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May 3, 1964

Laura C. Wilck, Literary Agency,
14647 Dickens Street,
Sherman Oaks, California.

Dear Mrs. Wilck:

A note, to express the hope that you've shaken the flu bug, and for good. And to let you know that I'm hopeful some progress is being made along lines we are both interested in.

I hope that things are shaping up for your benefit, and that you will soon be in a position to give me some ideas as to how I can put my talents to better work for you. Observation is a wonderful thing. And if I knew the approach and limitations, I know there are many things in *The Lonely Road*, that could be "re-shaped."

Had a nice weekend with Irving Petite, my friend from the Coast, author of *Mr. B* (Doubleday). His *Elderberry Tree* (Doubleday) is coming out in June and then a novel. We both succeeded in getting Sam Churchill here under way on his contract (Doubleday) on logging. Irving is strong on nature, animals etc. I'm still straightening around, getting some gardening under way, although our weather hangs around 30-32 at night and 55-60 daytime.

Don't waste your valuable time writing, just to reply. But here 's hoping.

Sincerely

Click Relander

3701 Commonwealth Rd.

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Laura D. Wilck Literary Agency,
14647 Dickens Street,
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

July 8, 1964

Dear Mrs. Wilck:

Been wondering, of course, how things have been going on your advisory assignment on the TV projected work. And have been wondering what I can do to further our mutual desires.

And I do hope that you recognized points made in my communication of a few months ago that the copy of The Lonely Road sent you was open to some re-working. I marked it up some and have been waiting some information from you along which I could direct more active lines.

Hope you have a chance to drop me a note, hope too that discussions from your end have resulted in matters crystalizing.

My vacation plans have not been finalized, but chances still point toward a California trip for me in a month or so.

Irving Petite tells me that his Mulberry Tree (Scribner's) has been purchased by same English publisher who purchased English rights on Mr. Big. Sam Churchill, one of my co-workers is finishing up work for Scribner's for which he has good advance and fine letter from his editor. I think the name was Robinson. Sam is our farm editor.

Hope the California summer is going well with you and yours.

Sincerely

Click Relander

3701 Commonwealth Rd.

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August 13, 1964

Mrs. Laura Wilck,
14647 Dickens St.,
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Dear Mrs. Wilck:

A note to let you know I'm still planning on coming to California, and expect to come as far south as L.A. And I do hope I will be able to see you.

We are still fighting conversion to offset, being the largest paper in the country to yet attempt what most have considered impossible. Oklahoma City, a big paper in Florida and a few in California are watching the expensive "conversion." It is costing our publisher \$900,000.

As things work out I have two dates for departure from Yakima, one the last of this month, another two weeks later, but am waiting a little to see what goes here. The crew in the printing side has it rough, really not so bad for the news side except longer hours.

Hope you will be in Southern California in September and that we can make connections. What have you to suggest? Hope, too, that things are working out satisfactorily for you and your TV projects.

Sincerely

Click Relander

Sept. 26, 1964

Dear Laura:

Home, and with but a nibble of a renewed perspective for new undertakings. I find upon reflection certain things are beginning to jell after my pleasurable meeting with you and the ensuing meeting with Lou. That my meeting with you was not longer for development of ideas is my own fault.

So I have concluded to write two letters. This will deal with Indians. A second, to be written, will center on The Lonely Road (or The Freeway), which is a lonely road. Carbons will be enclosed which you may give to Lou as you desire.

It is important to understand that I do not intend to "horn in" on the Indian deal now germinating in Lou's planning. This, however, bears out what I have often mentioned to you. 1-There is material in the Indians. 2-Because of the magnitude of the problem, generally unrealized, and the path toward termination of the reservations, there is a growing awareness of the Indian as a human being. This is contrary to the line of those profiting from the Indian inheritance of land to becloud the issue by "ignore them and they'll go away."

So as the time approaches for a fair appraisal of the problem, again, remember my background in the Indian field.

