamity – I must think up a new book – or of some way to use the prose ravings that I’ve been turning out since 10:VI. * out mailing letters a few minutes ago. I saw the Aston family. They were in their car, headed for a drive in the country – Jim says he’s lost his job & so is home all day & all night. They claim luke-warmly that they want me to visit them – that they’ll see me later today… […] * To compound the idiocy, I use up a great deal of time & energy recording these misadventures. * 7:30 PM – I’m in Beaver St. again, washed & clean & cooking dinner. Notes here begin at Cactus Circle in the Arboretum – I sat on bench opposite… and continued adding notes from time to time, all the way to the ocean & most of the way back. A warm sunny day, although the wind was very fast & a lot of blowing sand at the beach. Beautiful. […]  
* Note new “anti-smut” drive – hundreds of the righteous converging on Sacramento to demand the censoring of the Dictionary of American Slang & popular usage, on The Chronicle front page. * How to present a set of persons who believe in these ways – they have only vague notions of “right & wrong”, they are afraid of each other and afraid of themselves. They aren’t just stupid or nasty – really quite pleasant fairly intelligent people – think of the country folks of Lincoln County – but something has got at them, & they seem to me to be interpreting whatever it is in the wrong way – or they’re fighting a bogey that doesn’t really exist – I mean, they appear to be over-reacting. * Perhaps the feeling, that the world is a machine & that the
reactions of human beings are likewise predetermined, mechanical – & *uniform* – & universally predictable. * E.g., a high school child will read the definition of a “dirty word” in the dictionary – & will immediately go out and perform the action described… or will see a “naughty” movie, read *Lady Chatterley* &c & be “morally ruined” … *

Each child *must* react in exactly one way – a “bad” way -- apparently this is how the righteous feel about children * Fear & self righteousness – Joe Kreplick said, “Each person imagines that he knows the secret of life.” – but these people have complete certainty. * They say “I’m sure you have a very interesting point of view… … “ and “that’s a rather unusual idea – very stimulating… uh hum. Oh yes, I see.” *

Perhaps not so much afraid of things as *for* things… always anticipating, always hollers before he’s hurt. Taking a low view of other persons, he suspects they’ll do wrong… everybody knows about the dangers of a mob… the Mob {like in the 18th century} This is half-educated mind… it has been exposed to college courses in “psychology”, “child development” &c. “The lower classes are stupid” &c. * Imagine a “little family” of “nice people”, who have children in public schools, who get caught up in all this, & are in one of those automobiles or processions heading for the State Capitol, for the Governors Mansion &c. – they say “The Russians – who cares – the bomb ? Later. Right now, we are going to have PURITY & CONTROL & INNOCENCE &c &c” *
[…] But remember *Caves du Vatican*, & the Roman satirists. *Voltaire aide moi!*  * 

**RABELAIS, je te prie!**  * The “good” side, i.e. the anti-popular – must lose – & even its advocates must end up agreeing that the campaign is “a good thing”  *  

**Consider a speech at The Order of the American Buffalo Club**  *  

The children chew huge masses of bubble gum to conceal the pot smell, smell of headjobs, booze, etc.  *  

*They read everything – Barry Goldwater, Burroughs, some belong to the John Birch Society… readers of Dick Nixon, Eisenhower, Salinger &c &c.*  * 

*One boy apologizes to his date… it takes him a little longer than usual to get it up & he & his friends had been making each other in the shower several hours since &c &c*  * 

*One child refers to its parents as “Blimpy & Dogwood”*  * 

*But the children MUST be somehow better??!!*  * 

*I was feeling sad about not writing, so I took a walk in the park & demanded an idea for a book – asked myself to please think of something quickly. This is what happened.*  * 

**Temporarily I’m calling it *The Sandblast.* I’ve got 6 pages of it on paper, now – 10 PM – plus the foregoing notes. Praise the Muse! O Wyndham Lewis help me! O Rare Ben Jonson!*  * 

**23:VI:63**  

Kenneth Rexroth almost says {in *The Dragon & The Unicorn*} “Not the corruption, but the non-existence of society”  * 

**24:VI:63**  

Alas, yesterday I slept and went a-partying at the Keigwins & around the beach… I have no more idea than anything how to continue either one of the prose books I’ve started. In the meantime, I write poems & wait.  * 

---

* 

WM C WMS: *The Rose:*

The stillness of the rose
in time of war
reminds me of
the long sleep just begun
of that sparrow
his head pillowed unroughed
and unalarmed upon
the polished pavement or
of voluptuous hours
with some
breathless book when
stillness was an eternity
long since begun

{p. 233}

All this Williams material copied from the loose signature added to Duerden’s copy A
The Province

The figure
of tall
white grass
by the cinder-bank
keeps its alignment
faultlessly.
Moves!
in the brilliant
channels
of the wind

Shines!
its polished
shafts
and feathered
fronds
esconced there
colorless
beyond all feeling
This is
the principle
of the godly,
fluted, a
statue
tall and pale

— Lifeless
save only in
beauty,
the kernel
of all seeking,
the eternal

“The Collected Later Poems of Wm C Williams”.

My copy, a first edition. Left this signature out by
mistake.

*

*The Province*

Oh sock, sock, sock!
brief but persistent.
Emulate the gnat

| Wm C. Williams
or a tree’s leaves
that are not the tree
but mass to shape it.

Finis! Finish
and get out of this.

{ p. 244 }

*  

Blake: Notebook 1808 – 11
p. 21 “You don’t believe – I won’t attempt to make ye”
p. 22 “And his legs carried it like a long fork”
{ 61 in mine }
there are 92 such pieces in the 1957 edn.

*  

“Inscription on the back of The Fall of Man not incl.

*  

“When Satan first the black bow bent” – not incl.
additional lines to “I saw a monk of Charlemagne”
“annotations to Boyd’s translation of Dante’s Inferno. Dublin 1785,
written about 1800 (?) {?] not incl.

*  

check additional fragments to the 4 Zoas

*  

“I fear’d the fury of my wind”
“Note on a pencil drawing of nine grotesque heads” written about 1819 not incl.

63 pieces under the Notebook 1793

“The Hebrew Nation did not write it.
Avarice & Chastity did shite it.” not incl.

“Legends in a small book of designs –
( 9 pieces) not incl.

“Legends in a large book of designs:
Urizen, pl. 22: “Frozen doors to mock / The World: While they within
torments uplock.”

The Birds. “Where thou dwellest, in what grove”

“Remarks on the drawings of Thos. Heath Malkin &c.

“additional passages to Public Address * Joseph of Arimathea *

All this from Duerden’s personal library. I find that the 1957 edition of The Nonesuch Blake is
superior to mine – but much more expensive. Alas.
26:VI:63  This morning a $20 money-order arrived from Portland. It was signed “Orville S. Peebles, 4303 S.E. Boise St., Portland 6” I’ve been hung up all day with spending it. Nothing written for any of my books. I suppose that Mr. Peebles is Roy Stilwell whom Charlie Leong told to send money. * I mailed a signed copy of *Foot, an Auerhahn 1960 Catalogue, and a drawing of cats to Mr. Peebles in reply. *

28:VI:63  Celosia brainflower “Jewel box dwarf” var.  * Almost all day poetry keeps arriving. Lunch with Duerden. Short afternoon with McClure and LaVigne, the Conservatory revisited… I was there yesterday, alone. * I keep worrying about my two prose books. Where is the rest of either one or both? Nothing has arrived for 3 days for *Sandblast *

30:VI:63  According to a note that arrived yesterday, *YT&T* was received in Boston on 28:VI:63. * “Howard Presbyterian Church is here to serve you”— I begin at the panhandle of GG Park. * New interview with Tommy. She wants rent, removal to back room, ejection of Geza & the installation of Mr. Whistler as manager-general of the establishment. She claims that her brother has assumed control of the general finances of their contracting corporation. I must find money … within a couple weeks, apparently – or move. I have nowhere to go… all my friends are sick of taking care of me, now – I’ve been broke for almost a year. Considering the scarcity of money these days, nobody can blame them. If only I had some enemies, perhaps I could get help from them… otherwise, I shall soon be out in the street. O whither shall I fly &c. […]
3:VII:63  Inscription on A.G.’s pen-drawing of Foster’s:

“We eat reality sandwiches

-- Foster’s Café

A. Ginsberg”

[…]

*


* Nomad 9 Summer 1961  *  Rhinoceros 1961  *  Jabberwocky 1959  *  Donald Carpenter

is having turtle visions  *  “Song” & “The Road Runner”  Poetry Book Mag. Vol. 4 #4

Summer 1952  *  Coastlines 6, winter 1956-7  *  Sidewalk 1960 “EH”

* 1960 Beatitude Anthology  *  Parkinson 1961 48

*

8:VII:63  11 days with no money; but I have a little rice & some dried mushrooms. More
troublesome is my refusal to work at the Sandblast – the job that I ought to do. My head &
feelings have quit, in relationship to this book – I have an image in my head of the mob
converging on the statehouses or the Governor’s mansion, City Hall or whatnot
– because of Yaxleigh’s book-burning crusade – they are at once relieved & excited, &
determined.  * They shall have passed beyond the control of Yaxleigh or anyone else, by that
time. The senator is screeching at Yaxleigh for being incompetent to control the golem he’s
animated. The Evangelist has gone away to convert the population of Liverpool, Leeds,
Manchester, Brussels, n’importe que… But to get ahead with the manufacture of the persons

48 Whalen here lists poems such as “Itchy,” “Song,” and the magazine citations where they were
published, e.g. Nomad 9, Summer 1961; Beatitude Anthology, etc.
this action will grow out of... oh dear. * O Muse come to my aid! * The release, the joy of being able to look out to sea from the top of the ridge between here & Mike’s house – freedom & reassurance, delight & yet – some grief, some regret – anyway, more of a joy than anything, as of finding the world safely “there”, safely “itself”, despite my tiny personal fears, worries &c. * I found that by following Upper Terrace in a westerly direction I could arrive at the summit of Mt. Olympus – best view in the city, of the ocean, the Bay, Mt Tamalpais, Mt Diablo – I must think of going there on a clear morning. To live in the 300 block on Upper Terrace – what a delight that might be... the view is almost nourishing. *

*

9:VII:63  Consider the character of Donald Carpenter – how far would he go if he was pushed? Consider Michael’s insane story, yesterday, about Wally Hedrick’s interest in JoAnn – & how Mike lighted a great firecracker and shoved it into Wally’s mouth – Wally was able to throw it out or spit it out, and it exploded in midair – this at a crowded New Year’s party at Wally’s house. * Carpenter has this Saturday night party arranged – in order to meet whomever I choose to invite. What kind of mess will this create? I want my books out of there before Saturday. * Carpenter has arranged a luncheon for Bro. Antoninus & me, Thursday. I hope I can meet him decently. * Today, walking to Durham’s to take in his mail, I found a penny. I hope that this is a “sign” that my luck is changing for the better. There’s no supper tonight, & I’m too tired or timid or simple-minded to go out and beg, as I usually do. Consequently, I’m hungry, nervous & cranky.

[...]
Now Tommy’s coming home – & I’ve got her to worry about, also – she wants rent from me. She mentioned, Monday morning, that she had some “kind of semi-permanent arrangement” in mind for me, & would tell me about it “in a couple of days.” I suspect it’s another of her usual lunatic schemes whereby I should work 18 hours a day counting sugar for one of her friends -- 50¢ an hour & all the sugar I can carry home, the job is in Crockett, and a room will be provided for me in a really terribly amusing old boxcar – down by – or rather, right on the tracks – the tracks are no longer in use, of course – but done up with really a great deal of imagination and charm, etc. etc. *

10:VII:63 A gorgeous, brilliant morning – I feel high, disassociated – I put myself down for feeling hungry, for wishing the postman might bring loads of money – for being unable to do anything between this moment and the arrival of the postman with Donn’s Wall Street Journal, an ad for Dick Mayer, a letter from a friend of mine demanding help, love, attention. * Sure enough, nothing has arrived except the Wall Street Journal. I’m hungry as ever. * […]

23:VII:63 Last evening, Bob Miller arrived. Tommy has arranged with him to paint these rooms. He will take part of his pay in the shape of rent for the room where Donn lives now. Geza is being evicted from the small dark room behind the kitchen where I’m supposed to move – & pay rent for – but Geza hasn’t yet found a place. Donn has threatened him {in an ungrammatical note} with the sheriff &cc. Geza showed me all the notes that Donn’s been sending him, each of which was sillier than the last. Here’s a revolution all well commenced. Meanwhile, I must work as a baby sitter at the Astons, Durhams &c. to get money to eat & perhaps for rent. *
25:VII:63  All sitting for the Astons is in abeyance until next week. Caroleena has no job for a while.  *  Bob Miller is painting the bathroom & kitchen here. Fumes hurt my chest. He’ll live in Donn’s room, Donn will have this room; Geza left last night.  *  On 23:VII, received notice that Houghton Mifflin won’t print YT&T. Aston says that there’ll very soon be a movie released under that title, starring Sophia Loren.  *  I read Aston’s book Black Vision, which he finished just before I finished YT&T – I thought it was very bad & told him so, & told him what to do about it. Showed him how to fix the short-story that he’s just received back from Evergreen Review. He was shy of me for several days. Now he & Caroleena read YT&T.

*  

26:VII  […]

Re-reading Aeschylus, The Persians, Prometheus.  […]

*  

26:VII:63  Creeley & Ginsberg have just this morning telegraphed an invitation to the proceedings at Vancouver… they want me to telephone them about what shall I do &c.  *  


Bancroft Notebook 1

San Francisco  –  Vancouver

*  

26:VII:63  Saturday 4PM, aboard jet United 745 bound for Vancouver BC & a visit with AG et alia at the University of British Columbia. ETA 7:25 PM. A half-hour layover in Seattle. . . no doubt a change of planes & customs. Everybody has been at the conference for a week. I
must catch flight 392 out of Seattle, 6:30 ETD. ETD SFO 4:15, but here we sit having our tickets checked; for the 2nd time. Rotor whine warmup. Hot & sultry sun here; windy & cool in the city. . .  We move.

Now above Stinson Beach, banking N.E. above the Lagoon. The city was totally fogged over. Nothing to look for now until Mt. Shasta, we’re headed for Red Bluff, Medford & Portland. Haze & alto cumulus in the East, haze northerly . . . Air in here smells like public toilet. San Rafael below? San Joaquin River. Sierra crest exceedingly dim to the east. Sun bust through onto pinnacles east of Marysville. Unless it’s Mt. Lassen, seems now how much higher it rises above the surround – but it doesn’t seem possible that we should have come this far so soon. *

But here’s Red Bluff & Shasta Dam & Crooked River. * We climb * Shasta & baked creamy snow. Trinity Alps nearby -- & so I must be nearly over Lewis’s country & Cascade massif ahead – or anyhow should be – but only low cumulus masquerading as Himalaya. * Mt McLoughlin has 2 parallel stripes of snow. * Crater Lake, seen for the first time in 35 years or so. * Diamond Lake. 3 Sisters Broken Top [illeg.] * patches of forest baldness, clear-cutting, sustained yield blah blah blah. * I missed Mt. Thielsen, somewhere or other *

Some of the clear-cuts are green, pasture-like, but most are a hot brown. * Sisters. Squaw Tit, 3 Finger Jack, Wash & Jeff {or Jeff & Wash} * clear-cuts joined, [illeg.] with cat trails, jeep roads, truck roads fire trails. * Salt Creek / Willamette National Forest bought & sold nine times over. * Squaw Tit under a cloud that conceals nothing

TO VANCOUVER
on the other side, from such altitude. Now St Helens, Adams, & Rainier, some low clouds… but clear generally; St. Helens is Fuji-san * Nearing St. Helens, the pilot announces that we’ll start descending upon Seattle in a few minutes. * Lewis River, Ariel dam. * Nice shot of N. side Mt. Hood. * Spirit Lake * what is long snow ridge N of Adams? * Mt. Adams is huge. Rainier’s glaciers enormous, more mountain than I’ve seen before. * Just west of Rainier, we go ear pop down. * Bat wing military jet below. * There’s a lake on a hill, just south of Boeing Field. We’re now taxiing on Boeing runway…

[...]

I suppose Vancouver will be socked in by the time we arrive. There will doubtlessly be a late takeoff. Fog building in the west. * We fly up Elliott Bay, & the Kitsap Peninsula. Salad & cold apple cobbler whip cream & coffee. Mt Baker in & out of heavy thunderheads. Some of the Olympic range snowy, the rest in clouds & fog. The Sound a soapy grey green, & islands, cut with irregular but sharp moulds.

* & so to the grand poetickal conference, an excitement & a warring & a love-feast, among mountains & straits & rivers & islands. Red berry mountain ash trees, dogwood blooming for the second time, berries & salmon & warm beer & the best pastry I’ve yet found in North America. I feel as I’d alienated all the other poets – Olson already ½ mad at me – Creeley newly angered? – Duncan pretending I don’t exist, along with Denise Levertov & Margaret Avison who are of the same persuasion. . . A.G. alternately attacking & praising me.
17:VIII:63  Vancouver. The conference is concluded. A.G., Oscar Heiserman & I are to leave here tomorrow, driving to San Francisco with Thos. Jaquerelle. * The city is beautifully set at the edge of great mountains that look like Japan or Hong Kong, as seen in the National Geographic Magazine. The university stands at Point Grey & I used to swim quite often from the tiny beach that’s just under the cliff where the university buildings are. Automobile crash yesterday, the second one that I’ve been through, Oscar banged his head & today must be x-rayed. * Sadness, also – that I’ve been “dropped” by the Creeley family, that an uneasy truce has been settled with Olson… The Tallmans are astoundingly intelligent & generous & patient. I hope I can keep in touch with them. * I hope to become reconciled with Creeley at some future date, although at the moment he & Bobbie come at me most grumley [sic] and severe.  

{Michael told me, “He is not your friend.” , but what does M. know about it ?} * I sit here waiting to take Oscar to the hospital & read the sutras & explanations; Olson sits on the front steps, eating cold applesauce. AG reads student papers upstairs, Duncan flies home today. * Ida Hodes arrived yesterday & leaves this A.M. Don Allen was here most of this past week, grooking [sic] the literaries & meeting TISHES & living at the Faculty Club, a kind of enormous hotel-lobby / air terminal / night club. * So much for this babble what word can I choose “to stand beside” {as Pound interprets that particular Chinese word, “stand beside”} What I want to tell Charles is, that I could answer him in terms of the Abhidharma dialectic, for example – but I must not do so – I must digest or rediscover my own terminology, my own vocabulary, I must answer in my own voice or being… *

[…]

Bancroft Notebook 1

22:VIII:63

Now I’m at “home” in Beaver St. Allen has gone to stay at Ferlinghetti’s house & I am too tired, right now, to record anything more than the fact of my return to San Francisco shortly after noon today.

*  

25:VIII:63 What happened is that we were able to see each other & talk together, after years of physical separation & there were certain reconciliations & certain discussions & certain disagreements; however, we parted amiably.

[...]  

Bancroft Notebook 5

24:VIII:63, 1:25 A.M. Home from dinner at MM’s, with AG & T. Parkinson & Kirby Doyle. On the way home I saw a bright aluminum Christmas tree in an apartment house window. I heard the noise of a party, looked up, & there it was, people sitting beside it, others moving about the room talking & laughing & drinking. * I must devote the morning to writing letters & doing the laundry – I’m tired of feeling disorganized. *

25:VIII:63 Somewhat recovered this Sunday morning – feeling as if I might be freer to act, to do the things I believe I should do. * A row of blossoming flowers a row of people. 2 lines of people, several hundred yards apart, moving in the same direction. The space between the individuals in each of the lines is interesting. The speed of the walkers in the two lines, although, although the 2 lines are separated by several thousand feet, appears to be the same.
The Duerdens are in good shape, I guess. Rick was very curious about the conference & wondered what happened to Loewinsohn during the short time that he was there – what was it that turned him on? Duerden is now equipped with a small English mimeographing machine & so his magazine will now proceed. I am hungry, in the midst of Golden Gate Park. The food at the beach is horrible, but I shall eat something there before I proceed onward to LaVigne’s house. Great pine tree has tiny birds walk upside-down on its vertical trunk, they eating bugs & say very quietly, “bat bat bat”, a sound something like a split oboe reed. I remember, now, that LaVigne’s zebra finches have a similar note. […]

Bancroft, Box 10

27:8:1963

NOVELS

from 1962 notebook, 23:VIII

X IS his situation, almost anything he does now, is determined by his situation, & his situation is an expression of his nature…

I thought of Z & how he fixed up circumstances, situations, worlds, societies, Everything outside, to suit himself, in order to free himself, amuse himself, &c.

Nevertheless, I said, these 2, apparently unlike in learning, temperament, & inheritance, came to the same sticky finish – or will – quite unnecessarily young.
“mechanical” novel of 3 III 63

___________________________

IMAGINARY IDYLLS

___________________________

Older idea, the anti-Cowley business {also used by Olson in his letter poem to Melville Society}: sellout poet very minor, makes career out of reporting antics of greater men whom he knew years ago, who destroyed themselves with booze &c. & yet produced more & better work than he & his more “stable” friends. {Nor is this to be confused with The Horses Mouth – doubtlessly Hart Crane was a monster, a demon – the POINT is that the wrong man ends up in the character of Dean of American Letters, mouthing around about social consciousness, self-destructive impulses, “silent generations,” etc. – accepted by his employer & the Public as being in control of Literature &c. &c.

___________________________

[...]

___________________________

* 28:VIII:63 Michael has arranged for me to meet Mr Bill Stevens about a job at some art school downtown – they want English & also American History, a couple days per week, according to Mike. I hope I can persuade Mr. Stevens to pay me a living wage. I’ve just prepared a list of publications & a short vita for Mr. S. his perusal. Now everything depends on our interview tomorrow morning. * ETS invited me for dinner tomorrow. She is forgiving me the rent as long as I don’t tell anyone about her generosity. Nevertheless, it would be nice if I got an easy job & some money. *
Rocks, bones & shells. Horses & camels

who came from where? Glacier villages {Carl O. Sauer}
Folsom Arizona. Lake County Oregon.

Kingdoms & Empires: Aztec, Maya, Inca . . .
{ outposts: Pueblo? Moundsville? } &
NW Coast: Haida, Kwakiutl, Tsimshian, Salishan &c.

Swedes, Columbus {“we are discovered!”—J Cocteau},
Frenchmen, Spaniards {Cabeza de Vaca!},
Anguish . . . vs the Indigenes

The Utopians: the Adamses, Jefferson & co.
Hamilton & co. {Pound crosses over, at this point, to Kung}
America: The Bank

Bought &
sold,

The War

hocked &
faked & out Reconstruction

of Touch,

an Abstract,

Revolutions: Haymarket, Trusts, Grangers

a Law, a paper Wobblies, CCC, Peace Corps – we want it back!

Notes for an American history - 2 -

Whose geology isn’t too dense or dull? Paleontology likewise?

Kroeber essays 1936

Carl Sauer. el alia . . . Kroeber . . . Boas Ruth

Environment & Culture in Benedict

the [Last ] Deglaciation APS 194749 3 Ways of Life

John L. Stephens, Morley & Carnegie Reports, Prescott

& Eric Thompson

Wm C Wms: *In The American Grain*

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Chief Joseph

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2\textsuperscript{nd} September, Labor Day, at night, 11:05 PM. For the past four days I’ve been practicing Burroughs “cutup” method, using prose records of my own obsessive memories & hangups, typing & cutting & copying words and phrases over & over in different series of arrangement. Saturday, it had a remarkable head-clearing effect, & I was able to write a cuckoo letter to Joanne  *  Saturday night a huge party at Haselwood’s Gough Street house, much dope & excitement. Allen was there, & Lucien Carr from NYC, suddenly glad to see me. He was travelling with Lois, Jack’s old girlfriend, a slant-eyed, sullen, sexy brunette. As he was leaving, Lucien invited me to kill myself by leaping down the front stairs to the street – I declined, & now I fear that he despises me. Much dope, I screamed at everyone about CUTUP & I laughed & danced. Yesterday MM was here, demanding to see cutups which I decline to shew to anyone, so he’s gone off, sulking. Dinner yesterday – Sunday – with the Aston’s. They say they like my novel. Home all day today, writing more erotic memoirs & cutting & copying. Extremely hot weather for San Francisco; this room is plenty hot right now, 11:13, although both doors & both windows are opened wide. {bugs around my table lamp, bugs in my ears, I drink lukewarm tea} I have got to break through into another novel or prose book… I hope that Burroughs treatment works.  *  The school job in Mr Stevens’ Academy was to pay $5 an hour,
four hours a week. I declined to accept it. I wanted $300 a month. MM said the man could perhaps be persuaded to pay me $150, but I couldn’t accept such a small amount for the work that I proposed to do – rather extravagant plans – none of them wasted, however. * Some kind of money must be found… I fancy I could find another 100 pages of prose to show Luther…?
* & Sandblast must be put away for several years… I learned that there’s been a television play on the same subject, this Spring… not that Sandblast actually could be confused with a TV script… *

4:IX:63 […] {I’ve spent all but a dollar} Spent last $20 to help get Bob Miller out of gaol, last night. I keep fumbling with prose/history of erotic life. I worry 3 or four times a day about where I shall find money to live on… […]

*  

7:IX:63 I’ve written a poem, That Dream, & a short prose piece & a five-page start on a review of The Island (which I finished reading last night) & now I fidget & am about to eat something or take a walk, & yet blocked a little, wondering if Seaver will call – I told him the other day that I intended to spend the weekend at home & he proposed to come & visit sometime & it has – this waiting on someone else’s pleasure – become a bug, for the 9 millionth time – I make it a bug for myself. I haven’t sense enough to imagine Seaver telephoning, receiving no answer & so telephoning again. Later, when I shall have returned – I only see him phoning once & then giving up in despair, feeling that I have lied to him, that I’ve let him down – whereas he might call, & finding no one to answer him, go away, happy to be free to amuse himself with some other project than that of coming here to visit me.

