CHARTING THE VOYAGE OF "THE BRAVEST BOAT"
AN EXAMINATION OF MALCOLM'S LOWRY'S MANUSCRIPT

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is comprised of three sections: a genetic study of "The Bravest Boat;" an examination of four methods of "Lowryan revision;" and my own critical discussion of how my chronicle of the gestation and development of "The Bravest Boat" affects (effects?) a reading of the story, whether that reading be the first or the fiftieth.

Section One employs the methods of "genetic study" as defined by Victor Doyen and Suzanne Kim. I have attempted to locate all extant fragments of "The Bravest Boat" and, by comparing them with each other and with the published version, reconstruct the evolution of "The Bravest Boat" from its inception to its final, published version.

Section Two focuses on four typical Lowryan revisions. I incorporate most of the thirty-nine manuscript fragments I have recovered into my discussion of these four techniques; simultaneously, I explore various thematic and compositional issues raised by each sample fragment.

The final section of this thesis presents my examination of the effect that my work has had on a reading of the story in its published version. I discuss the development of the text through its two early draft versions and subsequent revisions, ultimately presenting my conclusions as to how "well" the story stands up to a prolonged close reading.
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The staff of the Special Collections Division of the University of British Columbia have been helpful in innumerable ways, as has my colleague, Kathy Chung. I could not have completed this thesis without the support of my parents, to whom it is dedicated.
For my mother and father, with love.
INTRODUCTION

The Special Collections Division of the University of British Columbia Library seems an unlikely site for a celebration. It is a quiet place, often populated by only a few dedicated scholars pouring over manuscripts, rare books and the U.B.C. Archives. I had been rummaging around the extensive Malcolm Lowry Archive held there, when I discovered that the manuscript for Lowry's short story "The Bravest Boat" was represented by just one page (7:16 r).\(^1\) Other than this one page, there is no (collected) holograph version of the story, although there is a typescript and a film script. Because the Lowry archive is extensive, and because, as Victor Doyen points out, "Margerie [Lowry] used the clear versos of rejected or superseded pages of stories and letters to type intermediate working copies" (166) of Malcolm's manuscripts, I decided to see if more of "The Bravest Boat" could be found. It could. I whooped, shattering the studious silence, and my voyage -- tracing the journey of "The Bravest Boat" -- began.

As much as anything, successful archival research seems to be the result of instinct paired with luck. I had a feeling that there must be more manuscript evidence; I was persuaded by the archive itself. It appears that Lowry kept almost all of his manuscripts and typescripts; therefore, "The Bravest Boat" had to be in there somewhere. I began my search with the only
definitely identified fragment, the one-page manuscript in 7:16.

File 7:16 contains one sheet of coarse yellow typing paper, heavily oxidized, bearing the heading "THE BRAVEST BOAT" in unidentified handwriting. (It is not recognizable as either Malcolm Lowry's or his wife Margerie's\(^2\) -- the letters are block and unevenly spaced; they are unlike Malcolm's cramped, difficult script and Margerie's flowing Parker penmanship). The sheet presents a paragraph of prose, partially revised, that was once labelled "B," but has been re-inscribed "16 B." (There is no help here in identifying the author of the title at the top of the page. The "B" in "16 B" bears no resemblance to the "Bs" in "THE BRAVEST BOAT.") The passage appears on pp 24-25 (the story appears on pp 13-27) of the Douglas & McIntyre version of *Hear us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place*, the collection of short stories introduced by "The Bravest Boat."\(^3\)

I took the page numbering as encouragement for my search. If the page was once "B," might there be an "A?" And if it is 16 B, where are pages one through fifteen (and, by extension, 17 through . . .)?\(^4\) The passage is clearly "Bravest Boat" material; it differs only in minor details from the published version. Thus inspired, I proceeded in as logical a fashion as I was able.

The paper on which the fragments of "The Bravest Boat" appear is of a comparable age and texture to the paper on which Lowry composed *October Ferry to Gabriola*; I therefore chose to begin my search for further "pieces" of the story within
that manuscript. The October Ferry section of the Lowry archive "fills six boxes, with a total of 145 folders containing about 4,000 pages, half of them working notes in a complete mix of reshuffled hand- and typewritten drafts" (Doyen 163). The pages that most closely resemble 7:16 are found in what the Inventory unhelpfully calls the "old version" of October Ferry to Gabriola. I began to examine the pages, concentrating on the versos of the typescript (or what Doyen contends were once the rectos). The painstaking, frustrating process of deciphering Lowry's handwriting forced me to work very slowly and deliberately, despite the size of the archive. Eventually, I recovered nearly forty pages of manuscript, including an early draft and the original "idea." This manuscript is the focus of my thesis -- it provides the basis for my examination of the gestation of "The Bravest Boat;" my charting of its voyage from concept to published text.

"The Bravest Boat" is the prelude to Malcolm Lowry's collection of seven short stories Hear Us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place. It serves as an introduction to the images that repeat throughout the text; it provides a sense of the choral or roundelay structure of the stories by (re-) introducing the recurring theme: "Frère Jacques! Frère Jacques!" (23), the incantation which punctuates both Hear us O Lord and October Ferry. It tells of an ocean voyage, a journey, a quest; yet it is a quest where the resolution is also the beginning. Ten-year-
old Sigurd Storlesen sets asail the boat containing a message that is found twelve years later by seven-year-old Astrid, who will later become Sigurd’s wife. Their story is the story of the boat -- the bravest boat -- and its journey along the Pacific coast from Fearnought Bay, Washington to Vancouver ("Enochvilleport") British Columbia.

My story is of a voyage around an archive in search of manuscript fragments. In many ways, my travels through the Lowry archive can be seen as parallel to the voyage of the little boat, in that the vagaries of chance, misfortune and coincidence affected (effected, too) my success. In "mapping" the fragments of "Bravest Boat" manuscript, I have simultaneously mapped my own efforts to find that manuscript. This thesis chronicles two journeys: the bravest boat’s, and mine.

"The Bravest Boat" has received almost no critical attention. It is mentioned, in passing, by Lowry’s biographers (Douglas Day, 1973 and Gordon Bowker, 1993); it is referred to by various Lowry scholars including Sherrill Grace, Keith Harrison, W.H. New and Elsa Linguanti, but no in-depth study of the story exists, nor, according to the UBC Special Collections Inventory of the Lowry Collection, does there exist any manuscript evidence of the story beyond the one page in 7:16. The story goes unmentioned in the anecdotal accounts of Lowry’s life: Gordon Bowker’s Malcolm Lowry Remembered (1985) and Sheryl Salloum’s Malcolm Lowry: Vancouver Days (1987). True, the story is sentimental, even cloying (along with Douglas Day, I wonder how
Lowry could have written such a sentence as "Nearer the forest were gardens with sheltered beds of snowdrops and here and there a few crocuses lifting their sweet chalices" (448), but in an unpublished letter Lowry refers to "The Bravest Boat" as "my favourite piece of work" (20:10 82). Evidence enough, I believe, to prompt a closer look.

The process of searching for an uncollected manuscript in the Malcolm Lowry Archive at first appears overwhelmingly daunting. The Archive occupies 50 boxes of manuscript, newspaper cuttings, photographs, letters and typescript beginning with early letters (1940) and ending with the revisions to October Ferry to Gabriola upon which Lowry was working at the time of his death in 1957. Although my search concentrated on the six boxes that comprise the October Ferry section of the archive, I extended it to include boxes containing anything written on similar paper such as letters, drafts of other stories, newspaper articles, journals and notebooks; in short, anything I felt might possibly contain reference to or evidence of "The Bravest Boat." Although I have examined all of the likely boxes (and most of the unlikely ones) held in the Lowry Collection, I am still plagued with a nagging doubt that I have not recovered every extant fragment of "Bravest Boat," even though the boxes I have not yet examined contain material composed long before Lowry began work on this story. The fact remains that Lowry could have used the versos of rejected earlier work to compose "Bravest Boat" (although his pencil drafts seem to have been produced
consistently on clean sheets which were used by Margerie for
typescripts only once rejected), or a page (or several) could be
misfiled. The point is: the fear persists. If I have missed
something, so be it. I will have to print an errata later.
Methodology

This thesis comprises three sections: a genetic study of "The Bravest Boat"; an examination of four methods of "Lowryan revision"; and my own critical discussion of how my chronicle of the gestation and development of "The Bravest Boat" affects a reading of the story, whether that reading be the first or the fiftieth.

Section One employs the methods of "genetic study" as defined by Victor Doyen ("From Innocent Story to Charon's Boat: Reading the 'October Ferry' Manuscripts") and Suzanne Kim ("The Emergence of an Authorial Figure in the Manuscripts of Lowry's Poetry"). That is, I have attempted to locate all extant fragments of "The Bravest Boat" and, by comparing them with each other and with the published version, reconstruct the evolution of "The Bravest Boat" from its inception as an Idea for Short - short - short (22A:1) through a five-page draft (22A:1 and 21:13) to its final, published version. There are breaks and gaps among the fragments I have located; Lowry obviously gave a great deal of thought to the story prior to the five-page draft, and it is apparent that most of the fragments I have recovered represent revisions to that draft. As part of my reconstruction of the creation and development of "The Bravest Boat" I have devised a visual representation of the genesis of the story: a "genealogy" of "The Bravest Boat" (Appendix Two).

Section Two focuses on four typical Lowryan revisions (which
I have called "Writing Between the Lines"; "The Insert"; "Working With Margerie"; and "Asking for Outside Assistance"). I hope to be able to incorporate most of the manuscript fragments I have recovered into my discussion of these four techniques; simultaneously, I will explore various thematic and compositional issues raised by each sample fragment. The six-page series of revisions examined in "Working with Margerie" are transcribed in Appendix Three.

The final section of this thesis presents my examination of the effect that my work has had on a reading of the story in its published version. I will discuss the development of the text through its two early draft versions and subsequent revisions, ultimately presenting my conclusions as to how "well" the story stands up. Have all of the additions, rewritings and revisions "improved" the story? And does the story itself stand up to the kind of close scrutiny I have given it? I hope to show that, while the story does, finally, succeed, its success could have been greater had Lowry’s text been subjected to a firmer editorial hand.
Transcription

Any scholar working with manuscripts is faced with the task of transcription. Lowry’s penmanship (more accurately, pencilmanship) was atrocious to begin with, and only deteriorated as he (sometimes? often?) became drunk. He frequently jammed his pages full of text, scribbling in the margins and between the lines, sometimes in complete sentences, at other times in fragments. His notes could be utterly obscure to anyone other than Margerie, his wife, editor, and typist. Some pages are headed with a prayer (usually to St. Jude), others with a plea to Margerie for assistance. Margerie’s revisions also appear (and are represented in italics in my transcriptions), as do her ideas and suggestions. The way Lowry’s text is laid out on the page provides evidence about the order in which he revised and reworked his drafts; therefore, the layout is almost as important to my study as the text itself. Consequently, I have chosen to attempt to type my transcriptions a fashion that approximates the original. Of course, a transcription is only an imitation; mine have, inevitably, been subjected to my editorial hand.

