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Dear Ivan:

If anybody told you I was dead, it was a “gross exaggeration” as Mark Twain expressed it. I still totter along, in amazingly good shape, for my age, 81, except that I go right on getting lazier, by the minute, failing to get out and do a decently long walk, every day, that being, as even I know, sure suicide for any animal possessing muscles. But, my Cousin, George Reed, with whom I enjoyed a long phone chat, two days ago, sounds as lively as ever. He was my best-loved male relative, my cousin, born and brought up on the Reed Ranch, at Dodson, still a Railroad stop, down stream a few miles below Bonneville, on the latest map I have looked at. One of the two salmon canneries was located at Dodson (I can’t remember, any more, whether it was McGowan’s or Warren’s).

This cousin George was younger than me, by a year, but he grew up among an enormous family of older men and women, whereas I was smothered by nothing but women, all through my early years (until I was ten).

He, George, had his own business, in Oakland, California, as well as a lot of business savvy (which I always lacked, 100%), so that he retired, about twenty years ago, he and his third wife “hiding out” like Robinson Crusoe, in Fall River Mills, away to hell-n-gone up, within 70 miles of the top boundary of the state, which scales, on the map, 790 miles, up and down.

San Diego is a puny 13 miles or so from the bottom end, and only once, during my 19 years here, have I driven a few miles south along the seashore, into Mexico to the end of the decently surfaced road. I like, often love, a great many of the Mexican-Americans I meet around here. It all depends on what part of Mexico they hail from. Those border towns are jungles, worse. That Cousin George of mine, was always a guy who loved everybody, and vice versa. But, when he retired from business and picked a place to eke out the remainder of his hitch aboard this Humanity-Loused-Up Planet, he (a guy who alWays was, still could be) a smash hit

among any gaggle of humans above the level of nickle-wits, picks that stinking Country ghetto, Fall River Mill, (pop. by the map, 250 to 1000), what a hell of a spot for a genius-high guy like George, to choose, of his own free will! As a kid, I always held George (a year my junior) as my ideal, the kind of guy I would give my two soles and my immortal soul to be able to like George, to communicate with people of every “stripe”, to rub each one the “right way”.

I have not laid eyes on George for about twenty years, but others, who meet him, now and then, assure me that he still has all of the old genius, a for spinning a yarn, or relating; any tid-bit of scandal or fun, with a spicy flavor like nobody else in the world. After my recent phone talk with George, I got off a long letter to him, (21 pages like this), not asking him any question, but giving him a look inside my head, to see how flabbergasted I all over this Robinson Crusoe caper of his, resigning from the human race!

As a kid, I used to wonder about this magical gift George had (almost anybody had a lot more of the gift than I could come up with!), and well aware of the great importance of that gift, doing my dammedest, all my life, to puzzle out and imitate some of those useful tricks. You could not blast me loose from San Dingo with nitro glycerin. It seems to be as free from racial hatred as any spot on earth. It is a rich mulligan of every race, every tint of hide, on earth. My home town, Cascade Locks, was just about the same thing, on a far smaller scale, of course. My cousin, Addie, ten years older (I, luckily, saw a lot of Addie, in the earliest years I can remember), and I learned, from Addie, to relish and love the great variety of personalities and dialects, all around us, our own family and all the other families, of other breeds, our neighbors, most of the Elders having gotten there by covered wagons, before the sissy days of railroads. I can conjure up a million details of those old timers, kids and adults, the ground- dragging skirts, the steel-ribbed corsets, the once-a-week bath some of us kids got, the dentist’s kit of Doc Hi Leavens, my granddad kept around, before the mental specialists caught up and moved in, the bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham’s cure-all sitting around, the Bull Durham smoking tobacco, the huge slabs of chewing tobacco “Star” and “Horse-Shoe” running neck-and-neck, as favorites), the drunks asleep, or “out”, anyhow, in the Main Street gutter, on a Saturday evening.

The two small shacks, in the rear of the White House Saloon, where visiting ladies came and went, irregularly. I was born in that building, before it became the popular "White House Saloon." I'll have you know), that saloon was located, smack in the geographical and business center of "our fair city." Almost any huddle of more than two shacks was a "city," in those self-esteeming days. For some strange reason, nobody felt proud of The Locks. Never did anybody speak of that place as a city (nor as a "village). When they were forced to classify it, they called it a "town", maybe with apologies,

Whenever I sit down, like this, ferminst my typer, so as to slip into my "old times" groove, millions of items of gabble converge on my feeble old noggin, often seeming to act on me like a Mickie Finn, so that I seem to Pass out, like a light, allowing the "Evil Demon," by which my beaten-up old typer is "possessed" to take over, all the way, banging out hundreds of furlongs of whuffle-whug, the likes of this, often so horrifying to me that I feel like crumpling it up for the trash man. Only in Emergencies do I get "all that" horrified. If there are no lies in it, ferninst me, or vice versa, I bale it all up and ship it, just as all good Catholics confess their sins, and wealthy nuts hire psychiatrists to listen to their moans and groans. The only reason I have been sparing you of late, is that I never let up, snooping around and getting my hooks into so many other innocent victims. I would like, now, to take care here of one final item, really important to anybody who cares a single damn, or less, about our out-of-this-world beautiful Columbia Gorge, Cascade stretch, so well documented by that worthy Donald A. Brown, as far as his 87-pages can cover the job. I sure hope that I am "spared as many more years as necessary to lay hands on your history job, an infinitely more scholarly account of that territory, and its denizens (furry, scaly and variously homo) than anybody else has ever glimpsed, let alone actually scrabbling around in trash dumps, never letting up your hell-bent resolve to scratch together, dust and muck off and type, in permanent form, those holy, 300 volumes of background material, which even those carp-brained jokers running the Oregon Historical Museum cannot be stupid enough to allow to rot or stoke their heating plant with. I truly believe (and it is easy to believe it here, in San Diego) that this tailless, pants-wearing breed of apes, homo, is steadily evolving into a far better breed (Some of the sharper, science fiction writers, such as John Campbell, refer to

this emerging breed of homo, as Homo-Superior-ish). I make it my business to get around and mix with the top crust of the college kids of today (I would, if I had ever had the chance, also like to meet and argue with some of the sure-nuff Hippies, (a recent “Hippie” report has “cooled me” just as I did mingle and practically live with a colony of junkies (drug addicts), for over a year, until I was given the heave-ho, ass-over-tea-kettle, when I told them off, to their fanatical faces, and with red-hot letters written to their top brains, that certain policies they were trying to scare me into were not only un-Christian, un-American but downright suicidal for their basically decent and very successful crusade for the re-habilitation of drug addicts. I laid it out in the strongest terms I knew how, that every other true-blue American, the like of me, they were depending on for money and other support, would feel the same disgust as I did for that feeble-witted procedure I was objecting to, tooth and claw.