[…]
13:IX:63  […] Yesterday I wrote a review of *Meat Science* & Michael has approved it for publication -- Mr. Hogan at the *Chronicle* will or wont. I didn’t notice {herein above} that I wrote a review of Allen’s *Reality Sandwiches*, which was printed in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, “This World” section, Sunday August 4th. They gave me a huge by-line, printed the piece, uncut & unchanged, nor were there any typographical errors. I hope for as much luck with the present effort.

[…]

*  

15:IX:63  Pound’s *Confucius* { & his other Chinese writers} are Satie’s *Socrate* – the use of these texts within the continuous humming & chording of Pound’s “orchestra”, the sound of Pound’s writing mind, – all this is what Satie does with Plato’s text & an orchestra of conventional instruments.  * This is repeated in the Oedipus of Stravinsky & Cocteau  * *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, Apollinaire & -- Poulenc {I thought “Satie”, again, but was mistaken about the music.}  […]

*  

18:IX:63  24 hours more & less of dissipation with AG around North Beach.  * Hogan writes a card to say that he’ll print the review I wrote about Michael. Michael & JoAnn are pleased.  * They say.  * Hogan wants a “Letter from North Beach”.  I must fake up something?  For a few more bucks?  * Nanda will print a silk screen reproduction of my own handwritten copy of *Monday In The Evening*.  * Don Allen wants to make a broadside of *Hymnus Ad Patrem Sinensis*, I must go to work now & design it.  * The Creeley review must be typewritten.  *  

*
19:IX:63 Early morning drive with Carpenter to San Rafael to see Bob Miller in gaol, then to see Bob’s mother, Auerhahn Press & so home. * I’ve made sketches for a broadside – Don Allen wants to use Hymnus Ad Patrem Sinensis in his stock of broadsides to sell at the outdoor art show in the Civic Center – he wants to raise money for his magazine. […]

21:IX:63 & so Don & I gossiped & Bill McNeil arrived & we all talked about the broadside project, & at last, Bill & I left. He invited me to his place for dinner, where was his friend Ed Rogers, & one roomer, Willy, & the Ebbe Borregaards, & Helen Adam. We ate & drank. […]

22:IX:63 Yesterday Mike & Dave Meltzer & I ate moon cakes – & later hero sandwiches with JoAnn, who’s catching cold or feeling sad & deprived, that periodic depression – & to the Diebenkorn show at the DeYoung Museum, which was only mildly innaresting – annoying to think of him as not being wildly successful, he was born in Portland a year before I was. {one of the most expensive abstract expressionists grew up in Portland – Mark Rothko} *

* Brakhage has sent me several feet of one of his films, signed in felt pen. I wonder what to send him. Bill hates B’s work, says his own is better, all about people, personal involvements, not psychology, psycho drama, “experimental film”, &c. &c. * Bob will come out of jail on Thursday next, Carpenter having cooled the Sacramento thing for him. * I was wondering about money for postage, feed &c. … I just found 16¢ in a coat pocket… I’ll be able to write to Joanne tomorrow. * I walked to Mike’s house to pick up my scratch pad & then out through the park to the ocean beach. High tide, many children swim * on way to Mike’s, I saw Duerden driving his car down the hill – we waved to each other –
* Albert is in the VA hospital at Livermore. He’ll be operated soon, for removal of a lobe of one lung. I wait to hear from him – does he want visitors or not & what could they bring him from the city. * ARL has been awarded custody of her children so is happy at last. She says that the children are also happy. * 

* 

23:IX:63 Long walk through the park to wade in the ocean & then to see haselwood for a minute & then to call on RJ Greensfelder. While I was at Greensfelder’s office, James Broughton bestowed a great mosaic upon me, the work of Robert Duncan… now it decorates 30” x 20” of one of my windows. * * Raptures & visions in the park, of some Indian Kama deity, his laughing face & tall gold crown, the red rouge on his palms, sometimes I saw the rest of his body – sometimes white, a memory of the Kali statue in the Devi movie – but at her most “real” or positive, she is blue. * I am sliced to pieces by jewel knife/wires in space – extasy & calm – almost tears – recall picture of Artaud in extasy, Sri Ramakrishna et alia – feeling as of drug “high”, but more like a free-floating orgasm – an orgasm centered in chest, neck & had rather than in sexual organs, although I was conscious of my body, I was free from it & free from this piece of space/time. * 

* 

26:IX:63 I’ve gone to visit LaVigne, who’s broke again, but painting. Charles Plymell came & got a poem for his magazine. Bob Miller should come out of jail today; I expect him momentarily. * I am out of money again, & the rice is eaten. There are a few biscuits, a few beancakes, two bouillon cubes… * I wonder what to write. * 

[...]
29:IX:63  I sit in the kitchen, & I have a cup of coffee & I think I’ll go to the park, the day is so fine. What I feel I ought to do is to write something exciting about The Dalles & Oregon, the Northwest in general {which is impossible, there are too many kinds of place/feelings, land forms & varieties of climate}  *  […]  I could move this chair onto the back porch & sit there if I want fresh air.  I want sexual contact, that’s for sure. But I tell myself, save up your nerves & juices against some new book, or a series of related poems that make a single pattern. Make something beautiful & exciting – or remember the small Samadhi of Monday –  *  […]  

30:IX:63  Until late last night, Bob Miller & I drank wine, played records & hollered. Donn Whistler was outraged. Tommy is outraged today. Ezra has fired Bob. Tommy is asking Bob to please move out, & implied that it’d be nice if I were to go too, although she hasn’t quite said so in that many words. Whistler claims that 70 or 80 dollars cash money is missing from his room – Tommy told me today – I wonder if it was there at all?  Much of what she tells me that Donn told her is a network of small lies, he might as well put across a big one while he’s at it.  *  […]  

1:X:63  Bob is more or less reconciled to moving out. I feel that I should move also, […]  

*  Where shall I go, whom shall I ask “to save me”?  The whole scene is already burnt down, except for the possibility of Charles Plymell’s place, which is already crowded, of the cold noisy 2 rooms in 24th St, of LaVigne’s house, except that he’s broke & scuffling at the moment, too, why add to his troubles, nor to Allen’s. Bill would not consider it. Paul? Nemi? Who?  *
* To opening of Bill Risdon show at Batman Gallery. Allen & Charley were there & sort of say it’s ok for me to live in Gough Street for a little while; if I must – Allen wants help with Neal – I just don’t feel up to all that – can I find someplace else…

Marian Weston offers the couch in her front room. * Paul & Rita Hamilton & the Henry Jacobs family were at the reception, the Lawrence Ferlinghettis, the Richard Keigwins, the Sterling Bunnells, & a vast number of rich people – anyway Marian said that’s who they were, patrons of the arts – who looked to me like members of the Mafia or the Police Department or both. Allen gave me $10  * I must go to Don Allen tomorrow to sign all the broadsides. * Robert Frank & a tall handsome Eddy [Gregson] are also here, with Allen G. – they plan to make a movie out of Allen’s Kaddish.  *

*  

2:X:63 A poem just arrived, the one which Marian wants for her not-quite-yet-arrived baby, R E Barker’s child – she wants it to have something which will connect it to her, although she has consented to give it up for adoption the moment that it is born, like Noel did.  * […] talking with Maureen last night was both exciting & annoying – she keeps trying to talk about ideas, & she hasn’t the slightest notion about what an idea is {or was}. And she’s still attractive, although pregnant & giddy.  * Afternoon signing 285 copies of the broadside version of Hymnus Ad Patrem Sinensis at Don Allen’s, a pleasant afternoon first drinking with Jim Aston at Mike’s Pool Hall, then to Don’s where was Robert LaVigne & later, Margot Doss popped in.  * Don & Shin-Chan & I dined at Yee Jun’s, then to City Lights where came Allen Ginsberg & Robert Frank & Eddy Gregson – we retired across the street to La Bodega, where they dined while Don & I talked with them – Don withdrew, & I traveled with Allen & party to Gough Street to inspect
rooms, & so to home to bathe & copy out Marian’s poem for her – I shall deliver it tomorrow, I suppose.  *

7:X:63  All pressures, today at least, are gone: Bob has moved out. Tommy tells me I can stay here at least nine months. She might change her mind this afternoon – but right this minute there’s no such difficulty.  * Party last night to celebrate the end of the broadside project & the last of the Art Festival &c. Margot assures me that my review of Meat Science will appear next Sunday. Nevertheless, I suppose that I ought to remove myself to Gough St., just for the record. Ch. Plymell’s magazine, Now, is well launched by last night’s party. Thos. Jackerell, Richard White & various other contributors were present, as well as the editor. […]  * Martha & Sara Durham came to call, then Bob drove all of us to the Durham house, whence I’ve just returned. Martha has borrowed YT&T to read, it makes me nervous, the ms. being out of the house, although I have the carbon & the holograph ms. beside me – yet I can’t bring myself to read it.

*  8:X:63  Spent afternoon with Ginsberg & the Auerhahn Press. Neal has begun to dictate his new novel.  * The paper has arrived from Milan; I’ve designed a few pictures in Chinese ink for the Monday poem which will be printed at Milan. […]  * AG is having an affaire with Kansas Charlie who is lamb like, A.G. says. AG claims that all this is a secret, but I told him that Mike had guessed as much on the day they went to Monterey.  *

*  11:X:63  A round of visits – to Auerhahn to AG to Duerden’s to Durham’s, Martha having nervous breakdown, but attended by Larry Vogt. I have come home & washed myself &
changed clothing preparatory to attending the opening of an exhibition of paintings by RT Field, Paul Alexander, Harry Jacobus, Fran Herndon, Lynn Brock, [illeg.] & Jess Collins at a gallery in Union St. The Duerdens, who plan also to attend, have offered me a ride home  * Martha & Ed have read my novel, they like it.  […]

[…]

Carrying the ms. of my novel home I was thinking about the pleasure of writing it – I still can’t face the idea of reading it – but the memory of working at it brings me great pleasure. I absolutely must begin something new or try to move the Sandblast which is already begun.

*  

12:X:63  Everyone in the art, poetry & critic business was present at the Peacock Gallery opening – except Allen & Michael. Afterwards, at a late supper chez Duerden, Duerden gave me hell for half an hour for participating in high crimes & misdemeanors under the supervision of Donald M Allen – Duerden claims everything I now write is done in the hope of pleasing Mr Allen, that I have a program, that Mr Allen is stopping me & a number of other people from getting published, from becoming famous &c. and that I am too fat although I should be allowed to be as fat as I want to be, and at last, that I had begun this argument myself. Also giant attack on McClure, & upon Ginsberg. I don’t know what’s the matter, except that Spicer told him that Don Allen is a monster or something. What a dismal scene – I worried about it all the rest of the night  * Pauline Kael, the film critic, told me that a friend of hers had read an attack upon me – with photos – in some kind of skin magazine – picture of Ginsberg & picture of me reading someplace, calling me a fake beatnik who never did a day’s work &c.  * I feel completely paranoiac, like I don’t want to see anyone ever again.  * Worst of all, I repeated my cute
saying, at one point in the scene with Rick, that *Dark Brown* is fake – & he’ll doubtlessly see – today or tomorrow or next week – my review of *Meat Science Essays*, where I mention that *Dark Brown*\(^{50}\) is better than Lawrence – & that will really get Duerden’s goat. Why can’t I remember to talk nice? *

Duerden has come to apologize but he still claims he’s right about Don Allen being a wicked [sic]. Martha has phoned to invite me for supper. Michael has phoned to say that the *Chronicle* has printed my Creeley review in the Sunday paper, & to say how much he likes the poem of mine that appears in Charley Plymell’s *Now* magazine. I promised Mike that I shall telephone Hogan on Monday to inquire when they are going to print the *Meat* review. *

*  

13:X:63  The other night I could hear the first sentence of a new novel in my head but since I didn’t get out of bed to write what I heard, it is obscured, now, by my wandering attention. I feel an echo of it at this moment which impels me to write about it, although I can’t remember exactly what was the sentence – it was a statement made by one man to someone – where is ti? *  

I still haven’t found the sentence. I had a pleasant conversation with Morton Subotnick & Carpenter brought me a copy of my review of Creeley’s novel *The Island* – part of one sentence lost out, a couple of words added to another sentence in order to make it say something I don’t intend – it appears to be absolutely in comprehensible. I can’t help feeling rage and despair – for here’s a new case in a series of put-downs & accidents which has pursued me for a year. *

Carpenter & I visited the Loewinsohns for a little – Ron has almost finished printing his book, 

*The World of The Lie.*

*  

*  

**14:X:63**  

No mail, no money. I walked to Auerhahn Press, no mail, no money. I walked to LaVigne’s house & begged lunch & he gave me a dollar to supper also. I came home to find that Duerden had brought me three copies of *The Rivoli Review*, published today including my poem about plums & Dr. Williams. I spent 88¢ on food, now I’ve had a shower & I rest.  

**14:X:63**  

[…] I look at new & unfinished poems, I hunt for the address of *Outburst* & find instead all my old Reed correspondences & transcripts. I spent a great deal of time looking through, revising & adding items to the list of my publications… vanity leading to vexation of spirit et cetera.  

* No mail, no money  *  

*  

**16:X:63**  

Not much better & no breakfast. I dreamed I had married a small dark unattractive girl. CLT & others were there to congratulate me. At the same time I was being introduced into a middle-class lodge or fraternity & was going to be allowed the freedom of its not terribly attractive club rooms.  

[…] hear an enormous song from it – small bird huge voice –  

* I eat 3 spoonfulls of honey, & I have a cup of tea – breakfast after all.  

[…]  

17/18:X:63  on 16:X, AG & RLV each gave me food & money, & today, my sister sent me $10 for a birthday present, & so I’m not quite as depressed as I was -- & the NW Review is to publish a great load of my poems  *  […]

20:X:63  I dreamed a poem, I could see it on the page. The word ‘9’ & one whole first line were quite distinct  *  I dreamed I was standing at a magazine stand in Kearny St. A handsome but angry little boy, very clean & well dressed, comes to push against my leg with both hands. He has blond hair. The tall blonde woman with him is embarrassed & says “He thinks you’re his daddy”. I smile & wake up.  *  Dream just before this of a more American version of the Vancouver B.C. university campus – at one point a great British Army band parades on sand under pine trees followed by a procession of distinguished looking civilian men & women who are movie start or something else beautiful & important. All of us who watch are politely applauding. Later in the same dream “we” are in a car & looking at beautiful houses & seashore & trees {Horseshoe Bay} go by – Margot Doss tells how nice it is to live there, in her funny strange style of talking.

*  JoAnn came & took me to their house for breakfast, then to the great benefit party, Paul Smith playing jazz, Ginsberg & McClure & I read {Michael beautifully read & then auctioned the Spring Poem\textsuperscript{52} which I copied last night & got $8 for it}  Later I auctioned a Duchamp catalog {signed} & copies of Now & the Brannaman comic book.

\textsuperscript{52} Whalen’s “Spring Poem to the Memory of Jane Ellen Harrison (1850 – 1928). 18:II:63. Rothenberg 282-83.
I read poems of Tom Jackerell & my own contribution to *Now* & signed copies. Kirby Doyle, the Wallace Bermans, Dean Stockwell, the Ferlinghettis, the Bob Kaufmanns, the Larry Jordans, the Holloways – many young, many children, babies & dogs. Lots of live jazz. John Fless & some kid called Tom Pickering or Chickering came to Mexican dinner with Allen & me. John told all about the new movie scene. Duncan & Jess came. Liam O’Gallagher & Robert Rheem. Tony Martin, Charley Plymell, Eddy Gregson {Grissom? – Robert Frank’s producer from Hollywood} & his wife. Many thousands more. I’ve had a hot bath & changed clothes, now I drink tea & wonder what to write & I’m tired. * I wonder now about the dream-poem of this A.M. – obviously the effect of writing out the copy of my Spring Poem, & yet I thought I could hear the first line, with “nine” in it somewhere. On the collage that Michael, Boobus & Steven Subotnick were making, I wrote “Indifferent saturn galls my life”.

23:X:63 Met Allen in City Lights with Roxie Powell, of all people. Later we decide to attend literary banquet tonight. Met Herbert Gold & John Carr – Mr. Gold & Mr. Algren are to speak in the banquet. I must telephone to Grover & warn him that I shall be there. *

24:X:63 Allen & I had cocktails & champagne with Peter van Mieter at a new bar/restaurant in Stevenson St. Then to meet Neal & Ann at the World Trade Center outside the Ferry Building. Inside we met all of literary San Francisco, Kenneth, Mark Schorer, Ken Kesey, Herb Gold, Nelson Algren &c. Dinner & long speeches after which a man at my table who claimed to be Vice President of Roos Atkins took me by the arm & hauled me out the door, telling me the
while that I was rude & a son of a bitch. At the door he kicked me across the buttocks. I started down the ramp when Allen came screaming to forgive the man & come back. Allen was joined by Grover, {who had also just been asked to leave} Kenneth, Evan Connell & Calvin Kentfield &c. who wanted to make peace, I presume – or to have a fight, I don’t know what. We went back in & no one said or did anything to us. At last Allen disappeared, looking for Neal, & I caught a ride back home with Kenneth & his lady. The Roos Atkins award, $5000 went to a “young” {36} “writer” {i.e. professor at the University of New Hampshire} who has already published three novels, the prize was given to him for a book of short stories published this June just past.53 […]

* 

25:X:63  More bother. Herb Caen wrote up an idiotic story about the dinner, & no doubt all the rest of the world that didn’t bother to hate me before this hour have begun. I feel ashamed to be seen in the street.54  Allen agrees that there’s nothing to be done – I say, not immediately, perhaps – except that I must contrive to go on with my own work as usual – wherever I land after Tommy throws me out of this place – which scene hasn’t yet occurred. […]

* 

53 The 1963 Roos Atkins prize for literature went to University of New Hampshire professor and novelist Thomas Williams, for his short story collection A High New House.
54 Herb Caen, the noted San Francisco Chronicle columnist, reported that Whalen was (read between the lines) drunk and feisty at this pathetic ‘literary’ celebration of corporate ‘administered’ art. Whalen heckled the head table of literary celebrities and was nearly kicked out the back door, but Ginsberg intervened. The page one headline in The Chronicle that day trumpeted “Hopeful View of U.S. Life After A-War (atomic, nuclear war), with three social science “experts” funded by the C.I.A. for domestic propaganda cheerily painting a rosey picture of life in America following an all-out nuclear exchange with Russia, “even in the face of a death toll of tens of millions.” The other major news that week was the C.I.A.-ordered assassination of the president of Vietnam. After firing C.I.A. Director Allen Dulles, President Kennedy himself was assassinated about one month later.
Yesterday Carpenter came to ask what was the true story of the award dinner. Then we went to Allen’s & so to see La Dolce Vita with John Kelly. Later I went to dinner at the Loewinsohns’s {who also must hear about the dinner} & home early to read, bathe, & sleep. * For the second time, I have dreamed of a small swarthy man with a Greek name. I can almost translate the name into English – I try hard but keep forgetting the Greek name – & wake up & as I write this I still try to remember – it begins with X & so I shall read in the Greek Lexicon a while * Michael came to fetch me away. We drove to SFSC campus where he threw books into the library & then to LaVigne’s for breakfast & I began upon our leaving there, to develop the fit of anxiety which has plagued me the rest of this day. […] but I am still feeling beset – dark forebodings, gloomy predictions about the outcome of the plan which all my friends have for the morrow – to parade up & down in front of the Palace Hotel in protest against the government of Viet Nam &/or Mme. Ngo Dinh Nhu who is visiting here. I feel I have no call to go there, & on the other hand I feel I should join with my friends; I can’t decide what to do. I must meditate & await for whatever direction I can inwardly intuit.

* […] Elsa has written to say that she likes YT&T but not the title. She will act as my agent, try to find a publisher for it.

[…]}
3:XI:63  […]  *  Yesterday the Diem government of Viet Nam fell to pieces – Allen’s revolution was a success, for once… Mr. Diem & Mr. Nhu are alleged to have killed themselves – I wonder if it’s true.55  * 

[…]

7:XI:63  {1:45 AM}  I’ve finished reading the ms. of Irving Rosenthal’s Memoir of Sheeper – quite beautiful but in want of cutting – it is pointlessly repetitious – relentlessly literary – happily there’s more of beauty & interest than not.  *  But it is overloaded, overdecorated, shrill – some truth in Allen Ansen’s phrase “the shreiks of an elegant insect”.  *  To Allen’s, to watch Neal revise the ms. he’s been working at for the past 15 years.56  Then LaVigne arrived & we went – via Auerhahn – to his place – dinner – RAIN – & so 12:30 home to find note saying I must see Tommy at the nearest opportunity; I hope this isn’t bad news.  *  

* 

[…]

9:XI:63  dinner with Tommy & Kathy last night.  She puts me down about Bob Miller, about my novel being sloppily written, about rent, about being a mediocre artist, & says she must change horses so that she can properly entertain the parents of Rachel’s friends.  She complains that she has no friends or acquaintances of her own any more.  She is bored.  She isn’t getting enough fun or money out of the contracting business.  She will go with me Tuesday night to see the Gerd Stern show.  *  Carpenter arrived; we went to see Allen.  He read my book yesterday

55 It was not true.  Pres. Ngô Dihn Diệm and his brother Ngô Dinh Nhu were both assassinated in the C.I.A.-backed coup of November, 1963. Mme. Nhu was Viet Nam’s First Lady.
\{YT&T\} & thinks it is too abstract – some of the characters “come through” but he had trouble identifying with any of them. Not as good as Creeley’s book, not as lively as Kirby Doyle’s, not as well written as Irving’s book – in general he feels YT&T just won’t do, except as a very abstract aesthetic object. I feel crushed & as if I had come to the end of my line, complete failure, complete rejection. I just now felt & smelled a tiny scene, experienced it mentally & wrote it down, a small fragment of *some* book. It seems that I must start in my work all over again from the beginning.

Score to date, YT&T

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<th>PRO</th>
<th>OK, but with Reservations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duerdens (2)</td>
<td>Thompson</td>
<td>JoAnn</td>
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<td>Thompson’s girl</td>
<td>Tommy</td>
<td>Don Allen</td>
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<td>Durhams (2)</td>
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Instead of giving the ms. to Haselwood like I asked him to do, he gave it to Ferlinghetti – which annoys me, because Ferlinghetti doesn’t like my writing at all – why drag him into all this, & all I’m going to get from him {from L.F.} is another of those creepy letters in which he explains to me that I don’t write very exciting or interesting stuff… I’m undecided now – shall I write to Elsa & ask her to return the ms. to me so that I can junk it – possibly write it all anew, several years from now? I feel shattered – & yet how can I disown this wretched creation?
* A.G. also puts down Mike’s novel as too facile, too “fast”, too superficial. & I have the same fault, “not detailed enough, too distant from the characters, what did the factory {in the “Today” section} produce?” etc. * I cry & rage, internally. *

*

10:XI:63 However, after writing letter to Jack {asking for return of my poetickal ms.} to Elsa {asking her to send the novel ms. back to me}, & to CLT {begging pardon for having deceived myself about the novel, about being a writer & announcing that I would commence looking, Monday, for a proper job}. I began to recover my equilibrium – I went to bed & soon decided that I’d allowed myself to be taken in by Allen’s public fame as an authority – I rebelled, why should I consider myself totally mistaken – Allen might be wrong, as well as I – I got up & destroyed the letter to Elsa, re-wrote the letter to CLT, will send the letter to Jack “as is”, I went back to bed, wakeful but calmer, & feel better this morning. As I wrote {or re-wrote} to CLT, the novel has about 3 good sentences & part of a good scene, I like it for that & will leave it so until I make some more books.

* […] *  Allen says the book is no worse than any other novel – it just isn’t the greatest thing since War & Peace. I said I didn’t pretend it was, it has some good things – he quite willingly agreed, but complained that he would never read another ms. &c. Ferlinghetti came in & we went with him to the store – Allen amused himself by photographing all of us – Charlie Plymell, Brannaman, Kaufman & many more were already at the store. We then descended upon Banducci’s sidewalk joint to drink coffee & gossip & so back to Gough St. to eat. Then a fine visit with Haselwood & so home. A pleasant day. *
11:XI:63 [...] I talked with Mike later & ate dinner there [...] Mike showed me a set of 18 or 20 poems he’s written this week – partly wind, partly pornography, part “philosophy” {or anyway, high sentence} I thought they were too abstract – said they ought to be cut. Then he said Allen told me the same thing. He quizzed me delicately about Dark Brown57 – I suspect that Allen has told him that I’ve denounced the book a number of times – I said it was too new, & the fuck ode material spoilt by my seeing outdoor movie from a distance, i.e. from airplane or fast car. *

This book now drags me – it is too full of dreams & confessions, I can’t carry it with me for fear of losing it or for fear of being arrested & having the police find it in my pocket. I have two unused books of this kind but as usual, I feel that I must fill this one up before I begin a new one. [...] I went out to help Fred to his trolley & now as I sit here I can hear Donn typing – no doubt another entry for his detective report to Tommy or the CIA – “entertaining suspicious stranger in room after 10 PM, etc. etc. recommend truth serum & lobotomy &c &c.” *

[...]

13:XI:63 Last night to fancy expensive fake art Gerd Stern show downtown San Francisco Art Museum {wrote 2 page review this morning, delivered one copy to Gerd’s house, mailed other to Alfred Frankenstein, Chronicle}. All of the rich & successful of San Francisco were out front or

involved in the show. Boredom – so Ferlinghetti drove us up to Batman where was opening of Arran Stephen’s show. He has some talent but is hung up in doing modish constructions & in the kind of symbolist painting which Kent Holloway is doing. Thick overlay of what LaVigne calls the “Midwest attic style”, “resurrection of ancestral totems [in] a search for security.”