I have occasionally omitted marginalia (sometimes because it is not directly connected to Lowry’s revisions, sometimes because I simply cannot read it). Where a line of Lowry’s often astonishingly tiny handwriting has been impossible to squeeze within my margins, I have indicated an editorial line break by inserting a slash (/). Where a word is illegible, I
have either made my best guess, enclosed it within square brackets and added a question mark (the question mark to distinguish my square brackets from Lowry's), or I have made no guess at all and represent the illegibility thus: [____]. Cancellations and erasures are reproduced as necessary, thus: [deleted]. In the case of certain transcriptions, where their arrangement on the page is not particularly germane to my discussion, I have simply typed a "clean" version, omitting any erasures, cancellations, or marginal notes not incorporated in the published version. The editorial decisions made in the creation of my transcriptions have been influenced by the limitations of my (in)ability to read Lowry's writing -- although I consider myself reasonably adept -- and the technological restraints imposed by my computer's capabilities. I believe, however, that my transcriptions are a fair representation of Lowry's manuscript.
Intentions

Almost as important as what I hope this thesis will be, is what I do not intend it to be. I have not found "final" manuscript versions of the story; in fact, much of what I have located is very preliminary. The story leaps a huge distance from the manuscript fragments I have located to the typescript found in 7:17. I have no evidence of how this gap was bridged, of what revisions, rewritings and editings went on between manuscript and typescript. My thesis is not, therefore, a scholarly edition. My focus is not on the story per se, it is on the writing of the story -- rather than where it is, I am concerned with how it got there.
SECTION ONE: A GENETIC STUDY OF "THE BRAVEST BOAT"

An Inspiration. An IDEA.

The chronology of the voyage of "The Bravest Boat" begins with a one-page fragment (the idea) headed Idea for Short-short-short (transcribed, Appendix Four). Many of the elements that appear in the published version of the story are already indicated: the location, the nature of the relationship between the man and woman (here "Mr & Mrs Jameson"), the weather. The tone of the story is also set; we learn that "there is a touching quality in their marriage" and that "you feel the hand of destiny . . . probably that they have had some tragedy in their lives." But the most telling lines of the "idea," in terms of what it will become, appear at the very bottom of the page.

The "idea" concludes with a line almost identical to that which ends the printed version (it lacks only the "but"): "Ah, the storms they had come through!" Lowry's editorial comment follows: "Such a story could be genius. 3 pages. But calls for infinite subtlety of technique. But it is a truly supernatural story, in the best sense." One wonders whom he is trying to convince -- himself or Margerie. In either case, the closing line of the story appears at the very beginning of its gestation; typically, Lowry has begun at the end.

From this idea, jotted on one page, evolves a story some 5,000 words in length. Although "The Bravest Boat" is neither the longest nor the most compelling of Lowry's stories, it
occupies, with "The Forest Path to the Spring," a unique position in the Lowry oeuvre, for it is a story of love and hope and tenacity:

So I have written, as it were, from the standpoint of the victims -- even though the protagonists themselves happen not to be especially victims but are clearly triumphant, & their love is triumphant, indeed even as the boat, over whatever forces have threatened them (unpublished letter to Clarisse Francillon; 2:20).

The gentleness of the story, and the improbability of it, become less surprising when its source is traced. Later in the same letter Lowry writes:

It was based on a true story reported in the Vancouver Sun too (though the couple weren’t married off later . . .) though unsigned: in short the contents of the note are factual, and the Seattle Star [is] the Vancouver Sun but to draw attention to that would be to draw attention also the fact that Enochvilleport is a satiric portrait of Vancouver etc. . . . (2:20).

Although the whereabouts of the story Lowry mentions remains a mystery, in true coincidental Lowry fashion, another story of the same sort was to appear.

. . . about six months ago a miraculous thing happened, though I wasn’t sure whether to be pleased. A similar thing happened in actual life, so help me, and was reported widely in the press though here the medium was not a boat, but a bottle. I informed the publishers I would not write the story again and call it The Bravest Bottle (20:10).
This unpublished letter (lacking both date and salutation) refers to a Vancouver Sun article which appeared July 8, 1950 entitled "Year-Old Note Taken From Bottle" (Appendix Five). In this message-in-a-bottle story, a young man sets adrift a note in a bottle, which he hopes will be found by a young woman. Lowry mentions that the event occurred "about six months ago," which is the cause for some concern, since "The Bravest Boat" was only completed in September or October 1951 (Selected Letters, 269). Was Lowry confused about the dates? How many message-in-a-bottle stories appeared in the Sun in the early 1950s? I have searched the UBC Library's microfilm record of the newspaper extensively, but have unearthed just this one article. That there may be another remains a possibility.

Whatever the specific inspiration, "The Bravest Boat" was apparently conceived, at least in part, as the result of this article. Readers familiar with Lowry's work will be aware of how prominent a place newspaper articles, billboards and signage of all sorts are given in his texts. The notion of a marriage based on this kind of unlikely coincidence obviously appealed to Lowry; if I take the notion of "genesis" a bit further, I can say that the birth of "The Bravest Boat" was announced on the front page of the Vancouver Sun, July 8, 1950.

From his one page "idea," Lowry developed "The Bravest Boat into a draft version of five pages. The first four pages
(draft pages one though four) are numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4; are connected and appear nearly sequentially in the file (they are written on pages that have become a typed version of October Ferry), and although none of the sentences runs over from page to page, the sequential development of the story is clear. The fifth page, however, is not so definitively a part of this draft.

The page I have identified as draft page five also became October Ferry typescript. I have designated it as the fifth page for two reasons. First, it is the earliest draft version of the closing section of the story that I have located. It lacks many of the details that appear as the final section is (scrupulously) reworked. Second, the layout of the paragraph on the page is similar to those preceding. Lowry's handwriting tends throughout to slope slightly to the left, so that each new line begins a little bit further from the right margin. This creates the impression that the page of script is tilting to the left slightly -- a feature apparent on "my" page five.5

The pages of this draft correspond to sections of the published text of varying length. Draft page one corresponds roughly to pages 13 through 18; draft page two covers pages 19 and 20. Draft page three: pages 21 through 23; page four: 23 through 25. The final page of the draft corresponds to pages 26 and 27 of the published text. For each draft page, I have recovered at least some evidence of revision or
The first step in any reconstruction -- once, of course, the manuscript fragments have been located -- must be to establish the chronology of the various drafts. Aside from the carbon typescript (7:19) and the printer's copy of Hear Us O Lord (12:7), all of the fragments I have located are handwritten pages of the sort Victor Doyen calls "the most difficult to situate in the sequence of versions" (165). This difficulty arises because the pages rarely bear any indication of their order (such as page numbering) nor is there any editorial indication of preference. (Elsewhere in the archive Margerie has pencilled "Yes!" in the margins of passages she particularly likes -- no such obvious clues here.) My editorial decisions must be based on evidence provided by the text itself; fortunately, Lowry's method of composition lends itself well to this sort of detective work, for his revisionary process is quite evident. He begins with a re-writing of a section of a previous version (for the purposes of this essay, the "previous version" usually refers to the five-page draft), which he then augments, re-works and revises, in some instances as many as eight or nine times. As is demonstrated in the six-page section that I examine in "Working With Margerie," Lowry's revisions were often made in consultation with his wife (often referred to as "dearduck" or "Harterreebeeste"). With each revision, almost without exception, Lowry expanded rather than edited his text. By
making careful note of when certain words appear, therefore, the task of establishing chronology becomes, if not easy, at least possible.

Eight pages of text corresponding to draft page one are spread through seven files in four boxes (16, 20, 22A and 22B), while only two pages of revision to draft page two have been located. Draft page three is the basis for a treasure trove of material: eleven pages of revisions, six of which are connected (i.e. revisions of revisions). Five pages of text related to draft page four have been located, including the single previously catalogued fragment: 7:16. Draft page five, which presents the shortest passage, is the starting-point for an eight-page series of revisions.

A "Genealogy" of "The Bravest Boat," presenting all recovered manuscript fragments and their correspondence to the five page draft, may be found in Appendix Two.
The first page of what will become "The Bravest Boat" is the most heavily reworked of the five draft pages. It is headed with two titles: The little boat and The bravest boat to round Flattery (original emphasis). To these have been added "The S.S. Fearnought;" "Romance Beyond Cape Flattery;" "The boat that braved Flattery;" "A Romance of Cape Flattery" (in both Malcolm and Margerie's hands); and, yes, "The Bravest Boat."

It appears that Lowry wrote the full draft version quite rapidly, perhaps in a single day. The consistent legibility of Lowry's handwriting, coupled with the generally legible nature of all of the pages, supports my contention that the skeleton was set down rather quickly; then Lowry returned to the beginning of the story to revise. Among the (many) methods of revision Lowry employed, perhaps the most frequently-occurring is interlineal augmentation. It seems that the spaces between his lines of text represented spaces in which the story could be expanded, reworked, revised and developed. A transcription of the development of the first few paragraphs of draft page one clearly demonstrates the various intentions of Lowry's interlineations. The superscript numbers refer to the revisions Lowry has inserted.
either between the lines or in the margins; they are transcribed as annotations.

Looking from lost lagoon, past the green dragons a shot of a stormy bay in the park\(^1\), the tragic seven sisters\(^2\), the mountains, snow still on their tops, the sea beyond.\(^3\)

The two figures, fair haired, wind blown, the man & a girl\(^4\), battled round the lagoon, hand in hand. Lovely laughing face of the girl. The man looked healthy and good.\(^5\)

Shot of the lagoon. Wild swans & many wild ducks. The mallards, the buffleheads & scaups & golden eyes & cackling slate black coots with carved ivory bills. The little buffleheads flying\(^6\) about like doves inn the trees. Perhaps a hooded merganser.\(^7\)

Shot of in the distance a little boy trying to sail a toy boat. But the blustery March wind soon had the little boat\(^8\) in trouble & he hauled it back again.\(^9\)

Dramatic close up of the two faces. The girl seems struggling with tears. The man -- they were quite alone now save for a few old men feeding the ducks --\(^1\) The man takes her in his arms and kisses her tenderly seven times.

Annotations

1. Mount Hood in America
2. who would not live near civilisation,
4. the man still young but many years older than the girl.
5. "healthy and good" deleted. With affection at the people who passed, with longing at the mountains, & gulped great draughts of fresh air returned a lost golf ball that had strayed over the fence. A child smiled at him & he smiled back. So did the girl. But the couple were unaccompanied. (Object is, perhaps they have had a child who has died.)

6. , & they looked at it with special sympathies for it had not a mate like the others.

7. blew

8. craft

9. & his father set it on an upright keel. Discuss grandfather sailing the boat to Liverpool. His father trimmed the sails or something.

1. & a few tragic bereaved looking lonely women. For the Canadian city was a brutal one & sometimes poor people who had no place to go would come & live in the park, the only friendly place, & so be found there destitute & sleeping. For faced with a choice even the very old will prefer, rather than keep a room and starve, to eat & live outdoors. For there in the park is the companionship of the dear ducks & of nature, the harsh city's only green grace.

These annotations represent typical Lowryan revisions, and many of the inserts are retained nearly unchanged throughout all subsequent revisions. He uses the spaces between lines, as well as the margins, to make notes that
either expand upon the story (as in note five) or act as reminders of details requiring further development (the note about the child, the suggestion "discuss grandfather" etc.). Some revisions are simply alternate word suggestions, while others represent extensive new material to be incorporated in subsequent rewriting. To see a page of Lowry's manuscript is to see the writer at work; although one can never be absolutely positive about which revision came first (The one between the lines or the one in the margins?), Lowry's handwritten pages are archival evidence (each an archive in itself) of the writer's process.
SECTION TWO.  PART TWO.

The Insert

Because any page of manuscript can bear only so much text, it is inevitable that Lowry rewrote and revised on pages separate from the original. This technique, which I have called "the insert," following Lowry's example, appears in revisions to all of the pages of the five-page draft. I have chosen examples from draft pages one and two as representative of two kinds of "insert" revision.