You know, as well as I do, you cannot argue with any fanatic, so out I flew, like a sneeze, or something, in a whirlwind. I might have gone ahead and published, (As I threatened, vaguely, to do) since the Police Department as well as the majority (I think) of the “blue-nosed”, straight-laced population. Here we were all looking for a good excuse to give that entire “synonon” colony the heave-ho, out of town (and they did, eventually, do that very thing, but with nary a smidgin of help from me). I knew from my year of “residence” almost as one of them, except that I rented my own “dump” (one room apartment), directly across the street. I saw with my own eyes that they were taking in a great slew of the lowest form of human garbage and building them, I figured about fifty-percent of their intake, over into working, law-abiding humans. No other program in the world, for junkies, was doing any betty than maybe four or five percent.

My health being miraculously good, I shall never stop trying to get going with my life-long radical program for education, derived, basically from that great Italian genius, Maria Monterrosi, whose work I first read about in 1910. That Montessori Method flares up, now and then, in the U. S. and elsewhere, but the “orthodox” educators always manage to crush it, put it out like a brush fire, as they are doing again, right now.

For the past couple of months, I have been all on fire with a big pipe dream for a new and more hopeful campaign on behalf of that radical and deeply scientifically

right assault on the educational establishment, by way of this good old wop gal, Montessori, plus my own lifetime of study and experiment with her method. My own kids and all possible others being my guinea pigs. Most of her success came from the use of new and clever gadgets she invented (all for her own efforts, being a mean old devil who never allowed another should to make the littlest improvement on one of her gadgets, still more hostile toward any new gadget anybody else in the world might come up with.)

I first heard him 1927 about the binary system of numbers, from a genius boss I worked for, at that time. That was almost twenty years before electronic computers took the math and scientific spotlight, making a loud hullabaloo over binary numbers. Back in 1927, when that genius boss of mine, researching in an entirely different “field,” first showed me the basic importance of the “two-system.” It was plain to me, instantly, that binary numbers, for dimensioning wooden, play blocks for kids, were just what the doctor ordered. I have been building such block sets for kids, starting right then for my little step-son, finding such blocks by far the best single item of learning gear hardware, in every way, any kid could possibly have. I have, naturally, by reason of this great toy hunger, that has been chewing at me all these years, rounded up zillions of other good items for kids, some of them getting long workouts with kids, others nothing but “visions” so far, but a slew of these equally good, I know, since I have learned, from all this practice to “think just like a kid.”

I met, about a year ago, a very brainy young fellow, twenty-six, holding a surprisingly high status job with the famous Salk Institute, where this financially, as well as, scientifically brainy Salk guy has rounded up, maybe 300 of the top brains of the world, in all the life sciences. This young Stewart Ross has a private office, and his own secretary has his office in the main building, along side Salk, and a few of the super big wheels, such of Brownowski. This young ross has the title of “Program Officer” and his job seems to be to get around, make friends with all these “mad scientists,” not only at Salk, but also, right next door, at the University of California, San Dingo Branch, attend all meetings, figure out ways to promote communication between all these different specialists, particularly (I judge) to squirt around the old oil, in public relations style.

This young Ross is a handsome a young so-and-so, plus the world's smoothest personality, and it is my strong impression that he could "sell any bill of goods" to anybody in the wide world, male or female, just as eloquently as to me. Not that he does any huge amount of talking. Maybe over half of his "salesmanship" is nothing but a "genius for listening." Why in hell he has paid me so much all-out attention, and has gone to so much trouble (even expense) to show so much respect for me and my outlaw ideas, I'll never know. Then he circulates, out there among all those world leaders (especially in the "Top Branches" of the science tree), at Salk and that top shelf university (UCSD), he being just as ready to laugh at any foolishness, or inconsistency one of them may express, as if the boo-boo were coming from the lowly likes of me, holding no degree at all.

In fact, I would feel more comfortable if he would tear loose and tear the be-Jesus out of some of my ignorant, half-cocked motions (he holds a master's degree in Political Economy, and has spent all his life among real brains.) It just could be that he is smart enough to know that anybody, no matter how high his I.Q. may fly, but has never gotten out and competed with the humble, blue-collar guys, or with artists, in any line, can be really stupid as all hell, for the kind of intelligence that would spell "survival," out in the jungle, or up against Mother Nature, in some of her dirtier moods, as lost on a desert, or up against a blizzard, in the polar regions or even living through a lively earthquake, such as the one that smacked Los Angeles recently. That L. A. quake did its tricks many miles away from the part of town where my daughter, husband and two babies live. I was amused to learn that that quake scared hell out of Eddie, my admirable son-in-law, a rough and tough Irish American. I can only figure that the fear of the wrath of God, branded deeply into the soul of every Catholic, must have gotten its probes into Eddie.

Years ago, in Chicago, a Negro fellow worker explained to me that mighty earthquake which killed (was it millions) of Japs, "Them Japs is a mighty wicked people! The Lord will put up with only so much of such sinfulness!" For all I know, Eddie may figure that the well known wickedness of Los Angeles finally got to be too much of a stink in God's nostrils. Ellen doesn't know the reason if Eddie himself understand the reason! Sure as hell, the ignorant, far-away likes of me has nary a chance to figure out Eddie "reason"! But also, sure as hell, Ellen convinced me, on

the phone, that, miles-away quake scared the undershorts off that admirable bold, stand-up Son of the Old Sod, even though he was born and brought up in Boston, where the Irish have been looked down on, running neck-and-neck with gorillas, for all the centuries (generations, anyhow) since the first, starved-out, shanty-dwelling, pig-in-the-parlour Irish first came over, in steerage, ship loads.