* Yesterday I went with Allen to meet a Lady * Russian professor of literature, Niven Busch, Luther Nichols, handsome boy critic from Examiner, Calvin Kentfield, Peter Edler, lady reporters. Examiner photographed Allen & Niven Busch & me with the professor. She talked very fast and very positively. Her English was fairly plain & quite copious. She said everything “officially”, as if she’d prepared for this semi-official interview for hours in advance. Fat & rosy & 40ish, black thick cloth suit with a long skirt & an ornamental pin of silver or gold. Very pleasant, but very much in control, in command of the whole scene. *

* 14:XI:63 It began raining last night & continues, with mild winds this morning. […]

Credit resources: $30 from Mrs. Katavolos for Monday In The Evening, which is bound to arrive sooner or later this month. Possible monies could arrive – for YT&T, for the poem at Poetry {Chicago}, royalty check from Don’s anthology or Totem/Corinth, & at last, Impossible monies, as from prizes, gifts & c. In any case I ought to spend 30¢ on bus fare to see Don Graham & Jay McIlroy in the county madhouse this afternoon. I have $8 in the bank but I must keep that account open so that I can cash whatever check may arrive, if & when, sooner or later, bye & bye. […] The rain comes in such small drops that they whirl in the air like motes of dust, a
cloud of gnats, quite self-determined. * 2 beautiful spiderwebs, hitherto indivisible, now set with clear minute crystal drops. The concentric & radial lines of each separate web and the heavier threads which support them compose a mathematical model, irregular changing surfaces, the [illeg.] of some complicated figure
– molecules in a gas cloud, a galaxy… * 2 galaxies passing each other? […]

* After lunch, 1:10 PM, no mail – it must have come earlier. Donn probably got it. I think of the imitation Breughel face in Arran Stephen’s big painting of the man with a stave & pot leaves, who is pursued by hell-hounds & black red-eye rat. Mr. Stephens has a call of some kind, but most of his expression is buried under a heavy, ornate style that doesn’t suit his own vision, his own being. He has Keat’s problem – genius, youth, impatience, no time to develop his own intellect & faculties, everything comes too fast & too easy. Using baby doll heads & limbs in collage/construction/compositions at this late date is a sign of low grade imagination & a feeble spirit * There is a fake darkness to many of the pictures, black & brown of the closet, the closed bureau drawer instead of the darkness of space, of the heart, of love, real mystery, &c. &c. Anyway it doesn’t do it to me – perhaps the unskilled application of paint to the canvas distracts me. * The rain has quit for a while – I must walk over to Marian’s house & deliver my poem for her baby.^[58] […]

I’m catching another fit of that destructive PLAGUE. I hope not. I read passages from the three notebooks preceding this one – no improvements, but a certain amount of writing is completed – alas, there’s nothing much else to show for the days except these grubby pages

Rainy Thursday Afternoon

14:XI:63
San Francisco

Bancroft Notebook 6

JOURNAL
San Francisco
15:XI:63
12:IV:64

15:XI:63 Pigeon sits in the middle of a puddle, its head tilted back, tis tail fanned out – asleep or playing swan. * Seagull, vacant lot, watches the pigeons pecking garbage. Couldn’t care less or practicing politeness. *

* 

17:XI:63 I must have leeway, more working space, room around me, tree November tree with scarlet flowers & bluey green hilltop in the distance, hilltop out of the water. Angel Island across the end of Steiner St. * Later mad as a wolverine – seeing more & more people in the park, why did I go so far towards the Aquarium? & to torment myself went on into the DeYoung where were bright clean photos of the Sierra et cetera by Ansel Adams, hundreds of pictures
1923 – 1963 – & gorgeous high-style jewels by George Bracque {& a few sculptures} his last works {obit August 1963} then a recollection of Michael’s tantrum yesterday – NOBODY is interesting or pleasant – I wanted to go home & be alone & my belly was bursting, suddenly, diarrhea again, & along comes Duerden to invite me away; I declined. I told him I was mad; he said, “You hold it very well.” * At home I read the first part of “Tuesday” from Thoreau’s *Merrimack Rivers* – & think of him climbing Saddleback Mountain in Massachusetts – & is it on this trip that he stays overnight with the speechless grim farmer & silent family in the bare wooden house beside the creek?

{He says the “mountain” is “three thousand six hundred feet” – its summit, anyway, is that high – two hundred feet lower than Mt. Diablo which I see out the window of my room & which I think of as a hill.} It was a different trip – he met the farmer elsewhere – Mt. Katadhin? * I should have stayed home & read that book, it makes me feel a little better. * Mr. Lincoln K.K. Wong arrived with greetings from Charlie [Leong] & a sack full of grub. I gave him a glass of wine & the jade plant. * Thoreau was in Connecticut; the “rude and uncivil” man was called Rice. {pp. 175-181} *

21:XI:63 The idea comes back to me – that when my friends {especially the younger ones} take a drug and get high, they see the world as I’m accustomed to seeing it when I’m feeling normally alert and interested – & when my various imaginative & visionary faculties are functioning clearly – as for example, today – the window frame wavers & crawls like it was alive – this would frighten some people or at least suggest to them that they ought to see an oculist. I
can accept the window frame as itself to wave or not as it desires or feels a call to behave. Its life isn’t a threat to me *

22:XI:63 The President of the United States, Mr. John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was shot to death this morning in the streets of Dallas Texas. The police are trying to prove that it was done by a man called Lee Harvey Oswald, who was chairman of the Dallas Fair Play for Cuba Committee – a man who was described as having “defected” to the Soviet Union in 1959 – he went there & tried to become a Soviet citizen. Earlier in the day, Tass & one American politician had laid the blame on “ultra right-wing hate groups… the John Birch Society, &c. …” If the police can get a solid case against Mr. Oswald, the Fascist revolution will have made a great advance – Goldwater’s chances at the Republican nomination should increase… beards & dissent will become even more unpopular than before. * Worry, dismay, gloomy speculations shared with Haselwood & Ginsberg *

[...]

24:XI:63 Michael says that Mr. Lee Harvey Oswald was shot to death in the basement of the Dallas jail by one Jack Ruby. Aldous Huxley died yesterday. * My eyes hurt all afternoon – I could see everything well enough, but I felt blind or as if I were merely remembering scenes or seeing a movie – the sunlight in the park, trees grasses & waters all as gorgeous as ever – my eyes made nothing of it all – they preferred to look at the muddy path at my feet, if they wanted to see anything at all. *

1:XII:63 say all the correct things “tape recorder”, “Lord of the Flies”. En route to Misraim the land of mud, by expensive railway bounce car, because it’s more comfortable than the bus my legs ache, reading of Mr. Walpole’s gout, * & wonder if my own huge size is responsible
for my bad temper & sleepiness… I weighed about 210 pounds in the depot last night. I must starve myself like Byron. * The books are in my briefcase, 2 cars away – I sit in club car bright light but refuse to read – or to sleep. {heat, smell, bad chairs &c. bent legs} * All of which reminds me of the gaol wherein Tom Field & I spent Tuesday night.

I read with Lew & Mike & Allen & Andy Hoyem & Dave Meltzer at International Music hall & got very drunk. Tom & I were arrested while we tried to walk from Fillmore Street to Allen’s place in Gough St. * Last night I went with the McClure family to put Allen on his plane. He was happy to be going home. * Tonight Carpenter helped me to the train with my luggage & a great box of CLT’s mss. & paints &c. &c. I had spent most of the day reading & sleeping, after having driven myself batty on Friday & Saturday by running errands preparatory to going on this trip… nervousness & physical symptoms, & now the train smells all throw me back 20 years into the war, the sweaty crowded trains and the mixed feeling of excitement of travel & of weariness, the war & the journey were endless. * This trip is mostly for the edification of CLT who’s paying cash money for it. I suppose I could have flatly refused to go – & yet I want a break, a change, a difference * I think of the characters that I sketched for the Sandblast.

Why is the columnist a liar? Suppose I start over & see what these people do, where they go, what it is that they want? Suppose I drop the book censoring business entirely, considering that there’s a play on Broadway dealing with that problem {not to mention the television play heard about in July} […]

* I think of the life & death of BRA & about how it might feel to have a character die in a novel that I might write – to contrive his death, actually to kill this imaginary person? But I think of people, real & imaginary, as being curiously indestructible. […]
I think of myself being asleep later tonight, & of awaking, wrinkled, smelly, grubby in Santa Barbara, three hours outside of L.A. & when I get to L.A. will CLT meet me in the station &c. I told myself today {reading Northrop Frye} that it’s high time I got myself resurrected, got over the paranoiac fantasies & depressions that have plagued me since July. Try to remember that the past is past & that now is the time to feel free, & to act freely, make some kind of new thing. [...] 

It was on this trip, San Francisco to L.A. that the spirit messages began to arrive from Wm. & Georgie Yeats. I’ve had to walk back to the club car again in order to stretch myself & write this. My head’s full of rocks & cotton, my eyes have nearly broken down, but still I wake.

7:XII:63 I sit {or walk} in Seal Beach, a consumer. Food, beer, sunshine, an opera by Benjamin Britten {The Turn of The Screw} […] & Paul Goodman’s Growing Up Absurd, & the ocean. & myself. I have no ideas, & feel a dim annoyance & boredom – I behave as if I’d left my real self or my double still sitting in San Francisco.

8:XII:63 {Rohatsu} Dream that I am a student, late for a class – which class & what room at what hour? I can’t remember -- just as I used to wonder & worry about which days was I supposed to be in Monte’s psychology class. I wander about inside the old Court Street school in The Dalles. It is full of light as from skylights or clerestory windows. The stairs & banisters & other woodwork gleams. I meet someone – Phil or Carol Baker – & tell them my problem – we laugh. We look into a classroom. People are having an art history test, they try to identify paintings, each one ‘has’ a reproduction of some painting or drawing, & there’s a lot of babble
going on -- everyone is talking, speculating about the pictures, who painted them -- I go
downstairs & hear someone calling “Whalen” or that call coming out of a loudspeaker -- I tell a
uniformed man it’s I & he hands me my red portfolio {the one in which I’m presently filing
photos} and has me sign for it on a large form attached to the portfolio, I must sign on a line near
another signature which looks like my own writing. I try to imitate it. The man tells me that she
{or they} are waiting for me “in the rockery”. I go outside into the sunshine. A very well
dressed couple, a blonde woman & a dark man are sitting on a bench in a rock garden. Other
people are sitting near them. The couple talk loudly & insolently to each other, saying “fuck” &
“fucking” quite often, I fear that their words & manner will offend the other -- rather shadowy --
people sitting there -- other people who I fear will identify me with this large, brilliant but
somehow “wild”, careless, couple. They apparently recognize me, “know” me, but I can’t
“place” them, can’t tell who they are -- now they’re both greeting me vociferously & arguing and
teasing loudly -- I awaken.

* This is the second bright & friendly dream {i.e. the building itself, & the general
tone of beauty & adventure} about that school house & schoolyard in The Dalles -- I saw it, the
last time I went to see my father -- it’s windows all boarded up -- abandoned & no doubt
scheduled for demolition. When I was very young I was always afraid of the teachers, the other
children, the principal {Miss Bell, an ancient red-haired lady -- everyone said that her hair was
dyed, & at that time false or dyed hair was associated with whoredom, hypocrisy, dishonesty of
some sort.} * I remember it was a shock last year, seeing the building shut up, abandoned,
“dead”, “killed”. I’d written about it in a poem, casually -- I’d seen the place a few years before
I wrote about it, it was still in use -- 1910 wasn’t so far away. I suppose that my dreaming head
has made the building stand for my “lost” childhood, my mother, &c. &c. * I finally 
remembered the name, Channing Peake, having read the name Howard Warshaw in the papers – 
both are painters, have painted or drawn pictures of Joanne Kyger Snyder. *

* 

10:XII:63   Aboard the Lark again, waiting to leave for San Francisco. I have new shoes & sox 
& am full of food, thanks to CLT. The car’s impossibly hot & stuffy. * He sat in his room 
until the midnight train passed & then he sighed & went calmly to bed, free of that last possible 
interruption, free of that day just passed. […] * We’re just beyond Santa Barbara, where we 
stopped for quite some time. We now speed along at a great rate; the cars bounce and sway over 
the rough track. We must make up time which will be lost by climbing over the mountain to 
Paso Robles. […] I keep having anxiety or insecurity takes – what am I to do when I get 
“home” – how to live &c. I’m able, also, to tell myself that I have much writing to do, much to 
study, much that I just try to do for my friends. I think also of Gary & Joanne – their visit is 
growing nearer – Gary will hate me because I have no job, & because I’m begging my keep. I 
shan’t be able to answer his objections, his criticisms. Tant pis. Try again. * Breakfast makes 
everything better from Salinas to Watsonville, Watsonville to Gilroy, heavy frost, bleak 
underwoods, brown trees. Beef cattle & calves wander & jump uncomfortably – frozen grass. 
* My train’s running an hour late.   * Gilroy town hall, an architectural marvel!   * San 
Carlos has a Romanesque station à la Ralph Adams Crane [ sp.??] [Crane? Cram ?] 
 […] 

*
I’ve been home little more than a day & have caught up on all my correspondence. Last night was a poetry reading by Duncan at the museum – poems 1942 – 1962. […]

I discovered, just now, that I used 2 of these notebooks, & part of two others during the course of this year, to contain these journals & notes. Ever since I was arrested I’ve been shy of writing in this book – but I was also shy even before that, afraid before the event. However, I’d persuaded myself that I was tired of journalising, … just now, seeing the date CLT had inscribed in front of the Aubrey he presented to me – 6-16-62 – I went to the journal for that date, & find that – although there’s no entry for 16:VI, there’s one earlier & one a day later… nothing of significance, but I see that I was alive then, & what it was I thought & did. […]

*  

I just finished reading the chopped-up Goddard translation of *Surangama Sutra* – the only English version, as far as I know. Also finished reading – slowly & painfully – the print is small & the language complex – 125 letters of S.T. Coleridge. * […] I contrived to remain hypnotized with Coleridge, but it was an uneasy sleep. What I read was somewhat close to my own “real” situation here & now. I told myself, complacently, that I write a great deal, that I don’t have a dope habit, that in many ways I’m far better off than was S.T.C. – but then, I ask myself, how does it happen that you haven’t written better & a greater number of things & a greater variety &c &c. *
23:XII:63 I feel as if the days go by very fast while I sit motionless, the daylight flick on and off, window an electric sign, flick. Flick. Flick. I sit, quite still, worrying about not doing anything, about having deceived myself, about all my life having finished itself, accomplished itself & come to an end long ago. I rage & howl at Mike & Loewinsohn, about other writers, wicked publishers &c. [...] 

[...] 

1:I:64 A day of eating & sleeping & reading & a little walking to the stores. Lew gave me $10 for the refrigerator & it’s gone to Mill Valley at last. We also helped EAMD commence to remove from 24th Street to a grand flat in North Beach – Bellair St., #55. * Tommy and all her family have returned to their house tonight, & I hear them all sitting up there & talking loudly & at some length – about … some very exciting & complicated thing, “why did you put so much salt in the potato salad”, for example, which require endless repeated argument & illustration, threats, bargains, excursions &c. {excurses, excursii ?} I wait for a large potato to be backed for my supper. * I feel very disorganized & foolish – too much wine & dope last night. I feel that I should write a great many new things right away. * 

* 

2:I:64 Loewinsohn got $1000 from the Poets Foundation. He treated Don Allen, Brautigan & me to dinner at the 4 Seas: martinis, roasted spare ribs. black mushroom [22] pressed duck in fruit sauce, beef in oyster sauce with ginger, mixed vegetables {water chestnut, bamboo, peas & onions} , fried prawns, & a great fry/steam rock cod in fruit sauce. Coffee & cognac at Don Allen’s & so home. O happy day! * Tomorrow I must help the Durham family move their belongings into Bellair Street. * When shall I get any writing done? When shall I get some INNARRESTING writing done? *
8:1:64  I spent most of the day wandering on foot over the town trying to get up nerve enough to beg a dinner. At last I had supper with LaVigne & we painted pictures afterwards. I am in despair about not having any money or any food here at home. LaVigne asked me to come back tomorrow – I suppose I shall go back unless some sudden money or food arrives here. *

* 

THE NINTH OF THURSDAY 1964, JANUARY.

I neglected to mention meeting MacNeil on the bus last night. He said that I should go to Japan and earn lots of money. As for the passage money? Fake it, he said – “that’s what everybody else does.” But with me, as with the Shandy family, everything runs in a different way.

* 

12:1:64  awakened at about 6:20 by jail-madhouse dream which was like a continuation of the dream that awakened me at about 10 AM on 11:1:64 – the Saturday dream had me in jail with Jack & other friends. One by one they were taken away & given some kind of primitive electroshock treatment & then brought back to the tank. Double-deck bunks there, as in army. I was afraid & didn’t want to go & hoped that the screws wouldn’t notice me. But when they came to return the last regular prisoner, they looked at me angrily & said that they would remember me & my obstinacy. – apparently the treatment wasn’t really compulsory but the screws were able to torture people in other ways. I was very frightened & decided to go with them for the sock when I awoke in terror. This morning, I dreamed I was in bed in jail madhouse. I was insane – the worry, the ugliness of reality. The loss of memory, the inability to concentrate – all the symptoms – & fear – & knowledge of my own condition. But gradually I became more lucid, &
more composed. I began to feel orientated to that world of jail. Then people came in – an officer, a nurse, Joe Kreplin… They had a small parcel which had come to the jail addressed to me – it contained pills & dope of some kind – I said, “then you must of course charge me with possession of narcotics also – ” feeling despair & terror – I must warns the friends who sent me the parcel that if I try to contact them, they’ll be arrested. Scene changes to a roadway through a weedy stoney field. Walls in the distance. Men in raggedy clothing sit in a little group beside the road. Other raggedy men pass by. One of the men sitting down is Kirby Doyle. His face is badly cut, beside one eye – forehead – cheek – & the cuts have been newly stitched & cleaned – clots of blood. He looks miserable. I feel responsible but he assures me that it wasn’t my fault he’s in trouble. I awaken. I go to the bathroom & return to bed. About a half hour later – 6:45 – I need to get up again. I see the new moon high in the sky.

* 

14:1:63  Yesterday, sciatica, lumbago, neuralgia in both hips & legs. There’s a total solar eclipse on schedule today, 12:44 PM. The sky is very clear – it rained quite hard for a little while, yesterday afternoon. It is cold – about 46º I guess.  *  I write all this in order to remind myself that I ought, after all, to be writing a poem, a story, novel, lay, essay, polemic, &c.

 […]  *  The mail this morning is all for Donn. I had hoped that money might arrive … SOMEWHERE …  *  I stop myself from reading – I finished The White Goddess night before last – I must listen to my own guts.  *  A few minutes ago I thought, now the postman has come & gone, I’m free to listen to myself – but I immediately remembered the eclipse – I must wait for it, now, & observe it closely when it arrives.
* 1:18 PM – nothing even approximating an eclipse has happened. * 3 PM still nothing. I took a short walk, up the hill to Clifford St., down Clayton to the Panhandle, up Baker & Buena Vista Terrace to 15th St. & so home – the sun bright, the air brilliantly clear, a chill breeze. Towards the last I found myself growing quite sleepy. Now that I’m home, I vacillate – shall I
go to bed or shall I try to keep awake? Time is so short -- I should write about 35 short stories this week – a novel next week – a play the week after that – &c. &c. &c. * 

* 15:1:64 Chez LaVigne, reading Fosco Maraini Secret Tibet while LaVigne takes a nap. p. 69 tells us that Queen Maya reached up to pick an olive branch. Also, that Lumbini is the present Rummindei & that a commemorative pillar was erected there in B.C. 249 {rediscovered in 1895} announcing that Asoka excuse the village of Lumbini from paying taxes on account of its being the birthplace of Buddha. P. 83, speaking of Tantras, “Nominally they deal with the five great themes (the creation of worlds, the destruction of worlds, religion, the acquisition of supernatural powers, and union with the Absolute). Actually they are mainly concerned with ritual matters, mystical & magic ways of acquiring occult powers, the use & meaning of formulae and enchantments, the uses of letters of the alphabet, esoteric diagrams and talismans, and the symbolism of gestures (mudra). {“ … dialogues between Siva & his Female Energy … “} * pp. 87-90. Buddhas of the 4th, Present, Epoch: Dhyani Buddha, Amitabha {the Panchen Lama}, Dhyani Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara {the Dala Lama} & Manushi [sic] Buddha Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha.
* Adi Buddha {Nepal} Svayambhu[59]

Gelugpa:
Vajradhara + Prajnaparamita
(Dorjechang

Kargyupa:
Vajrasattva
(Dorjesempa

Nimapa:
Samantabhadra + White Tara

Dhyani Buddhas preside over the 5 Kalpas, the Five Elements &c., exist in

“Dharmakaya”

Dhyani Bodhisattvas, dynamic generations of the above, exist as “Sambhogakaya” – “bodies of absolute completedness.”

Manushri Buddha – earthly manifestation by the Dhyani Buddha of the current kalpa –

“phenomenal body” – “Nirmanakaya”.

Maraini compares this last with the Docetist heresy in the Christian Church. {Gr. Δοκηται, from δοκέ-ειν } – that Christ’s body was either a phantom, or of celestial substance, Q.V. [ quod

[59] In the original text the terms “Gelugpa,” etc., are subsumed on the right side of the page in much a much smaller hand-script.
vide] which Scholiast on the Iliad figured that the Helen who was abducted by Paris was only a phantom figure?

* 

17:I:64 12:50 A.M. – Tommy & Ezra are still carrying on a grand screeching war upstairs. It’s extremely tiresome. I’d like to be asleep. I lay with the Sanskrit alphabet.

21:I:64 Storms of wind, rain, hail & thunder. Allen has written to say that I must send a poetickal ms. to LeRoi Jones & hope he will select a book of poems from it to be printed by Totem/Corinth. I look with loathing upon the job of typewriting I must do – I can’t find the nerve to begin it. I am supposed to dine Friday with the Aston famly. I was supposed to go to the Durham’s tomorrow, but here’s all this typing & weather. I need many dollars for postage – I own 2¢ in cash. All the rest of my resources must be counted in terms of genius, macaroni & margarine & 2 cans tomato sauce. *

* 

23:I:64 I began the typing yesterday then to supper with LaVigne. Now 3:25 A.M. I have insomnia, indigestion, giddiness. After typing all the stuff in my notebook, I realize that 1963 is gone, it was another year, & now there’s this one. LaVigne also feels that it seems as if a year had elapsed between New Year’s & today – some huge tract of time, anyway. * I feel too scattered to write, too tired to read, too wide awake to lie comfortably abed.

[...]

17:II:64 The ms. must have got finished typing on or about the 28 or 29 January – I seem to recall that it took about a week or 8 days. I didn’t get it mailed until the 11 or 13 of February, lacking money. I continue to subsist by scrounging, stealing, borrowing, begging, wheedling, etc.
* The weather is very clear & warming very slowly. The nights are cold. Saturn & Venus & the new moon looked exquisite on Sunday night {the 16 Feb.} * But LaVigne says today that the stars are due to keep shedding baleful influences over my head for the next 18 months. Look to April for an event which will give an inkling of what the astrology magazine claims will be horrors in June – & again from 20 September until March 1965. Good grief. He foretells revolutions & upheavals & quarrels between me & friends &c. &c. * I sit here trying to get myself back into the notion of attending to my own business, but I seem unwilling to begin. I’ve decided to feel hungry, instead. LaVigne is preparing a small show of pictures for 23 February, a champagne farewell party to the rich of San Francisco & to all his friends here. Kirby will read on the preceding evening.

**18:II:64** Sent poems to Charles Plymell & to Bob Ross for their several publishing projects. Also sent poems last week to Ed Sanders in NY for his anthology. * I visited Gisen on Sunday – brought books for him to read &c. He now has a lady disciple – she left her husband, after several weeks of marriage – & set herself to be a student, lady monk or whatnot – pretty Nisei girl possibly 23 or 24, Margaret Ikeda. People who own Japanese restaurant have donated a large flat to Gisen. Margaret lives there with him – I presume they sleep together, since Zen priests aren’t customarily celibate. The people at EW House {Joanne Snyder & I ate there last week} are sort of annoyed & mildly scandalized by the new arrangement. They say that Miss Ikeda has announced that Gisen is a rōshi of the most pure Rinzai stripe & carries the true Dharma, as contrasted with the Reverend Mr. Suzuki at the Soto temple where {Margaret has reportedly said} “everybody just sits around” – implying that there’s no “Zen” there. When told of this assertion, the Rev. Mr. Suzuki is said to have remarked, “Maybe so.”
I am to lunch with Joanne tomorrow. She looks very well, seems much more composed, less giddy & demanding than 4 years ago. I still love her in some way or other. I’ve fooled away several hours by sorting old letters which I ought to toss out & burn. I shall never re-read very many of them. What a waste of space & time! -- but what else shall I do with these imaginary entities, alternately to waste & to decorate them with virtuous action, beautiful works of art & philosophy &c. ? -- feh!