Beginning with the first page of draft one, the page which bears the most evidence of revision, Lowry seems to have recognized the futility of attempting to revise this draft entirely on the original pages. He (wisely) ceases work on the original and moves to separate sheets. While this tactic obviously made rewriting easier for Lowry, it makes my task much more difficult. Instead of one page crammed full of notes, there are who knows how many separate pages, many of which have disappeared into drafts of other stories (or disappeared altogether). But uncertainty is exactly what makes the work I have undertaken so interesting -- the possibility of failure (i.e. not coming up with any hoped-for manuscript fragments) is as great as is the possibility of success. With each extant fragment located, the possibility that there will be another becomes slimmer -- a condition both frustrating (I may never know if I have unearthed all that
exists of "The Bravest Boat" manuscript) and compelling ("There must be one more page somewhere.") and the reason why my process of sifting through the Lowry Archive continues as of this writing.

In the middle of the penultimate paragraph of draft page one, an interlineal emendation introduces a loudspeaker whose "bark" disrupts the peace of the otherwise pastoral setting:

A loudspeaker mounted on a roadster barked from the town and on the road a Royal canadian mounted police car went by with the mounted police mounted on the cushions of a chevrolet.

This brief sentence is eventually developed into a 55-line-long sentence that is as blatant an attack on the city (here easily recognizable as Vancouver) as appears anywhere in Lowry's writings. Lowry made no secret of the fact that if he loved Dollarton, he loathed Vancouver, and the vitriol with which this paragraph attacks the city (and by association, all cities) is like a storm of human nature blowing against the shores of civilization.

Four pages of revisions to this passage exist. The first ("Insert A1") reads:

More happily, a sign began to flicker: Palomar;
Louis Armstrong & his orchestra. A huge grey hotel belched mild smoke out of its turreted haunted looking roof as if it had caught fire, and the lamps were already on in the grim courtyard of the law
courts where for weeks they had ["been" is obscured] trying a seventeen year old boy for murder. Now the apron lights came out on a variety theatre Tonight Palevana the master hypnotist, while a little further away his subject the street car lined down which now another parkwise car is coming running past this to where his subject, perhaps a somnolent descendant of the seven famous sisters who had named the trees, had been sleeping happily in a shop window for the last three days as advance publicity. A newsboy cried above while his placard announced: Lash ordered for La pierre. SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD BOY, CHILD SLAYER, TO HANG. Read all about it.

The major components of the passage are all present, they only need to be more explicitly connected. The sleeper-in-the-window section needs work, so Lowry takes another stab, continuing to work on the same manuscript page.

A loudspeaker, mounted on a wagon, barked from the town, in which neon signs were already coming out comprised of dilapidated half-skyscrapers like lofty slums between which were squeezed occasional beautiful dark ivy clad old houses, with shingled roofs that seemed weeping, cut off from all light, on their knees; above which the same neon signs were already out; more happily one began to flicker . . .

This revision resolves the problem of providing a transition
between the barking loudspeaker and the Louis Armstrong Orchestra, while setting up the contrasts that punctuate this section of the story. The "Louis Armstrong" section is copied almost verbatim from its previous incarnation (the hotel becomes the "huge grey dead hotel" and there are minor additions to the description of the jury) before Lowry turns to his window-dweller.

Nearer the park the apron lights came out on a one night stand variety theatre saying GOON TAMMUZ master hypnotist, tonight 8:30, running past which the tramlines, down which another parkways tram was approaching, could be seen [___ing?] almost to the department store in whose window Tammuz' subject, perhaps a somnolent descendent of the seven famous sisters whose superastronomical fame had embraced even the seven dead redwoods, had been sleeping happily in a shop window for the last three days as advance publicity. A newsboy now cried out on the road [deleted]: Lash ordered for LA PIERRE

Here, "Palevana" has been improbably replaced by "Goon" which then becomes "Tammuz," a series of revisions that reflects Lowry's concern with naming. "Tammuz," according to my Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary, is "a Babylonian or Syrian deity, lover of Astarte, corresponding to the Greek Adonis. He became the personification of the seasonal decay and revival of crops" (1475). By choosing to name a hypnotist
(who advertises his ability by placing a sleeping person in a shop window) after a deity concerned with decay and revival, Lowry combines notions of wilderness and civilization, growth and destruction, even "earth and world" in one reference -- one that in typical Lowry fashion, remains obscure to those who do not know who "Tammuz" was and are unwilling to check the dictionary definition.

Lowry is by no means finished with his diatribe. On a page headed "Problems 1" (one dreads the possibility of problems 2 through 200) the first section of the passage is again reworked. To the "dilapidated half skyscrapers, like lofty slums" is added "at different levels, some with all kinds of scrap-iron, even broken aeroplanes, on their flat roofs, others being mouldy modern stock exchange buildings beer parlours and the like," before we return to the "ivy-clad old houses." Between these houses now may be found at infrequent intervals, queer blackened onion-shaped domes, so that you thought you were in Turkey or Russia: all then went as if down a great incline to a harbour more spectacular than Rio de Janeiro and San Francisco put together.

The following six lines are intended to bridge the gap between the description of the harbour and the flickering neon sign. But they are cancelled, and the revision appears on a separate page.

From the appearance of the page I have called "Problems 1", it seems likely that Lowry did not cancel the "San
Francisco" section until after he had written a version of the paragraph which immediately follows it in the published text; the "Eridanus" section of "The Bravest Boat." In this early version, the basic elements of a description of Dollarton are present, but Lowry is clearly unsatisfied with it, and the whole paragraph dwindles into illegibility. He apparently re-read the page, cancelled the "San Francisco" section, and turned to a fresh sheet to rework both paragraphs.

This new sheet ("Insert A2") begins with the revision of the "San Francisco" section:

all these went as if down a great incline to a harbour more spectacular than Rio de Janeiro & San Francisco put together, with deep sea steamers moored at every angle for miles in the roadstead, but to whose magnificent prospect the only homes on this park side that had any air of belonging, or whose inhabitants could be said to deserve the view [ ... ].

The passage is again revised to read:

but to whose magnificent prospect the only dwellings on this side that had any air of belonging, or of which their inhabitants could be said to have a homelike participating deserving view, were paradoxically a few humble little self-built stranded shacks & floathouses, down at the waters [sic] edge or on the sea itself, some of the former dark & dilapidated, & on piles, like fisherman's huts, others freshly & bravely painted & wonderfully pretty, with window boxes, but all evidently built with some human need for beauty in mind, even under
the permanent threat of eviction, and standing as if in gay defiance of the town, & of eternity: as if making a kind of worship of the mountains.

In the printed text, the allusion to Dollarton (happiness, peace, earth as opposed to world) is the note on which the first, long sentence of the "loudspeaker" passage ends. But this brief foray into optimism is quickly shattered; Lowry immediately returns us to Enochvilleport with its happily flickering neon sign (one wonders if the neon sign is happy or if it is a happy thing that the neon sign is flickering, possibly soon to burn out) advertising the Palomar. By relocating this reference to the garish city, Lowry is once again able to juxtapose his notions of good and evil, and, by the final typescript, the Palomar section flows smoothly into the trial section, on to the TAMMUZ section, and the rage against Enochvilleport and all it represents ends with the headline "LASH ORDERED FOR SAINT PIERRE! . . . " (18).

Through his revisions, Lowry has established the pattern of this long passage. Although further revisions must have been done subsequent to those I have recovered, I have been unable to locate them -- with the exception of one small fragment. "Insert A3" bears four short scribbles which eventually become part of the first long sentence in the "loudspeaker" section:

Ye olde English tea shoppes where your fortune can be told by an exiled relative of Maximilian of Mexico
though the same seemed not the case
draper's shops English tweeds & opium dens in the bas [sic]
masonries contain. English tea shoppes where your fortune could be told by a female relative of Maximilian of Mexico, draper's shops with the best Scotch Tweed, and opium den's [sic] in the basement, Salvation Army barracks

The Tea Shoppes, Maximilian of Mexico and the draper's shops with their opium dens all appear in the published version, although the Salvation Army seems to have been banished to its own reward.

This series of revised pages demonstrates Lowry's ability to add material almost endlessly with each revision. Rarely does an image or idea appear un-expanded from one version to the next. Sometimes just one or two words are added ("huge grey hotel" becomes "huge grey dead hotel"), while in other instances a whole series of descriptive phrases is added. On Problems 1, the "dilapidated half-skyscrapers" first seen on Insert A1 are further described: "some with all kinds of scrap-iron, even broken aeroplanes, on their flat roofs, others being mouldy modern stock exchange buildings beer parlours and the like . . . ." There is no evidence that Lowry planned and developed this expansion elsewhere; it seems to be an instance of relatively rapid composition which Lowry was satisfied with and left unrevised.
Another kind of "insert" employed by Lowry is demonstrated on draft page two. The page opens with a continuation of the description of how Astrid and Sigurd met: "In fact it was as if they saw it happening in front of their eyes." This allusion to the notion of the couple's future being "played out" does not survive in the published version. But it reminds us of how aware Lowry was of film techniques; by having the couple's story pass before their eyes, he suggests that his story should be passing before the reader's eyes. The care with which Lost Lagoon and its surroundings are described in the text seems to support this assertion, as does Lowry's revision of the second sentence of this draft. What originally read "Maybe Astrid, though it had occurred five years before she was born, saw it more vividly than Sigurd himself . . . " becomes "Perhaps Astrid, who liked to picture Sigurd as a child, saw it more clearly than Sigurd himself . . . ". This reminder that Astrid "picture[s]" Sigurd immediately follows the suggestion that Astrid and Sigurd see their story "happening in front of their eyes." Despite the absence of the specific film jargon that appears on draft page one (such as "Close up" and "Shot of"), Lowry's cinematic style is retained.

As the page continues, we learn that Sigurd set his boat adrift:

At twilight, in June, in a little bay & on a windy day twenty years before, on the further side of Cape
Draft page two concludes with the juxtaposition of two contrasting scenes. The penultimate paragraph describes Sigurd as he sets the boat adrift, while the final paragraph pulls us back to Stanley Park, where the couple are watching "an Indian" as he feeds the squirrels. On re-reading, Lowry obviously realizes that he needs to more thoroughly establish the time-frame of the boat's voyage, leading him to prepare "Insert 2."

Insert 2 presents the conversation between Astrid and Sigurd which appears on page 19 of the published text. Near the top of draft page two, Lowry has pencilled "Incantations dialogue from original" in the margin. Here he presents a fragment of dialogue easily described as an "incantation."

As in the published version, Insert 2 presents a repetitious, round-like conversation. For the first few lines, Astrid picks up and repeats part of Sigurd's previous sentence:

'Well it was a day just like this,' Sigurd said slowly, 'that I set the boat adrift. It was twenty-nine years ago in June.'

'It was twenty-nine years ago in June.' Astrid said 'and it was June the 27th.'

'It was five years before you were born & I was ten years old & I came down to the bay with my father.'

'It was five years before I was born. You were
ten years old and you came down to the beach with your father.'

The passage serves two purposes. First, it establishes the "routine" that this conversation has become. The couple come to the park every year on their anniversary, they always have this conversation, they use it as a ritualistic reminder of the unlikeliness of their union. Second, and more practically, this conversation provides the reader with all the information necessary to establish the age of the characters and the miracle of the boat's survival. For although we do not yet know how long the boat drifted, nor do we know its exact significance to these people, we can assume from the tone of the conversation that they wonder at the ability of the boat to have survived; it therefore must have survived a long time.