Even Thoreau, a decent sort, as writers go (b. 1817-d. 1862), speaks in one of his books, of carefully “giving a wide berth” to the “sties of the Irish.” In New York, the Irish just about took over “showbiz,” for many years, and in politics, they did even better for themselves. In Chicago, they did very well for themselves in politics. Daily, who has been elected Mayor of Chicago (must be about thirty years, now), is a tree-green Mick, I am almost certain. When I lived in Chicago, from 1920 to 1952, I heard a lot of slurs against the Irish, from Germans and Scandinavians, and that was a new thing to me, born and brought up on the Pacific Coast, as I was.

When my well-loved son-in-law, Eddie Burns, tried to tell me slurs had been cast at him, when he first moved to Los Angeles from Boston, I told him, as emphatically as I could, without insulting him, that I, born and raised on this coast, did not believe a damned work of any “anti-Irish” or “anti-Catholic” prejudice, in any of these Pacific coast states. I hammered it in “good” that his own over-blown sensitivity had caused him to “hear things,” pure “pink elephant” stuff. Eddie’s fabulous success, in his job with the genius Howard Hughes, has, most likely forced him to see things straight. In this special company Howard Hughes, he has a “stable” of the world’s top-shelf “Mad-Scientists”, starting where the most hair-heisting science fiction leaves off, ideas not due for us puny humans to mess around with for a few centuries, yet. A few of these weirdest pipe dreams have turned out to be big break-thoughts, big noises in science and engineering. Eddie, employed among this pop-eyed crew for the past 15 years, has worked up to be one of the “top engineers” (he never even finished high school) able to listen, dig out and savvy anything at all the “maddest” of these weirdos can envision, in their outlaw, mental caldrons, set it down on paper, in fully engineering form blueprints, specifications, materials lists, etc., etc., send such paper into the shops and get back ship-shape hardware, just what that madman had in mind, indignant “as wet hens” over the abysmal stupidity of the conceited, degree-bearing, big wheels cluttering up their collection of the “top

siftings” of the world’s “stand-outs” in science, in failure to understand what this most recent pipe dream was all about, hence, all the more grateful and respectful to our Eddie for is un-pretentious insight.

I have been keenly aware, all my life, of a special thing, a mental knack, occurring, sporadically among many races, maybe in all, enabling them to absorb huge masses of supposedly elusive technical know-how, without any academics right to any such damned thing. In a book I keep around here, “Long, Long Ago,” by Alex Woolcott, is an “essay,” “I might just as well have played hookey,” in which he lists a number of highly creative men, in various “difficult” professions, who have barged boldly in, with no training worthy of the name, making monkeys out of the “super-trained,” erstwhile “leaders.”

I recently heard from a grammar-school-mate, Walter Attwell, a yarn new to me, about me Uncle Turner Leavens, quoted in Brown’s History, lacking any formal education (maybe two years or so, back when primary schools simply did not yet exist in Illinois, nor Washington Territory), yet impressing me, in my teens, as a well-read and technically sound, thinker and creator, in his Columbia Gorge habitat. In my early teen years, I liked Turner, finding it very pleasant and informative to visit and “shoot the breeze” with him. From others of our family who saw far more of Turner than I did, even my sensible brother, Clive, and from Turner’s daughter, Addie, the best-loved person in my entire life-span, I heard nothing but violent knocks for Turner, nary a word of credit. In any such case, I go by my, first-hand evidence. This Walter Attwell, born at The Locks, apparently a close friend of Wayne Gurley, knew Turner during years when Turner and I were entirely out of touch. I do recall, from my earliest years, that Turner owned a surveyor’s transit, which I, a toddler, stumbled against, as it stood, negligently in Turner’s front yard, when I went visiting there, with my mother, a mere, slap-happy child herself. Over toppled the transit, doomed to partial or complete destruction, except that my Cousin Aimee, about nine, grappled with the awkward, heavy so-and-so and saved the day until adult help showed up, and maybe my tender, guilt-smitten life (the impression I got from that chorus of horror from one and all, focussed on me!)

Walt Attwell, after all these decades, a few months ago, filled me in (I had never before wondered) as to how come a farmer-riverman, the likes of Turner,



possessed a “foreign” doo-dad, such as a transit. Some time, back in those forgotten ages, Turner (in that “try anything” spirit, common to everybody fitted to survive the plains crossing, then merely clinging to life, by hook or crook, after arrival and settling down), became a candidate for Assessor of Skamania County, and was elected! After that triumph, it was revealed to Turner, much to his surprise that the Assessor, also, automatically, assumed the duties of County Surveyor. Ohhh!!! Naturally, there had to be somebody around possessing the requisite know-how. Naturally, a deal was arrived at between Turner and the S. I. (Sivil Engineer). Turner, telling the tale to Walt, lamented “I guess I was pretty stupid. It took me a whole afternoon to get it all down, good and pat.”

That special thing, that ability to soak up, through God knows what and how many channels, shows up, in at least a few individuals, or in an entire family, as music came as natural as breathing, to that entire Reed clan, at Dodson, as certainly magical skills were common to entire tribes in Australia (those early books as some Christians stuff their kids with immaculate conceptions and other “miracles”), to every child. It so happens, that I, throughout my lifetime, have seen more such cases of “short cut miracles” among the Irish, than among any other breed. Hence, while I am knocked for a loop by my son-in-law, Eddie’s unusual invasion of a top-shelf hassle of super-brains, I am by no means really surprised.

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The special barrier, above, indicated a time leap and a “flow leap,” almost into a new dimension. Here it is, March 5, Friday, and I find on Page One, the date Feb. 20, for the take-off of what looked like a lazy, relaxative, couple of pages. This, lousy as it surely is, does not “hold a candle” to other “gaps” in letter I have committed. A letter to my noble cousin G. Roy Hurlburt, almost twenty years my junior, up to his nostrils in a laborious, irritating job for several years now, nailing down the genealogy of the Leavens-St. Ores family (Old Doc Hi and his wife, Dear Old Grandma Pluma), as well as his son, Hurlburt forebears. Hence, the harnessing, three-abreast, Donaldson-Gurley-Hurlburt, of you thrice-blessed historians who, between the three of yous (as we Irish love, logically, to differentiate between the singular and plural forms of the second person), have been slaving away at, piling up

indebtedness and gratitude from me, hand over fist. An important letter to Roy, has been lying, neglected, here, for months.