This can be summarized in a kind of biography which Lou asked I make available.

Born in Indiana, educated there and in California including early grades at Yorba Linda (back to Indiana) ; then to the San Joaquin Valley. Education there and in Los Angeles, including Otis Art Institute).

2-Helander, Indians.

Forty years ago I began studying Indians in California. These were families ~~my~~ my relatives became acquainted with when they homesteaded in Squaw Valley and Drum Valley. This personal contact grew to where I was "recognized" as an unofficial Indian agency by the Sacramento Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs through my representation of the non-treaty Indians in the San Joaquin Valley.

I continued my Indian studies under the late Dr. F.W. Hodge, the greatest authority on Indians of the Southwest. (Re-read please his introduction to my Drummers and Dreamers).

When I migrated to Yakima, 19 years ago, I already was well versed in the lore of the Yakima, thus my Indian education expanded throughout the entire west and southwest.

In later years, before any published writings, I was qualified as an expert ethno-historian before the Indian Claims Commission. In representing the little band of (now four Wanapums) and after two days I was qualified over the opposition of university ethnologists and historians. Their ethnoses could qualify only as ethnoses and their historians only as historians. None as both. In this I "opposed" the entire Yakima Tribe, but because of honesty and sincerity they engaged me to write the history of the Yakima Treaty and also Strangers on the Land.

And believe me, it is only through my own shortcomings at publicizing myself to you and equip you with such material that you were not thoroughly familiar with my potentialities.

As an example of my "standing" I found awaiting me upon my return home the usual accumulation of two weeks, some 15 letters from writers, scholars, professors, graduate students asking my aid on various Indian matters. I receive them from New York, New Jersey, Maryland, British Columbia, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana etc. Too much of my time is taken in replying, but it enables me to expand my knowledge of all tribes and peoples.

Recalling my conversation with Lou, may I now offer some suggestions as food for thought.

Indian orphanages, boarding schools etc. operate extensively in most Indian country. I have long been personally acquainted with several.

One is the Yakima Christian Indian Mission. This is a project of the Disciples of Christ or the commonly known Christian Church. The church has four missions, one is among the Puerto Ricans in New York, one among the Negroes in the south; another among the Mexicans in Southern California, and the fourth is among the Yakimas. Christian churches throughout the entire nation support these missions.

Besides, there are smaller denominations or individuals who espouse like projects. The orphanage Lou mentioned, no doubt, is one of these.

I have long been impressed by the similarity of "Going My Way" with some aspects of the Christian Indian Mission. The real story is what happens to these Indians as much as the character of the man associated with mission life.

I have known workers who the Indians called "The Jesus Woman" and such names. I have made a special study of "Father" James H. Wilbur, rated one of the greatest missionaries, a man of the caliber of Father Kino of the Southwest and Junipero Serra. "Father" Wilbur was the Rev. James H. Wilbur, a Methodist missionary who came onto the Yakima Reservation in the '60s as a teacher. He pleaded the Indian case before President Lincoln in the days of "thieving" agents, and returned to the reservation as the agent where he remained for 20 years. The results of his work are what make the story, as well as the outstanding character of the man. His boarding school became the pattern throughout the entire Indian service for Indian schools.

Wilbur's influence was such that some of his students became ordained ministers, stories themselves.

I have more Father Wilbur material in my files than any one I know of. I also have much material of the early missionary workers, the priests and others, narrating their experiences over their lifetimes.

Only a month ago I discouraged a project with a man in Idaho. He fell heir to the notes of an autobiography of a man who spent his lifetime among the Nez Perce and other Indians. Unsolicited this man wished to place the material at my disposal on a "share" basis. While I have never met this man he knew of my "standing." I do not know how the now-dead minister in his lifetime writings, expressed his "character."