Lowry's ability as a strategic writer is also apparent here. He has revealed a great deal about the intimacy between these two people, but we still are not sure how they are connected -- the final draft leaves their relationship ambiguous until page 24. And although the couple's names have appeared in the draft prior to this point, a marginal note at the end of Insert 2 reads: "Not had name till now." That is, Lowry chooses to refrain from revealing Sigurd's name until it appears in his note. This clue is one of several that lead me to the conclusion that Insert 2 was written after the draft
version had been completed. In the draft, Sigurd and Astrid are named quite early (Sigurd is Sigurd right from the start, Astrid appeared in the "Idea" as "Anne McColl," then as "Ingrid" or "Helge" on draft page one), these namings are excised somewhere between the draft and the published version. Also, Lowry does not present Sigurd’s note in its entirety in Insert 2; it appears thus:

Hullo,

   My name is Sigurd Wallace etc. -- Thanks

Sigbjørn Jensen.

The difficulty Lowry has had in naming Astrid has apparently extended to Sigurd. On draft page two, his name is originally Sigurd Jensen; he then becomes Sigurd Wallace, but the change is not made to the name as it appears at the close of the note. "Sigbjørn" does not appear at all in the early draft and is apparently a late (and discarded) alternate suggestion. Sherrill Grace, in The Voyage That Never Ends, presents an etymology of the name "Sigbjørn" that sheds some light on Lowry’s concern with naming:

   The protean protagonist is crucial to an understanding of Lowry’s purpose in Hear Us O Lord. . . in Norwegian, Sigbjørn means "victorious bear," and through the name Lowry may have wished to associate his wandering hero with Wagner’s Siegfried (roughly, "guardian of victory"), but more importantly, the positive associations of the name contrast with the "Ursus Horribilis" (or grizzly) of "The Bravest Boat" (20) and recall the two
constellations, Ursa Minor and Ursa Major. In addition, the name sounds like "sea-borne," and together with stars and constellations, the sea provides perhaps the most affirmative imagery in the collection and throughout Lowry's work (102).

In a note to this passage, Grace goes further to establish the significance of Lowry's choice of names:

. . . I find the implicit contrast between Sigbiørn and the Latin word in "the Bravest Boat" to be effective, even if not deliberately so.
. . . [T]he High German "Sig/fried," like the Old Norse "Sig/urd," comes from the Germanic root "Sig/ward," which means "guardian of victory" (139).

To this I would add that "Sigward" sounds like "sea-ward" (as "Sigurd" sounds like "sea-girt"). This aural play, coupled with Lowry's assertion from the very first that "the characters should be Scandinavian with Scandinavian names" (Idea) suggests that Lowry's concern with naming springs from his desire for his character's names to be both etymologically appropriate and "musically" appealing. (It is not clear, from the manuscript fragments I have located, when Sigurd Jameson/Jensen/Wallace becomes Sigurd Storlesen. Obviously, this revision occurred sometime between the revisions I focus on here and the carbon typescript [7:17].)

In the left-hand margin, next to the "note," the following emendation appears: "My father is a sailor. But my Mummy's Dad is the lighthouse keeper at Cape Flattery." The right margin presents two alternatives: "I live in Jefferson
County. My father is lighthouse keeper at Cape Flattery."
And: "My father is the Norwegian Consul at Tacoma. My mummy is American." In the published version, this background information excludes all reference to "Mummy," presenting only "[m]y Dad is a forest warden in the Olympic National Forest but my Granddad is the lighthouse keeper at Cape Flattery" (19-20). These revisions appear to stem from Lowry's concern that the locale of the story be ambiguous. He wants to make it clear that Sigurd is from the United States, possibly to further obscure the fact that the story is set in Canada. (As early as the "Idea," where Stanley Park is "vaguely in the Pacific Northwest," Lowry is playing fast and loose with geography. Draft page one mentions "Mount Hood" as being visible from Lost Lagoon -- a geographical impossibility meant to relocate Stanley Park considerably further south than Vancouver.)

Once Lowry has revised Sigurd's father out of the cabin of the little boat (see transcript), he reworks the rest of this paragraph to incorporate dialogue written in the same style as that which precedes the note:

'Yes, then my father & I put the note inside, & we glued down the lid & sealed it & put the boat in the water.'

'You put the boat in the water & the tide was going out & away it went. The current caught it right off & carried it out & you watched it until it was out of sight'
Again we have the repetitions, the picking up of what has been said before -- a continuation of the "incantation" that this conversation is meant to be. But here, the names of the characters have been dropped -- the conversation continues without the previous "Astrid said" or "Sigurd said." This technique is extended to the whole conversation in the published version, further reinforcing the notion of call and response, or the conversation of unknown voices that is suggested by the term "incantation." With the end of this dialogue fragment comes the end of the incantation, and the end of Insert 2.
SECTION TWO. PART THREE.

Working With Margerie

In the published text, the twelve-year voyage of Sigurd's boat is chronicled in one longish paragraph (25 lines, pp. 20-21). The essentials of this text were written by Malcolm in consultation with Margerie, as demonstrated in the archive (Inserts B1-B6). While other examples of the Lowrys' co-working exist (notably on the fragments connected to the "Seattle Star" section of the story), these six pages of manuscript provide a unique insight into the back-and-forth revising that the Lowrys did together. Not only do these pages present an extremely detailed "map" of the development of the "twelve years" section of the story, they also bear evidence of Margerie's suggestions for revisions, Malcolm's acceptance or rejection of those suggestions, and, most revealingly, Malcolm's own description of how he incorporated both his and Margerie's ideas into the final version (Insert B5). Appendix Three presents my transcription of the development of this passage over six manuscript pages.

Insert B1 is comprised of two sections, labelled "A" and "B." Section A presents a long, complex sentence that, in both technique and content, evokes the astonishing miracle of the boat's successful journey. It is introduced with the statement "Twelve years it had wandered" (20). Simple, unadorned statement of fact. Lowry writes only one word
before the revisions begin: "Through the tempests of winters" is cancelled and "tempestuous" is inserted interlineally. Apparently dissatisfied with this personification, Lowry rewrites "the tempests of winter" below, bracketing the whole section for further attention. The second phrase is originally "over summer seas" but the alternatives "seas of sunlight;" "blue seas of sunlight;" and "sunny summer seas" are written above and below the original. This second-guessing -- a sort of revision of alternatives -- continues throughout this section. Lowry seems to write in phrase-bursts; he manages "what tide rips had caught it" unrevised, then offers four alternatives for the next phrase.

Each clause is reworked so that it both describes the voyage of the boat and complicates the sentence that is the vehicle for that description. The sentence is as complex as the journey, and the reader may get as lost in the syntax as the boat is lost at sea. For example:

... what tide rips had caught it, what wild sea birds, shearwaters, storm petrels, jaegers, that follow the thrashing propellers, the dark albatross of these northern waters, swooped upon it ... (20).

The boat is always "it," never "the boat"; the phrase, "that follow the thrashing propellers," modifies the description of the sea birds, not the path of the boat, so that the next phrase ("the dark albatross . . .") seems to have no referent until it becomes apparent that it describes another of the sea birds in the list Lowry has interrupted with the parenthetical
note about the "thrashing propellers."

Lowry's revisions remove the objective perspective -- we are to journey with this boat rather than observe that journey. The phrase that becomes ". . . warm currents edged it lazily toward land --" (20) is, in Insert B1, alternatively, "warm currents brought it lazily within sight from shore" and "within sight of shore." Lowry again edits out the personification (the boat cannot see, so it cannot be "within sight of shore") and he removes the land-bound observer able to see the boat because it is "within sight from shore." The conflation of boat and reader parallels the metaphor of the boat's journey as symbol of Sigurd and Astrid's relationship; as the reader imagines she journeys with the boat, she simultaneously imagines the journey that is their love story.

Section B of Insert B1 presents a fully-realized poem that eventually develops into the third and longest sentence of the paragraph as published. It is apparently a second version of the draft appearing as Insert B2, for it incorporates some of the revisions made to Insert B2. It seems that Lowry composed the "A" section of Insert B1, then copied it onto a separate page (Insert B2), and began work on the next sentence ("Perhaps it had rested drifting . . ."). He then copies the second sentence on to Insert B1 and shows both pages to Margerie, whose comment appears at the bottom of Insert B2:
poised between the poles of June & January -- here the two great tides of the year roughly correspond to the winter & summer solstice -- the boat perhaps thrown upon a shore by the January tide would stay there until June -- one of the periods of its 12 years. You must have the great tides of January & huge calm tides of June even if you have to change the great black albatross.

In response to this suggestion, Lowry produces Insert B3. Beginning with the phrase "Perhaps it had rested drifting in some sheltered cove," Insert B3 incorporates some of the interlineal alternatives presented on Insert B2. The comparison of the boat to a tin can, a revision made after the passage was copied onto Insert B1, is almost fully realized on Insert B3. But even this third version of the passage is unsatisfactory. That Lowry is having difficulty combining his apparently contradictory desires for clarity and mystery is evident in his note to Margerie at the bottom of Insert B3:

Please consider these alterations dear duck. I append your alternative. To my mind the sentence 'relinquished as flotsam' is a weakness . . . perhaps necessary. But the last 'until or before' is a grammatical problem: if 'before' is repeated, it adds another mysterious dimension by suggesting an Indian just might have found it at another time of year. Your notion of the winter tide bringing it in & the summer tide pushing it out on second thoughts might weaken the drama as much as it strengthens it my defining the time. But I could be absolutely wrong. An ox may increase the poetry, the mystery. But please consider, my dear duck.
I'm a little tired. Tin can stuff, possible substitution of 'a' for 'some' the threatening propellers do not plot position of shearwaters, merely characterize them, all help to depurple, I feel (Insert B3).

Lowry is attempting to retain the sense of mystery; how does this little boat survive? how does it escape disaster for twelve years? He is concerned with the implications of the repetition of "before" (at the middle and bottom of Insert B2) -- if "before" is repeated, (i.e. "before it had found its way again . . . before it was borne out to sea once more"), Lowry wonders, does it add "another mysterious dimension by suggesting an Indian just might have found it at another time of year[?]" In the published text, "before" is replaced by "until" (21). The whole discussion makes one aware of Lowry's obsessive attention to detail. Only the most microscopic examination of the text would produce the concern in a reader that Lowry, as writer, feels so intensely. Likewise, his reluctance to accept Margerie's "notion of the winter tide bringing it in & the summer tide pushing it out" on the grounds that it "might weaken the drama as much as it strengthens it by defining the time" demonstrates an attention to detail that goes beyond careful into the realm of obsessive. Here, Lowry recognizes the humour in his concern: "But I could be absolutely wrong." Only for that moment, however; he immediately returns to the text: "An or [between
the "tides of January" and "the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon"] may increase the poetry, the mystery." Still unwilling to "define the time," Lowry is unwilling to indicate even the season in case that might detract from the mysterious success of this voyage. Yet in spite of this poetic concern for the mysterious, Lowry is worried that his prose may be too overwrought. "Tin can stuff, possible substitution of 'a' for 'some' . . . all help to depurple, I feel." And here, Lowry's quandary with this whole passage: how to achieve the mystery, the poetry, the sense of destiny and magic, without overwhelming his reader with high-flowing poetics and thereby risk obscuring his intent.