A short interlude “begets” itself, here, facilitated by the pre-occupation of my loud mouth with the slurping in of that magical second cup of coffee. For a short while, back in my grammar school years, one of those (you know!) do-gooders, went on a public “health” warpath ferninst coffee (about the same time, I recall, a similar anti-glucose warning arose, that crusade possible financed by the cane-sugar and beet-sugar “trusts”, such an effective goblin curser, (that one) that a lot of gullible americans laid off of that cheap, competitive sweetener, glucose. I learned, early in life, to sneak my unsportsman-like nose into motivations, but the great, ignorant majority, (according to the loud exposers, such as Vance Packard), the sheep-like, normal public, continually renewed by the monstrous fecundity, common to all animal species, and the magical crafty scientists, earning fabulous wages from Madison Avenue, the sheep-herding techniques never cease to progress toward even finer artistry in mass persuasion.

Any slightest slacking off from full attentions, such as this, even to draw a vital breath of air, allows copious swarms of irrelevant comments to snatch the chance to crash my “screens.” My memory reaches back to the days when the best we knew, against mosquitos was to do what we could with Mosquito Bar. Following that flimsy defense, came wire screens. I was deeply impressed by my first look at a fly-swatter, when I was twelve (in 1901). Instantly, my memory says, everybody had them, a necessity of life. Before that glad occasion, all through that never-ending mosquito season, kids’ legs, bare, of course, (especially my legs), were covered (standing room only) with infected mosquito bites. “Mosquito Island”, damned well named, across the river from Dodson, named on later maps, “Pierce Island,” after Tommy Pierce, the first “podner” of Hi Leavens, both “podners” named in Brown’s History. Incidentally, I have often wondered what ever became of Turner’s front yard. Every “stone” in that wall was a sinker for fishing nets (two kinds of sinkers, one a cyndrical stone, grooved around it “waist”, the other a flat, irregularly circular stone, pierced, off-center, by a hole to receive a rope or equivalent).

Also, “mortars” and “pestles,” Since these were found on the same rocky stretch of beach, I hoped, all my life, to learn what purpose they served. It was

Turner’s far-flung curiosities, getting him off from his more “practical” relatives and friends, which roused my wonder and respect. Those stones, lugged up that hill (my memory says about 200 feet, vertically), cost Turner many a man-hour of time and weariness. (There must be plenty more where those came from, in deeper water, a bit off-shore.)

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HA! This time I didn’t by this and that, do my “special barrier,” to celebrate this auspicious occasion, without committing one lousy boo-boo! Never mind the eruption of a normal yield of boo-boos in the words immediately following that sweated-out “barrier thing,” My crow stems from my “perfection score” for the barrier itself! My entire life has consisted of a series of “misfires” on items of technique which I had practiced millions of times, never arriving at reliability on any one of them! The gristly skeletons of the times I have let people down who were depending on me, issue from the closet, seldom allowing me a momentary whiff of anything like a fractional delusion of grandeur. On “matters of moment,” such as family obligations or definite “commitments” such as social or dental appointments, my score is, maybe above average. It is on these treacherous, “little” bits which the huge, normal majority reduce to fool-proof habit, that my inner cogs are wont to slip a tooth, making many a monkey of me, right out in public.

My biggest brag, among my three, is that I am crafty as all hell, in ability to “cash in” on my worst defects. (1) As all military geniuses, including the “fuzzy-wussy” tacticians, lauded by Kipling, and our own Douglas McArthur, the big thing is to surprise the enemy. Time and again, in my design work, I have fooled around with some plumb crack-pot idiocy, absent-mindedly, never given a second’s attention by any guy in possession of “all his marbles”, and I, marching, head-on, into a “stone wall,” right on through, as if a handy, swinging, bar-room door had been there, in plain sight, the whole while. (2) Being, by nature’s whim, devoid of the puniest whiff of hand skill (such as music) requiring by fingering, or, mechanical knacks, such as filing, soldering or welding, I have sweated out, by necessity, outlandish aids to clumsiness, such as guides for filing, jigs for directing the movements of drills and other power tools, temporary clamps, for example, for holding the boards composing

a drawer in proper position, while driving in the nails or screws, guards to prevent damage from mis-licks from a hammer, such as a steel plate with a hole in it, to surround any nail being driven, the plate being right there to catch the mis-aimed hammer blow, leaving nary an ugly dent in the all-too-willing wood. (3) On occasion, a need arised for an item of special, artificial gear, impossible to improvise, on the spur of the moment, but vivid in my mind, for all that, as a might “Now if I only had . . .” eventually germinating into that very, longed-for gismo.

Such was the origin of my “tank pen”, a lettering pen for Indian ink, back in ancient times when all mechanical drawings were made, with ink, on tracing cloth, from which original, many blueprint copies could be obtained. Finding that my ridiculously clumsy hands could not turn out, by means of existing, ordinary, steel, writing pens (a skill easily, quickly acquired by anybody else in the world, but me), I did, by God, eventually invent, modify a zillion times, devise and make production tools — learning thereby, a good bit about tool design and tool making — then, by means of cheap, chiseling, novel, publicity dodges, get samples of my trick pens into the hands of a mere 4,000 drafting instructors, in the larger high schools of the larger cities in the U. S. All teachers, back in those primeval times, were enough smarter and sufficiently dedicated to teaching, that a great many of them saw that run-of-the-mill students, not just that super-stupid likes of me, got past that worst hurdle of mechanical drawing, that un-Godly chore of free-hand lettering, with Indian ink, with far less disgust and humiliation than when they had nothing better than the ordinary writing pens.

From these, privileged classes, student spread out into every drafting office in the U. S., plugging, of course, by my Tank Pens, which they had learned in school, to lean on, as a crutch. From there, first the retailers, then the wholesalers and jobbers, felt the “heat” and came a-running to me being, likewise forced to stick my “wares” into catalogs. Simultaneously, all (so far as I know) text books of mechanical drawing May 15 or ore, bowed to necessity and wrote me up and my mighty pens, clearly, if a bit on the sloppy side, oft time. For various legitimate, and merely “sloppy-character” reasons, I never did expand that apparently “good start” into any larger and more profitable business. Despite which seeming stupidity, that punt, hole-in-the-wall hidden-away-in-my-basement, mail order “industry” afforded 50% additional income

for me and my family (my income main-stay being my salaried employment), for a forty-year stretch, including the years when the feeding, medical and educational needs of my three kids, ate up far more of the family income than all the rest combined.