There are now, on the Yakima Reservation--and don't forget that it is a reserve of 1,200,000 acres, something the size of L.A. county with several cities located thereon,--several who maintain boarding schools etc. attempting to get little Indian kids off to a better start than they can expect under present circumstances. Although presumably orphanages, they care for Indian kids abandoned by their drinking parents, or the offsprings of girls who have as the Indians say, gone AWOL with some soldier home on leave for a few weeks.

It is important, too, to remember that under our society there exist Welfare Departments or Departments of Public Assistance. Each state recognizes the responsibility for the welfare of the child. But here state laws and treaties and tribal laws clash. Here, in California and every other state the Welfare Departments receive great funds from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Most of the Aid to Dependent Children money comes from the government. States must comply with federal law or they lose the federal grants. This is where orphanages come in, also foster homes and foster parents. This too is where there is conflict between Indian parents, misfits, who do not want to surrender their children and lose the tribal per capita payments or annuities, and to clashes with culture. Indian-white culture is much the same all over.

One has to be a combination of psychologist, social service worker, writer, anthropologist, ethnologist and many other persons to be able to interpret the story, unless it is a simple pattern story. Being a city editor on three papers in various parts of the country in 30 years has advantages.

A small example of the knowledge needed, close to you in California, besides Indian culture is in the Arizona-California water dispute, decided in July, 1963 by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The dispute was over the Colorado River drainage which covers one-twelfth of the continental U.S., rises in North Central Colorado and travels 1,300 miles to empty into the Gulf of California.

In the decision the court's watermaster recommended that the first 7,500,000 acre feet flowing into the lower basin annually be divided on a ratio of 4,400,000 acre feet for California, 2,800,000 for Arizona and 300,000 for Nevada. An acre foot is 325,000 gallons which will cover an acre of land one foot deep. California wanted all the water, claiming it needed it for development and that it was financing development.

But the decision gave Arizona Indians prior water rights to water passing through their reservations. They were granted use of one million of the 2.8 million acre feet allotted to Arizona. This established the Winters doctrine of 1908 which held that Indian water rights were paramount.

The issuance of a decree is still pending but effects will be widespread. Development of Indian reservations will be assured. But it is certain there will be frantic efforts for REMOVAL of reservation lands into non-Indian ownership. This is the reason for the joint Senate-House mandate for termination of Indian Reservations.

This is one of numerous matters involving big influence in the Indian-non-Indian controversy. Where will growth continue for non-Indian communities* like Yuma? What is the future of the Indian holding land needed for expansion? (How about Palm Springs?)

Will Indians be "bought" off by token payments for their land and put on relief or will they become a part of our society? And what is our society, look at your own ancestral background and that of those about you. What is an American? He hasn't evolved yet from the "melting pot?" Right ?

My point, the character, in an orphanage, an Indian teacher, priest, minister, social worker or what have you who is a strong character sees these things. He is unswayed by bribes, but coercion, threats, by being called an Indian lover. His work is to educate and train the Indian to be capable of taking his own role in the new kind of civilization. He is willing to stand before such forces.

I mention these things for small help they may be to you and Lou if you embark upon an Indian orphanage story like "Going My Way."

The master story teller of the Southwest was Oliver LaFarge and his masterpiece was "Laughing Boy" before he became embroiled in the social aspects and was lost by being "bought up" as an Indian association worker. I was paid a high tribute by Mr. LaFarge before his death for my standing.

"Crazy Weather" by Charles L. McNichols is a remarkable Southwest book, but in it the culture is no different from California or the Northwest. (The medicine man has the same beliefs, the same powers, the same guardian spirits).

To his everlasting credit the American Indian has turned down all overtures from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and kindred groups. Indians want to stand alone, on their own character unless they are half bloods. None but the half bloods, with the mixture of the white in them, will ever resort to the extremes of the Negro.

Few writers have portrayed the Indian as he was or is, even Alan LeMay of "The Searchers". They pick the embittered Indians and present them to the public, such as the Lee Oswalds. That is the common portrayal of the American Indian.