Margerie must have responded to this request for assistance, for a subsequent version of the "Perhaps it had rested" passage appears as Insert B4. Here, Lowry is apparently having difficulty continuing his revisions. The page is headed by the prayer "God help me." Lowry prays (on paper) to God and St. Jude throughout much of the manuscript of October Ferry, yet "The Bravest Boat" manuscript (at least those fragments I have recovered) bears only three of these somewhat desperate pleas.6

The frustrated writer is still worrying his words, just below the "prayer" appears an attempt to achieve the desired wording for (what becomes) "coming through thunder" (21). Lowry writes "among in in [sic] thunder" adding "among" and "in" to "beneath" as alternatives for "coming through." Yet
this is likely a postscript, for the page itself is almost completely free of revisions. Apparently (reasonably) satisfied with the first section, Lowry begins with the boat "drifting in some sheltered cove." He is clear about the "baby seal" who "stared with her wondering eyes" but is still working on the "afternoon sun" section, striking out "for it to be thrown aground" and "and then, catching the rainy afternoon sun," leaving "catching the rainy afternoon sun, [only -- from the line above] for it to be thrown aground."

Insert B5 presents Lowry's own chronicle of his revisions to this passage, and it helps clarify the order in which the fragments were composed.

Insert B5 is entitled It originally ran with extra Harteebeeste genius, and begins with a description of what appears to be Insert B2.

baby seals et al
before it had found its way to who will ever know what fierce & desolate forested uninhabited shore known only to the dread Wendigo, where not even an Indian could have found it, before it was borne out to sea once more by the sweeping black tides of January or the huge calm tide of the Midsummer moon to start its Journey all over again --

Having presented this version, Lowry describes how he reworked the passage to incorporate Margerie's suggestion about the June and January tides:
Then Harteebeestes arrived bearing great pails of further genius, I worked it to this effect:
baby seals et al
before it had found its way etc.
known only to the . . .
washed up there by the great brimming black tides of January,
relinquished as flotsam while the world of the ocean caught its breath poised between solstice & solstice,
to be borne out to sea once more by the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon,
to start its journey all over again --

This description refers to Insert B3, although it presents a new revision in "the world of the ocean caught its breath poised between solstice & solstice" -- perhaps in response to Margerie's suggestion at the foot of Insert B2. Insert B5 continues with Lowry's description of the development of an interlineal revision that eventually becomes one of the most compelling descriptions in the "twelve years" passage:

Then while I was working out this extra harteebeeste genius, which I don't like as much as the other, I saw an old tin Horrors can knocking on the shore which inspired me to want to get the:
sense of it catching the rainy afternoon sun, thrown aground on cruel barnacled rocks by the waves, lying aground knocked from side to side in an inch of water like a live thing, or a poor old tin can, pushed, pounded ashore & reversed, & reversed again, left high & dry: -- & then, ten minutes later, swept another 50 yards up the beach: -- or swept under a shack, its knocking to keep [drive] a
seine fisherman awake [mad]. . .

Something of that nature: so now El Leon has moses in the cave & doesn’t know what to do, & wishes that you give my poor boat a leetle shove out to sea again . . . (Insert B5).

The last section of this excerpt presents a nearly final version of a passage first suggested on Insert B2. Lowry has revised it on Inserts B3 and B4, and is now apparently handing it over to Margerie for comments and suggestions. Although I have recovered no evidence of her opinion, Margerie apparently agreed that the idea was a good one. Insert B6 presents a draft of the "tin can" section that, except for a few words, is identical to the published version.

The note-form "conversation" between the Lowrys that accompanies the development of the "twelve years" passage provides evidence of Margerie Lowry’s almost-ignored editorial contribution to Malcolm Lowry’s work. While it is clear from manuscript evidence that the Lowrys worked very closely, little credit has been given to Margerie Lowry for the constant suggestions and encouragement she provided. Far more than a typist or mere "helpmeet," Margerie Lowry was, perhaps, a co-conspirator with her husband in the production of his work. Critical opinion on Margerie Lowry’s contribution to Malcolm’s work is divided. Douglas Day contends that "[n]othing Lowry wrote after 1939 was, strictly speaking, entirely his own" (note to 439), while Sherrill Grace contends:
Without doubt, Margerie Bonner [Lowry] wrote well. It would be difficult to deny the welcome presence in Malcolm Lowry's fiction of her inventiveness, narrative control, and eye for descriptive detail. To insist upon her influence on his work beyond this point, however, seems unnecessary (1977, 324).

While I concur with Grace, it seems unreasonable not to give Margerie Lowry at least some credit for her so-apparent contribution to "The Bravest Boat." In 1994 terminology, she might be called a consultant.
SECTION TWO.  PART FOUR.

Asking for Outside Assistance

The final section of the story

When Malcolm Lowry needed help with his work, he most often began his search for that help by pencilling a plea to God or St. Jude at the top of his page. When that was not enough, or when he required editorial assistance, he turned to his wife, Margerie. But what to do when his own, God’s and Margerie’s inspiration was not enough? The revisions to draft page five show that, at least in this instance, Lowry turned to someone else for advice.

I have recovered eight pages of revisions to draft page five, the first of which, Insert C1, was clearly composed at or near the same time as Insert C2, although the material composed on C1 eventually corresponds to an earlier part of the story (24). Both C1 and C2 are begun with prayers, and each bears a thundercloud-like drawing at the top of the page. Both pages are labelled "A." Insert C3 presents a draft of the entire last section of the story, in a version quite close to that which eventually is published. The major difference is in the sentence order; on C6 the sentences follow the order of those on C2, but they have been numbered to suggest an order closer to that of the published version. Because the page is inscribed "Marjorie" in Margerie Lowry’s hand, it is possible to theorize that the suggested sentence order came from the
Lowry's friend (and the daughter of their neighbour, Jimmy Craige), Marjorie Kirk. It is certainly possible to imagine an evening's conversation turning to Lowry's work, with attendant comments on the relative difficulties of composition. I can imagine Lowry saying something like "This passage has been bothering both of us. Why don't you have a look?" Until I began working with the Lowry archive, I do not think it ever crossed my mind that Lowry said anything. I had thought of an author as one who speaks on paper. Perhaps his paper has begun to speak to me.

The development of the last section of "The Bravest Boat" comprises one of the most clearly connected series of revisions to the story. The "order" of Inserts C2 through C8 is reasonably easy to establish; Lowry's revisions (expansions) are copied from one draft to the next, then revisions to the next draft are copied onto the one following. From one short paragraph, describing the couple's arrival on the beach, the wreckage, the wind and the incredible survival of the little boat, the revisions to the last section produce a sweeping description of the beach, including an extremely detailed inventory of the various flotsam upon it, a reminder of the verdancy of spring that contradicts the desolation of the beach, the couple, the ocean, the mountains, the ships in the harbour, the chaos of the day; description after description, Lowry builds the passage into a five-paragraph climax.
This development is achieved through a focused reworking and expansion, a line-by-line re/vision of the story’s conclusion.

Insert C2 presents the first three revisions of draft page five. The first attempt is brief:

And it was the ocean that lay before them, at the end of the slope running down into the beach, the naked Pacific, without enchantment, diving platforms, or even any friendly shacks.

But Lowry cancels this attempt, and tries again with a version more clearly linked to draft page five:

They came to the desolate beach strewn with sculptured and whorled driftwood piled everywhere by tides so immense that there was wreckage, wrecked hencoops, wrecked floats, even the wrecked shiplap of the side of the house. Looking out to sea, as they crunched the seashells beneath them on the beach itself, was like looking into chaos. The wind blew away their thoughts, their voices, their senses, and it was through [this] that the little boat of theirs had been borne at last to safety.

But ah, the storms they had come through!

Here Lowry introduces most of the elements that will appear throughout the following series of revisions. The driftwood that will eventually be tossed above the high tide line by Astrid and Sigurd, the wreckage that is eventually described in great detail, the shells beneath the couple’s feet, and the wind that takes their breath away. In the next six pages of revisions, Lowry methodically reworks this passage, dissecting and reassembling it until it reaches a satisfactory (to him,
at least) state.

Inserts C4, C5, and C7, labelled "A," "B," and "C" present a rewriting of Insert C3 -- the page inscribed "Marjorie." When these four pages are placed side-by-side, the development of the last section of the story is presented in as clear a fashion as any Lowry scholar might hope to find. The first page in the series, Insert C3, presents a combination of the various draft versions of the last section that have appeared as draft page five and Inserts C2, C6 and C8. Lowry's handwriting is relatively clear, and there are just a few interlineations. The whole final section, from Sigurd and Astrid's arrival on the beach to the reflective line that has closed the story since its inception, is presented. The most striking feature of the page is the numbering that has been added to the first paragraph.

Paragraph one of Insert C3 bears a series of circled numbers indicating an alternate order to the sentences. Inserts C4, C5 and C7 show the whole of C3, written out so that the sentence order corresponds to that suggested. As noted, the pages are inscribed A, B and C, with Insert C4 ("A") presenting the first paragraph of page 26 of the published text ("They came to the desolate beach . . . a smashed wheel lying in the sand") in an almost final version. Insert C5 ("B"), presents the second and third paragraphs of page 26, again in almost final form. The final paragraph of the story, Insert C7, has been subjected to further revisions
since its appearance as part of Insert C3. Insert C6, possibly labelled "C," although the letter is unclear, shows an earlier version of C7. Together, Inserts C3 through C7 clearly demonstrate the work of an author in control of his text. Despite the "outside assistance" in the form of sentence-order suggestions, it is apparent that Lowry was reasonably satisfied with this version of the end of his story. There are very few cancellations, interlineations, or adjustments of any kind. None of the pages is headed with a plea or a prayer, and the pressure on the pencil is firm throughout. The boat has weathered its storm, as have the author and the critic. The finale is confident, celebratory and reflective. Whether the story has survived the storm of its creation, or the storm inflicted upon it by my searching eye, remains to be seen.
SECTION THREE

The Critical Question:

Has the Voyage Been a Success?

"The Bravest Boat" is the first in a series of journey stories beginning and ending at Dollarton, B.C. (Lowry’s "Eridanus"). These stories, collected in Hear Us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place, were intended to become part of a larger body of work entitled "The Voyage That Never Ends" (Grace, 1982). Although "The Voyage That Never Ends" remained unfinished (much of Lowry's completed work was not published until after his death, having been edited by his wife; some of the texts proposed exist only in very early draft forms [Grace 1982, 8-9]) the connecting "voyage" theme Lowry proposed to explore is clearly established in the published work. In Hear Us O Lord, "the voyage from west to south to north-east and, completing a geographical circle, west again" (Grace 1982, 103) chronicles the journey and the storms recalled in the closing line of "The Bravest Boat": "But ah, the storms they had come through!" (27). "The Bravest Boat," although the first story in the collection, is a tale of the recollection and remembrance of a voyage, here symbolized by the twelve-year journey of a tiny balsa-wood boat. The survival of the boat, the survival of the marriage that results from the boat’s discovery on a beach in "Enochvilleport," and the survival of the couple’s lifestyle despite the ominous threat
of the bleak city -- each success achieved despite the odds against it -- represent the hope, tenacity and love that carry Lowry's five "narrator/protagonists" (Grace 1982, 102) through the various journeys that make up Hear Us O Lord.

As the last line of "The Bravest Boat" suggests, these are "the storms they had come through" (27). Lowry's emphatic use of the past perfect tense here serves two functions. First, it indicates that the stories following "The Bravest Boat" are from a fictional past. Second, it suggests a fictional present picked up again in "Forest Path," indicating that the Lowry protagonist has moved on into a future from which he is looking back upon the cycle of experience portrayed in the stories (Grace 1982 103).