An “incidental” friend benefit from our Tank Pen slavery, was my “discovery that an even passable agreeable married couple, doing “creative teamwork,” to which both are truly dedicated, and given anything like “democracy” in the aforesaid, joint endeavor, avoiding any master-slave snake to sneak into their garden, can create something as near to Eden as apes, the likes of us, are likely to move into, for some time to come. That leaky couple, blasting hell out of the sacred roots of anthropology, “down under,” in South Africa, afford an ideal instance of just such glamorous, creative, married-twosome teamwork. Another, equally beautiful instance of the same, magical achievement is amusingly and gloriously told in the book, “and a bit later, the movie), “Cheaper By The Dozen,” that Galbraith married pair (not John Kenneth Galbraith and his wife, if he had a wife). That pair of pioneers in “scientific management” had a wonderful life together putting into practice, with their own dozen kids, and every angle of their private lives, all the new laws of business organization which they were “researching” as their life-work, horsing around, clowning, never a dull, sane moment, around their home, according to the book and the side-splitting movie.

As I should have filled in, directly after my latest barrier, on Page 12, today is Saturday, March 6, 1971, 7:40 a.m., at the present moment. As evidenced by the intervening yarding of persiflage, I must have been up and breakfasted a bit earlier, cannot say exactly when. Now, comes the acid test: Am I man enough to switch (or dial out) this drivel and set forth the one, serious worry (and plea to you) which is my only alibi for perpetrating this windy thing at all. An item of moment, in its own right, as well as a fairly good introduction for the mean (but meaningful, to you and me both) question involving time, finesse and general nuisance angles at your expense. My question, natural and innocent enough, on the surface, is “Can you hazard any kind of guess, at this time, about the date of publication of your book?” I am clinging, like grim death, to what would be, for any ordinary guy, my almost-used-up hitch aboard this planet, hell-bent to last long enough to lay hands on and

gobble up that prophesied history which is a vital portion of my own, personal biography, a hell of a predicament for any guy to face up to. It would be like taking off on a honeymoon, then learning that one half or other of the bride had been overlooked and left behind, when the trans-Pacific jet-liner took off. (Could I have been having night-mares about mermaids?) I know that no booze nor drugs have ever sullied my lips. I blame all such nonsense these days, on my wayward typer, which has been possessed for a couple of years, by one of the voodoo demons, often stowing away on Navy ships and jumping ship here a pleasant habitat for anybody or anything. Something, maybe these demons, keeps this region 99 and 44/100% free of flies, mosquitos and stinkbugs. Therefore, please push that history book along, so that I can, if I once lay hands on it, do all I can to take it with me.

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Sunday morning, 1:30 a.m., March 7, 1971. Such an un-Godly o'clock as this, to be up, breakfasted, full of zing for this typing addiction, is a natural aspect of my life-long inability to acquire habits, good or worse. Only by loud self-cursing, am I now (I hope), able to hit the sober items I had clearly in mind when I took off on this chare of decent communication. The pitifully few of us elite, able and willing to communicate at all, are duty-bound to take on the job, for our entire lazy, deeply rutted species. I have found out, like Robinson Crusoe and a few other honest souls, that it is not only sane, but healthful for a guy or gal to go right ahead and talk to one's self, to one's heart's content. Little kids do it non-stop, until some half-witted adult clobbers them into pathological silence (abandoning their God-given power of language symbolism, which sets off from the other beasts, wild or tame, except for the admirable individualistic jackass).

Going even farther with my neurosis, I am coming, more and more, to believe that it is healthful for us and still more so, the best thing possible for our group life, from the two-person, (any two at all, who chance to get near enough), a man and wife, a family, a gang of shovelers, the crew of a ship (water, air or space-borne), the citizens (everybody, babies, tots, teenage-hellions, all of us hellions of any age), of any far-flung bad-lands hassle of settlers, village, tribe, nation or planet-full, to talk, yell, curse, each other, clear the air! Naturally, any such group therapy, as natural an activity as man, as eating or sleeping, tends to be taken over by some self-appointed

prophet, in the name of science, religion (you name it). I have heard Chuck Dederich, founder and tyrannical dictator of the admirable, synanon attack on drug addiction, refer to himself, from a lecture platform, as “One of the Minor Prophets.” My particular angle, in this group therapy virus, polluting the entire planetary atmosphere, these days, is my, late-in-life discovery of mere let-her-go-gallegher yakking, as heap big medicine for my own soul, but that a surprising number of normal humans encourage me to yakk (up to a clearly established point).

Lastly, queerly, I find more and more tolerance, even welcome, in my own gizzard, for a hell of this same let-her-go-gallegher gabble, from almost anybody, limited the same as other in my time-span of listening tolerance, and, of course, very pick-and-choosy about the ones I can put up with. I make a special effort to “draw out” humble souls who imagine that mere schooling sets off the valuable folks from the trash. Often, that very illiteracy giving rise to their humility, has also shielded them from a lot of hog-wash that has tended to foul up most of the people of any modern nation, leading not only the entire bookish population down primrose short cuts to hell, but, much worse, deluding most of the un-bookish, no matter how obviously superior they may be, in horse-sense, art, craftsmanship, but even in supposedly abstract domains, such as applied math, plant and animal care and selective breeding, then the most God-like wisdom of all, the management of all the environment factors, inanimate, animate and other humans. Incidentally (or maybe of supreme importance) the possible inborn superiority of women over men, in every damned one of the key skills. This newly arising feminist movement may, very well, be a highly beneficial revolution to surpass all previous revolutions. I try, like hell, as in all questionable deals, to hang on like an abalone, to my open mind, no doubt not quite so “open” as I pretend that it is, and which I do my damndest to improve in open-ness. Simply the factor of sportsmanship, drives me to support the gals in their fight for equal pay for equal work (and I support the Negroes and other minorities, who are worthy of citizenship and acceptance by the Armed Forces). And, beyond argument, equal opportunity for education, jobs, everything implied by citizenship, using that word to include every human, once he is born, and up to decent standards.