7-Relander, Indians

If you are familiar with the War of the Rebellion Records you can find in them terms laid down by the Northern Armies at Atlanta and other southern cities as they fell, one by one, specific decrees for opening schools to Negroes and every other thing that has lain idle and unenforced since conclusion of the Civil War. These are army records, contained in 140 vols. Yet there has been no writer, no attorney, no politician or Indian group alert enough to produce these and present these records or documents, which will show that what is happening now throughout the entire country was inevitable.

In my contemplated revision of The Lonely Road will be interweaving the blood lines of a chief in my character, Joe Leather. This will go back to the Treaty of 1855 when the Yakimas ceded over 10 million acres of land they possessed in return for a reservation of 1,200,000 acres. This was not "given" them by the white man. They reserved that which they already possessed.

This chief stood before soldiers, after refusing to talk for many days. Finally he spoke and said : "Let them do as they have promised."

And when he found out promises were not kept and the land only was wanted he lived in retirement. When the government agent went to him, offering him blankets as his pay as a chief, poor as he was and in shreds of clothing, he stood and said: "Poor as I am, I am not too poor to accept anything from the government."

There is this, also, to be remembered. Indians cannot rely longer upon treaties for their protection, nor can they forever rely upon the government and their conquerors to give them a living as too many have grown to accept as "the Indian way ." A lot of them have become second and third generation relievers, like the non-Indian relievers who are on welfare because their mothers and fathers were on relief.

One must recognize all these facets to write something that is not sickening to people who have grown predominately more desirous of money

8-Relander, Indians

and land than of morality.

So I close this first letter by noting a few clippings appended. I could send 50 pounds of such representing reviews of Drummers and Dreamers, Strangers on the Land, 1855-1955 the Yakima, Yakima Jubilee, and just plain newspaper articles. They would include magazine reviews of magazines with circulations up to 1,500,000 and newspapers with a combined circulation of somewhere around 15,000,000. So my name is not unknown among those interested in Indians.

The next letter, which I hope for you sake will not be as long, will deal more specifically with The Lonely Road, how it can be changed into a saleable and marketable piece with a story interwoven to give it a widespread appeal. The Lonely Road (or The Freeway) is just that. Freeways are converting the entire country into a lonely road.

Shady Lane Tavern will become a tavern and a lounge, affected by the building of a freeway, like so many cities are affected. Indian Reservations are also in the way of freeways, don't forget. Don't forget, also, that there is a growing feeling the U.S. has reached the saturation point for freeways, making the entire nation convenient only to motor transportation and ignoring the millions of acres of farming land taken from production.

It wouldn't take much reworking to bring The Lonely Road up to something stronger and also the vehicle for a likeable bartender, a place for deals are made (like freeway exchanges, public mells in downtown areas, buildings, etc) and where humorous things as well as tragic happenings germinate.

Please remember I know some fine Indian characters, very colorful who would be invaluable in any production regarding Indians.

My projected reworking The Lonely Road, when I hear something encouraging, not a generality, is made easier by the 3,000 mile trip just completed.

9-Relander, Indians.

In case I do, I wish to be headed in the right direction. The Lonely Road has a lot in it but needs "modernization"! I will want to get down to specifics. This letter will help do that, I trust.

Again, my thanks for the pleasure of meeting you and Lou.

Sincerely

Click Relander

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Dear Laura:

Sept. 30, 1964

This is the second letter promised. It deals with The Lonely Road.

The purpose is to determine whether there is merit in my proposal to "rework" The Lonely Road manuscript making it valuable and suitable material for your purposes, or save you and I our valuable time.

The reworking, of course, would entail no small amount of labor. To insure a better chance of success I would need some specific suggestions which would be incorporated in the reworking, if within my ability to do so.