While I concur with Grace's analysis of "The Bravest Boat['s]" importance to the cycle of stories that make up Hear Us O Lord (and, by extension, the proposed "Voyage That Never Ends"), the work that I have done on the story has forced me to consider it in isolation. It was first published in English singly (in The Partisan Review, May 1954); Lowry obviously intended it to be capable of standing on its own. Having spent nearly six months working very closely with both manuscript and published versions, I have developed some concerns regarding the story's success, as well as its ability to withstand the scrutiny I have subjected it to.

There is something ironic about the existence of a thesis
three times longer than its subject. I am so familiar with "The Bravest Boat" that I am able to recite passages from memory. I see the story in sections, most of which I have named, and I have developed a relationship with the text that I can only characterize as intimate. Surely this was not Lowry’s intention (if anything, he was most concerned that the story not give offence -- news stories, not theses, were his worry [2:20, letter to Clarisse Francillon]). Yet this familiarity has been the inevitable result of my work. My reading of the story has changed; my opinion of it has shifted. Has "The Bravest Boat" survived the voyage I have taken it on? Well, yes. And no.

More than that of many authors, Malcolm Lowry’s fiction is autobiographical. His protagonists share personality traits with Malcolm and Margerie Lowry; his stories incorporate real-life events, letters, road signs and newspaper articles. This reality-based fiction presents a problem for the critic who endeavours to separate author from protagonist, reality from fiction. The problem is made more difficult when Lowry uses his writing as an arena for the venting of his spleen. For example, the first extant "Bravest Boat" revisions focus on a brief reference to "the seven sisters who would not live near civilisation" made on draft page one. Insert D1 presents seven versions of what will become the first sentence of the parenthetical comment appearing in the third paragraph of "The Bravest Boat" as
published. The versions are:
They were dying, as if wilfully, rather than live any longer near civilisation.
They were dying rather than live longer near civilisation.
They were dying rather than live any longer near civilisation.
They had decided to die rather than live longer near civilisation.
They preferred to die rather than live any longer near civilisation.

It is the second version that is ultimately published.

If it seems odd that Lowry was so concerned with this phrase, the inspiration for the passage may prove illuminating. On April 3, 1951 there appeared, in the Vancouver Sun, an article describing "The Seven Sisters" -- a group of six Douglas firs and one cedar -- that were about to be removed from Stanley Park because they had become a hazard. In the article, the origin of the name for the group of trees is said to have been either the seven Sutherland sisters (who sold hair tonic), or the seven daughters of Angus C. Fraser, one of the most prominent of Vancouver’s early non-Native settlers. This misapprehension sparked a wonderfully ironic outraged letter from Lowry.

"Dear Sir," he begins;

In your tragic story of the "Seven Sisters" . . . you mention that the City Archivist Major Matthews says that their name has two possible origins [the Sutherland sisters and Angus Fraser’s
daughters].

But is it not just barely possible that the Seven famous Sutherland sisters who sold hair tonic, no less than the seven daughters of Gastown's prominent citizen, Mr. Angus C. Frazer [sic] of Jericho, would not have, in their several ways, been so known as the Seven Sisters in the first place had it not been for a concept of a yet more famous 'Seven Sisters,' whose performance has been visible weather permitting from your own Sun tower -- for that matter -- every night from winter to early spring since it has been built? . . . .

Is it possible that neither the gallant Major nor the Vancouver Sun have heard of the Pleiades, the constellation known since time immemorial as the Seven Sisters? (3:14).

The letter continues in this vein for three pages, becoming progressively more ironic and more didactic. That Lowry was upset is apparent, and his outrage is expressed in the fact that both sets of "Seven Sisters" appear in "The Bravest Boat." The daughters of Angus Fraser (or Frazer) are conflated with the shop-window Sutherland Sisters to become "the seven daughters of a butcher, who seventy years before when the growing city was named Gaspool had all danced together in a shop window" (13), who appear again in the advertisement for "TAMMUZ The Master Hypnotist."

. . . the tram lines . . . could be seen extending almost to the department store in whose show window Tammuz' subject, perhaps a somnolent descendant of the seven sisters whose fame had eclipsed even that of the Pleiades, . . . had been sleeping happily and
publicly in a double bed for the last three days as an advance publicity stunt for tonight’s performance (18).

The five-page draft version of "The Bravest Boat" (Appendix Two) presents a slight, romantic tale coloured with only a hint of the negative:

The two had now passed the place of ancient maple trees & young branches & swaying alders & passed the tragic Seven sisters themselves, a group of 7 noble redwoods, growing there together perhaps hundreds of years but dying now defeated by the approach of civilisation (draft page three).

As I have shown in Section Two, Part Two, civilisation in the published text is represented by the threatening and looming "Enochvilleport," the city that, like the caged lynx (21) lurks at the edge of the wilderness, poised to strike. Enochvilleport represents a threat to Sigurd and Astrid’s happiness, its proximity is a threat to "the lowly little self-built shacks and floathouses" (17) they admire (and which so obviously allude to the Lowry’s Dollarton home), and its noise, smoke and violence threaten the idyllic park that is the setting of the story. But the intrusion of the omniscient narrator’s diatribe against the city may be a threat to the integrity of the story.

Lowry has set his reader up to expect a pastoral tale, perhaps with an undercurrent of uneasiness (Astrid’s near-tears at the weighing machine hint at a darker subtext), but it is a love story that is expected. When the lyric is
interrupted by the raging, the reader is yanked out of the pleasant and thrust into the bleak. The juxtaposition is effective; the contrast is powerfully conveyed, and Lowry's awareness of film technique is again reinforced -- from what might be described as a series of long shots he "cuts to" a 1951 version of MTV. My concern, however, is that the reader is not sufficiently prepared for the "Enochvilleport" passage for it to be completely successful. It reads as an interruption of the story, rather than as a development. Lowry's personal loathing of Vancouver and his particular obsession with the demise of the Seven Sisters of Stanley Park provided much of the fuel for this vitriolic attack. I am not sure that the apparent slightness of the love story completely supports Lowry's lengthy diatribe. Part of my concern, of course, is that I may be conflating the author with the narrator -- the passage is more effective when I am able to read it as the voice of a speaker other than Malcolm Lowry.

The first sentence of the "Enochvilleport" passage is approximately 550 words long. It is a great cloud of imagery spewing from the pen(cil) of its author as the smoke spews from the chimneys of the Molochs-cum-sawmills. It is a relentless, overwhelming barrage of information about a journey through a city that is hell, along its waterways, culminating in a moment's respite among a tiny enclave of squatter's shacks. The pace and setting of the story are shoved aside by the hand of civilisation in the guise of
Enochvilleport, and a new story, black and ugly, intrudes.

The jarring contrast between the park and the city serve to unbalance the reader (the passenger) of "The Bravest Boat." Like a sudden storm at sea, Enochvilleport blows in on the "wild March wind" of the story's first line, upsetting the smooth passage of the vessel. With the lashing of Saint Pierre, the "storm" abates, and Lowry returns his reader to the comparative calm of Lost Lagoon. Lowry uses this technique on two other occasions in "The Bravest Boat."

If I may call the Enochvilleport "intrusion" the first, the second is the "[t]welve years it had wandered" passage I examined in Part Three of Section Two. The third "storm" that disrupts the smooth progression of the story is a second description of the boat's voyage; the passage Sherrill Grace describes as "the most important and beautiful" in the story (1982, 105). This passage provides an explanation of Lowry's "interruptive" technique:

Ah, its absolute loneliness amid those wastes, those wildernesses, of rough rainy seas bereft even of sea birds, between contrary winds, or in the great dead windless swell that comes following a gale; and then with the wind springing up and blowing the spray across the sea like rain, like a vision of creation . . . in ceaseless motion, rising and falling . . . and all this time a sound, like a high sound of singing . . . (22, emphasis added).

Where Grace's argument points to the fact that "the punctuation and the rhythm of the passage capture the
sensation of ceaseless, incremental withdrawal and return" (105), I would suggest that the passage simultaneously presents a suggested reading of "The Bravest Boat."

The "smooth journey" that is the simple love story sketched in the five page draft becomes a voyage interrupted by three apparently digressive passages. But as the rhythm of the excerpted passage suggests the "flow and stasis" (Grace, 105) of the sea, it also recalls the ebb and flow of the story itself. Lowry has managed to write a story that imitates a sea voyage in its very structure. The opening section of the story (pp 13-16) is the calm before the storm; there is a hint of the ominous, but the "storm" strikes almost without warning. Then the tempest abates, and the story gently rocks through its "incantation" section (pp 18-20) before another, smaller interruption (call it a squall) occurs. The "[t]welve years" section chronicles a gentle period in the voyage of the little boat; things seem so peaceful, beautiful and easy that the reader begins to anticipate some fearful occurrence.

In the section following, Lowry changes tack, introducing a symbolically threatening event into the love story. The bears ("Ursus Horribilis") that appeared just prior to the "[t]welve years" section (20), have been replaced by two beautiful demonic creatures . . . searching the base of their cage, betweeen whose bars there was just room to slip a murderous paw . . . searching with eternal voraciousness, yet seeking in desperation also some way out, passing and repassing
each other rhythmically, as though truly damned and
under some compelling enchantment (21).
These are the "terrifying Canadian lynx" (22) who symbolize
darkness, evil and danger -- recalling the descriptions of
Enochvilleport, perhaps suggesting how its inhabitants must
feel. But in spite of this caged danger, "before the lovers'
eyes still sailed that tiny boat, battling with the seas, at
the mercy of a wilder ferocity yet . . ." (22). With this,
Lowry introduces the passage I quoted first, the passage that
serves as a key to this story, and the one that concludes with
the incantation that recurs throughout Hear Us O Lord: Frère
Jacques! Frère Jacques!

It is remarkable that my excerpted and emphasized
selection from this passage is almost identical to the one
Grace provides in The Voyage That Never Ends. Clearly, there
is more going on in this "little" story than is apparent on
first reading. Lowry creates an almost animate prose that
carries his reader along the voyage of both the little boat
and the couple brought together by it. What at first might
appear to be a slight love story punctuated with some
particularly evocative writing, is in fact a carefully-crafted
piece that, like the opening chapter of Under the Volcano
prepares the reader for a journey that begins in the past.
The "storms they had come through" are yet to come; here,
Lowry establishes their rhythm.