Just so as to get un-lost, myself, I am offering alibis for my “free-wheeling”

manner of unloading, oral or typed. If, I insist, I honestly desire and encourage a lot of just such untrammelled unloading by anybody else offering me anything at all that is new. Those latest arrivals from “outer space” (literally from “inner space,” of course), meaning the babies, from birth to up, say junior high age, especially the ones just starting to make feverish use of that magical activity they have just discovered, language. Little girls about three or four are my top-shelf people. I can sit and “converse” by the hour, or until I start boring them. Boys, such as my step-son (whom I adopted without delay), who came with my second wife, when he was barely three. What a bold gift of gab that tiger-bold little son-of-a-gun brought with him. I have “communicated” with a boy of ten months, sitting with his mother across the aisle from me, in a bus, fluently, with mutual delight, throughout a long bus ride.

Of my three favorites, dedicated historians, you top the other two by a parsec. (1) You have that properly, universally, revered token, brand, decoration, a college degree carrying the full meaning which it, too often, fails to carry. (2) Your life work (I suspect that the outline of the said life-work existed in your mental circuits long before you ever began your first, money-earning job) has been as fine an example of the “generalist” approach to life, to self-development, as I have ever encountered. You deal professionally, with the general survival and prosperity of an especially wondrous species of organism. The title of your book puts emphasis on the economical importance of that said species, to our, in many ways, relatively advanced species. (3) That same book title lays stress on the supreme importance of gadgets, in all human activity, throughout all human history, particularly those gadgets whereby man has won, and enhanced his domination of other species of life, as well as the non-living features and powers of our amazing habitat, earth.

You shine, by comparison, in your ability to face joyfully, not gravenly back away from, “The frame of your picture,” including all the vital features of the said frame, even those devilish, human features, forever assaulting all other features of your “picture”, forever messing around with the basic elements which only a few, lucky members of any species manage to adapt to, even when the environment remains steady over a long enough spell of time. I think that the tid-bits of pre-view of your book have helped me, more than any other factor, to forget my former fear of any “wool-gathering” taunt hurled at my “style,” rightfully or un-justly. I am now



able to spit in the eye of any such critic, telling them, in tones so well voiced by good old rabble-rousing Patrick Henry, "Go now and make the most of that."

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Four-fifty, that same, mild San Diego, Sunday morning. Here is a job of work I wish to shove off on you, because of the default from clear duty, on the part of Wayne Gurley (he, poor guy, may very well have the worst of reasons for such J23

default), and Walter Attwell, a native of The Locks, school-mate of mine, friend of Gurley for many years, now aged 78, able-bodied and active in his own business, about six months ago. His default looks like simple character-defect. I'll tell you the gnarled, hairy tale. Hi Leavens had one son, Turner, and four daughters. Turner had one son, Aubert, and a daughter, Addie, by his first wife, then a daughter, Amy, by his second wife. Turner's first wife was placed in the State Insane Asylum. I have always love Addie, their daughter, above every other person in the world. She was ten years my senior and took care of me during my earliest, impressionable years. She was, for the most part, a happy, loveable person, although given, in her later years, to "fits" of deep depression, readily accounted for by her over-load of bad luck, of a sort to cut deeply into anybody. Addie's older brother, Aubert, I found definitely likeable, often visiting him and his wife and three kids in their home, also visiting Aubert on the job, during the years he served as a fireman with the Portland Fire Department. Whereas addie was never regarded by anybody as anything but fully sane, it is my impression that any "alienist" would tag Aubert as quite a bit "around the bend". During his fire department hitch, he confided to me several times, that his fellow firemen were always "conspiring against him, out of jealousy." This exact "symptom" is as plain as a "special label" as the red behind on a babboon, according to my limited and highly skeptical reading. He has other unusual "symptoms," indicating to my ignorant mentality that he did inherit a definite "taint" from someplace. Other members of our family, including Turner's daughter Addie, and my brother, Clive, four years my junior, all having been around Turner to a greater extent than I, hold strong beliefs that Turner as so far around the bend as to arouse suspicions that Turner, by way of mis-treatment, or by perjured evidence, had wrongly managed to get his first wife "put away," In view of Aubert's screwy ways, and now, equally screwy behavior on the part of his son, Wren Leavens, I am inclined to believe that Turner's first wife really was insane, as she was officially declared to be.

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Well, Ivan, here it is 8 a.m. that same lovely dawn of a Sunday, and here sits me, again, after a suitable relapse, collapse, back into the hay, plus my third cup of coffee, my daily bio-chemical limit for that lovely drug, usually arrived at about noon

time. This time, is exceptional, with me driving myself, Simon Lagree-like (hear that merciless lash a-cracking), hell-bent to wind up and ship this dangerously shifting cargo, before it swamps me, out here in empty space.

You now “get” the genealogical picture, I’m sure: Hi, Turner, Aubert, and lastly, Wren, four generation of male Leavens. Wren begat a child, possibly a son, possibly more than one child. Wren figures big in the Leavens Family Tree, if only that he has, in his possession, various Leavens Family heirlooms, not even known to me, in detail, as to just what the items may be. I shall, here, brutally lop off all but one of these items. That special item is as close to my own personal heart as anything could be. It is a map of The Locks, dated, by my guess, about 1890. That map shows Hi Leavens’ dwelling, with Hi’s name plainly printed thereon. As you may know, I sweated blood, about two years ago, trying to draw a map of The Locks, my only help being the oldest U. S. G. S. map of the region, surveyed in 1900, filling in as many details as possible (fences, stores, gov’t. and other buildings, ponds, streams, secondary roads, lanes, named of residents, and other “graffitti”) from my memory, nobody else alive able to help me beyond the most pitiful smidgin or two.

Hence, my gizzardly-deep desire to lay hands on that 1890 map. This #-%?#zxzxQ Wren ignores my letters, pleading for a copy of the map. According to our cousin, G. Roy Hurlburt, who has done several years of laborious, worrisome, expensive research into the family genealogy, and has had some measure of contact with Wren, the latter has become aware somehow, that I know the main facts about his grandmother’s hitch in the state asylum. For that “reason,” according to this Roy Hulburt, Wren is hell-bent to “get back” at me, by doing me dirt, the fact that this same “dirt” is a super-dirty trick to play on all the others who may feel the most commendable interest in the past of that historically important settlement. Neither Walter Attwell, Gurley, nor anybody, has ever stirred a finger to obtain a copy of that map, so dear to my heart. Walt was in that region on a visit a year ago. Anybody not tainted, in any way, by any sort of association with dirty old me, might find Wren wide open to reason. It occurs to me now, as I am typing this, that the Oregon Historical Society might be successful in such an attempt to get such a copy. At 81, I am simply not up to any laborious chore of any kind.