25:II:64  […]  * Sunday, R. LaVigne showed a vast number of drawings & paintings at Batman Gallery. He’d taken the advice of a very successful PR man – sent out beautifully printed invitations {a wood block print, signed} to 90 rich people. He spent 80 – some dollars on champagne for them to drink. One of the rich people attended the showing. LaVigne & all of us – his friends – drank the champagne. Where shall he get money to pay his rent, pay for his removal to New York City?  *

26:II:64  He sits today at Batman Gallery, waiting for buyers. I wait also, for Ronald Cushing to arrive, we are to visit the Bunnell estate in the country. Both &/or all of us are broke & despondent. Robert says he has over $400 worth of debt here which must be paid before he can go to NY, not to speak of the money he’ll need for the trip. Shall we rob the bank, an armoured car? He will begin telephoning again – trying to get collectors to come & see his pictures. I predicted the present fiasco – what good did it do, this foreknowledge? […]  * I’m hungry, along with 9/10ths of the world – they ask, “So what else is new?”  * I drank too much coffee at the gallery – I keep on feeling wakeful, “nervous”, “depressed” -- old fantasies of suicide
revive: disappearance in the mountains, walking out of town as far as possible – remote from this house, anyway – to eat sleeping pills, other poisons… * I must be catching cold – why else should I be feeling so ridiculous? * How else describe my present condition than to say, “I am dead”? I’ve cut myself away from all the world – what is this but an end, a tomb? So that I must – now or 10 minutes from now or early tomorrow morning – begin again, start a new life, a new series of mistakes, a row of X’s and O’s.

* Reading Blake helped restore my spirits – that, and trying to find bits about writing which Don Allen might use for the book that he and Warren Tallman want to compile – suitable quotes from Valéry, Stein, Hart Crane &c. – At last I got stuck with re-reading some of the Paris Review interviews – & now it’s past 1: AM 27:II:64

* I didn’t go to the country – I grew tired of waiting for Ron & so started home – and met him in Fillmore Street, where he apologized for being 5 or 6 hours late. I said that I didn’t mind, that now I must go home & try to work. He urged me to come another time for a long visit. I declined, graciously (I hope) * At about 7 PM I tried to see Gisen but their house was dark – I left a note & returned home, 7:15. So here I stayed until this very minute, when I plan to go to bed – & go unconscious until morning *


March 1, 1964 – The first quarter of this year is almost gone & I’ve written very little. As usual, I feel frightened – shall I ever write anything again – how shall I prove to myself that I exist, unless I can keep showing myself many pages of handwritten poems and notes in the file that’s in my desk drawer? Money came on Wednesday or Thursday from sale of Siesta to Brown University. I have no present worry – Don’s phonograph is restored – I am full of food – I keep
tryin to finish reading Clea, while feeling that I’m wasting far too much time with it. I’ve seen so many people this weekend, I’m worn out with society – yesterday, I barged about with Carpenter. Today, I visited Gisen & Margaret, then the McClures where Mort Subotnick came to visit also, & I had a talk with Nemi & then with Joanne – these last two by telephone. Now I am to go to dinner at Duerdens with the Loewinsohns & Robt LaVigne -- & tomorrow night some kind of soiree at Don Allen’s, where there’s some kind of poet visiting from New York. Mr. & Mrs. William Eastlake from New Mexico, & Warren Tallman, from Vancouver. Since I’m not engaged in any writing project, I may as well socialize. Joanne & Nemi like my novel; they’ve both read the ms. Joanne said that Bill MacNeil was with her while she was talking to me. She says she needs someone to help guide her life. She’s to dine with Duncan tomorrow night, but must also come to Don Allen’s. She wants me to telephone her daily… I am, of course, hugely flattered. A day of rain squalls – literary gossip.

2:III:64 up at 9:40 AM, bright sunshine. My head is muddled from having stayed up until 3 AM to finish reading Clea – my throat is sore from babbling loudly & idiotically for hours at everyone last night, telling all the same inarresting [sic] things I always tell – what a bore. Why couldn’t I simply have come home at – say – 10:30 PM – ? All of us stayed until 1:15 A.M. – inexcusably, tiresomely &c. &c. The Loewinsohns leave town forever this coming Friday… so perhaps it was a farewell party, but even that isn’t true, certainly it wasn’t a very good excuse for my sitting like a lump in the Duerden’s drawing room running my mouth a mile a minute. I must apologise.

[...]

60 The fourth and final novel in Lawrence Durrell’s Alexandrian Quartet.
4:III:64 was alright, except that I squandered shoals of money on books. I’ve read *A Room With a View* at last – what a pleasure to read something exact & concentrated, after the bubbles & marshmallows of Durrell. I’ve also begun to read Faulkner’s last book, *The Reivers*, & to re-read *South Wind* – all this in addition to the *Lotus Sutra* that I commenced reading this morning. My eyes hurt. I feel worried & guilty because I’ve been reading & spending & eating too much, instead of writing & thinking &c. &c. &c.

*5:III:64 “I wonder what flavour that jello was”, Robert LaVigne says, at dinner in the Asia Grill. * While I wait for a bus, about 20 minutes before midnight, Jackson & Fillmore, the police want to know if I live in the neighborhood, have I been ringing doorbells up the street, am I on my way home? No, no, yes. The one who drove the car said, finally, positively, “Good night.” So the bus took me away, five minutes later. I wonder if the stars recorded all this. I’ll ask LaVigne tomorrow/today {it’s after midnight as I write this, Friday the 6th of March 1964}.

*  
7:III:64 I awaken early – 7:25 – cold & stiff. I’ve caught the cold which LaVigne & Joanne had yesterday. Since Friday, the weather turned very cold, however the sun is very bright – it as the sun which woke me – I write this in the park, my hand stiff & cramped, the joints of my fingers cold & painful & swollen, from walking, cold. The sun above Mt. Parnassus, moon over Strawberry Hill, a phenomenon; my nose runs. I’m supposed to attend a party for Albert this PM at Jim Hatch’s in Mill Valley. I don’t think I can stay longer than an hour, I feel so tired – & there’s another party tomorrow PM at Tom Parkinson’s.

*
Morning flash: My father had an artificial head; he’d lost his own in a battle of World War I. The first mechanical head was an experimental model – the smile was jerky, the eyelids didn’t work too well, & the paint was much too pink, suggesting doll flesh. The one he wore during the ‘30s was more natural-looking, surfaced with some kind of soft leather. After the 2nd world war, he was able to get a very lifelike head – so many men had, by that time, suffered from the same accident as my father, the demand for artificial heads had grown – many new materials and techniques of working them had been developed.

* 

At the Laundry: A picture or a sentence presents itself to me. In order to know, to write the next sentence or to see the next picture – or perhaps the next frame of the same sequence, as in a strip of movie film, or the next whole scene or sequence – I must let myself “down into” what I feel is the TIME of that picture, that sentence. {Gtde. Stein says “the time of and the time in the composition” – I’m seeing her meaning, again?} Even this moment – I’m looking at a small crowd of people who are listening to a political speech. I feel that their sense of time, participating as they are in another event (“other” than my own scene, inside the launderette, where I’ve been reading, the radio’s playing, other customers move about, one of the managers is talking on the telephone – roar of machines) is different from mine. A man in the crowd is looking towards me. I don’t know whether he sees me, but it’s quite likely that he does. I observe the changes of his facial expression – he listens & looks, caught up in another time. * 

Now all the hard things are done for today. I’ve had a bath, done the laundry, written up these notes. There are many letters which I must write. The rug on my floor is filthy; I must sweep it. &c. &c. I should telephone Miss Kay Boyle about suits. I should go see LaVigne, Michael, telephone Joanne &c. &c. *
12:III:64  [...]  The “picture or sentence” of 10:III above, was of a woman awakened in bed by the sound of – Japanese music, or the whining of a heavy dynamo – a not un-musical whistling whine, several notes sounding together, a treble bagpipe drone, a Chinese shêng, & one high flute note, loud & long, beginning with a soft glissando up to the sustained high wailing note – & perhaps the heavy, seemingly off-beat thump of a big drum, or of a Nō actor’s foot on the stage floor. It is just before sunrise. Is the noise real or imaginary – music or machinery? [50]  {Is it a woman hearing it. Is it a man who suddenly tells himself, for half a second, “It is the beàn sidhe” & then decides he’s having a heart attack, a nervous breakdown, hearing a radio – there’s a real explanation}  * & Actually I recognized some while later, I was remembering a personal experience from 20 years ago – but seeing it all as happening to somebody else in much different circumstances, somebody in a story, “in the poem”, as Duncan &/or Spicer would say.  *

13:III:64  I wake up coughing, 4:25 AM; get up a few minutes, go back to bed coughing & wheezing [...]  

14:III:64  I took a 5 gr Nembutal last night & got some sleep. This morning I feel a little better, got up & ate, shaved, cleaned this absolutely filthy room. Carpenter came to visit, & gave me a ride to the post office. I walked back – a fairly warm sunny day – buying more grapefruit

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61 In Irish folklore, the Bean Sidhe (woman of the hills, also known as a Banshee) is a spirit who presages a death by her wailing.
on the way […]  * Jack Ruby has been sentenced to death for the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald. Presumably, this ends the train of events begun on November 22 last year when Oswald is supposed to have killed President Kennedy.

[...]

17:III:64   Lunch & long afternoon with Joanne & all the gang – Nemi, Liz, Richard Brautigan, Lewis Welch – beer & fumes & laughter, & I early to home dinner, Conrad & sleep. The Conrad – *Lord Jim* – largely [illeg.] & “correct” feelings {“*Le style anglais – Victorienne*”} & “morals” & “morale”. It is, so far, BORING to read these polite sentences, these neat chapters. {Each of the chapters ends with what C. must have considered a “wow” – either as a sentence viewed as an accomplishment of Art, or as a surprising piece of information or a profound philosophical saying.} I’m now at p. 284 & it’s taken me 8 or 9 months to get there. […] – I think of Ford, Forster, Stephen Crane, D.H. Lawrence – all contemporaries. Are Conrad or any of these an improvement upon Henry James? Is this last an interesting question? Lawrence, Joyce, even, in her own way, Mrs. Woolf – all these are poets of a new kind. * Conrad’s prose is reminiscent of Addison & Steele, the total final delight of English instructors who never have read Swift, Sterne, Smollet, Aubry, Nashe, Ben Jonson &c. […]

*  

18:III:64   I’ve arranged a busy day for myself. Carpenter picks me up at 11:30 to take me to baby-sit at his house until after 1 PM. Yesterday I sent a message to Henry Wenning to say that I’d be at home all this afternoon, if he should like to come by. *  

[...]  I finished reading *Lord Jim* last night. It isn’t really too terrible. Like any good novel, it’s about illusion & reality – about making mistakes, fucking up, because one responds – mistakenly – to one’s own IDEA about the world instead of responding directly to the world. [...]


Mr. Henry Wenning, tall, white haired, getting heavy in the middle, smokes too much, & is addicted to taking Bromo Seltzer – he has an ulcer. He works too hard, worries too much […] Once he worked for the government – some sort of administration of government doles. Union organizer CIO, all over the country including San Francisco 1937 – 8. Knew Bridges {they disliked each other} hated Murray, loved John L Lewis &c. Was in some sort of business for himself, later, & then threw it up, sold it out to pay off divorce & first wife. Went into book business 5 or 6 years ago – met Allen & Gregory in Europe. A fan of Beckett, he’s met him several times, collected his books, & now buys Beckett ms. when he can. […] Likes Bro. Antoninus. A little sour about Michael. Likes Dubliners, David Meltzer &c. Beckett is awesomely learned, very courtly, gentle, calm. Wenning told him that Cid Corman claimed that if Beckett believes his own ideas he’d be dead, a suicide. Beckett said, “What can you do about people. Que voulez vous – cette vie ici est unique – tout que nous avons. These people leave no room for the imagination.” Wenning doesn’t approve of Stevens’s publication of Opus Posthumus – “I’ve never opened it” He thought that it ought not to have been printed – or only for scholars and disciples. He heard some story that Stevens had bought up &/or destroyed all the copies he could find of Owls Clover. Wenning bought my copies of Transport to Summer and Auroras of Autumn and the proof sheets of the City Lights edition of Howl – $40 for the lot, on a day when I had only 3¢ in my pocket. It was probably a mistake to sell the proof sheets, but I want money, food, “security” – & I’m already in my “old age” that I’ve been saving against – good riddance, good luck, Selah. *

[…]
Once they had all been together, a set, clique, gang – they had since gone their several ways. It was seldom that more than 3 of them met together – one of the last occasions was the farewell party to X. After he was gone, 5 or six of the one-time group kept up a correspondence with X while he was overseas. the members of the group grew older; their talents, élan, esprit &c. have been wasted – the brightest of them killed himself, the next brightest is incurably batty in an institution – the middling are police-types: professionals, medium-large business executives, professors. The point is, none of these people has any real existence or meaning except for their friendship with X and his interest in them. X has become fantastically great, something cross between Einstein & Beethoven – so great that nobody knows that he is, Life and Time haven’t told anybody about him {much less have New Yorker, Esquire, Encounter, Figaro, Frankfurter Zeitung, Il Voce Di Popolo, Pravda, the Hong Kong Times, the Dainichi Shinbun} – & won’t unless he were to perish. One reason for his anonymity is the jealousy of his professional colleagues, who hate him. They avoid mentioning his name – most particularly, they take care never to write it or otherwise let it appear in print. Much later, some of that group are remembered as having been a friend of X. They attain a minute portion of official immortality by being mentioned in footnotes to learned articles and books. {They have immortal souls, each one of them is infinitely valuable, but as clearly as they themselves or any of their friends can see, they have done nothing, contributed nothing, they are lost, & for all practical purposes, their lives have been of no remark or interest to anyone outside themselves – except X, who knows that certain of them have been important to his physical, intellectual, moral &c. development.  

*
John Montgomery came around twice, same as ever. James & Mary Ann Hatch came & brought Mary Ann’s painting of islands [sic] & trees, which I’m borrowing {Organ Morgan was with them. He wound up baying & moaning}.

Brendan Behan is dead {18\textsuperscript{th}? 20\textsuperscript{th}? of March} Since we are about the same age, it is worrisome to contemplate – but there it is. He had a lot of bad luck & lots of fun – I expect he felt that he’d done all he could do. No doubt he hated dying, even if he was tired of being sick.

The only time I met him was in NY, at Larry Rivers’s studio/apartment. He spoke so fast & with such a thick brogue, it was nearly impossible to understand him. He had very few teeth in front. he often sang – instead of speaking a [illeg.] sentence he’d sing – one expected another sentence to complete the paragraph but instead here came some bawdy song, “I’m Lady Chatterly’s Lover” {to the tune of “Pomp & Circumstance”} anyway he was funny & lively, although not drinking that day – his wife, a thin fairly tall quiet girl, very pleasant. I as told that she’s a nurse.

I didn’t see Behan when he came out here, later. Too bad.

Dinner with Tommy, late as usual. I left about 12:30 this morning & read until 3 AM or so – finished reading the translation of Kagerō Nikki which I found in Clement St. last week. […] I feel tired & sick this morning. I cleaned the rug & now it’s dirty again. We talked last night with some difficulty – it was Kathy’s birthday and she hated the idea of a party & as in a bad mood. Tommy & I spoke mechanically back & forth about politics, movies,
Mexico, money, Rachel, Curtiss &c. She thinks I ought to get a rich patron or a foundation grant – & that my books ought to sell millions of copies. I get paranoid & wonder how I can get out of this room, out of this house. {I have 15¢ in my pocket} I wonder if Locke would take me away with him to Tucson – he’s invited me a couple times – it’s a cinch that I’ve pretty well “worn out my welcome” in this town. How I’d like to go into the Himalayas! *

*

25:III:64 Lady Day. […] * I’m reminded of Olson’s idea that the poetic or exciting communication is broken, gasping, stammering speech – not smoothly ordered discourse * I remember now, that I went into Vesuvio last night to see Jim Aston. I was bombed out of my head. He invited me to come for dinner chez lui on Friday 27 – I must remember. I saw Chris MacLaine a moment later – looking very well very calm & collected. We shook hands. I must figure out a way of asking Jim not to holler out my entire name when he sees me coming into that place – it makes people look around & I feel like a fool. * The way things fit together. That’s painting, music, – all of art? What about vision? The way things fit together; a drill which makes a square hole.

*

All of which is “kindling”, as Robert Graves says the Arab poets call it – warm-up, setting-up exercises. But why not? The paper’s cheap, and I feel better – instead of aimlessly worrying. * Which comes first – the postman or lunch time? * The other day I thought for a long time about people who are famous or important – and “ordinary” people, “all the rest.” I suspect that each person is important to somebody, that many famous or important people don’t interest me – I’m not interested in meeting the Governor of California, or Mr. Louis Zukofsky, for example.
I’m told that many people would like to meet me, for one reason or another. I know that there are millions of people who don’t know that I exist & don’t care if I do.

It amuses me that Mr. Matson, for example {presuming that one of the Matson family is still alive & is President/Board Chairman & chief controller [sic] of the Matson Steamboat Line} and I live in the same town. He is rich as Croesus & has quite a voice in California, national & international politics. He’s an important man. It would be difficult to meet him, without going to a great deal of trouble to arrange a meeting. But I don’t need or want to meet Mr. Matson – or, anyhow not the Matson who I just described – if I met a handsome man, one who I thought was attractive 7c. & he turned out to be Mr. Matson, that would be quite something else. […]  

26:III:64  I sit home & catch one line of poetry out of the air – I barely survive. I fidget & fiddle, glue & repair & ring bells & cut hair – waiting. Also, remorse & regret & worry – How can I get out of here when shall I get enough money to move independently – what’s happened to the coal-oil stove that Mertis loaned to me – when can I retrieve the McClaine painting from David Deck’s apartment – when shall I pay the dentist – when can I have my teeth repaired again – when shall I be able to pay back all the money that I owe – what shall I do about the income tax? I wait for the postman to bring a letter that will cure me. In the meantime, I boil a pot of macaroni and hope for the best – knowing that I shall, as usual, get precisely what I deserve – no more, no less. […]  

* Again & again I’m shocked to think how much of the year has gone by without my having accomplished anything. All day I’ve been creating shelves full of books in my head – but there’s nothing on paper except these repetitious & commonplace ramblings – not even real notes. […]
I cleaned almost the entire house this morning. Then came a letter from Little Brown\textsuperscript{62} to say that YT&T has “two critical flaws”. “The two main characters” are “profoundly unattractive” and the “narrative line is inert.” As Lew is fond of saying, “Some days I just don’t know what to think.” So there’s that. I sit here penniless, minus that one gambler’s chance I’m accustomed to using for credit – I’ve heard of living beyond one’s means – I live, usually, one step beyond that – now here I am, located (more or less permanently, I fear) about two miles further up the road from that last “step beyond” – But what I want is my as yet unwritten next book – where’s that fiery angel with the word at? I don’t care, really, about not having food or postage or money I want to hear my Daemon voices – the symphonies & operas as yet unheard, unseen by anyone else. * The wisteria beans that Jim Hatch gave me have been put into the closet on a wet sponge, I hope that they’ll germinate & grow properly.

* Duerden brought James Koller to call. Mr. Koller is still shy – but a tough enough customer, nevertheless. Mostly Duerden talked about literature & the post office & the iniquities of Eastern Publishers & Malcolm Cowley & Bill Brown & Richard Brautigan & Random House & Robert Creeley. We talked of Conrad’s creepy morality. […]

* I’m reading a translation of selected letters of Rilke. I read a translation of Sonnets to Orpheus * American Indian Prose & Poetry & re-read the introductory materials & the first chapter of Nigger of the Narcissus, & re-read King Jesus, & re-read the essays on Jarry in The Banquet Years and the first one of the Indian Tales of Jaime De Angulo and a long essay on the “lost [last?] poems of WCW & the poems themselves {New Directions 16}. And I continue

\textsuperscript{62} The literary and legal New York publishing house, Little, Brown and Company.
reading *Morte d’Arthur* and the translation of *The Lotus Sutra* and re-read the “Introduction” to *Magister Ludi*. I read *The Reivers* without much excitement. I re-read bits from *The Arabian Nights*, bits of Baudelaire, Apollinaire, Mallarmé, Jarry. I read all through this notebook – a record of silliness & self-pity & self indulgence. […] * Dinner with the Astons was a trifle awkward – Caroleena cooked a splendid curry & prepared a large number of tasty garnishes for it. A fruit salad. She seems happy, but mildly reserved – neither formal nor unfriendly, but a little tired, a little bored. Jim was exhausted from working & from fighting with his boss.

I’m neither famous enough, nor successful enough to suit – contrariwise it may have nothing to do with me – they may simply have been into a scrap before I came. I felt that they tolerate me, but don’t want to see me very often. […] They have been kind to me – in the past, & this evening as well – I have no real cause for complaint or for beginning to feel a real strain in our relationship with each other. On the other hand, I have a strong hunch that they are holding back, they are reserved; much of the time they aren’t saying what it is they feel – quite possibly they would like to talk more plainly, but don’t do it because they’re afraid of hurting my feelings, or because they do, actually, have a rather exalted, romantic notion of me, some peculiar old fashioned “respect for the aged” – or is it some confused hope and fear: perhaps they think of me as a person with power in the Literary World, one who could help build or help wreck – the chances of a young author?

* Can people – young, old or whatever age – really know & like each other & then stay together – or with great violence {or a delightful grace} leave each other forever {yet remembering each other with precision, with the respect of real hatred or really fond recollection} – without some sort of physical sexual contact? I’m beginning, after a few years of experience & a few minutes of thought, to believe that it’s impossible – because so much of the
time we WON’T speak plainly to each other. We “gloss over” – when we don’t simply tell a flat footed lie. Too much of the time I’m satisfied with mild & gentle conversation instead of real CONTACT, physical satisfaction – I always settle for less than I need – make myself seem less than I am – instead of allowing myself to be totally seen, instead of TRULY MANIFESTING THAT BEING WHICH IS TRULY I WHICH IS BEYOND “PERSONALITY”, BEYOND WHAT I CUSTOMARILY FEEL AND SEE AND THINK OF AS “I MYSELF” *

*

28:III:64 I’ve done even LESS today than ever – read much of the Sunday paper & talked to Jayson & did some calligraphy {badly} & ate again & fed the cats & now I’m as tired as if I’d done a whole day’s work. Kansas Charlie & his girlfriend, Anne, came to see me this afternoon. Charley complained about the police busting the sale of books from City Lights press, & of Now magazine & about the Midwest put-down of all good art & the present universal overproduction of bad art &c. I told him to get busy turning out his own work. He wasn’t very easily convinced – he thinks of doing one’s own work as a kind of withdrawal or retirement from action. He keeps worrying about being sent forcibly to the loony bin or goal &c. Now I intend to read for a while. * What I should do is bathe. Instead I try to look at Chinese characters in the Heart Sutra to find out what are the sounds. […]

30:III:64 I started to write “30:XII:64” – I sit waiting for McCorkle & for poems; wondering about food & money. […] Now instead of writing I think about spending the rest of my savings – $5 – & about where & how to eat NEXT – at Mike’s, at the Duerden’s – I must find a
new train of thought. * I chafe against the idea of waiting for Locke to show up – I’m not really hungry – {not like yesterday} – what I must do is BEGIN WRITING. * & wrote some, & so to spend the $ on food & a quart of wine. I cooked & ate a vast meal & then smoked all the rest of the adulterated hash that Brown brought me yesterday. It helped the digestion, but didn’t spring my skull. I’ve read until my eyes hurt – or the cheap dinner wine has made a Katzenjammer? […] Am I to suffer another cold? But that’s just the tobacco shutting off my circulation… ? *

31:III:64 I finished reading all of Malory’s Morte D’Arthur. It has taken me a year to read through the two volumes. {800 pp.} I’d started reading the first volume about 10 years ago & stopped… * It rains today. I’ve eaten a great quantity & now I think of going to the store to get a little bit more, but I’m not hungry enough to decide what it is I want more of, except it must be fresh vegetables & meat & milk * Now I’m stuck with reading Chaucer, Spenser & the Byron biography… all left hanging. I was thinking a while ago about lines from The Tempest & looking forward to re-reading it… but I must read the rest of B. Jonson first, I tell myself… & the Lotus Sutra I’ve only got ½ the way through. * & I think of Genji, & The Longest Journey & Ambassadors &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.

1:IV:64 Chuang Tse ca. 369-286 B.C. Mencius 372-289 B.C.

Lao Tse {3 c. B.C. ?}. * I quoted Mencius Bk. IV part II ch. XII but couldn’t remember where I’d read it – where did I quote it? *

[…]

I’ve been reading Hermann Weyl’s *Philosophy of Mathematics and Natural Science*. I don’t understand more than 1/8 of what I’ve read, but it’s entertaining, & full of trips. I grew tired of it this noon, cleaned the rug, went to visit DL Haselwood at the Auerhahn Press. Trudi, the swiss lady who runs the restaurant next door, made us come to see her hand-carved musical chair – the seat is loose, hinged, so that it rises, after one has sat upon it, & sets off the clockwork inside to playing one of 2 tunes. Now I am at home, & must continue reading Mr. Weyl – although my eyes are tired & I’m not really interested in doing so, I feel I must finish reading the book. * […]*

A postcard from LaVigne to say that he’s arrived safely in NYC & that all our friends there are well. I’ve been thinking of writing to him in the country, or of driving to the ranch with Harold – but I’ve been stuck here counting sugar – & VAST TRACTS OF TIME HAVE GONE PAST MY EMPTY HEAD – WHEN SHALL I SET MYSELF TO WORK?