So, without doubt, the story may be called a success.
But what of my success? What effect has working with the manuscript had on my reading of this story? Because I am now so familiar with the way in which "The Bravest Boat" was composed, I cannot help but read it as a rather choppy and often disconnected tale. This is partly due to a remnant of the filmic description of scene in the five page draft; Lowry "cuts" from paragraph to paragraph with little concern for transition, a technique I now find jarring and inconsistent. The rolling rhythm of the sea, the boat, the story, are contradicted by a structure that leaps from "shot" to "shot." I yearn for a stomach-rolling plunge down one side of a descriptive wave that sweeps me up into another with no discernable pause. My sense is that Lowry needed someone to tell him this -- both he and Margerie were too close to the story, and too close to the 1949-50 filmscript of Tender Is the Night they had co-authored, to be objective in the face of a flaw that compromises the success of the story. But Lowry was a reluctant "editee" who was anxious to get something published; Harold Matson was able to place it in the Partisan Review in a version identical to the carbon typescript -- it may not have had an outside editor. However, this flaw could be written off as minor, the picky quibble of one who has read the story too many times in a too-brief period. For despite my concern, "The Bravest Boat" stands, both alone and in its fine company in Hear Us O Lord, as a story that continues to evoke emotion in me, whether I am reading manuscript fragments or the published text.
Malcolm Lowry, I have learned, was a passionate perfectionist who had a love of words and their power. He was extremely aware of the effect his tone and style would have on his reader, and he seemed to want to include the reader in his story. I feel that there is a place for me in "The Bravest Boat." I have not been a mere bystander, I have been a participant in a journey. It has been a journey through the "before, during and after" of "The Bravest Boat;" it has been voyeuristic, ecstatic, and sometimes tedious. We have weathered the storms, survived the crises, and cried in our beers, Malcolm and me. On all of our voyages, we shall sail before the wind.
NOTES

1. All manuscript references are to the Malcolm Lowry Archive held at the Special Collections Division of the University of British Columbia Main Library. Because my discussion focuses on individual pages of manuscript, many of which are difficult to locate within their various boxes, I have attempted to make my citations as specific as possible, with the result that they have become unwieldy. I have therefore "named" each text fragment that is discussed in detail, sometimes referring to it by a letter or number that appears on the manuscript, at other times describing it as a numbered "Insert." These references then correspond to Appendix One which connects my "named" fragments to the box, file and page on which they may be found. My system of abbreviation presents the location of the manuscript fragments thus: box#: file# page# (if available) and indication of which page numbered thus, if necessary. Unless indicated (by a lower-case "r") all manuscript fragments appear on the verso of the cited page. For example, "7:16" to indicate box 7, file 16 or "UBC SC 16:21 2nd p28" for box 16, file 21, second instance of a page numbered 28, verso. Unpublished letters are cited by box and file number only. All are forthcoming in The Collected Letters of Malcolm Lowry, edited by Sherrill E. Grace. Box numbers correspond to the 1985 Combs-Sugars inventory. Manuscript fragments cited in passing will be
identified within parentheses in the body of my text.

2. I will refer to Malcolm Lowry as "Lowry" throughout this essay. When a distinction must be made between Malcolm Lowry and Margerie Lowry, I will use their first names.

3. All references to "the published version" are to the 1987 Douglas & McIntyre edition and appear in parentheses in my text.

4. As it turns out, "17" is extant, and is referred to in my discussion of draft page five as "Insert C4." Insert C2 ends with the note "etc. 18," suggesting at least the existence of a page 18, although I have not found it. "16B" chronologically precedes Insert C4 (or "17"). All of these pages seem to be part of a single, late draft.

5. There are two less concrete reasons for identifying this fragment as draft page five. First, Lowry’s handwriting changes dramatically from one section of the Archive to another. Although the basic identifying features never change ("the small, sloping script, the Greek "E’s", the crucified "t’s," and so on [Grace, "Thoughts . . ." 66]) the legibility of the handwriting varies from clear to unreadable. Sometimes Lowry wrote with a great deal of pressure on his pencil, at other times his writing is almost invisible. And although always small, his script frequently becomes almost microscopic. The size and appearance of Lowry’s script on "my" draft page five are consistent with the rest of the draft.
Second, and less defensibly, a partially-erased figure at the top of draft page five could, just possibly, be the remnant of a figure "5."

6. Insert C1 is headed: "God help me that this story may do thy will." Insert C2 is inscribed: "God please help me."

7. For a discussion of "Margerie Bonner's Contributions to October Ferry to Gabriola by Malcolm Lowry," see Katalin Özvegyi, Parenthesis, Spring 1993.
WORKS CONSULTED

Primary Sources

---. The Malcolm Lowry Manuscript Collection. University of British Columbia Library, Special Collections Division.

Secondary Sources


## APPENDIX ONE

**GUIDE TO "NAMED" MANUSCRIPT FRAGMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fragment Name</th>
<th>Box, File and Page Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>22A:1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Page One</td>
<td>22A:1 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Page Two</td>
<td>22A:1 7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>22A:1 6</td>
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<td>22B:24 10</td>
</tr>
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<td>20:13 2</td>
</tr>
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<td>20:20 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert A3</td>
<td>22A:2 6C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert 2</td>
<td>22A:1 8</td>
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<td>16:21 2nd page 27</td>
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<td>16:21 2nd page 28</td>
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<td>16:21 2nd page 26</td>
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<td>20:20 17</td>
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<td>16:21 7</td>
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<td>21:10 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert D1</td>
<td>16:21 6</td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX TWO
A GENEALOGY OF "THE BRAVEST BOAT"

IDEA
22A:1 10

FIVE PAGE DRAFT

PAGE ONE
22A:1 9
16:21 6
20:13 6
22B:24 10
20:13 2
20:20 18
22A:2 6

PAGE TWO
22A:1 7
16:21 8
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17:10 1 after 9

PAGE THREE
22A:1 2nd p6
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20:13 1st typed page
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PAGE FOUR
22A:1 26B 7:16 r
22A:1 26
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PAGE FIVE
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21:13 12
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16:21 8
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16:22 25
21:13 10
16:21 7
21:10 28
APPENDIX THREE

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE "TWELVE YEARS" SECTION
OF "THE BRAVEST BOAT"

A

through the storms of winter, and sunny summer days

Twelve years it had wandered

{ tempestuous over seas of sunlight } through
{ the tempests of winters, over summer seas } the tempests of winter over sunny summer seas

What tide rips had caught it, what sea-birds

{ wild sea-birds }{ crying " "
{ mewing " " }

Shear-walkers, storm-petrels, Jaegers,
that follow the thrashing propellers,

dusk
{ dusky }{ sea-lanes }
{ the dark }{ seas }
{ wastes }{ albatross of these northern }
{ wildernesses }

swooped upon it,

{ brought it within sight from shore }
{ sailed within within sight of shore }

or warm currents brought it lazily shoreward

or glacial drifts tossed it about Cape Flattery itself:

B

Perhaps it had rested drifting in some sheltered cove
where the killer-whale smoked, lashed, the deep still water,
the eagle and the salmon seen it,
a baby seal stared with her wondering eyes,
can tell

before it had found its way to who will ever know what fierce and/

desolate forested uninhabited
shore,

known only to the dread Wendigo
where not even an Indian could have found it swept
there by the great brimming black tides of January,
relinquished as flotsam for half a year,

until the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon
bore it out to sea once more

in thunder
to begin its journey all over again --
Twelve years it had wandered. Through the tempests of winter, or sunny summer seas, what tide-rips had caught it, what strange wild sea-birds, shearwaters, storm petrels, black - dusky the great albatross of these northern seas, swooped upon it, what warm lazy currents brought it within sight of shore, or glacial drifts tossed it about terrible Cape Flattery itself:

rainy afternoon

Get the aura of it catching the sun, thrown aground by the waves, lying around knocked from side to side like a live thing, or a poor old tin can, pushed ashore & reversed, & reversed again left high & dry: -

perhaps it had rested drifting in some sheltered cave

in an inch of water

where the killer whale tossed the deep still water, the eagle and the salmon seen it

or a baby seal stared with wondering eyes

before it had found its way to who will ever know what fierce and desolate forested shore, known only to the dread Wendigo, where not even an Indian could have found it. -

before it was swept borne out to sea by the sweeping black tides of January, or the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon, to start its journey all over again --

poised between the poles of June & January -- here the two great tides of the year roughly correspond to the winter & summer solstice -- the boat perhaps thrown upon a shore by the January tide would stay there until June -- one of the periods of its 12 years. You must have the great tides of January & huge calm tides of June even if you have to change the great black albatross.
drifted in a 
 Perhaps it had rested drifting in some sheltered cove, 
clear still 

where the killer-whale smote, lashed the deep water, had 

the eagle and the salmon seen it, 
a baby seal stared with her wondering eyes, 

only, catching the rainy afternoon sun, for it to be thrown aground
for it to be thrown aground, catching the rainy afternoon sun, 
on cruel barnacled rocks by the waves, 

lying aground knocked from side to side in an inch of water like a live thing, 
or a poor old tin can, 

pushed, pounded ashore, & swung round, reversed again, 
left high & dry, and then, ten minutes later 

swept another fifty yards up the beach, 

or swept under a shack, its knocking to drive a poor seine fisherman crazy all night 

(faint plaintive)

before it found the coming through thunder 
before it had found its way again, coming through thunder, to who can tell what

fierce & desolate uninhabited shore, 
known only to the dread Wendigo, 
where not even an Indian could have found it, 

unfriended there, lost

[(relinquished as flotsam [for half a year)]

until sweeping 

before it was borne out to sea once more by the [great] brimming black tides of January, 
or the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon, 

Te-star

to start its journey all over again.

Please consider these alterations dear duck. I append your alternative. To mind perhaps necessary

the sentence 'relinquished as flotsam' is a weakness ... But the last 'until or before' is a grammatical problem; if 'before' is repeated, it adds another mysterious dimension by suggesting an Indian just might have found it at another time of year. Your notion of the winter tide bringing it in & the summer tide pushing it out on second thoughts might weaken the drama as much as strengthens it by defining the time. But I could be absolutely wrong. An or may increase the poetry, the mystery. But please consider, my dear duck. I'm a little tired. Tin can stuff, possible substitution of 'a' for 'some' the threatening propellers do not plot position of shearwaters, merely characterises them, all help to depurple, I feel.
God help me

coming in in thunder

Perhaps it had rested drifting in some sheltered cove,
where the killer-whale smote, lashed, the deep still water,
the eagle and the salmon seen it

a baby seal stared with her wondering eyes,
only to be thrown aground, catching the rainy/
afternoon sun,
and then, catching the rainy afternoon sun
to be
for it thrown aground on cruel barnacled rocks by the waves,
lying aground lurched from side to side in an inch of water like a live thing,
or a poor old tin can,
swung round
pushed, pounded ashore, or reversed, reversed again,
left high and dry, and then, ten minutes later,
swept another fifty yards up the beach, all night
or swept under a shack, its knocking to drive a poor seine fisherman crazy;

beneath the thunder
coming through thunder
before it had found its way again to who will ever know what fierce & desolate
uninhabited shore,

known only to the dread Wendigo,

where not even an Indian could have found it,
relinquished as flotsam for half a year,
before it was borne out to sea once more by the sweeping black tides of January,
or the huge calm tide of the midsummer moon,
to start its journey all over again
it originally ran with extra hartebeeeste genius

baby seals et al
before it had found its way to who will ever know what fierce & desolate/
forestet uninhabited shore

known only to the dread Wendigo,
where not even an Indian could have found it,
before it was borne out to sea once more by the sweeping black tides of/

or the huge calm tide of the Midsummer moon,
to start its Journey all over again --

Then Hartebeeetes arrived bearing great pails of further genius, I worked/
it out to

this effect:

baby seals et al
before it had found its way etc
known only to the . . .
washed up there by the great brimming black tides of January,
relinquished as flotsam while the world of the ocean caught its breath/
oposed between
solstic & solstic,
to be borne out to sea once more by the huge calm tide of the/
missummer moon,
to start its journey all over again ---

which I don't like as much as the other,

Then while I was working out this extra Hartebeeeste genius, I saw an old/
tin horrors

knocking on the shore which inspired me to want to get the:
sense of it catching the rainy afternoon sun, thrown aground on cruel/
rocks by the
waves, lying aground knocked from side to side in an inch of water like a/
live thing,
or a poor old tin can, pushed, pounded ashore & reversed, & reversed/
again, left
high & dry : -- & then, ten minutes later, swept another 50 yards up the/
beach:

-- or swept under a shack, its knocking to keep a fisherman awake . . .

something of that nature: so now El Leon has moses in the cave & doesn't
know what to do, & wishes that you give my poor boat

a leettle shove
out to sea
again . . . .
lying aground lurched from side to side in an inch of water like a live/
thing, or a poor old tin can,
pushed, pounded ashore, and swung round, reversed again,
by the next swell three
left high & dry, and then, by the next swell, swept another few yards up/
the beach,
sought some
or swept under a lonely, salt-grey shack, its faint plaintive knocking to
swept
drive a poor seine fisherman crazy all night, with its faint plaintive/
knocking,
dark
before it ebbed out in the autumnal dawn.
and to find
before it found its way again, over the deep, coming in through thunder,/ to who
will ever know what fierce & desolate uninhabited shore,
known only to the dread Wendigo,
where not even an Indian could have found it,
unfriended there, lost,
until it was borne out to sea by the great brimming black tides
of January,
or the huge calm tides of the midsummer moon,
to start its journey all over again.
APPENDIX FOUR

Idea for Short-short-short

Very touching, profound & I think saleable: Also
translatable into any language. A story with a
kind of Norwegian or 'Danish' touch -- in fact, I think,
the characters should be Scandinavian with Scandinavian
names.