Mr. Wren Leavens

E. G. Henry  
1556 Street  
San Diego, Calif. 92101

Mr. Ivan Donaldson  
Bonneville Dam Headquarters, U.S.  
Bonneville, Oregon

Dear Ivan:

This is the first letter to you since your book was published. THAT was a big let-down and heart-break to me, a bit less deadly than to you, but bad enough. I never bother people with MY puny "sympathy" after they have had an important death in their family. Hence, my failure to keep up my correspondence with you, although my numerous interests, plus my relative senescence, have prolonged my neglect of my duty to you and the magnificent history job you have been doing.

Anyhow, I am still alive, with nothing out of whack (below my neck) to threaten my life in any way. I was 84, last Sept. 30th. My Uncle Turner and my Aunt Eva (Ev) lived beyond 90. All my forebears finished out similarly long lives.

Jim Attwell and his loveable wife Polly, visited me here about two years ago. Since then I have sent two or three letters to Jim, mostly about Old Doc Hi Leavens. I would, of course, be proud to send copies of these clear memories to you. Just say the work. So far as I know, Jim has never given you and your massive board of history makings a glance of attention. Apparently, he and his cronies are taking off on their unqualified "own," to put forth some kind of "History of The Locks." My last message from Jim was a copy of his book, dusting off that old yarn about "The Bridge of the Gods," (another dirty trick ferninst them), attributed to the Indians. The **real** story of the origin of the Columbia Cascades, only in recent years dug out and published by respectable geologists, is a far more truly romantic episode in earth history.

Well, Ivan, I would still, as always before, yak away on paper to almost any length, knowing you to be one of the rare ones who feel a genuine and professionally worthy interest in your fellow humans, especially in the case of specimens, such as myself, more than a bit "teched." The older I get, the more interest, even love, I feel toward people, especially toward the little kids of today. For the past two years I have been acting as Volunteer Teacher in an unusual private school, where the kids, all six or less in age, are allowed, even helped, to blossom out, each kid in its own natural channel. It has been a very happy time.

E. G. Henry  
HANK

E. G. Henry  
1556 Street  
San Diego, Calif. 92101  
April 11, 1974

Dear Ivan:

Hooray!! I hope I read your letter alright, that you really do have those hide-away records of good old Frank Hall. You spell his name "Haul," I could, so easily be wrong. Please check with me on his name. Right or wrong, he must wait his turn here. My first attention must go to answering both your letters respectfully. We're off! letter by letter, page by page!

I trust that the manuscript you submitted, "400 pages of narrative plus 525 photos", does not tie up all that "background material" you squeezed or choked out of all those old timers. As I recall, you had 24 bound books, 250 typed pages each book." Do those vampires have any way to keep you or anybody else you choose from making use of all that treasure? I doubt that you have to submit, 100%, to any sort of dirty deal from a publisher. I know that there are authors' associations. There must be loyal Webfooters, wealthy enough, and mean enough to go to bat for you.

I must hurry and ship to you all such info as I can lay hands on now. Those recent letters of mine, to Jim, about Doc Hi and Turner, may require a bit of time to dig up. I'll do what I can.

What you told me about Jim's attitude toward you, hit me with a "fatal blow" flavor! Here I sit — might as well be in Timbuctoo — hoping to see a worthy history of my homeland come to pass. Heretofore, you have given attention to all that Gorge region, except The Locks itself — nothing left out except my one and only HEART!!

Off to a new start, April 27, '74. This time lapse, since earlier gabbling, has forced a change in my schedule for telling my tale to you. First priority now is to cover the new news items:

- (1) I had a long phone talk with my cousin, Roy Hurlburt, 1519 Princeton, Stockton, Calif. He has been doing noble "research" into the Leavens genealogy for, maybe 15 or 20 years. His job with the federal government enabled him to travel all over the U. S. "on the house." I

advised you, years ago, to probe him for help with your Gorge history. He is now in his nearly 60's, retired, hot as ever on the "genealogy kick." He does not share my interest in the history of the Gorge or of the Locks. I was able to get off a letter to him urging him to contact certain relatives of the Leavens family I had urged on him years ago. Evidently not followed up the first time.

Later, the same day, I phoned Walter Attwell, 42674 Heidi Road, Three Rivers, Calif., 93271. His grandfather Attwell took up land at the Locks, the earliest, was a go-getter in many ways. He and Doc Hi were partners in various deals, including a match factory at the Locks. Walter told me, on the phone that he has many old letters and records of his grandfather. Unless I missed Walter's meaning, the old man was in a very early deal building a steam boat. I well remember, as a kid, tusing the old "seven day, phossy jaw" matches. I recall, clearly, the look and the "feel" of those blocks of matches, split (except at one end), then treated with the poisonous dope, separately and scratched on any rough surface. It took several seconds to set the wood afire, so as to give out a real flame, starting with a tiny, feeble, dull glow. At Doc Hi's house, where I lived, at the time of my earliest memories, we used the older, cheaper, phossy jaw, long after the handsomer modern matches came in. Leave it to old Doc Hi to watch his nickels.

Walter is young than me, by three years. I'll be 85 next 30 Sept. He lived at The Locks maybe three years after I moved away to Vancouver. Hence, he has a lot of info about the Locks people, unknown to me. His memory sounded, on the phone, a sharp as mine, which I know to be unusual. My cousin, George Reed, still alive, a year younger than me, told me, a while back, he has plumb forgotten everything about his early life. That is mainly because he and all the Reeds never did have any proper respect and love for those wonderful Old Timers, and the sort of special civilization they had gone in and hacked out of the wilderness. As a kid, and increasingly, all my long life, I never feel anything but huge respect for my people, like old Doc Hi, and his wife, Plums Stores, who had what it takes and do all their own jobs of living, no doctors or other professionals to turn to. I feel sure that Walter Attwell feels just the same as I do about all of it. Mayby, even, he has group, school photos.

I have hoped, all along, that Gurley has come early group, school photos. More and more, I now wonder if any of those historians know, or cared to know, all the facts about early history, in the sense that you seem to have tackled that history job.