* […] I’ve made 7 pages of quotes & queries while reading Weyl – what shall I do with them? *

*  

Locke arrived & took me to an expensive lunch at Lefty O’Doul’s & shopping for India prints & for books at the Metaphysical Town Hall & Library & Bookshop Fritzi Armstrong. & so home -- […]

*  

Last night Whistler made a long tirade about his “stolen” frying pans, books, $60 – {remember Tommy said it was $85} – & wants to know if Bob Miller has recovered or found the books which he {Bob} says are missing from his collection – Also a story that someone has tired to jimmy the front door of Tommy’s house. Whistler has lied before, to me & to other people –
what does he want, really? He says he wants to take the $60 off his Income Tax, but can’t unless he tells the police about it – & he doesn’t want to have an investigation for fear of embarrassing Bob Miller. On the other hand, he says, if Bob Miller has had things stolen from him, they might complain to the police together, & then all would be sweetness & light. I think that all this is a combination of boredom & paranoia. * I forgot to add, on the 3rd above, that nobody was home at Michael’s house -- & that I met Duerden when I was on the way home, & he took me to lunch at his house. * Now I must finish reading Hermann Weyl – but my brains are boiled. Jay is playing the phonograph, Mr. Whistler is bounding up & down the house &c. […] This would be a good day for the mailman to come & scatter bundles of money & good news all over my grey head… but I suppose that all I’ll get is that YT&T ms., back from Boston. […] I went to Michael’s last night to pick up the Pound books which he had borrowed – JoAnn says, they’ve had a little letter from Allen – he says that he’s busy, that he’s stopped writing poetry &c. * I wish that I could keep my father’s rather cynical dictum in mind: DON’T BELIEVE ANYTHING YOU HEAR – AND ONLY HALF OF WHAT YOU SEE. * Better yet, I ought to keep my own business, my own affairs in mind. * Exactly what happened – the ms. is here, all dog-eared & wrinkly – reading a stray sentence here & there, I’m convinced it’s STILL a fair book, no matter who doesn’t like it. * I just went up & hollered at Tommy about Mr. Whistler. She says he’s been under psychiatric treatment for a number of years – at one time he went into a fugue, disappeared into the wilds of Alameda for a year and a half – nobody could find him. “When we did find him, he was wild. Don’t pay any attention to him. Don’t take it personally.” […] She says, in re her front door, that a screw worked out of the lock plate & scratched the door-jamb – it was Whistler who interpreted the scratches as being marks of a jimmy – […] She has long been accustomed to Donn’s paranoia. She put the chain on the door
& went to bed. Ezra checked the door this morning & saw that there was no wood to hold the screw which had worked out of the lock plate. * […] They probably think I have a lot of nerve, to speak to them about all this, considering how they no doubt figure that I owe them a year’s rent & other vast kindnesses. {At best, I tell myself, they may take it as an exhibition of an aristocratic temperament – the penniless *vieux marquis* shouting at the indulgent servants who are secretly doing fancy laundry & sewing to earn money enough to keep the old man fed… shades of Balzac.} […] I went with Carpenter to help him select chow for the dinner which he & Marty propose to give the Decks [sic] & me tomorrow night. We found that Ed Muldoon’s Vorpal Gallery in Adler Place had been raided by the police – there’s been a plainclothesman in, yesterday, photographing the Kama Sutra sculptures of Ron Boise – today the police served a warrant on Muldoon & confiscated 11 sculptures. Muldoon is to be arraigned tomorrow. I must write a letter to the papers tonight – & make phone calls tomorrow in order to rouse interest &c. * I’ve already arranged to get hold of Gleason – tomorrow I must call Dean Wallace & Grove & Larry & also write to Allen in NY.

* 11:IV:64 At night. At last I’ve finished reading & making many pages of extracts from Herman Weyl […] * Much time today spent with Carpenter. We went to North Beach where I had to deliver many things to many people. We had a long talk at Mike’s Place with Brautigan, who has loaned me *The Confederate General* to read. Then Carpenter drove me to Camp Herms, in the hills behind Kensington, where we hunted for pretty rocks & pollywogs. I was back here about 3:15 PM, to bathe, eat, & read. Now I must finish reading Brautigan’s book. * […] […]
Bancroft Notebook 7

San Francisco

21:IV:64 –

24:II:66

21:IV:64  *The Tempest*, as designed by Ariel Parkinson, was a great turn-on.  {Berkeley, 18:IV}  But that Saturday I got a sore throat which still plagues me – a cold, a flu, a virus.  My chest is all glued shut.  *  I’ve been trying not to commence writing in this new notebook – most particularly trying to avoid writing in this vein, this diary style.  I tell myself that since I’ve already begun – I want a record of my illnesses – I must remember to leave this book at home.  No more losing, no more unauthorized readers &c.  *  The Karlgren book arrived today.  I haven’t the least idea how I shall ever pay for it – & I need the Bulletins 14, 16 & 18 from the Museum in order to read Karlgren’s glosses.  *

*

22:IV:64  Historical notes:  Maurice Gerodias has been sentenced to a year in prison, fined thousands of Francs, & forbidden to publish any books for 20 years.  *  Olson’s wife, Betty, was killed in an automobile accident, last week.  *  Donald Carpenter sold a piece of a rejected novel as a story to *Saturday Evening Post* for $1200.  & Brautigan may win the Formentor Award, or might have one of his novels serialized in the *Saturday Evening Post* – in any case, he’ll soon be rich.  *  On 14:IV I mailed a poem to *Poetry* {Chicago}.  I don’t expect to get it back until 28:IV.
Later, I was in bed – I’d felt tired and I’m still sick – when Carpenter suddenly arrived. He told me I ought not to allow myself to let my resistances get so low – that I ought to have food &/or money. He went out and came back in about 45 minutes, bringing a shopping bag full of food. I was very grateful. * Martin Schneider came to call this afternoon. He brought some halavah & he proposes to bring his friend, Dr. Sholkov, when he comes again. * I’m thankful for my friends, and for the little writing that I have been able to get done. I enjoy the possessions I have {i.e., all these troublesome books & printed music}… but how I want an instrument – piano, organ &c. – to play upon. And I feel I need great sums of money – to pay off the debts I owe, and to help my father. Where will it all come from – except from the usual miraculous source that has already provided me so wonderfully. *

*  

I say I want, I need EVERYTHING – and it’s true that I do – but I see that I’d much better be asking for more genius; mastery in art, more patience, industry, discipline  *

*  

Relative to the story idea that Carpenter was telling me yesterday – {about beatniks who kill a prize bull while they’re on a drunken spree in the suburbs} – I’m more interested in thinking about that moment when “our better judgment” AND a “hunch” both tell us, “If you do thus & so, you’ll regret it – at best you will have lost a lot of time.” * I can remember, for example, the moment I decided to leave Berkeley for Newport. I felt I knew – it was a mistake – but I told myself I was doing BRA a small favor &c. * In Carpenter’s story, Carpenter is appalled that the instigator, the curiously passive ringleader should go unpunished – & C. feels that the man was totally responsible for the subsequent actions of the group of men around him.
I keep asking, “Why did they follow him?” DC says, they were a “gang,” they were grouping-type men – and furthermore, they were drunk & taking dope &c. * I can remember letting myself go along with a group in spite of my conscience. What is it – a combination of cowardice, cynicism, a lapse of memory? A desperate necessity to be loved by the other members of the group – that’s strong enough motivation. {N.B., that in DC’s story, one of the group is raped by another prisoner while they’re in jail.} 63

 [...]  

*  

30:IV:64  Yesterday I received a check for $25 from Allen. Mike took me to Oakland, where I read to one of his classes. Later, we had a fine supper chez McClure. * Tonight I’m supposed to go to Margot Doss’s book party. Sunday the Duerdens want to pay me to sit with their infant child. * I try to wait now, patiently, until it’s time for the stores to open – I must go buy food and envelopes &c. Most of the money must be paid to Carpenter and to Marty Schneider in return for the loans that they made to me. *

*  

1:V:64  In the park. The rhododendrons are still good. Wistaria in the tea garden was probably great about 5 days ago – it’s fair today, especially over the front of the restaurant.  
High fog. The sun blinks occasionally. I still haven’t managed to persuade myself that I must begin writing a novel -- * At home, I took a nap – 11 to 12:30. I got up and ate a big lunch, cleaned this room, & now here I sit with a new pot of tea & wait. * I didn’t wait very long. I

63 Carpenter’s novel *Hard Rain Falling* was published about two years later, in 1966. However, the ‘gang’ member Billy Lancing has a lover in prison, the main protagonist Jack Leavitt. Their sexual relationship did not involve rape. Leavitt was raped prior to prison, in the orphanages and reform schools where he grew up.
went to the music library to find out about editions of Bach’s organ works & then to Auerhahn Press, to deliver a note to David. So home, where I’ve been reading Jonas’s book again, getting ¾ of the way towards the end of it, *The Gnostic Religion*. Mr. Jonas writes badly, but he puts a lot of ideas into good order. * It seems to me I really want two THINGS – an organ with complete pedal keyboard and all of Bach’s writings for organ… I don’t need the money to buy these things, I need the music which I could make out of them – the music & the improvement which association with it must bring. Confucius: “Have you studied the Odes?” – I must add {from the West} “Have you studied the Chorales?” *

*  

2:V:64  I typed little poems to send to AG who asked for simple pieces to give *Evergreen* and *Paris Review*. Also 3 poems to a new magazine, *Things* – which they’ll probably reject, judging from their announcement – they seem to have a very strict program. I still have a lot of typing to do, for *Duende* – either type, or write to Mr. Goodel & beg off the whole deal… I find I’d rather weasel out of my promise than to copy 16 pages of my own uncertain prose – I hate the idea of its being read in that mimeograph form of *Duende*. Shall I send poems instead? – but no, I hate all mimeographed sheets, &c. oh dear. * […]*  

*  

3:V:64  Instead of sitting at my desk – or anywhere else – with paper & pen, I walk up & down, worrying, praying for the first paragraph, the first sentence, the first word of a book. I must find it. * [...]  

*  

4:V:64  Yesterday & today I burned about four reams of paper – journals, short stories, uncompleted novels – junk that I’ve been carting about with me for 20 years. I still have great
quantities of ms. which I ought to put into a vault – mss. of completed, published books, & the collection of letters from AG, JLK & GSS, et alia – and STILL, a great deal of garbage: old concert programs, clippings, theater programs, gallery announcements, invitations &c. &c. &c.

*  

7:V:64 For about 3 seconds on Tuesday 5:V, the sullen iron gates of my imagination opened, revealing… I don’t know what – I wasn’t paying close enough attention, or I thought, “I’ll write it down in just a few minutes” – The gates opened, I knew that – they shut again and I know that – did anyone, anything walk in or out during that small interval? A message to my waking mind? * Last night I went to Mike’s – we drank wine and sake – I came home, took a shower, ate a sleeping pill & slept from 10 PM until 8 this morning, when I awoke in a marvelous good humour. I wrote for several hours and then went to Duerden’s for lunch but there I fell a – railing & carping – why do I do that everytime I go there? We talk happily a few minutes, then soon I’m raving and ranting, cranky and silly. {I was as bad last night, at Mike’s house – I MUST try to govern my tongue & my temper. Why should I come on so jealous, embittered, calumniating everybody, gossiping &c.? What’s it to me if each person I think of as silly, worthless and wicked should get money, gifts, love, trips, dope &c. &c. &c.? The money & goodies haven’t been taken out of my pocket – there’s quite enough left for me – what IS this envy & bitterness routine? *  

*  

8:V:64 I’m tired of protesting. Let the world go sink into sublimity or total negative entropy – I must learn to do without it – figure out some other mode of existence or non… “Why don’t you go back to the old country *** any old country”… Anyhow, run it through the garbage disposer and right on down the drain. * I don’t mean I want to die or that I’m about to kill
myself – I’m announcing METAMORPHOSIS, TRANSFORMATION, APOCALYPSE * A cursed cold wind blows today. The year will go on, the spring has gone, I shall grow older but remain unchanged in the altering years. * It seems I no longer have anyone to talk with, no one whose experience is anything like mine, no one of my age & learning * I wish I could be like John McClaren, grow very old and at last become a garden of pines and rhododendrons. * I saw Woodrow Wilson in the park. He might have smiled at me. * In the Arboretum – Rhododendron Beesianum from China – white trumpet shaped blossoms, long dull wrinkled leaves arranged in stars * there being no one to talk with I have to talk to everybody. Instead of blowing up like a bomb I must be translated into poems, music, pictures * NOW I’M FREE OF ALL THAT. * I’ve walked all through the Arboretum, around Stowe Lake {where the tall flat topped yellow iris are blooming} through the tea garden {wisteria, & tall thin leaved intense purple Jap iris} to chat for a minute with the checkroom lady in the DeYoung Museum {no shows – only new pen or pencil portraits of movie stars & Stravinsky & Huxley & Spender & Isherwood &c. &c. by one Mr. Bachardy. Gerald Heard didn’t sign his portrait. * wild iris in the Arboretum a great delight – Iris Douglasiana. * Blackberries are blooming, & elk’s clover. Salmon berries have been planted -- & chain saw in the distance a memory of home – one of the Bay Bridge towers has been painted red at the top. *

[...]

Columbia 13, 1

12:V:64

I’ve sacrificed my parents, my wives

and children, all my friends and

almost all of my own selves to
you. There’s nothing left to offer
except yourself –

afterwards I’ll start all over again.

Bancroft Notebook 7

*  

3:VI:64 I continue to cough & snort. Last night at MacNeil’s, Gary & Lew & Don Allen & I &c. &c. addressed stacks of announcements of the reading we’re to make on June 12. Don is to print up & sell broadside poems which we’ve made for him. * As Carpenter & I came up to the house, Joanne was coming out, going back to her own place – didn’t – I guessed – want to see Gary? Anyway I thought about her fondly, many hours later – & how I should have made a date to see her… *  

*  

4:VI:64 A total loss, except for the letters that I wrote & that I was able to walk to Carpenter’s house and ask him to give me stamps for all the letters. {He also gave me half an avocado with mayonnaise, an ice cream bar and a cup of coffee.} […] * A year ago today I finished writing YT&T – I shall try reading it, now – after having not looked at it since I finished typing the ms. * I’ve read it through, & made some small grammatical corrections & punctuations – I think it has some kind of life – not of the kind anyone might expect from a book, maybe, but it has something – it is poorly written, perhaps, but it is new, & strange.
362

Bancroft Notebook 1
8:VI:64

I’ve been reading over the Sierra sections of this book – Gary and I are thinking of a

trip – McCorkle has proposed to meet us on or about 20 July at the Palisade Lakes. Gary wants
to work out some entertaining way of getting to that place “cross country” & has invited me to
join him. * Don Carpenter has proposed that I come with him for a few days in the northern
Sierra, to look for rocks and minerals. I have been thinking just now about the possibility of
making that trip with Carpenter to be the beginning of a solo walk down the Muir Trail – I might
arrange to meet Gary at some point or other & so go on with him to the Palisade Lakes. I must
talk with him about this.
Gary & Lew & I are to read at the old Longshoreman’s Hall on Friday the 12 – 4 days from
now – with luck, I’ll make enough money to buy a new pack & sleeping bag & grub for my own
use in the mountains, in case I can make my own trip.

Bancroft Notebook 7
9:VI:64

[…]

* I happened to hear the Brahms D min. Piano Concerto this PM – much more

exciting & rhapsodic than I remembered it. Leon Fleischer was the soloist. All I can complain
of, still, is 2 bars of octaves that seem too bald , too open {in the solo part – I must count the bars
& fix the place precisely … } I was able to experience it fully, & read the 2-piano score as well
– I’d forgotten how angry & wild was the first movement, how profoundly sad the adagio – &
how wild the rondo at the end, what a showpiece it is, 2 cadenzas… it must have hoisted the
audience out of their seats when it was first heard with Brahms himself as soloist. {But NB, that
Eduard Hanslick or some other contemporary critic panned the first performance – “a symphony


with piano obligato”) * I remember some recording of the piece from 20 years back, probably
by probably by Arthur Rubinstein, as being a much more stolid, almost boring piece… did I
never hear recordings of it by Horowitz, or by Serkin? *

*

[…]

17:VI:64 On way to see above mentioned exhibit again. I see that I made no note for 12:VI,
when Lew & Gary & I read in the PLMA hall to about 600 people who paid $1 a head. The
audience was very good, very simpatico. Gleason reviewed the scene favorably in the Monday
paper {15 VI Chronicle} except he thought I can’t read very well, & my writing “owes much to
Lenny Bruce” – in any case, he said it was a good evening – he could have passed the whole
thing by in silence. * 3c. A.D. Limestone high relief fragment, Satavahana Dyn. {30 B.C. –
320 A.D.} Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh – graeco/roman detail. High finish. Also from
Nagarjunakonda, same province, part of railing – Buddha subdues the elephant Nalagivi – shows
Buddha wearing square patched robe * Tara on Lotus throne, buff sandstone very high relief,
Mahoba, Hamirpur Dist., Uttar Pradesh. Right hand “holds flaming jewell (?)”, left hand holds
half-open lotus. NB, that the eyelids are sown in the Nepalese/Tibetan fashion, with dip in the
center of each upper lid. * Broken bust of 4 headed Vajra Tara has Mongol eyes, but the
droop in the center of the upper lid is not pronounced. This piece is buff sandstone, 11th c.,
Sarvath, very beautiful. * […] All these bits from Konark are done in rather crumby
ferruginous sandstone – which doesn’t look as if it could be used to show such small detail as

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64 An exhibit at San Francisco’s DeYoung Museum of ancient Indian artifacts, sculptures,
stoneworks, stone figures, etc., from the Alexandrian, Gupta, and other early periods.
would be possible in a more close-grained material. As a result, the edges blur * Still, the Varunani from the same district, is highly finished – imported stone? –

Exquisite detailing & polish * […]

[…] I bought a museum catalog yesterday in order to keep track of some of this information. * I kept hearing people complain, yesterday, about the want of expression in the faces of this kind of sculpture, & the “sameness” of the figures. No one has explained to them that when the figures aren’t simple decoration, they are supposed to be looked at for long periods at a time, are to form a center for one’s meditation upon the God which the figure represents – upon that section of one’s consciousness which is of God – or can be identified with God – or what not. *

* *

20:VI:64 […] I’ve read stray paragraphs of Thoreau’s Week, of Maurois’ Proust & from Bach’s Choral Preludes &c. – & have cut & filed my fingernails. I’m still not here – not PRESENT – or wasn’t, until just a moment ago, when I was suddenly remembering a piece of Jonas’s book about the Gnostics – & my imagination was suddenly here, & acting. *

[…] I’m all hot & sweaty & dissatisfied – & trying to remember whether the few bars of orchestral music which now re-echoes in my memory is Brahms or Tchaikovsky – I think, almost certainly Tsch. [sic] * Naturally I’m nervous – the solstice is approaching. *

* *

23:VI:64 The administrative papers arrived this noon – I’ve signed them & had them notarized & have mailed them back. Next, I’m supposed to receive a contract – & on 23:IX I shall begin teaching a workshop in poetry, Wednesday evenings 730 to 930, @ $10/hour. I shall have $80 a month to SPEND !!! {?] That is, if any students sign up for the course, & if they like it & want more &c. *
*  

28:VI:64  Article in *Scientific American*, about very ancient Neolithic city in South Central Turkey records finds of goddess figures &c. carved from pieces of stalactite. Does this cross-connect with the habit of making paintings in underground caves, as at Trois Frères, Altamira &c. ??  Also, that one of the interior walls is decorated with repeated pattern of childrens’ hands. This recalls A) the poem about hands painted in a cave near Tassajara (*Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, p. 264), and B) the reference in Durrrell’s *Justine*, at p. 37, to “the blue imprints of juvenile hands – the talisman which in this part of the world guards a house against the evil eye. It was the only decoration in the room; indeed the commonest decoration of the whole Arab quarter of the city.” * See also Stephen’s *Travels in Yucatan*, Vol. II & appendix). Again, at p. 191 – & in *Mount Olive*, p. 265 – & at last, at p. 139 of *Clea*.

*  My ambition troubles me today, it mounts & swells – & my fear & guilt drive it along, or grow at the same time, vast horrific teeth and claws & slimy hair *et cetera*. I must

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65 Jeffers’s poem “Hands:”

Inside a cave in a narrow canyon near Tassajara
The vault of rock is painted with hands,
A multitude of hands in the twilight, a cloud of men’s palms, no more,
No other picture. There’s no one to say
Whether the brown shy quiet people who are dead intended
Religion or magic, or made their tracings
In the idleness of art; but over the division of years these careful
Signs-manual are now like a sealed message
Saying: “Look: we also were human; we had hands, not paws.
   All hail
You people with the cleverer hands, our supplanters
In the beautiful country; enjoy her a season, her beauty, and come down
And be supplanted; for you also are human.”  (Jeffers 264)
write – I must have the sensation of writing, the combined feeling of writing, the combined feeling of thinking, speaking, and of drawing or painting – the paper receives a design made up of graphite squiggles & loops & dashes * The sensation must be experienced again and again – which is the reason, I suppose that Kerouac used to say he was “hooked” on writing, like a junky with his “habit”. […]  

* I keep behaving as if I were 17 years old, just out of high school, with every opportunity open to me. I forget that I am well into middle age, that there’s no longer time in which to make a fortune, climb the Himalayas, learn several classical languages, learn to play musical instruments, paint pictures, write books, travel, marry, beget a number of children. *

6:VII:64 In rage & panic, hungry, I sold half a dozen books for $2. I’ve eaten almost all of it: the *Iliad*, a contemporary verse translation with Wedgewood illustrations. *The Desert Music*, *Journey to Love*, The 100,000 Songs {xlations from Milarepa}, and a Dante illustrated by George Grosz {an old illustrated Modern Library volume – the prose version of Dante by Carlyle & Wicksteed.} * I also signed a contract for the Italian anthology which Nanda Pivano is doing for Feltrinelli in Milan. *

[…]

**Bancroft Notebook 1**

15:VII:64 NB, that my name-sake, Philip Maximus van Aelstyn was born on 8 July 1964, 7 pounds 13 oz., 21” high. I sweat & worry, making preparations for the Sierra trip. We are to go in from Cedar Grove, proceed up the Paradise Valley to the Muir Trail at Woods Creek, over Pinchot & Mather Passes to rendezvous with McCorkle at the northernmost Palisades Lake. We
plan to leave San Francisco early tomorrow morning – Thursday 16:VII: & return ca. Wednesday 30 VII. Barbara Sommers will walk with us.

SAN FRANCISCO – SIERRA 1964

16:VII:64 Highway 50. Noble Palomino horse arches neck under a billboard. We are *en route*. Cold fog in the city & bright sun, out here nearing Livermore. {A stop in Oakland brought us gas & some retsina.} * All the cows that are eating face the west. All the cows that are lying down face the east. * TIRED SLEEPY DEATH at the steering-wheel. Snyder turned on by the spacious interior of this minibus. *Inside the Giant Sausage.* {We are passing through Tracy.}

[…] * The Merced River is mostly pasture. * No white gas in downtown Fresno. Have we a bad fuel pump? No can opener, either. Later. *

SIERRA 1964

& so we are arrived at Cedar Grove Camp & have devoured a huge dinner, Barbara & Gary & our driver, Mr. Rod Garrett {brother to Mrs. Robert McCorkle} & it is hot. We stopped *en route* to look at the General Grant Tree & its brothers. The weather is warm & dry. The South Fork Kings River is high but clear.

17:VII:64 Friday. We had the last of the town food for breakfast. We rest now, at Mist Falls on the Kings River in Paradise Valley. Rod has walked this far with us. Clear & hot weather.
The falls is a solid granite whale. Water also comes around from the E. side of it, through the woods. Fine views to the south are had from a point halfway between the Bubbs Cr./Kings R. forks. It is now 10:15 AM Friday – end of the first 5 miles of trail.

At the beginning of the falls there are pools in the river where we all swam. Rod left us at that point. We are now camped near the junction of Woods Creek & Kings River – the uppermost camp in Paradise Valley. Shortly after lunch, Barbara & Gary were preparing to go have a look at the South Fork trail – is there one, can they see the Muro Blanco &c. &c. Gary explained the snakebite kit to Barbara, saying that it was a good thing to take with them because of the great numbers of snakes at this altitude. They found a three-foot rattler at the edge of this camp, fat & sassy. We dissuaded Gary from killing it. The butterfly, California Sister (Limenitis Bredowii) also loiters hereabouts. In the meadows below: white mariposa, red columbine, lupine, pussy paws, cow parsnip, elderberry, paintbrush, monkey flower, gilia, various yellow daisy-like flowers, white daisies, a delicate large pale blue bell-trumpet flower (tall), turk’s cap lilies, & many more. Here at the pine tree foot is a complicated set of large mosses. One small plant has minute yellow blossoms which are shaped rather like violets.

The tall pale blue trumpets are Harvest Brodiaea (B. Coronaria). White mariposas are (Calochortus venustus). . . Gary says the snake was no more than two feet long. It was fat.

*  

Just now – evening – camp invaded by a doe who wanted salt? Got some taste of soap. She’s still pattering about in the neighborhood. This morning we saw 4 does near the bridge by Bubbs Creek trail.

*
18:VII:64  Saturday – After a wild night of marauding bear enraged by the scent of bacon, we made a long slow hot walk to the Muir Trail crossing, where we’ve been eating lunch. We plan to proceed to Twin Lakes, in a few minutes.

*

19:VII:64  Sunday – At Twin Lakes -- many mosquitoes. A cold night. Wild delphinium on the trail, columbine, tiger lilies & all live stock. Terrible cold last night here. 10,000 feet. I had to get up & put on more clothes. We head out now for Pinchot Pass. * The pass held the blue flowers as at p. 72 above, also a small mossy flower, white star shape, & large furry yellow daisies. The pass was fairly easy. We lunched at Lake Marjory, & came on down to the South Fork of Kings River -- & up again, to camp beside the S. Fork in the Upper Basin – great fields of shooting stars, more valuable than orchids. We have all bathed & laundered ourselves. In the morning we cross Mather Pass & run on down to Palisade Lake, our rendezvous point.

*

20:VII:64  Monday. The sun arrived at last, & we slowly prepare a getaway. Very hot, & all the mosquitoes anybody might want. Nevertheless, it is a good camp. * There was a slow, hard dusty climb over talus & scree to the top of Mather Pass. We had a long rest, & lunch, then a walk down over more scree & talus & boggy meadows & granite cliffs until here we are. Camped fairly early beside the outlet stream of the Lower Palisade Lake, where there’s no sign of McCorkle. We’ve crossed from the South Fork of the King’s River to the Middle Fork.