I am convinced there is human interest and story material in the present work as far as it goes. With reworking along lines proposed it would be a stronger vehicle. But there would be no practicability in proceeding during these fall months unless you (and Lou) had some definite lines along which you were thinking.

When completed it could properly be called The Lonely Road (or The Freeway).

Have you considered the changes in living conditions freeways and interstate routes have wrought throughout the entire country? How these have brought about a new way of life. A "key" to "thinking" is the present situation whereby federal finances, 92 per cent of all interstates, make these great road building projects possible. And now there are arising "freeway fighters". Besides, there are those opposed to all freeways although some recognize their value but now don't want them cutting up their backyards. This combination, with other groups, now represents a bloc formidable enough to disrupt intelligent planning. And there are different opinions between local and state level planners to add to confusion.

2-Relander, The Lonely Road

My proposals:

First, the Shady Lane Tavern would cease to be a simple beer tavern and would become also a modern lounge. The lounge would also be the meeting place of persons of means, ideas, strong character and plans, problems etc. needing solution. Here would be portrayed lounges and their utilization.

One new character would be a highway engineer or road commissioner, or a politician. His purpose would be to negotiate deals for continuation of freeways, or their completion, road contracts, rights of way, property.

Joe Leather, the Indian character, would be involved in one of these deals, involving continuation of the freeway through the reservation which his ancestors had sought to retain, intact. (Even though, universally, the 200 and some Indian treaties provided for "public roads" railroads etc.)

The bartender would be a more evident happy-go-lucky type of guy, more capable of solving any arguments by his strength and diplomacy as a bartender than of profixting from any "information" he might pick up to capitalize on his own income. Plausibility, or he would not continue to be a bartender. Right.

The bartender's physical makeup is described in material you have on hand, and this was MUCH the character Lou described, even to the fist size:

"Steve's bigness, his rough, craggy face and chill gray eyes reminded Joe Leather of an Army sergeant he had once served under. But Steve had ~~ms~~ a tolerance for the antics of his customers which the sergeant had lacked for his men. Only occasionally did Steve ball a capable fist and indicate the door..."

Dusty would be a more modern city, with problems of present-day cities to be solved. Shady Lane would be on the outskirts, cut off by the freeway, a typical roadside business.

Others in the lounge could be town businessmen, there to make deals having to do with acquisition of property for a downtown mall to hold onto downtown business.

3-Relander, The Lonely Road

(If you haven't seen the Fresno Mall, cut through five blocks of downtown, still in process of construction, it's something to set you thinking. Other cities have purchased blocks adjoining downtown and cleared them completely for parking. Parking meters are obsolete. This also makes parking meter salesmen "obsolete" and here is opening for another light-hearted character, a typical salesman who can go from season to season, region to region, and being inherently a salesman, turn from "parking meters" to selling concrete or road equipment, neon lights or what have you if there's a market and no longer a market for parking meters. Some malls are to be air conditioned, and heated. This is the downtown's only way to compensate for the trend of major business firms which are moving to the outskirts where they acquire several blocks on which to build shopping centers where other businesses gravitate).

The incidents and stories themselves provide the comedy-acting opportunity (like the salesman). There are incidents possible for addition. for instance:

The couple who set down for a few drinks at Shady Lane, fall in with two married friends. A few drinks and the couple, encouraged by the married friends, decide there's no use to wait longer to get married. So the four head out for Las Vegas or Reno. There's a fast marriage ceremony of the Nevada atmosphere, then a night-long round of the places, slots and gaming tables with the bride still dressed in her "wedding gear" but no fulfillment of nuptials because of the groom's condition, tired and sleepy. Then to "San Francisco" and a big hotel and wedding feast, and again he's too far out, so a well intending member of the party mistakingly gives him sleeping pills instead of pep pills. (Another dull night)...

And not half a mile on Sunset from your place I saw an incident:

It was an example that a "freeway" or boulevard can't in reality change things too much, not routine, or an example of effect on animal life.