Right at this time, then, here are the items that “feel” the hottest:

- (1) Walter tells me that Jim has a “History of Cascade Locks” ready to be published during this May coming up. Let me know.
- (2) I have always, all my life, planned to set down my memories of The Locks, and have gathered and hoarded letters written by and to me, notes, clips, maps, photos, etc. I have counted on the U. S. Census to joggle my memory. Sad to say, the U. S. Census has been made secret, by law, supposedly for a limited, due to be released just about now. Now, I learn from Roy Hurlburt, that a bill, pending in Congress, will put that census into secrecy, for God know how much longer.
- (3) Frank Hall’s register of visitors at the annual reunion would be of huge help to me in calling back the names of a lot of old timers, old and young to me. Have you looked over his old records? How much work would it take to make copies of those visitor lists? I mean Xerox copies, of course. Still wilder notions occur to me as I sit here: If I should manage to make a visit, up Webfoot way, would those Frank Hall be available to me, under proper arrangement? I would bring along a good tape recorder, which I will lay hands on within the next couple of weeks.
- (4) That map of The Locks which I drew from memory a few years ago, needs a supplementary, printed sheet, to interpret it. I sent only a faded copy of the map, not mentioning the “Code Sheet.” I am being well heated by my daughter and others for items promised to them and buried deep in my un-Godly haystack of confused, mixed up item from my remost and recent past. I shall, pronto, face that job of sorting, thus unearthing all these items I owe to yourself, daughter and others. A visit up your way, if I can swing it, would enable me to have access to the Museum items at The Locks, the least wear and tear on Jim. Especially helpful to me would be copies of group school photos, which I devoutly hope that Gurley was able to collect.

- (5) Do you have that old, Kaiser book of photo-copies of Columbia River Scenic Shots? I wish to make sure, of course, that that book, apparently quite rare, is properly preserved and displayed for posterity.
- (6) The Locks was a remarkably law-abiding community. When I was real small, 2 or 3, a guy named Wilson killed himself. Later, when I was 7 or 8, an old German, Gebhardt, killed self and wife with a shot gun. Nobody had any idea why. A very solid citizen names Stuart, his daughter married to John Attwell, no kids; another daughter Leva, married to a Jackson; several kids my school mates. Old man Stuart, according to my very imaginative Mother, Ade, had been a bit of a gun-hand in his younger says. In my time, he was the loudest guy with a song or shout at the Methodist Church.

I am not breaking any records, but my D. C. (Decency Quotient) could be lower, I suppose.

Very truly yours,  
Earle Gray Henry



E. G. Henry  
1556 Street  
San Diego, Calif. 92101  
May 16, 1974

Dear Ivan:

If I am mixed here, repeating stuff I told you already, think nothing of it. I know I have not yet gotten around to answering a number of your clear questions, but, mostly, that is because I am 100% ignorant regarding the answers. Since my last letter to you, immediately after I mailed that, I took off on new and dizzy plans and involvements.

Jim, as you know, most likely, as I learned from Walter Attwell, about the time I last wrote to you, has written a "Locks History," due to be published right now, during this very May, 1974. This puts Jim in a more favorable light with me. I feared he was only horsing around with that malarkey about the Bridge of the Gods, teacherously attributed to the innocent Siwashes. I am all in a sweat to lay hands on Jim's new history, of course. I got off a letter to Jim, expressing joy about the book. I also broke to Jim, as I am now breaking to you, my sudden resolve to visit my Webfoot homeland, next Labor Day, to match up with the Annual Locks Reunion. I'll stick around those parts (Locks, Portland, roundabout) rounding up material for my own life story, to be left to my posterity, very likely in the form of tape recordings.

When I make that visit, I'll live at a motel, maybe about three weeks. I'll bring with me (1) a tape recorder, and (2) a camera, fit not only for people and scenes, but also for mini-copies of documents such as those in the hands of Wren Leavens in Vancouver, whatever they have at The Locks Museum, and most important, Frank Hall's Register of Visitors at the Early Reunion, from around 1900 to 1935(?).

E. G. Henry  
HANK

E. G. Henry  
1556 Street  
San Diego, Calif. 92101  
July 26, 1974

Dear Ivan:

Troubles and alibis. Poor material for a “friendly” letter. My interest in a worthy, Webfoot history is as strong as ever, but my interest in education for little kids has always been about twice as strong as the history kick.

I had a fairly decent letter ready to send to you. I am unable to locate any such letter around here. Did I mail it? I enclosed the address of a woman in Washington State, a relative of Seth Leavens. She has an old Leavens Bible, with a lot of family names and dates.

I’ll hit 85, come Sept. 30, My M. D. tells me “nothing out of whack to shorten my life.” I am hooked up as “Volunteer Teacher” with a school (private) for kids 3 to 14, a century ahead of any other I ever saw or heard about. That school has me so “hooked” that I have laid aside everything else, even my hoped-for trip up your way, this coming Locks reunion. Most likely I can swing it next year.

I do not wish to offend Jim, since I hope to have access to everything in the Locks Museum.

I have just now bought a really top-notch tape recorder, mainly with the idea of setting down the story of my entire “Life and Times,” including my native, cordwood accent. I would pay good blood for such a “story” of my forebears, all of whom led rambunctuous lives.

I planned to buy, for my now delayed trip to Webfoot, a camera good enough to get good copies of documents, such as any items at the Locks Museum, your priceless reunion records set down by Frank Hall and documents dated back to Revolutionary War times, in the insane hands of Wren Leavens of Vancouver, Wash. He has failed to co-operate in furnishing copies of that material. I figure he can hardly refuse to allow anybody to come there with a camera so as to copy the material, right on the “premises.”

I find that Jim’s older brother, Walter Attwell, at Three Rivers, California has

clear memories of The Locks, covering several years he lived there after I had moved away.

I have a copy of Jim's (Attwell) *Cascade History, Vol. 1*. As I wish to emphasize, I am leaning over backwards, to avoid offending Jim.

I have brains enough to appreciate the worth of your work on that Gorge history. I have high hopes to be around, maybe not another full 85 years, but long enough to chip in, substantially to the real history I feel sure you will put forth, in due time.

Let me know about the latest info sent to you. I can tell you names of Seth Leavens' two sons in Portland. That older woman, Seth's relative, may be dead.

Best regards,

HANK

E. G. Henry