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66 Here Whalen refers to page 72 in Bancroft Notebook 1, where he has inserted a “small mossy” blue flower in a little plastic envelope. Its botanical Latinate name is “polemonium.” He also refers to this species as “sky pilot,” and it also may be referred to in the vernacular as “Jacob’s Ladder.”
Tomorrow Gary wants to go climb among the Palisades. Perhaps I shall visit the upper of these two lakes... Steep granite peaks rise up on all sides of us. The sun is scalding hot; the wind blows. The mosquitoes are starving. Large penstemon flowers; heather in two kinds; paint brush; varieties of stonecrop. I saw small – 7” trout in one of the little streams which meander through the meadows into the lake.

*  

21:VII:64 Tuesday. Barbara’s Birthday! Gary makes flapjacks among clouds of copal incense from the fire. The mosquitoes come to breakfast also. Clear & warm, {i.e. blazing hot, in direct sunshine.} We remember the pictures of the cowboy/prospector in the ads for Albers Hotcake Flour. The McCorkle no show. * Locke & Tagore arrived while Gary & I were looking for them at the upper lake. Now we’ve had lunch; the rest are planning where it is we are going to walk next. * I read & swam & lay around all the rest of this day. Broke my zoriis & sun glasses.

*  

22:VII:64 Wednesday. We are up before breakfast in order to make an early start for the Muir Pass country. * We’ve camped for the night at the upper end of Le Conte Canyon – above Big Pete Meadow. Tomorrow we go over the Muir Pass – then over a saddle to the McGee Lakes, perhaps. Then on into the Evolution Basin & out over Lamarck Col. The air here is hot & stuffy. A bath & laundry, but I’m still very tired. We hiked about 12 miles today. Locke is creating a large supper. {Last night’s Birthday Banquet was Golden Trout with mushroom &

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67 Fr., O.F., col (Latin, collum). Neck. A pass or depression between two mountain peaks; a gap in a ridge.
shrimp sauce, Kraft Dinner, pea soup, & jello. There were special elegant Japanese hors d’oeuvres & hot Lapsong Souchon tea}

*  

23:VII:64 Thursday. After the slowest, dustiest climb, we’re at Muir Pass, just before noon. The most complicated “inside the mountains” pass that I’ve seen, aside from Lake South America/Harrison Pass &c. We ate lunch at the shelter & then walked down to Wanda Lake. From there a fairly stiff climb up over a saddle (Delayed by loud thunder shower – we hid under a big leaky rock) followed by a very steep downwards clamber – has brought us here to McGee Lakes – 11,000, no other campers, gorgeous views, plenteous woods. The lakes are large & clean. Our camp is uphill a hundred yards from the lake, but the mosquitoes have found us. Nevertheless it is so beautiful here, the mosquitoes are only a minor nuisance. I am very tired from walking, however. Tomorrow we stay here, & then will move next day into Darwin Canyon, from which we propose to reach Lake Sabrina (& leave the Sierra) via the Lamarck Col. I hope that the Col isn’t as rough as today’s saddle.


*  

24:VII:64 Friday. The sun is hot. Everyone is preparing to climb a small mountain S.E. of our camp. The quiet & isolation are exhilarating – also the 11,000 + altitude. I plan to walk & swim & read & write today. A big helicopter flew past earlier – now the air force jet fighters are playing around at about 50,000 ft. overhead. I’ve walked to the edge of the canyon – great view NW, barren peaks, & a green, sparsely timbered valley directly below. The chain of lakes I’ve
just walked past is fascinating, various, brilliantly colored & landscaped. I see only frogs &
tadpoles in the water – no fish.

[...]  

**25:VII:64** Saturday. We are preparing to leave for Darwin Canyon & the escape route of
Lamarck Col. High broken clouds this morning – it rained maybe half an hour in the middle of
yesterday afternoon. We propose to leave cross country, over a different saddle than the one by
which we entered this place. Snyder prepares a small food cache to leave here. * A hot slow
climb up & a scary scramble down a steep broken slope brought us to the Muir Trail at Sapphire
Lake. A thunder shower delayed us there, about 10:15 – for about half an hour. While the rest
of us went on ahead, Locke stayed behind a little way in order to fish the lakes. We wait for him
now near the outlet of Evolution Lake, in a big moraine meadow. The sky is occupied by big
chunks of white cloud & still some thunderheads. I swam a little & Barbara washed her shirt.
There was just now a short distant roar of thunder. Did I feel a rain drop? * There was rain,
we had lunch & a shelter & then we came on to this place, the first lake in Darwin Canyon,
11,400 feet – our highest camp. We must climb 1600 feet to Lamarck Col tomorrow. The sun
has come out again, but there are scattered heavy cumulus clouds, E & W of here. I boil water
for bouillon.

*  

**26:VII:64** Sunday. A steep climb through talus brought us to the Lamarck Col, from which we
had a long gentle descent over scree & snow. A longer downhill run, over many switchbacks
and dim trail lead us to Grass Lake, where we now lunch. Gary says that Jack & Thea Hogan
might be at Sabrina Lake – I doubt it. The sun is hot herre, but with great white chunks of
cumulus cloud. * Last night there was thunder & rain, we constructed a shelter but the storm was a very small one.

Now – about 5 PM we’re checked into a motel in Bishop. We were lucky to make it here in 2 truck rides – & Locke arranged to have the boys who brought us to Bishop take him to Glacier Inn {behind Big Pine, 16 miles away} where he’ll pick-up his own truck. We shall remain here until the 1 AM bus takes us back to San Francisco. Gary & Barbara have gone out to replace their worn-out clothes. I’ve had a bath, & put my dirty clothes back on. I have a wonderfully ratty beard & a peeling nose.

* 

SAN FRANCISCO

27:VII:64 Bus from Bishop to Reno 1:45 AM til 6 AM. Breakfast in Reno, & a walk about the casinos {I won a penny} then bus again from 8 until 1:45 PM gets us into San Francisco. We had yogurt drinks in a health-food bar, picked up our luggage at the station and parted, after having agreed to meet for dinner at Barbara’s house.

At home I find much mail. Perhaps I shall keep my beard?

31:VII:64 […] * On the way home from my walk to the ocean, I had coffee & cake with the McClures, & a short visit with Bruce & Jean Conner who are staying at Mike’s for a little while. The Conners seem to be in good shape. Mike looks distraught. Bruce gave me a green lapel button that has “PEYOTE” printed across it in thick black letters. * Mike says Norman Mailer tells him that the fascist revolution is very near – & all of us are likely to wind up in the stockades. The conservatives want power; they are angry & frightened & can buy the presidency &/or anything else they want – but now they’ve decided they do want, they are very mad &
dangerous. If Senator Goldwater wins election, we must expect an era of even greater repression, conservatism &c. &c.

[...]

7:VIII:64 I am spending the weekend chez Hatch in Mill Valley. Gary & Karen, Lew & Magda, Sara & John Hammond, James & Ann. Now everyone has gone home & I write this from Sara’s bedroom. We had a pleasant visit together. Now I’m tired but not particularly sleepy. The idea of reading bores me & I have nothing much to write – Here I sit, wondering.

*


Now I shall look at pictures of Haiti. When am I going to wake up? * Read & bathe, & sit on the deck, in the shade. No news, except that I’d like to have a big piece of paper. I hate trying to write in this book. {I suppose that I could have brought a clip board.} The sky & air both are delicious. The various gum & bay & wattle trees are displayed as if they were made of glass – I see every leaf, the composition of each mass/group of tree foliage – Pre-Raphaelite Italian… Bennotto Gozzoli & al. * Flashes of bright color from different hillside levels – geraniums, bougainvillea – pink & brilliant lavender. * Jays. * Trunks of lemonwood – a Rousseau forest * I keep trying to read Prof. Tuve’s Imagery, but my eyes & head still find her manner & style very tiresome. She says everybody knew the rules of rhetoric, the “laws” of poetry – all the writers & readers who lived in the Elizabethan Age – & so they might have – but did everyone then accept & believe in these rules – did every reader & writer apply them to every
sonnet, ballad, screed & squib? * I’ve put Wm. Byrd’s *Mass for 4 Voices* on the gramophone, & am resolved to do nothing more than listen to it, & record the fact.

Yellowjackets & bluejays & dogs & children & traffic * Josquin Des Prés;

MISSA HERCULES DUX FERRARIAE

{Vanguard BG 620} *

[…]

11:VIII:64 Bruce Conner marathon show at Batman Gallery. Marbles & assemblages & big signs that say: “Do not touch” – & one, under glass which reads “TOUCH”. JoAnn McClure, in a blue woolen dress lay in a department shore showcase – glass top & front – Her shoes stood near her crossed feet. Her hands lay on her chest. A glass marble was placed at each eye & one between her slightly parted lips. A fluorescent light in side the case made her look like a wax dummy. * A beautifully painted pillow, the other side of which was decorated with pictures of sexy girls. Fantastically decorated suitcase. Gorgeously painted shoes. None of this is for sale. * Since Hatch brought me back from the country yesterday morning, I’ve had great difficulty finding food – I had a piece of bread & butter at his house Monday morning, & then nothing but a few raisins until this afternoon when JoAnn gave me a couple lumps of pot roast & a couple bites of potato… I doubt that she could spare it very easily. Brautigan gave me some sherry later this PM. On Thursday I’m to take care of Aron Aston – J. Aston offers $$ for the job. Tomorrow I don’t know where I shall find anything to eat. * I must begin again – although I told JoAnn this afternoon, that I shall never write anything again. *

* 

12:VIII:64 A long letter from Elsa, who still wants to act as my agent – I must write to her soon as I can, send the novel ms. back to her &c. &c. * Lunch with Rick & Suzanne
[Duerden]. Denise has rejected Rick’s book – she’s editing now for Norton, silly creature.  

LeRoi Jones is in Berkeley but will come to see me soon. Don Allen will have a reading / reception at his house to produce Roi before the San Francisco community.  

Barbara Sommers came to bring me bread, honey, jam & cookies. The bread & cookies & jam she made herself, the honey is the elegant wildflower kind which comes from the Farmers Market.  

Unnoticed acceptances:  

May 18:  U. of Tampa: *Letter to Michael*  

May 19:  Poetry: “Invocation & Theophany”  

May 22:  The Paris Review: *To The Muse*  

July 2:  The Last Americans {Anthology tr. & ed. by Nanda Pivano, Feltrinelli, Milan: *Homage to Rodin & I Return To San Francisco.*  


NB, that on 20 July Nanda put my copies of the Milan edition of *Monday In The Evening* into the mail.  

*  

13:VIII:64  I took care of Aron Aston all day & ate food & read at Prof. Tuve & played the piano. Jim paid me $5. Tomorrow I shall take all my dirty clothes to the laundry.
* Don Allen appeared a while ago to announce that LeRoi would read on Sunday night at Buzz Gallery. He – Don – was reeling drunk. * I must persuade myself that I grow nearer, every hour, to writing a prose book. *

[...]

* 

16:VIII:64  Last night Roi and his girl from Berkeley {Evelyn} came to visit, & took me away to the L house for supper & talk, & then to McClure’s for the rest of the evening. * This PM, CLT & Shirley showed up, on their way to Montesano. We ate together in Clement St., & visited the Durhams & Bob Miller & City Lights & so to Roi’s reading in Buchanan St., & now home. CLT gave me $10 & they left for the north, about 11 PM. * My hip joints are sore & I’ve had ½ a sinus cold for the past 4 days. I go to see Joanne on Wednesday – dine with the Astons Tuesday, see LeRoi tomorrow PM… busy-ness. *

* 

18:VIII:64  The Milan edition of Monday In The Evening arrived today. I also sent the ms. of YT&T back to Elsa, hoping she’ll take it around some more. Maybe SOMEBODY in New York will print it, at last.  [...]

* 

27:VIII:64  @ 1:15 AM – Right when I usually am asleep I’m awake – i.e. I went to bed about an hour & a half ago, but was worrying & restless. Why must I decide to worry right at bedtime? * I must write a book – I must get money – I must get out of this house &c. &c. &c. Why don’t I tackle these problems in the daytime – & solve them – instead of pestering myself with all of this in the middle of the night?
* I’m coming down from a walk to the top of Twin Peaks – sparrow hawk balancing in a head wind, presently dives off. * I received an answer to the question, problem, worry of this early morning: “Stay home & tend to your own work, write the book that will come – particular people instead of the dusty masks of stage & movies – Blake’s “minute Particulars” – & listen to my voices – this is my job – listening, writing, envisioning: work enough – this, &, it seems, climbing to the tops of high hills, walking through the woods down to the sea &c. &c. &c. * Why be ashamed, shy, &c. about believing in one’s own genius, capability, &c.?

I keep thinking of Bob Chrisman saying {reading at Blue Unicorn last night} that he wrote most of his poems 2 years ago & they aren’t very good &c. & wound up saying “I’m better than that” – i.e. “more intelligent & warmer & more widely experienced than the poems make me sound” – I understand perfectly how he feels & yet it was shocking to hear him say such a thing – it sounded egotistical, pompous – it was – & is, I see, even in my own case, a damned lie. That silly saying of Oscar Wilde – “I wish I were as good as my blue China” -- isn’t really silly. * Of course many of don’t know what is our proper business & so we create bother & trouble – & others of us become so identified with our own business, our rôle, that we lose ourselves, & fail to see other persons except in terms of our rôle or business… we become bourgeois, Babbits; squares… *

* 30:VIII:64 Richard Brewer came to call. He plans to go live in New York again

* Duerden was here all evening to discuss the literary scene, putting me down for contributing to the Don Allen /Robert Creeley anthology – I told Duerden that I knew Creeley & D. Allen think of me as 2nd rate, lightweight &c. Duerden says I should write novels – mixture
of Henry James & Mozart – drinking wine makes Duerden more sarcastic than usual. But drunk or sober he enjoys railing at Creeley/Olson, ½ admiringly against Duncan & Co., ½ pro-Spicer, etc. etc. etc. – he seems to believe that all these plus Donald Allen really DO “control American Literature” * what if Duerden is correct? If he is, why does he bother to write – why should I bother, &c. &c. &c. ? *

Brautigan came back from Pt. Richmond: we all talked about poverty & how to raise money & what weird kind of books we might write in order to sell. But we are penniless & we are worried, in spite of our hilarity. We have a million ideas a minute but no way to profit from them. * We drank half a gallon of wine, then I drank 4 or 5 cups of coffee: I am awake & nervous, it’s after midnight, I want to go to bed. Tomorrow I have 2 appointments – one, to meet Walter Nowick at Joanne’s house, & another to meet with Lew et al. at Don Allen’s, where we will do again what we’ve just been doing here: talk about how to get money & how poor we are & scatter a million ideas & many hours. […] *

2:IX:64 At Ocean Beach, about ¼ to 11 A.M. – Bright sun & smooth ocean. Pelicans are fishing, & 2 men. I seldom remember that I live almost in the Pacific. * Sprinkler arms of water turn spreading rainbows on the air – rainbows appear to open & close as the water fan turns edgewise & then flat again. *

Monday 31:VIII I met the first American Rinzai roshi, Walter Nowick, at Joanne’s house. He has great presence, radiates joy, energy, & compassion all over. His eyes look glassy, seem to radiate light beams, a little frightening at first, but he may realize this & so be careful to put a
reassuring hand one one’s shoulder. * I shall be home by 1 PM, hot & sweaty – I hope that
the mailman ahs brought money. *

*

3:IX:64 Gary appeared late this A.M. We motorcycled to the DeYoung Museum, visited the
aquarium & the planetarium. Odd news from Oregon – his visit to the Olympic Mountains &c.
We had a very good time together. We are to dine chez lui on Wednesday next. Edwd. & Carole
van Aelstyn are supposed to arrive in Pt. Richmond that day. * Gary & I were looking at the
huge garfish in the aquarium. I asked, what do you suppose that one is thinking? G said, “He’s
in Samadhi – most animals are in some kind of Samadhi a great deal of the time.”

*

7:IX:64 Ten minutes past 3 A.M. – Dinner last night at Duerden’s, & home to bed early –
i.e., by 10:30 PM. Now I’m awake & I suppose it’s mostly that indigestion or belly flu which
has bothered me for a week – at any rate, I feel half sick & sadly awake.

* Part of the sadness – Duerden says that Duncan told him that Olson calls me “a vegetable”
-- and Duerden says “Look out. He’s going to get you.” & a little later, “He wishes that you’d
stop writing.” I told Duerden that each of us has his own hard life to “live down” – Olson as
much as anyone so much the worse for all of us. Here we are. * There’s no reason for me to
be angry – or half-amused – or half-afraid – although I feel all these things. I must busy myself
with perfecting my “own” being, doing my own work… As I was lying in bed a while ago,
deciding to get up – I was already wide awake… the thought came to me that I must begin sitting
again, whether I write anything or not. I’m wasting too much time laughing with Richard & John, or making sage conversation, spreading academic noises abroad.

* 

SAN FRANCISCO

14:IX:64  Penniless & bearded. The van Aelstyns brought Philip Maximus to meet me, yesterday. He has a great round head, like his father. He’s very serious & quiet – complains quietly. A very handsome child – naturally. * Dave Haselwood says the blue flower from high Sierra passes is polemonium, “sky pilot.”

15:X:64  A good morning at the ocean beach, where I squat at the water’s edge to write. […] What a joy – hot sun, a few high clouds & pelicans & sandpipers – people sun themselves, wade in the surf, quite a few children rush about in the shallows – cut school – * I’m contented at last – watching the waves, reflections of their foam, sky & cloud shine on wet sand &c. Sudden pelican dive as if shot down &c. thin water bubble & ripple patterns &c. * […] Pelican {speeds} glide above his own reflection in wave then leaves big expanding black shadow as he ascends the air. * Alto cirrus NNW – clear sun all the rest *

[…]

26:X:64  Some flowers won’t bear close inspection – e.g. cana lilies, and century plants. Others require contemplation – roses, chrysanthemums, nasturtiums. […] * Brautigan removed to live with Janice in Divisadero Street. Now commences the mess of getting a suitable 3rd tenant. Tommy is in a rush to get someone whom we will find compatible. I am {naturally} catching a “cold.” Richard & Janet Meigs have moved from Offut Lake to Mill Valley. They

68 By “sitting” Whalen refers to seated, i.e., Zen meditation.
have the house in Lovell St. which the Hatch family used to occupy. The Hatch’s now live in a house that John White built at Muir Beach. John White lives near Thorn, where his sister, Valery White McCorkle McKee resides. * A week ago the Hatch’s entertained all of us. On Saturday the 24th, Snyder entertained us at dinner for Dan Welch. (Dan Welch – on his way to Japan or Hawaii to study Zen – now (1976) a priest at Zenshinji Tassajara.)[…]

[...]

13:XI:64 Lew & John Montgomery & Miles Payne & I read poems on State College campus – a meeting sponsored by the Dizzy Gillespie for President Society. This evening, a party at Andrew Hoyem’s, celebrating the publication of Bill Deemer’s poems. Maureen Keigwin was there. She told me that Charley Plymell is the father of her daughter, Cynara – not Richard Keigwin. * The TLS says that my Art of Literature is brilliant. *

[...]

* 8:XII:64 In June were printed 300 copies of my poem, Three Mornings, as a broadside, by the George Lithograph Co., San Francisco, from an offset plate reproducing my own handwriting {Hamilton “Andorra” paper} published by Donald M. Allen upon the occasion of a public reading delivered by Lewis Welch, Gary Snyder and myself on 12:VI:64. Gary’s poem Nanao Knows and a poem of Lew’s were printed at the same time * August saw the production of 400 copies of my poem Monday In The Evening at East 128 Milano {3}, a 19 page booklet on

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69 This parenthetical remark about Dan Welch clarifies that Whalen went through this notebook in 1976 to make notes, edits, etc. Welch is currently abbot of Crestone Mountain Zen Center, Crestone, Colorado.

70 See note on the TLS comment regarding Whalen’s The Art of Literature at p.
mold-made Italian paper. My handwriting was reproduced by a photographic silkscreen process at Serigrafia Pezzoli in Milan, as the third in the series “Autori scelti da Fernanda Pivano.” The booklet also contains 3 photographs of me taken by Ettore Sottsass Jr.

On December 7 at Auerhahn Press, San Francisco, 125 copies of my new poem, *Goddess*, printed by Andrew Hoyem & David Haselwood for Donald Carpenter. 100 copies with an initial “W” designed by myself & made into a zinc cut by Stephens Lithograph of San Francisco were printed from Palatino Italic type on dampened handmade Tovil paper, approximately 8 3/8 “ X 11 ¾ “. 25 copies were printed without the initial & colophon & presented to me by Donald Carpenter on 8:XII:64.


*  

**28:XII:64** 2:30 AM. I returned, Monday morning at 9:30, from a trip to Seal Beach. {I had left here on the 19th} The Thompson family trundles along, somewhat uneasily. CLT’s bookstore takes too much of his time. His wife must be taken to Europe in April or May – they project a visit to San Francisco for February, &c. &c.

*
San Francisco

1:I:65 I walked to the ocean beach. A cool sunny day – now that the sun’s gone down it’s freezing cold. Boys were surfing this afternoon. Donald Carpenter came to call. Last night, a small New Year party at Loewinsohn’s house – Donald Allen, R. Brautigan, Janice, & later, Gary & Sally, the Hatch family & a couple whose names elude me. *


* 

1:II:65 mailed completed book to Diane di Prima in NYC who promises to produce it by 15:IV:65. 18:II:65 Lewis Welch says to name it Different Ways of Being Nervous.

* 

[...]

7:IV:65 beginning of walk from Wawona St. towards home via the rhododendron garden.

PROBLEMS

A) culture has lost idea of what is a man &c.

B) knowledge of what a person wants vs. ignorance of it

C) “doing” something “while not really doing” – Joanne – & the present way we deceive ourselves as to our motives – parallel to being at war but “not really”: Korea &c.

D) “pleasure is ugly” – & yet we know that those who have no pleasures are losers – anyway, we keep saying so while avoiding pleasure ourselves…

* 

Is KNOWLEDGE the real point? What about the way it manifests itself – how do we treat ourselves & others? Perhaps STYLE is the really important thing –
when I look up from

writing this {I’m sitting astride a log on the

beach in a fast SW wind} I see rainbows ahead –

& the bases of style are compassion and wisdom? The acts themselves, being at once selfless & completely responsible “have only neutral consequences?”

* But all this would only work if there were such things as “I”, “action”,

“another”, &c.

* It was a beautiful solitary walk. Tulips a total delight. Hidden cherry trees to stand under & look up at small rain. Falling blossoms in Japanese Garden. A few early rhododendrons – & particularly the small Japanese varieties which are colored like nasturtiums. It has sprinkled rain all day – how it blows & rains, but not violently – a young girl in a fit of pique. Tomorrow, Lew & Duncan & I will all lecture & hold a colloquium on Gertrude Stein.

[…]

26:IV:65 Monday – A day completely devoted to the care & feeding of a seemingly endless line of callers. In the morning Jay Blaise – he stayed all day – then Sara & Alisa Wheeler {whose visit attracted the three children from the opposite end of the back yard – these children a bother all day} Robert Allen, Martha & Sara Durham. Michael McClure. JB Hatch appeared at dinner: Eleven visitors, counting all the children – I talked to the children, too. […]

* 28:IV:65 Rhododendrons better today – * Water lilies bloom now *
Rhododendron Dalhousiae

Rhododendron Exbury Calstocker F.C.C. Hybrid. 15 – 7 lobes & scent, white with red/purple/deep wine/color spot at base of uppermost lobe * {magenta ?} *

Chilly wind here where I sit, eucalyptus log on hillside just under the casting pools – read all this notebook – some of it is wonderful, I guess. I find that a year ago I was in exactly the same spiritual condition – half sick, worrying about money & not writing. But I also find poems &c. here. * This world is actually engaged in the production of leaves & grass & tiny flowers – the sun shines, the rain falls, the wind blows. Rocks arise from the hot center of the earth. They crystallize, they stand in the light and wind – a color, a shape – slowly they crumble: rain wind frost and sun – then they are plants & bugs & birds & animals, flowers & fur & brilliant feathers burst into light color and air – dissipate into nothing; darkness and silence – fall into dust? LIES. These things neither come nor go – neither does this “nothing” exist nor persist – these are feeble imaginings – I must do better * Delicate but intensely but intensely blue jap iris & pale wisteria in Tea Garden. About 3 or 4 days ago, the display of iris, anemones & ranuncalalus in front of the Conservatory shewed at its best. * The rhododendrons are now just a little past their peak * But now R. Griffithianum, from the Himalaya, & other Chinese rhododendrons & camellias happen *

There’s a vacancy at the Eastman Hotel. * Sawdust smell – dusty carpet mothball FIRE ESCAPE, a white hand points its finger – I stand in shade under Wall Street
I thought that after the war, I’ll go live in San Francisco, a good place to be a great writer. And now I very nearly did.

I’ve begun to work ½ days proof-reading for Andrew Hoyem. In Honey Town, part of Bill Brown’s novel has been published as a separate book. Joanne K called me this AM to ask whether I’d seen Bill Brown – he was missing. I told her I’d try looking for him at the San Gottardo Hotel. I found him there, shortly after 5 PM, drunk & yelling, just as he used to be when I first met him, 10 years ago. This is the first time in 20 months that he has been drunk – there he is.

The book Andrew is printing is the essays of Charles Olson – very troublesome text.

Now I see AG’s bright brown eyes & hear him say “put heart of angel heat blaze next. Then furnace blare whoop (he became JLK in the middle of this vision) * “Isn’t it too lovely? I could never stand it myself. I should be too lonely.” It would be immodest but true to tell them, “I’m not lonely, I am here – my presence makes a considerable difference.” * In order to be a writer, you must forget that no one asked you to write down your experiences, your opinions, insights &c. – But the reader wants to find your book himself – accidentally -- & will treasure it.