4-Relander, The Lonely Road

Here, at a park area or estate yard, cut through and divided by four lanes of heavy traffic, a red squirrel casually loped across a telephone cable, ~~ingor~~ ignoring the traffic below to carry out some routine call. The squirrel was reacting just as a human would to find a way to survive and continue to live where strings and ties are strongest (another person, another squirrel?) Just like a roadside business that persists in doing business at the same stand. The squirrel could have a dual -human personality.

In Joe Leather, the Indian, is the opportunity to develop a stronger character, a descendant of the strong old chiefs, the true Indians, in a few pages unfolding and making sense of the Indian treaties. (Chiefs of the kind I wrote about in the Indian letter: "What have I to be speaking about?" "Let them do as they have promised." "What has the earth to say?" "Poor as I am I am not so poor that I have to accept something from a government which does not keep its promises...")

Incident : The tavern frequenter who lived a mile from the tavern, bought a case of beer and started for home, carrying it. A friend found him an hour later, seated on the railroad tracks, empty bottles nearby, a few left in the case.... "It was too heavy to carry home so I decided to drink it..."

Characters: Grape growers who meet to work out shipping deals, marketing etc. (The new west and new agriculture and production). whose word over a drink with a winery man buying 200 tons of grapes is as good as "bring the contract around tomorrow afternoon, meet me here for a drink and we'll sign it."

The day before I met you I had lunch in the back room of a cross roads restaurant in the center of thousands of acres of grapes, packing houses, controlled atmosphere holding, storage rooms. There were half a dozen big growers there, meeting there as some people meet in lounges for half an hour or an hour. Only they had built their own "lounge" and furnished it and it was exclusively for their convenience.

5-Relander, The Lonely Road

They had their own kinds of drinks and food and in less than an hour tossed off all kinds of deals from how to write off taxes to arranging big tonnage sales. (One paid \$300,000 income taxes last year.) Another was developing another 160 acres of raw land for planting, operating seven pieces of heavy equipment costing \$20 an hour each, which had worked three weeks and had another three weeks work remaining before planting.

All these men were concerned over new highways eating up the land, over unusable land of abandoned old highways. Land to them, a special kind of red soil, was worth \$2,500 an acre unplanted. (One invited all of us to Malibu to his place for the weekend. I didn't accept).

These kind of men deal with "brokers" from New York. If weather washes up their crops one year and they are left holding the bag for \$100,000 or \$500,000, they are financed by the brokers and make up the loss and more the next year.

These kind of men, in their chapter, are vehicles for the new kind of west, now developing and producing food. These are men whose ancestors grew a few acres of grapes in the old country, and they were brought up with viticulture or hop culture in their blood. This runs in their blood like the blood of the old chiefs runs in Joe Leather's veins.

Yes, the Lonely Road can be lightened, but it can still have the reality and tragedy of real life. It can be modernized and tell further the story of what is happening to many on The Lonely Road (or The Freeway), ~~xxf~~ the lonely road, a freeway built for the convenience of a motorized public and agrowing feeling of ~~xxxxxx~~ everyone that they are on ~~xx~~ a frantic, lonely road, that they are isolated like their communities are being isolated, and for what purpose?

A Ramos fizz would be injected into the "bridal party" which gives you the idea there's a little know-how behind some of it. As you know, a Ramos pegs the party participants.

6-Relander, The Lonely Road

The reworked material would have bourbon and other hard liquor drinks and less beer.

There 'll be more class than in the present manuscript and less of the feeling that you are on a slumming expedition on "skid road." I think that best describes it.

Now, if you and Lou care to pick it up from there, and have given the copy of the manuscript you have on hand a fairly thorough reading, remembering it is still somewhat rough, perhaps you can conclude we are in a position to go ahead with something productive. But if this doesn't strike either of you, then there would appear to be no use to further think along these lines. What do you think?

Again, my sincere regards

Click Relander