Mr & Mrs "Jameson" walk in Stanley park on their (vaguely
in the Pacific North West) on their wedding anniversary.
The Japanese cherry blossoms. The pelicans. The squirrels.
The buffleheads flying about & perching in trees. The
two lynxs (savagery of Nature) the Indian with the black
squirrel (magic or taming of nature) the seven sisters (defeated by nature)
The Englishman 'Fed up, that's all'
They are very much in love. They come to the
waterfront. Or instead of summer, it can be stormy, in
winter. But I think it should be stormy anyhow. Even a
wreck (there was one recently.) And a stormy sea.

At this point, when they reach the waterfront, by whatever
magic of technique, the newspaper story is recalled, though
actual
perhaps we want to avoid mention of Vancouver Sun, though that I
don't know. Perhaps the boat has drifted to Seattle & the girl is
Though we need the remoteness of 'Vancouver Island.' Or a Gulf
island. American. Or vice versa. Anyhow they have married, there
is a touching quality in their marriage, & the little boat had
been sent off five years before Anne McColl was born. You feel
the hand of destiny in their marriage & probably that they have had
in their lives
some tragedy though they are obviously devoted to each other. Now
she is about 25 maybe, he perhaps 39. And perhaps they have
reached the spot where the boat was found.

- Ah, the storms they had come through! (or exclamation
point)

Such a story could be genius. 3 pages. But calls
for infinite subtlety of technique. But it is a truly
supernatural story, in the best
sense.
ON WEST SHORE

Year-Old Note Taken From Bottle

FISHERMAN'S COVE, July 8. -- A note written by a Prince George youth has been located here after a year-long journey in a pickle bottle.

John Brynelson, who found the note in its bottle while down at the waterfront inspecting his boat the other day, figures it must have travelled down the Fraser River, been spewed from the raging river's mouth during the freshet and been carried north by the vagaries of the tides.

The Prince George youth, who wrote the note in May, 1949, had hoped that it would be found by a young woman, and asked her to write him, but Brynelson will write anyway to let him know the fate of his message.
The little boat     The bravest boat to round Flattery

Looking from lost lagoon, past the green dragons or shot
of a stormy bay in the park, the tragic seven sisters, the
mountains, snow still on their tops, the sea beyond. The two
figures, fair haired, windblown, the man & a girl, battled
round the lagoon, hand in hand. Lovely laughing face of the
girl. The man looked healthy and good.

Shot of the lagoon. Wild swans & golden eyes & cackling
slate black coots with carved ivory bills. The little
buffleheads fly almost like doves in the trees. Perhaps a
hooded merganser.

Shot of in the distance a little boy trying to sail a toy
boat. But the blustery March wind soon had the little boat in
trouble & he hauled it back again.

Dramatic close up of the two faces. The girl seems
struggling with tears. The man -- they were quite alone now
save for a few old men feeding the ducks -- takes her in his
arms and kisses her tenderly seven times.

'Once for every year we've been married, Ingrid.'

"Yes, Sigurd beloved. Darling . . . darling. And every
year we've come here, haven't we? And next year maybe ---.' [sic]

Shot of the couple who have now passed the boy with the boat. They are smiling. They now approach the trees of the Park, through which a few foot paths threaded. The park, like others throughout the Pacific North West, was very large and for the most part left to the original wilderness. Near the entrance were gardens with sheltered beds of snowdrops, and here & there a little clump of snowdrops lifted their chalices. The man and the girl now seemed lost in thought.

But a guardian angel of these two, and certainly they had a guardian angel, blew Astrid's scarlet scarf out behind her like a pennant and blew Sigurd's fair hair about his head. The girl walked along beside him with her arm through his and as they talked & smiled together and then eyes met you would have said, had you watched them, here are two people in love.

And though this was true, only a guardian angel of these two would have known -- and surely they possessed a guardian angel in the strangest of all strange things of which they were thinking, save that since they had spoken of it so often, both knew the other was thinking the same thing, [which was how their love had come about.]

In fact it was as if they saw it happening in front of their eyes. Maybe Astrid, though it had occurred five years before she was born, saw it more vividly than Sigurd himself, even
though the incident took place five years before she was born.

At twilight, in a bay on the further side of Cape Flattery, in Jefferson, the little boy aged ten, came down with his father on the wharf. The father, an old sea captain, was carrying the boat he had made his son, which was a fine one, ten inches long, smoothly varnished, & made of balsa wood, with a new strong white sail.

'Now write the note, Sigurd. Say I'm telling you what to write, Sigurd

Hello:

My name is Sigurd Jensen. I am 10 years old.

Right now I am sitting on the wharf at Cowichan Bay in Jefferson County, U.S.A., 5 miles from Cape Flattery & my Dad is beside me telling me what to write. To-day is June 27th 1922. Beside me is a small shiny canoe which you now hold in your hand. It is a windy day & my Dad said to put the canoe in the water when I have put this in & glue down the lid which is a piece of balsa wood from my model airplane box.

Well must close this note now, but first I will ask you to tell the newspaper that you have found it because I am going to start reading the paper from to-day & looking for a piece that says who when & where it was found.

Thanks, Sigurd Jensen.

The note written, Sigurd placed it with his father inside the lid which they glued down. Then the father sealed the little craft with wax. Then they put the boat in the water.
The tide was going out, and Sigurd gave the boat a push, and away it went.

The two had now reached a place where a few little grey squirrels & a few black squirrels were scampering about the grass. An Indian stood with a sleek black squirrel sitting on his shoulder, eating popcorn he was giving it from a bag.

This reminded [sic] to get some peanuts to feed the bears, but how should they stop thinking about the boat? But as they left the lagoon & turned into a narrow winding path through a forest of Douglas firs and gnarled ancient maple trees and young branches and swaying alders their guardian angel knew that they were still thinking of the boat.

Twelve years the tiny boat had wandered over the sea. Through the tempests of winter, over sunny summer seas, what tide-rips had caught it, what strange wild sea-birds, shearwaters, storm petrels, the great black footed albatross of these northern seas, had swooped upon it, what warm lazy currents brought it within sight of shore, or glacial drifts tossed it about terrible Cape Flattery itself; perhaps it had rested in some sweet sheltered cove, or seen the killer whale lash the water, the eagle & the salmon seen it, before it had found its way to this shore.

The two had now passed the place of ancient maple trees & young branches & swaying alders & passed the tragic Seven Sisters themselves, a group of 7 noble redwoods, growing there
together perhaps hundreds of years but dying now defeated by
the approach of civilisation.

Now they came to the pool where the otter lived but they
couldn’t see him:-- through the trees to the right they saw
the bears’ cages.

_Urza horribilis_, [sic] the grizzly bear, & hear [sic] among
thick trees, was the enclosure where lived the pair of lynx.
This was a large enclosure with trees growing through it, a
sheltered cave like section across the middle & the whole
covered with wire mesh.

And the lynx, beautiful, with their tasseled [sic] ears &
bright gold maniac eyes, paced endlessly, passing & repassing
each other rhythmically, as though under some compelling
enchantment.

And still, the lonely boat was battling with the seas,
all those years before she was born? What ships had sunk,
what fathomless deeps, what birds of ill-omen, became well
omened then, nudging it with their beaks, the great mysterious
hunting birds, the shearwaters, the albatross who finds it
[sic] way home, who knows how, all those years threatened by
freighters, wars fought, what freighters now at the bottom
cargoed with old marble & cherry-in-brine.

And now, suddenly as Astrid & Sigurd watched a little
squirrel ran up a tree beside the cage and then, chattering
shrilly, leaped from a branch and ran across the top of the
wire mesh. Instantly swift & deadly as lightening one of the
lynx sprang twenty feet into the air, right to the top of the cage, toward the squirrel & Astrid cried out & covered her face.

But the squirrel, unhurt, was already running lightly along another branch, down the tree and away while the enraged lynx sprang straight up, and sprang again, & his mate crouched, spitting and snarling below.

'Well, I watched the paper and waited and waited, for a long time, but I never heard anything about it & finally I stopped looking in the paper.' said Sigurd. 'Of course, naturally it didn't occur to me to look in the paper of another country, though even [sic] I had, it wouldn't have helped, since it took those twelve years to get anywhere. But I never forgot it, Astrid, darling.

Astrid and Sigurd walked on past the long double row of Japanese cherry trees, next month to be a show of celestial bloom. As they approached the waterfront the wind grew even more boisterous, gulls wheeled & sailed overhead with shrill cries or sailed downwind, were downwind in a second, & now suddenly before them in the distance lay the sea [sic]. And Astrid said what she'd so often said before, so that they repeated these things in the way of pretty like [sic] an incantation.

'I'll never forget that day when I was seven years old coming to the park here on a picnic with my mother & father & brother. After lunch my brother & I came down to this beach
to play. It was a fine summer day, and the tide was out, but there'd been a very high tide in the night & you could see the lines of driftwood and seaweed where it had ebbed. I was playing on the beach & I found your boat. The little mast was broken & shreds of sail hung slimy and limp, but the boat was still whole and unhurt, though it was weatherbeaten and the varnish was gone. I ran to my mother with it and she saw the sealing wax over the tiny cockpit, & I found your note.’

She drew from her pocket the scrap of paper & holding it between them they bent over and read, though it was hardly legible by now they knew it off by heart.

'Hello:

My name is Sigurd Jensen. I am 10 years old. Right now I am sitting on the wharf . . . . and my Dad’s beside me telling me what to write. It is a windy day, & my Dad said to put the canoe in the water when I have put this in & glue down the lid which is a piece of balsa wood from my model airplane box.

They came to the lonely desolate beach strewn with bleached and sculptured and whorled driftwood piled everywhere, at tidelines so immense and channelled with winterbournes. The clouds had lifted over the sea though the sky was not blue but still that intense silver, and they could see right across the Gulf and even make out, or thought they could, some of the Gulf islands. A lone freighter with upraised derricks shipped seas on the horizon. A hint of the summit of Mount Hood
remained. Behind them the icy mountains of Canada hid their savage peaks & snowfalls with still more savage clouds. Arm in arm, they shivered, & stamped for warmth, & clung to one another. Everywhere was the wreckage, the flotsam of the sea. The wind sailed away their words. But ah, the storms they had come through.