Lately MM has been radiating terror & hostility. It is rooted in pride & ambition. MM, Tony Martin, Daniel Moore… Lust & ignorance beget rage & murder. * All the same feelings make Duerden cynical & sarcastic & quietly hostile – Bill Brown gets drunk &c. * How can I move out of my own way? I stand blocking my own path, head to head.

71 Coyote Books published William Brown’s novel The Way To The Uncle Sam Hotel in 1966, with distribution through City Lights Books.
Bancroft Notebook 1

28:V:65  Bill Wroth brought me copies of my book EVERY DAY, sales to begin tonight at a benefit reading for Coyote’s Journal, Synapse & Wild Dog. Van Aelstyn & Koller arrived later, & we dined together. Jim Thurber, Gino Clays, Dave Haselton, Ken Irby, Jim Koller, Robert Duncan, “Facino” {Douglas Palmer}; Harold Dull, George Stanley, Joanne Kyger, Ron Loewinsohn, Gary Snyder & I read before about 400 people. Also newly published: Bill Brown’s In Honeytown, Rick Duerden’s The Fork, Ron Loewinsohn’s Against the Silences to Come, Jim Koller’s Two Hands. Gary says on the telephone just now, that Don Allen will publish his book privately – Don has also offered to do a book for Lew. Diane di Prima is at work producing my book Brain Candy, promised to appear “before summer.” Different Ways of Being Nervous is promised for the fall.

*  

2:VI:65  Bill Wroth, Ed Van Aelstyn & James Koller here on 28:V for the benefit reading, 13 of us {unexpectedly George Stanley was the 13th} There were over 300 people in audience. Coyote Journal, Synapse & Wild Dog acquired $80 a piece. The audience was enthusiastic; it was a good {if long} evening.  *  Wroth brought me newly bound copies of my new book Every Day. Now I’ve been working again at transcribing & working out the Diamond Noodle. The business of copying my own ms., choosing, listening, cutting, sometimes adding things – all this has opened up my head, I feel more interested in writing than I have for a long time. I find the original ms. notes of the Noodle rather thin, remote, how can the future reader make any sense out of it? I’m half repelled by it, keep
thinking of yanking it – & yet I know that I must finish making this typed & corrected version of it, anyway the living situation is threatened again, as it was when I was at work on YT&T, 2 years ago. Tommy’s contracting business has run into bankruptcy. She has lost her personal fortune, as well – she says she must go to work. Fortunately Lew has money now to pay his rent, but John now owes $105 & has no money no job no prospects – neither have I – I keep telling Tommy that I should leave – & if I had any place where I could bring all these books & papers to live, I’d go immediately. It’s odd that as soon as I get all the books into one place – & particularly if there’s also a piano or an organ involved – a great catastrophe falls directly upon me, fairly soon after I’m comfortably settled into living & writing & playing music. * * *

 […] LaVigne came 10 days or so ago & borrowed a mess of books & now gone into Sonoma with all of it, & I wonder when he’s coming back & where are the books?

* * Reading the earlier parts of this book is a frightening experience – I was sick at this same time last year, Tommy was in a fit, I was worrying about moving. The same flowers had been blooming, I said very nearly the same things I’m saying now. I’ve done nothing to try to change all this into an orderly, useful, & proper life – a life that doesn’t worry other people the way this one does. Unless someone gives me a whole lot of money, or a small sum every week, I shall feel obliged to worry about myself for too many waking hours; waste too much time with guilt, panic, silliness… * *

**11:VI:65** Finished first typescript of *The Diamond Noodle.*  

*  

**12:VI:65** , 00.05 AM – on 11:VI:65  I finished the first typescript of *The Diamond Noodle.*  

*
*  

[...]

18:VI:65  Born dead, spent my childhood drowning, burst appendix & hit by a car.  *  All those others must take care of themselves.

26:VI:65  The ocean is wider than the hill is high, the water hangs over the hill in the sky.  

*  

28:VI:65  On Tuesday 22 June I went with Gary to the Oakland Army Terminal. We sat outside the fence beside the highway, doing zāzen from 7:20 in the morning until 4 in the evening. There were 25 minute periods & ten minute breaks & an hour for lunch. No formal kinhin. Richard Baker, Jim Thurber, Robert Gove, Silas Hoadley, a man called Chuck (Reader? Rieder?) sat with us, & in the afternoon a man called Max joined us. Although many people photographed us & a few newsmen came around, none of us gave our names. Snyder had thought it best for all of us to remain anonymous Buddhists. While we sat, some of the people who drove past (on the street behind us or on the street in front of us, inside the Terminal) laughed or yelled insults or jokes. No one seemed to know what it was we were doing, except for the Police & Military Authorities who had been informed in advanced by the CNVA spokesman, Monte Stedman {Steadman?} {CNVA, Committee for Non-Violent Action, which had a large group of people on the same scene – they carried signs denouncing war &c., & some of them purposely got themselves arrested by trying to enter the gate of the Terminal – this illegal entry being considered by the CNVA people as an act of civil disobedience which would be an effective anti-war protest.} I was surprised to meet Mr. Stedman there – we had met each other once before – at a meeting of the executive board of the American Friends Service Committee in San Francisco. I had met Robert Gove a number of times at Robert LaVigne’s house. Jim
Thurber was one of Gary’s students during this past year – Thurber has shown great promise as a poet.

* 

Tomorrow night, Mr. David Kherdian will appear by appointment: he is to prepare a bibliography of my work. * Wednesday, Gary & Drummond Hadley and I will go to Kings Canyon.72

Sierra 1965

Wednesday

30 June – Depart San Francisco in fog & drizzle 8:10 am & so to rootbeer sunshine Tracy drive-in, map & diary consultation. We are to meet Drummond Hadley in Fresno. Oleander blooms in traffic divider. * BYRON RIGHT LANE * We met Mr Hadley on time & so to lunch & now to the Safeway for last minute. . . Mr Hadley wants to remove the windshield. Now we stop for gas at 2:10 pm. * GS – “The Sierras started in the Late Jurassic – I remember they started the same age as birds.” 

* Settling in at Camp 4, Cedar Grove, at sunset. Western Tanagers & Steller Jays. Warm weather. The ranger says it’s cold in Granite Basin. We’re finishing a bota of wine while dinner cooks.

1 July Thursday – We are loading our packs in Cedar Grove, preparatory to taking off up Copper Creek. There are tame yellow & black camp robbers here. (top pg 137) The weather is

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72 Kings Canyon is an area of deep canyons, lakes, and meadows in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains. Drummond Hadley’s poetry collection Voice of the Borderlands was published in 2005 by Rio Nuevo, with an introduction by Gary Snyder. In the next entry “Tracy” is Tracy, California, a town en route to the Sierra Nevada. “Byron” is also a town en route.
clear & warm. * Somehow or other we are camped a mile or so below Granite Pass – we walked nearly 10 miles G.S. says. All of us are giddy with fatigue & anticipation. * Snow lies hereabout in thick rotting fields. Water runs all around us. It will be hard finding a dry spot to sleep. * Alas the pudding fell over, so little more than a tablespoonful is left. * This place is called Granite Basin.

*  

**2 July Friday** – The night was rather warm. The weather is blue & warm this morning. I feel very tired & have a cough. * Snyder gives Hadley a lesson in handling the ice-axe. The grass here is brown on top, beginning to turn green – at the camp the heather plants were bent & brown, but only a hundred feet lower down the grass & heather are green. Along the trail I see Douglas phlox and pink heather buds. We’ve stopped in the upper part of this Basin, which is still under a foot & a half of snow. (p 138) The trail bobs in & out of running water, rocks & snow. This must be a splendid meadow in late July. The Granite pass appears (of course) to be quite near. I suppose it’s a trip of several hours hard climbing. There’s lots of snow up there. * There are many trout in the stream here, not very large. Drummond is trying to catch some. Hot sun & cool wind, lots of song birds, rushing water &c. * The pass was under 2 or 3 feet of snow, & the trail northwards was alternately flooded or snowed in. Now we are camped on some fork of Dougherty Creek among the mosquitoes – otherwise we have an ideal campsite. All of us have been bathing & laundering. I am very tired from falling through the snow – consequently we didn’t reach the State Lakes today as we had planned. The trail down from the swamps below the Pass is very beautiful from the Pass itself, views of the Palisades & the Tunemah Mtns &c. &c. This is a park service camp complete with broken signs &c. good fireplaces. We’re among Lodgepole pine that grows quite close together. I guess it’s Lodgepole. There was a pink
headed bird a while ago – I suppose it has a proper name &c. & yesterday we met one fisherman on the trail. Today we’ve seen no one. *

* 

3 July Saturday – Packing up this morning among mosquitoes & cicadas. We plan to arrive at the State Lakes for lunch, & weather is clear & warm. * Before leaving we climbed up a little ridge nearby in order to see the Lake of the Fallen Moon, Tunemah Peaks, the canyon of Disappearing Creek &c. * A short walk has brought us to State Lake – we are to stay here beside the lowest of the lakes tonight & tomorrow night. It is early afternoon – many birds, mosquitoes & lots of trout for Drummond to catch – he seems elated. The weather is warm & gently breezy.

* 

4 July Sunday. Yesterday afternoon I walked up to the head of this basin a splendid view on all sides. This morning we cut down a small tree for firewood, & now everyone is separating to explore & watch &c. The ground was very cold last night. Gary says we shall stay here for several days & then return to Cedar Grove via Glacier Valley.

* No people yesterday. * Bones here, & at the next campsite, the skull -- & further south, various ribs & spines of a horse or mule. * Heather blooms, shooting stars, buttercups. The mosquitoes are young, plentiful & hungry. Perhaps I shall walk into the upper regions in order to avoid them, take Shakespeare with me. * Hot & clear, although some alto cumulus clouds yesterday pm. * Drummond has seen two passengers. I walked to the upper lake & heard them. Later – sundown – a big buck near camp, drinking.

*
5 July Monday. We prepare for an excursion to Windy Ridge, Horseshoe Lakes &c. * Today is clear & quite windy.

6 July Tuesday. Hot sun, after the thunder showers of yesterday pm. 8 Our trip up the Horseshoe Basin included the ascent of the Peak 12,500 which divides the State Lakes basin from the Horseshoe Basin. Good views of the Palisades, Mt Goddard, Cartridge Creek – view SE into Bench Lake & the descent from Pinchot Pass &c. * We returned here to set up tent of ponchos &c. but the rain didn’t last. * The descent of the peak through granite walls was exciting, & the upper cirques has frozen lakes a turquoise color, {Gilmore Gas, blue-green – Roar! “There’s Gilmore now!”} This morning we argue metaphysics & do our laundry. The Horseshoe Lakes & basin aren’t quite as beautiful or various as the State Lakes. {Why not?}

Deer nearby last night, eating & drinking […]

SIERRA 1965

7 July Wednesday. Up before the sun to break up this camp. Ice formed on Wolf Tit’s sleeping bag after he came out of it. * Although there were clouds & thunder yesterday pm there was no more rain. We slept in the open, after consuming ½ pint of Cognac. Gary & I spent much of yesterday sitting in the sun in the high meadow above the lakes. I’ve re-read Timon, Troilus & Pericles. The print is defective in the first 2 of these. Yesterday Gary bestowed the Wolf Tit name upon Drummond Hadley, out of the Olson poem where shadow of radiator is wolf tits on the floor. (Y & Y) * Now that the sun is up, so are the bugs. * We got here by walking up Glacier Valley to a little 1200 ft. pass & down to where we’ve camped. Tomorrow we have 8 or 9 miles of downtrail to Cedar Grove. The weather is hot & bright. No other people. A few yards
from this camp the ground is littered with flakes of obsidian. Sometime or other people sat here trying to make arrow-heads. I found an imperfect one. We are nearly out of food. Drummond is out in the hot sun trying to catch some fish. I rest in camp in the shade. I feel very tired, but since I’ve had a quick bath, I hope that I may recover. I’m also hungry, oddly enough. This is Tanabatamatsuri today – Herd Boy & Weaving Girl can meet across the River of Heaven &c. *

8 July Thursday – Left Glacier Basin middling early & a slow down trip through clouds of wild flowers & sunshine to Zumwalt Meadows, where we bathed ourselves in the South Fork of the Kings. At Cedar Grove, there were milkshakes & ice cream sodas & elegant groceries for supper. Visit to General Grant Tree & grove, then here to camp at Dorst Creek in Sequoia Park. Tomorrow (144) we shall go to Giant Forest & then drive back to San Francisco. The moon is now about ¾ full. Drummond lost his pocket knife on the pass yesterday. I lost my John Muir cup somewhere on the trail, and Gary left a bandana beside the Kings River.

* 9 July Friday. a monumental brown bear came by our camp shortly after we were up & about. We’ve had a huge breakfast & now lazily organize all our belongings for packing them into the car. * Clear & bright weather, but damp among these trees.

* 10 July Saturday – At home. We drove yesterday through Giant Forest, visited General Sherman Tree & others, also Medicine Rock, & so to Visalia & home. Later we dined together at the New Pisa, then Diana came to Gary’s house to take Drummond to Napa. They gave me a ride home. This morning I put away equipment & greased my boots, wondering when shall I use them again & where.
11:VII:65  To the park, having returned from the Sierra on 9:VII. I met Bill Deemer & Toby. We went to the polo match together. A sunny day. Now I roast a great piece of lamb, the gift of Margot Patterson Doss.


To Lassen & Return

21:VIII:65  Mt. Lassen Forest, chez Van Aelstyn. Sunny & damp in the piney woods. Here are Ed & Carole Van Aelstyn & 4 babies, Jim & Jean Koller & Dierdre [sic], Bill & Zoe & Margaret & Tony Brown, & me. Here is a little board & batten house with a wide uncovered porch on 2 sides, propane refrigerator & lights, indoor toilet, hot & cold water &c. near a creek. Mt. Lassen is 10 miles north. Cows are plentiful just down the road. Here also are dogs, Koller’s Malemute Thomas Thomas, & Tony’s Chihuahua. A jolly Weimaraner dog from the next cabin completes the canine complement. Rocky soil, I suppose glacial till, in bottom of a wide canyon. The house is called Dutch Treat. * I didn’t expect to get out of the city so soon again. . . but the large variety of live stock & citizenry makes it seem as if I never left.

Bill Delmer is here, & one of Carole Van Aelstyn’s beautiful sisters – Cindy. On Saturday Tony & I walked to Drakesbad & Boiling Springs Lake where are boiling mudpots & steam fumaroles & hotsprings. We were caught in a great RAIN & had to be rescued by car, 3 miles from the cabin. Sunday I rested & had a nervous collapse & in the evening everybody got drunk & yelled
until 3 this morning. Today {Monday} is warm & sunny, a few high cumulus clouds & s small south wind occasionally. I’ve had a pleasant stroll beside the creek, & now back on the porch of the cabin I drink tea – the party is dispersed about through the woods – Bill Brown & some of the children sleep. Sound of creek water & breeze in Jeffrey pines – bluejay & grasshopper. I’ll read for a little while – Hesiod today. * Later 23 VIII – I’m home at last, nerves completely shattered. I haven’t lost my fingernail cutter. I’ve seen Warner Valley & some country south, southwest & west of Mt. Lassen, which pleases me – how silent & private & delightful is this one city room.

16:IX:65 Thursday evening, I’m packed & ready to take a bus to Portland where my father’s in Providence Hospital, Ruby writes, “He has something n the upper part of his chest that makes it hard for him to swallow.” He was to be operated today, but when I telephoned Ruby a while ago, she said there had been no operation – great drop in blood pressure forbade it. I spent many hours trying to raise money for the trip – at last Dave Haselwood loaned me $70. I go now to catch a trolley to the bus depot, where I must stand in line 40 minutes waiting for the bus to leave. It is very hot tonight – smog & heat all day. I’ve been working slowly at the revision of *The Diamond Noodle.*

*  

21:IX:65 Portland. {I don’t know yet how long I must stay here – I was with Carol & Bill from Friday until this morning. Now I’m removed to Otto & Mary Lystrup’s house, 44th & Davis, a few blocks from the hospital.

*  


*  

[...]

26:IX:65  The Dalles — Sun in a golden cup — Antimachus, fr. 4 — & also Stesichorus


*  Hesiod  Melampodia — 1. tells of Calchas dying of jealousy when Mopsus guesses the riddle of the figs.

*  Independence  [Oregon]

1:X:65  China Pheasant in field out of Monmouth  *  for “the furniture” in Noodle: a picture — large colored litho, fancy gesso frame, La Priere Dans Le Desert, blue & tawny colors — a camel & 2 Arabs, one kneeling, one bowing to Mecca. Another picture, hand painted, of a small red campfire beside a lake which reflected moon and fire. Figurine bust of Chinese boy in native dress.  Brass lizard from India,

2:X:65  which lizard lives now here in Independence. Where I sit doing nothing but consider the breakfast settling now in my belly, remember my mother.  Sunlight through jugs and plates of raspberry or amber American glass, sunlight through green red begonia leaves, they are slices of lamb kidney, microscope slides very carefully stained with exotic dyes.  *  Shall I visit Eugene before I leave.  *  Back toad to Airlie is Sauerkraut Road because there was a settlement of Dutchmen who lived along side it.
* 

10:X:65    San Francisco. One day in Independence Nana showed me a small white envelope marked “Velna”. She opened it & showed me $350 in small bills. She said, “This would have been Sue’s, for plane fare, if she had come down here. She wouldn’t have had to borrow.” I said she ought not to keep such a flock of money in the house. She said it was her own money to do with as she pleased. She had saved it – had picked up filberts on Doc’s farm, sold African violets – scraped it all together, somehow, for my sister. Nana & Nick claimed that they had left her everything in their will – & here she is, UNGRATEFUL &c. &c. &c. 

    “… she was so good, she seemed so happy to be here, we tried to give her our heritage, whenever she wanted anything we got it for her…”

10:X:65    San Francisco. Returned here in the night of 4:X. Lost my address book at or in Ed Van Aelstyn’s house in Eugene. So I won’t forget, I must write the names of his children here: Edward Jr. {“Vanny”}, Paula, Nicholas {“Niko”} & Philip Maximus. * Lewy has removed from Beaver St. Mr. David Kherdian replaces him. * Gary is trying to get me a job teaching English in Kyoto. He has also volunteered to lend me passage money there. Tomorrow I shall order my passport photos.

    *

14:X:65    Portable garden, Brown’s shed in Point Richmond. Moth ripple in air. Moth holes in air, air walking around, alive, these flying dust wing flap, air quiver, a shaky curtain.

    *  Explain the spherical gas tank

        A)  it holds more    B)  it is stronger
C) its shadow is a circle on the wall  D) aluminum paint keeps it clean and cool.  

I have nothing to say about the American commitment in Viet Nam at this time except I don’t like it; we’re losing.  

A day I nearly understand the saying, that we’re all miserable sinners

Write to Diane. Talk to Michael. Talk to Haselwood about reprinting *MIA*.  

Bill Brown will read *YT&T* for Coyote Books.

22:X:65  Formal “opening” of Mt. Tamalpais {in Chinese, *K’ai Shan*, Japanese *Kai San* [Chinese characters] with Gary and Allen. We circumambulated the mountain, held 2 feasts, chanted sutras, climbed the peak, set up shrines to visit.

22:X:65  Hot & sunny morning when Allen & Gary & I are to march around Mt. Tamalpais, here they come. We are ready.  

Sutras in creek bed – chants & lustrations first shrine / oak tree grows out of rock/field of Lazuli buntings. / Crow song.

address to the ocean, trail crosses fire road at hilltop

KAI SAN

out of the woods again  { Siva music also, addressed to the peaks }  * Rock Springs. Music for Sarasvati. Memory of tea with Mike & JoAnn years ago. A surprise to find fresh water here late in a dry season  

What do wasps do?

Mess around

That was outdoor feast at Rifle Camp.
Collier Spring – The Great Dharani & Tara music.

Inspiration Point – Gatha of Vajra Intellectual Heat Lightning.

To the summit via North Side trail & a scramble up the North Knee. Where is the mountain?  *

Mtn. Home – The Parking Lot

Sun thinks of setting? Amida going west. O Gopala, &c. Devaki Nandi na Gopala…  * & a Tibetan encore, “O Maraba sa ma de de de om Araba sa ma”  *

A final chanting in the creekbed, Muir Woods Gate, with cymbals & libations & lustrations

Dinner goodbye for Gary at Magda’s house. I had to get Carpenter to drive me to Tiburon to catch bus home – tired of party early. Now I read sutra waiting to arrive home. (I write this in bus.)  *

24:X:65 Packing tonight for trip tomorrow to Portland with James Koller. I shall give poetry reading in Reed College Wednesday 27:X in the chapel.  * Bill Brown is reading YT&T for Coyote Books. If he likes it, Coyote will publish it.  * Reading was at 8 in faculty office building. Big crowd, for a week night at Reed – Lloyd introduced me.  * Plans for a kind of festschrift volume & testimonial dinner in honor of Reynolds are now greatly gone forward, with advice from President Sullivan; much talk with Thos. K. Worcester, and much help from David Ray and Mark Loeb. Lloyd is delighted. I worry. When shall I finish revising Diamond Noodle?
Bill Brown {today in San Francisco I phoned him} will come to help make small revisions in YT & T to ready it for publication.

*  

25:X:65 A hot morning in San Francisco. We (James Koller & I) leave Beaver Street a little after 8 A.M. Smog, high broken clouds in the west. * […]

*  


Ornamental roof tiles, animals & some with human riders, K’ang Hsi. *  

“T’ang Dyn. seated Lohan, micaceous hopeli [sp illeg? “Hopeh?] marble, slightly larger than life. 2 small Lokapalaas hold up rear corners of throne. […]

Clear rock crystal seal, unidentified, approx. 4” X 7” high. * Frit glass with red amber appliqué figures of angelic horsemen – described as ruby red & white glass – Ch’ien Lung. […] *  

“Chinese Roll Painting in water color and ink on silk. Sung Dynasty (960 – 1277) Artist: Kuo Hsi) M W CH 32:K9” * Pair of conical shaped bowls about 9 or 10” diameter, thin polished spinach jade. * Pair of low, shallow, footed bowls, flat bottomed, dark spinach jade. *
28:X:65  Ask Kenneth will he read at Reed when he comes to Portland for $150.  * Copy of
Dragon & Unicorn, Like I Say, MIA for Winnifred Ray, 111 Tower Court, Yellow Springs,
Ohio. (hard cover if possible)73  *  […]

* He kept repeating that domestic fucking automobiles wouldn’t corner worth a damn.  * Pair
of China pheasants in flight.  * South Oregon green rug the sheep over stuffed furniture that
stands or lies thereon.  * Mushrooms?

DRAIN REEDSPORT / DRAIN ELKTON  *  43.36 IN Rice Hill Oregon

* “… will never corner… never apologise, never explain”

* It pays to use Elephant Brand fertilizer  * $2.60 for dinner  * $2.25 gas in Dunnigan  *
$.50 bridge fare  * $.15 coca cola in Redding  * “Zurich Switzerland or the center of the
sun?”  * Let’s all cap out simultaneously.

* Let’s all hyperventilate one minute, then hold our breath and envision Mr. 2705  {drawing
of a man in Serpent Power, showing location of chakras}  & pray for the little green cannabis
plants really working their hearts out on the back porch back home” & they did.  *

*  

10:XI:65  Television Days.  Nothing but wait between takes, I must have a book to read if
this requires more time. Very odd that the camera is alive only a few minutes at a time –
sometimes less – two minutes of “work” & 20 waiting.  * The visiting public here at the
Legion of Honor are only mildly curious & a few slightly bugged with our presence here.  *
Some kind of black-cowled grey bird with a very loud voice is here in great numbers.  *

73 Whalen is sending Ms. Ray a few books, including Kenneth Rexroth’s poetry collection The
Dragon and The Unicorn (1952), plus his own Like I Say (1960) and Memoirs of An Interglacial
Age (1960).
11:XI:65 The movie was completed today – & also the sound recording. I go tomorrow to see the rushes of Duncan’s film & to sign releases &c.

[...]

23:XI:65 Revised typescript of Diamond Noodle completed this afternoon.

* 

2:I:66 Disillusionment without enlightenment is like “going out backwards” in pinochle.
Recall Melville’s Pierre, who learns more & more about himself but less & less about the world.
He dies of despair &c.

* 

San Francisco - Kyoto


7:II:66 Zoo restaurant terrace here come two pea hens. Cold sunshine. They stand with toes decorously crossed, “in waiting,” “in attendance at court.” High Spanish combs – they are Goya creations – grey, hieratic, doltish aristocrats. * Crooked branch of Monterey Cypress, 2 big peacocks, carefully growing their new green trains high above the muddy ground. Real? They seem. Royal blue and carnelian. […]

* I came close to the peacocks. In the sun, one had a green tail, the other was green/blue overlaid with delicate bronze. * Snowy egrets. Pink pelicans * The giant blue pigeons with the XVIIIeme S [style?] hairdos are thinking thoughts of love. * Walk with the cassowary, a Nō dance… * Venerable grebes. * Cypress tree tells me “You dropped your scarf” – I find it
beside the Lake  *  Preening himself the white drake twists his head backwards; wing and
shoulder feathers: petals of a white magnolia.  *  Jim Koller, Edward Van Aelstyn & Bill
Brown – the entire staff of Coyote – brought me copies of Highgrade tonight 7:II:66 followed
by monumental dinner in Chinatown.  *

24:II:66  On February 24, 1966, at 4 PM I sailed from San Francisco on the SS PRESIDENT
CLEVELAND bound for Honolulu, Yokohama, Hong Kong & Manila.

   I descended at Yokohama on 10 March 1966 – see Looseleaf notes for account of trip, first
impressions of Japan &c.
Appendix 1: Key Individuals Cited in the Journals (ref. Whalen’s *Collected Poems* (CP)).

Allen, Donald M. “Don”  Legendary editor and publisher, including at Grove Press, New York. Allen’s *The New American Poetry 1945-1960* was easily the most important poetry anthology in the immediate post-war era. He started Grey Fox Press and Four Seasons Foundation in order to be able to publish poets and writers such as Whalen, Jack Spicer, Joanne Kyger, Charles Olson, Gary Snyder, Robert Duncan, Ed Dorn, and other breakthrough avant-garde figures of the period. (1912-2004).

Anderson, Richard B.  Judge Ben Richard Anderson was a very close friend and patron of Whalen who secured Whalen a job and place to live in Newport, Oregon from autumn, 1957 until spring, 1959. He “disappeared” (presumably a suicide) in the Santiam Valley, Oregon in 1961, about one year following the death of his wife Virginia. (d. 1961)

Anderson, Virginia  Wife of Ben Richard Anderson, above. (d. 1960 at age 49)


Baker, Richard “Dick”  2\(^{nd}\) abbot of San Francisco Zen Center; close friend and confidant of Whalen and served as Whalen’s primary Zen teacher. Organized the landmark 1965 Berkeley Poetry Conference for the University of California. During the 1970s and 1980s one of the leading thinkers, teachers, and intellectuals in American Zen Buddhism. Influenced dozens of major figures, including Whalen. (b.1936).

Baraka, Amiri  (Aka Leroi Jones). Playwright, poet, essayist, fiction writer, political activist, and friend of Philip Whalen. Amiri Baraka/Leroi Jones originally conceived of himself as a New York Beat writer, but transformed himself into a central figure of the 1960s Black Arts and Black Power movements and influenced “the course of black nationality formation in the 1970s” through his work as a poet, educator, and community organizer (Komozi xiii). Baraka and the Black Arts Movement had “a profound and lasting philosophical and aesthetic impact on all postintegrationist black art” (William Harris, at Komozi xiii). (b. 1934)
Behan, Brendan
Irish poet, novelist, playwright, and I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army) volunteer who wrote both in English and Irish. (1923-1964). Whalen and Behan met on one of Whalen’s east coast poetry reading tours. (1923-1964)

Branaman, Robert
Painter, poet, film producer. Part of the ‘Kansas Vortex’ (aka ‘Wichita Vortex) of artists and writers who moved from Kansas to San Francisco in the late 1950s, including Michael McClure, Dave Haselwood, William S. Burroughs, Dennis Hopper, Ed Dorn, Charlie Parker, Roxie Powell, Stan Brakhage, Timothy Leary, et al. (dates unknown)

Brown, William “Bill”
Novelist, friend, correspondent with Whalen. Author of In Honeytown (1965) and The Way To The Uncle Sam Hotel (1966) (CP 552, 587) (dates unknown)

Burroughs, Wm. S.
Burroughs met Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac in New York in 1943, cementing the New York roots of the Beat movement. Whalen and William S. Burroughs were not particularly close friends or colleagues, but Whalen appreciated Burroughs work as a novelist (see his essay on the novels of Burroughs and Kerouac at p. 163, above). Burroughs wrote 18 novels, and published several collections of short stories and essays. In 1983 he was elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. (1914-1997) (CP 407)

Carpenter, Donald “Don”

Cassady, Neal.
Beat writer and friend of Whalen and an integral part of their circle during the 1950s and 60s; jailed for two years in San Quentin for possession of marijuana; figures as Dean Moriarity in Kerouac’s 1957 novel On The Road. (1926-1968).

Conner, Bruce
An integral and iconic part of the San Francisco’s scene from the 1950s through the 1990s, both Conner and his wife Jean were friends of Whalen. Bruce Conner is widely known for his work in painting, drawing, sculpture, assemblage, and film. (1933-2008)
Conner, Jean

Peter Frank wrote that Jean Conner’s collages “maintain a tradition of poetic juxtaposition begun by the likes of Hannah Höch and Raoul Hausmann, refined by Max Ernst, and injected into the American art stream by the likes of Joseph Cornell and Jess.” (b. 1933)

Creeley, Robert

A seminal poet and theorist of the Black Mountain School, Creeley and Charles Olson were the main architects of Black Mountain’s influence on American poetics. Today he is recognized as one of the most influential poets of the 20th century, a poet whose dense concision and terse emotionalism is a counter-balance to Whalen’s lush word play and full emotionalism. (1926-2005) (CP 52)

di Prima, Diane

Brooklyn born, former poet laureate of San Francisco, and author of more than forty books of poetry and prose, Diane di Prima’s life in many ways represents the material and spiritual potential for the pure socio-political rebellion that was a main signifier of the 1960s counter-culture. After dropping out of Swarthmore College she moved to Greenwich Village and met fellow writers Allen Ginsberg, Audre Lord, Jack Kerouac, and Amiri Barka. She later joined Timothy Leary’s psychedelic commune in upstate New York, and was editor of the influential avant-garde magazine *Floating Bear* from 1961 to 1969. Di Prima shared with Philip Whalen a common interest in Zen Buddhism, deep suspicion of the U.S. national security state, and a circle of artist and writer friends in the Bay Area and New York City. (b. 1934) (CP 499)

Duerden, Richard “Rick”

Aka “R.D.” San Francisco Renaissance poet and editor of *Foot* magazine and *Rivoli Review*. Duerden was a close friend of Philip Whalen and a high-profile poet in the Bay Area scene during the 1960s and 70s. He read from his work at the 1965 Berkeley Poetry Conference and his poems were featured in Donald Allen’s *NAP*. (1927–2000) (CP 190, 569)

Duerden, Suzanne

Attorney in Marin County District Attorney’s office. Partner of Rick Duerden. (1940-2005).

Duncan, Robert

One of the most accomplished and influential poets of the postwar period, and along with Jack Spicer, Robin Blaser, and Kenneth Rexroth, a leading figure of the San Francisco Renaissance and the author of close to 40 volumes of verse, prose, and dramatic literature. In 1944 the magazine *Politics* under editor Dwight Macdonald published Duncan’s trailblazing essay “The Homosexual in Society,” one of the very first postmodern

Durham, Edward  
Patron and friend of Whalen; aka EAMD, Durham, etc.  
(dates unknown) (CP 393)

Durham, Martha  
Patron and friend of Whalen; partner of Edw. Durham.  
(dates unknown)

Ginsberg, Allen  
Aka “A.G.,” leading Beat poet, essayist, literary theorist and longtime friend and patron of Philip Whalen. Originally from Newark and Paterson, N.J., Ginsberg’s *Howl and Other Poems* was seized by U.S. Customs Officials in San Francisco in 1957 on obscenity grounds, but after the U.S. attorney refused to file condemnation proceedings against the book, undercover city police arrested City Lights Books clerk Shigeyoshi Murao for selling it, and then issued a warrant for the arrest of bookstore owner and publisher Lawrence Ferlinghetti. In many ways Ginsberg was the signal figure of the Beat era, a brash New Yorker who was able to bind together the avant-gardes of the east and west coasts into a single powerful force by the sheer force of his personality and boundless energy. In 1974 Ginsberg’s collection *The Fall of America* shared the National Book Award for poetry, in 1979 he was inducted into the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and his *Cosmopolitan Greetings: Poems 1986-1992* was a 1995 Pulitzer Prize finalist. Ginsberg was the author of dozens of influential literary essays, forewords, introductions, and reviews. A devout buddhist, his expansive generosity sustained many poets, artists, and friends through tough economic crises. (1926-1997)

Harrison, Jane Ellen  
Aka “Miss Harrison.” British scholar, linguist, feminist political activist, author of the landmark *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* ((1903) and other works; often cited in Whalen’s journals and a figure enormously important to Charles Olson. (1850-1928)

Hatch, Jim  
Aka “Hatch,” “JB Hatch.” Poet, professor of literature at CCNY; co-founder of the Billops-Hatch archive, a collection of research materials on African American arts housed at Emory University. (dates unknown)
Hoyem, Andrew  Poet, typographer, printer, publisher, founder and director of San Francisco’s Arion Press. The National Trust for Historic Preservation designated Hoyem’s metal type foundry, letterpress, and bookbindery part of the U.S.’s historical and cultural legacy. (b. 1935)

Jess  Aka the painter Jess Collins. Worked on the Manhattan Project in nuclear weapon production but abandoned this career in a pacifist protest, changing his name to simply “Jess.” Enrolled in the Calif. School of the Arts in 1949 (now San Francisco Art Institute) and met his lifelong partner Robert Duncan in 1951. Jess and Duncan were extremely influential artists of the San Francisco Renaissance. In 1952 Jess, Duncan, and the painter Harry Jacobus opened the King Ubu Gallery, which was later re-opened under the tutelage of Jack Spicer and art school students as the Six Gallery – where Philip Whalen had his public debut as a poet in October, 1955. (1923-2004)

Kerouac, Jack  Aka “JLK,” “Jean,” across North American culture Jack Kerouac is probably the most influential and least understood Beat writer, one of Whalen’s closest friends and regular correspondents – they shared a cottage in Berkeley for about a year in the late 1950s. Whalen, with his deep, wide, and scholarly reading habits clearly nourished Kerouac’s interest in buddhism, which has been widely misinterpreted by some writers. Kerouac’s grasp of buddhist philosophy, mysticism, and cosmogony was second to none, but was syncretic, in that he never foreswore his native Roman Catholicism. English was Kerouac’s second language. On TheRoad was first written in Québécois French, where he is considered one of their originary authors. (1922-1969)

Kyger, Joanne  Aka “JEK,” “JEKS,” “Joanne Elizabeth,” etc., for a time the love of Philip Whalen’s life, Kyger studied with Robert Duncan and Jack Spicer and has published more than 20 volumes of poetry including About Now: Collected Poems (2007). While married to Gary Snyder and living in Kyoto, Japan Kyger practiced traditional Rinzai Zen at Daitoku-ji monastery, and later traveled through India on a buddhist sojourn with Snyder, Peter Orlovsky, and Allen Ginsberg, related in her highly entertaining journal account Strange Big Moon: The Japan and India Journals 1960-1964. Their circle of friends in Japan included Donald Allen, Clayton Eshleman, Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Masao Abe, Ben Shahn, and Philip Yampolsky. David Meltzer said of Kyger, that “No other poet of my generation has been able to make the pleasures
and particulars of the “everyday” as luminous and essential and central.” (b. 1934)

Leh, Ann.  Aka “Ann,” “ARL.” Partner of Albert Saijo. (dates unknown)

Loewinisohn, Ron  Poet, novelist, essayist; professor at University of California, Berkeley. Co-edited and published literary magazine *Change* with Richard Brautigan (b.1937).


McClure, Michael “Mike”  Aka “MM,” “M.” Leading San Francisco Renaissance and Beat poet, playwright, novelist, and actor known for his unique and revolutionary incorporation of biological, animal, and environmental perspectives in his work. Author of several dozen volumes of verse, novels, and literary essays, as well as more than 20 plays, musicals, and television documentaries, plus the song “Mercedes Benz” made famous by rock n’ roll musician Janis Joplin. Born in Kansas, McClure studied at the University of Wichita, the University of Arizona, and San Francisco State College, where he first met Robert Duncan. Like Philip Whalen, his inaugural poetry reading was in 1955 at the Six Gallery. Michael and his first wife Joanna were among Whalen’s closest friends and supporters from the late 1950s through the mid-1960s. (b. 1932) (CP 142, 287).

McGaw, Bruce  Well-known painter and scholar of the San Francisco figurative Movement. Studied with Richard Diebenkorn; taught at Bay Area art schools. (b.1935).

Meltzer, David  Musician and poet, author of over 40 books of poetry including *Arrows: Selected Poetry 1957–1992*, plus fiction, essays, and literary interviews, David Meltzer was a key figure in the San Francisco Renaissance and Beat Generation. He was especially close with Jack Spicer, Robert Duncan and Philip Whalen, and was one of Whalen’s closest colleagues from the late 1950s to mid-1960s. Meltzer’s work was included in Donald Allen’s anthology *The New American Poetry 1945-1960*; and together with Diane di Prima he was a distinguished member of the poetics faculty at San Francisco’s New College. His most recent book is *When I Was A Poet* (2011). (b. 1937)
Olson, Charles

One of the two or three most influential postwar poets and literary essayists, Charles Olson changed the course of postmodern poetry, taking it “off the shelf” and “back into… the living context of a place and its location in a more collective, plural, geographical history” (Alcalay 105). The founder and leading figure of the Black Mountain ‘school’ of poets centered around the legendary Black Mountain College in Asheville, North Carolina, Olson influenced and nurtured dozens of poets and writers, including Creeley, di Prima, Jones/Baraka, John Wieners, Anne Waldman, Ed Dorn, Diane Wakoski, Alice Notely, et al., and investigated ‘open field’ poetics with Whalen through epistolary poems and correspondence. As Donald Hall noted in 1961, Olson’s “historicizing impulse” was “practically without precedent” (Rasula 255). Olson’s “Polis is this” also means ‘polis’ is this person, this public person, public mask, history itself (256-57). Olson’s breakthrough set the stage for the resurgence of poetry as public event, as a vehicle for political protest in the 1960s, and thus for a whole range of poets, musicians, and artists who created this era as one vast progressive social movement. For more on Olson see entry for Ezra Pound, below. (1910-1970) (CP 97, 105)

Parks, Shandel “Sally”

A founder of San Francisco’s Louvre Gallery and the American Academy of Asian Studies. Linked to Whalen, Gary Snyder, Kenneth Rexroth, Shunryu Suzuki, Alan Watts, et al., through common interests in Zen Buddhism and East Asian culture. (dates unknown)

Pound, Ezra

One of the foremost modernist poets, author of the epic masterpiece The Cantos (1925-48) and several dozen volumes of lyric poetry and literary essays, Pound in many ways defined early modernism, variously publishing, editing, or promoting the work of W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, H.D., William Carlos Williams, Marianne Moore, T.S. Eliot, and Ernest Hemingway. His interest in and translations of Asian poets and philosophers were definitive in their period, and extremely influential on Gary Snyder and Philip Whalen who, in many ways, picked up and continued where Pound left off. Pound became an anti-semite and a propagandist for Mussolini’s fascist government during WWII and was arrested and charged with treason by the U.S. government in 1945. At trial in the U.S. he was acquitted on grounds of insanity and delivered to St. Elizabeths mental hospital in Washington, D.C. where he remained until 1958. Charles Olson, a former Roosevelt Administration official and Democrat Party rising star, had returned to his literary roots and begun to write
poetry. He also began to visit Pound at St. Elizabeths in January, 1946. The two poets forged a friendship, spending weeks and months discussing literature, art, politics, and life (see Seelye). Pound was released from custody in 1958 and returned to Italy. Ginsberg visited him there in 1967; smoked pot and drank wine with the older poet (it’s not clear if Pound shared in the marijuana part), related his Blake visions, and discussed poetics with the modernist master, as well as poems of Creeley, and writings of Olson and Wieners (1980, 1-17). Pound apologized to Ginsberg for his anti-semitism, and by extension, his fascist ignorance. He died in Italy in 1972. (1885-1972)

Powell, Roxie

Beat poet, member of the ‘Wichita Vortex’ (see note for Branaman, above). (b. 1935). (CP 331).

Reynolds, Lloyd

A professor of literature, creative writing, and calligraphy at Reed College during Whalen’s student days, Reynolds was the poet’s single most influential teacher, singularly responsible for Whalen’s devotion to the art of calligraphy and the small press handmade book, and Whalen was deeply devoted to his former professor, with whom he kept up a regular correspondence throughout his life. Reynolds directed Whalen’s initial education in letterpress printing, book manufacture, and modern literature, and as a member of the faculty helped host William Carlos Williams during his 1950 visit to Reed, where he met and discussed poetry with Whalen, Snyder, Lew Welch, and other students. Reynolds harbored a severe mistrust of America’s sharp political rightward turn after WWII, as well as the country’s increasingly philistine cultural ethos, and he found a like minded acolyte in Whalen. (1902-1978)

Rexroth, Kenneth

Kenneth Rexroth was one of the seminal poets of the San Francisco Renaissance, as well as a incisively potent critic and political activist. It would be difficult to overstate his legacy and influence on American letters, including especially the various ‘schools’ of the New American Poets, the Beats, etc. He emceed the Six Gallery poetry reading in October, 1955, Whalen’s public debut. (1905-1982) (CP 650)

Rivers, Larry

American artist of the New York School; as well as a musician, filmmaker, and actor. Studied at New York University and the Juilliard School of Music. (1923-2002).
Rosenthal, Irving “Irv”  Former editor of the *Chicago Review* and founder-publisher of *Big Table*; novelist, critic, gay activist; friend and confidant of Whalen. Rosenthal was also close with Allen Ginsberg, Herbert Huncke, William S. Burroughs and other figures in the Beat movement. (b. 1930)

Saijo, Albert.  Writer, Beat poet, Zen Buddhist, in 1942 Saijo and his family were interned at Heart Mountain Relocation Center in northwest Wyoming with ten thousand other Japanese-Americans. He later joined the U.S. Army and served honorably in Italy. In 1972 his book of haiku poems *Trip Trap*, produced in conjunction with Jack Kerouac and Lew Welch, was published, and in 1997 he brought out the poetry collection *Outspeaks: A Rhapsody*. His personal generosity towards Whalen was critical in allowing Whalen to complete his first novel, *You Didn’t Even Try*. (1926-2011) (CP 178)

Sales, Elizabeth “Tommy”  Close friend, confidant, patron, and landlord to Whalen, who lived rent-free in her house at 123 Beaver Street several times during the 1960s, including at one point with roommates Richard Brautigan and Lew Welch. Whalen frequently refers to her in the journals as “E.T.S.” and “Madame E.T.S.” (dates unknown) (CP 89, 372)

Sales, Grover  San Francisco author, jazz historian, publicist, and critic who wrote on music, movies, and cultural issues. (1920-2004)

Snyder, Gary  A Pulitzer Prize winning poet, the most influential buddhist thinker in North America, and a literary force across many cultures and nations for three decades. It is Gary Snyder’s deep hope, Bill McKibben once wrote, “… that someday we might all be native Americans, at home in our grand place—.” Throughout Philip Whalen’s life, Gary Snyder was one of his closest friends and literary allies. His poems and essays mark an important turn in American letters, politics, and culture, as Snyder is one of the most important polemicists for ‘deep ecology’ in North America. (b. 1930) (CP 156)

Suzuki, Shunryu  Japanese Zen priest and founding abbot of San Francisco Zen Center; extraordinarily subtle and effective buddhist philosopher-teacher with enormous influence on dozens of poets, writers, and artists throughout North America and Japan. (1904-1971)

Thompson, Clarence Leslie  Aka “Les,” “Leslie,” “CLT,” “L,” “T,” “Clarence.” Probably Philip Whalen’s closest friend and most significant lover during the late 1950s and early to mid-1960s, Thompson and Whalen lived together for over two years in a small storefront apartment at 24th & Douglass in San Francisco. During his entire Thompson remained the only partner Whalen lived with for a significant amount of time in a sustained, committed relationship. They met at Reed College. Thompson later owned a bookstore in Seal Beach, Calif. (dates unknown)


Wenning, Henry  Rare book dealer, aesthete, notable raconteur, former union official, a friend of Whalen who occasionally arranged the sale of the poet’s archival material to university libraries. See esp. journal entry above at pp. 343 (18:III:64) for anecdote on Wenning, Cid Corman, and Samuel Beckett. (1911-1987)

Wieners, John  An antiwar and gay rights activist, Wieners studied at Black Mountain College with Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, and Robert Duncan. His poetry brims with passion, sadness, and subtle insights into the human condition. Wieners received awards for his work from the Poetry Foundation, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. He founded and edited the literary magazine Measure (1957–1962), and worked as an actor and stage manager at the Poet’s Theater, Cambridge, Massachusetts. His first book, The Hotel Wentley Poems, was published by David Haselwood’s Auerhahn Press in 1958. (1934-2002) (CP 85)
Appendix 2: Works Cited by Philip Whalen in the pre-Kyoto Journals

Aeschylus  
*The Persians* (472 B.C.); *Prometheus Bound* (circa 480 B.C.)

Ault, Norman  
*Elizabethan Lyrics from the Original Texts* (1949)

Corelli, Arcangelo  
*Sonata No. 3* (1689)

Bloch, Ernest  
*Violin Sonatas* (n.d.)

Branaman, Robert “Bob”  
*The Room* (painting, n.d.)

Bree, Germaine  
*Gide* (1963)

Britten, Benjamin  
*The Turn of the Screw* (opera 1954)

Brown, Bill  
*In Honeytown* (1965)

Brown, William H.  
*The Judgement of Paris* (two paintings 1963)

Browne, Sir Thomas  
*The Garden of Cyrus* (1658)

Burroughs, William S.  

Burton, Sir Richard (trans.)  
*The Arabian Nights* (circa 900 C.E.)

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor  
*The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1895)

Conner, Bruce  
(paintings, Batman Gallery 1964)

Conze, Edward (trans.)  

Creel, Herrlee Glessner  
*The Birth of China* (1954)

Creeley, Robert  
*The Island* (1963)

de Angulo, Jaime  
*Indian Tales* (1953)

de Man, Paul  

Durrell, Lawrence  
*Clea* (1960)
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<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Faulkner, William</td>
<td><em>The Reivers</em></td>
<td>(1962)</td>
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<td>Gide, André</td>
<td><em>The Caves of the Vatican</em></td>
<td>(1914)</td>
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<td>Goddard, Dwight</td>
<td><em>The Śūraṅgama Sūtra</em></td>
<td>(713 C.E.; trans. 1963)</td>
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<td>Goodman, Paul</td>
<td><em>Growing Up Absurd</em></td>
<td>(1960)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hesse, Herman</td>
<td><em>Magister Ludi</em></td>
<td>(1943)</td>
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<td>Huxley, Aldous</td>
<td><em>Eyeless In Gaza</em></td>
<td>(1936)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibsen, Henrik</td>
<td><em>When We Dead Awaken</em></td>
<td>(1899)</td>
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<tr>
<td>James, Henry</td>
<td><em>The Art of the Novel</em></td>
<td>(1934); <em>The Wings of the Dove</em> (1902); <em>The Ambassadors</em> (1903)</td>
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<td>Joyce, James</td>
<td><em>Dubliners</em></td>
<td>(1914); <em>Portrait of the Artist as A Young Man</em> ((1916)</td>
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<td>Kerouac, Jack</td>
<td><em>The Town and the City</em></td>
<td>(1950); <em>On The Road</em> (1957); <em>The Dharma Bums</em> (1958); <em>Doctor Sax</em> (1959); <em>Maggie Cassidy</em> (1959); <em>Tristesssa</em> (1960); <em>Visions of Cody</em> (1960); <em>Big Sur</em> (1962)</td>
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<td>Kesey, Ken</td>
<td><em>One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest</em></td>
<td>(1962)</td>
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<td>Malory, Sir Thomas</td>
<td><em>Le Morte d’Arthur</em></td>
<td>(1485)</td>
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<td>Maraini, Fosco</td>
<td><em>Secret Tibet</em></td>
<td>(1952)</td>
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<td>McGaw, Bruce</td>
<td><em>Orpheus: Interior Looking Outwards</em></td>
<td>(paintings 1962)</td>
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<td>Mottram, Eric</td>
<td>“The Mimeograph Revolution.” <em>Times Literary Supplement</em> (1964)</td>
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<td>Pound, Ezra</td>
<td><em>Confucius</em></td>
<td>(1951)</td>
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<td>Rexroth, Kenneth</td>
<td><em>The Dragon and The Unicorn</em></td>
<td>(1944-1950)</td>
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<td>Rickert, Elizabeth</td>
<td>Chaucer’s World</td>
<td>(1948)</td>
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<td>Sauer, Carl</td>
<td>“Environment and Culture during the Last Deglaciation.” <em>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</em> (March 1948)</td>
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<td>Schumann, Robert</td>
<td><em>Symphony No. 2 in C Major</em></td>
<td>(1847)</td>
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<td>Soothill, W.E.</td>
<td><em>The Lotus Sutra</em> (1930)</td>
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<td>Stein, Gertrude</td>
<td><em>Lectures In America</em> (1935); <em>Four In America</em> (1947)</td>
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<td>Sterne, Laurence</td>
<td><em>Tristram Shandy</em> (1759-67)</td>
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<td>Thoreau, Henry David</td>
<td><em>A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers</em> (1849)</td>
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<td>Tolkien, J.R.R.</td>
<td><em>The Fellowship of the Ring</em> (1954-55)</td>
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<td>Tuve, Rosemond</td>
<td><em>Allegorical Imagery</em> (1966)</td>
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<td>Waugh, Evelyn</td>
<td><em>Brideshead Revisited</em> (1945)</td>
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<td>Weill, Kurt</td>
<td><em>The Seven Deadly Sins</em> (1933)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weyl, Hermann</td>
<td><em>Philosophy of Mathematics and Natural Science</em> (1949)</td>
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<td>Williams, William Carlos</td>
<td><em>The Collected Later Poems</em> (1963); <em>In The American Grain</em> (1956)</td>
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<td>Yeats, W.B.</td>
<td><em>The Celtic Twilight</em> (1893)</td>
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<td>Zenji, Sëtcho</td>
<td><em>The Blue Cliff Record</em> (J. <em>Hekigan Roku</em>) (1125)</td>
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### Appendix 3: Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bancroft</td>
<td>The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>The Columbia University Rare Book &amp; Manuscript Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington University</td>
<td>The Olin Library, Washington University in St. Louis</td>
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</table>
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---. *Correspondence*. Reed College Library, Special Collections & Archives.


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