possessors. If they are worthy of the name, possess the possessor as he possesses them. They are singularly his if there are no others.
exactly like them, as Sheldon's "shooting clothes" could have been no one's but his.

Looking out the end window of the Long Room through tall rhododendrons to the fieldstone springhouse with its big iron dinner bell under the overhang, I see it as a hand-built form over 200 years old like this house, giving me a sense of Time and continuity and rightness, and I feel a possessiveness of everything that is Old Hemlock, removing all the people who have lived here and used it and mistreated it or loved it before Kay and me.

We have three waters out of our land, crystal, pure, each of different mineral content and flavor. The spring inside the springhouse flowing day and night, whether we are home or away, pours out of the hillside and overbrims the carved stone basin to fill the shallow milk trough that provided cooling for milk and cream and butter for the early residents and gave us refrigeration for ten years before "the electric" was brought into this region, emptying into the twenty gallon tile overflow of cold drinking water for the Old Hemlock settlers since Blue, soft sweet water seeing the light of day for the first. There is the upper Hickory Springs in a thousand-gallon underground concrete reservoir whose fifty-foot drop gave us gravity flow and running water in the house in the years until electric power was available; it gives us water still with a turn of a valve when power fails in violent storms, spring water with a "sac" limestone taste, good for the bones. And there's the drilled deep well that never diminishes, the water we use most, for its healthful mineral balance. I hold it to the light at dinner in a cut-glass tumbler—clear, cold, full flavored, nothing less than elixir. We bathe in this glorious liquid, like bathing in Pouilly-Fumé, a drink for a king. These are wild mountain waters out of high land, waters that belong only to us and no one has used before. That is possession.

Walking up our lane with Kay with our sugar maples sifting gold, I try to think what it would be like to see such a house with its boxwood, sleeping away its centuries under these giant trees in the dignity of solitude, and not possess it, and I grasp that Indian summer and all of this is just for Kay and the settlers and me.

Half-wild lavender rockets come each June, growing on the grounds as on other early homesteads, brought by pioneer women years forgotten from I don't know where. They seed themselves to a line of abandoned orchard or the old sheet of vibrant lavender in ways with us in June, spots of color.

Possessions are a symbol of happiness, to see the simplicity of that live because I love them. There is no price on things you possess.

This chair, which fits me as its antebellum black hornback generations after it had been Jackson. That it should kindle Dixie Line is a glorious thing. Carved walnut arm and I see lone chair up at me as he grasped it, prayed after cleaning our gun one morning while trying to eat breakfast the first time before the War.

Belton and Quest are sparse from the corner of their eyes, among my possessions, my men love dogs it would be as man, but who would love me care, is knowing it will end. It is to love a gun that will outlive.

I stand among the mannie our land and lay my hand on feel like God. I viewed a mortal with its twenty-two for summer storm I learned where the hole in the sky is beginning the hemlocks, and the massive more than 300 years after it species.

Sometimes it is the small crystal jewel box with its...
years forgotten from I don’t know where, perambulatory blooms seeding themselves to migrate from the springhouse area into the abandoned orchard or the old garden plot; another year they are a sheet of vibrant lavender in surrounding woods, always moving, always with us in June, spots of color and fragrance among new green.

Possessions are a symbol not of wealth but means, the means to happiness, to see the simplicity of this land, the house and its objects that live because I love them beyond price. The moment you put mere price on things you possess, you desicrate them.

This chair, which fits me as if it had been poured round me, sheds its antebellum black horsehair for the blue velvet under my hands generations after it had been in the house of a cousin of Stonewall Jackson. That it should kindly accept me from across the Mason-Dixon Line is a gracious thing. My fingers find the toothmarks in its carved walnut arm and I see Bixie again as a puppy, innocently looking up at me as he gnawed it. Sitting in this chair, I held Bliss in my lap after cleaning our gun on countless shooting days, nursed Ruff while trying to eat breakfast balanced on a tray. I have probably used and loved this chair longer than Kay’s ancestor who first owned it before the War.

Belton and Quest are spread on the floor near me, watching me from the corner of their eyes. I almost make the mistake of counting them among my possessions, but dogs are too much. When men love dogs it would be only kind if they would live twice as long as man, but who would look after them when we were gone? To care, is knowing it will end. Perhaps that is why it is so comfortable to love a gun that will outlive you by a hundred years.

I stand among the mammoth hemlocks on the southern end of our land and lay my hand on their enormous girths and own them and feel like God. I viewed the great springhouse white oak as immortal with its twenty-two foot circumference, and then in 1974 in a summer storm I learned what mortality was. Thirteen years later, the hole in the sky is beginning to fill in with tall sugar maples and hemlocks, and the massive stump is crumbling, eaten by fungi more than 300 years after it sprouted as an acorn.

Sometimes it is the small thing that lasts. I saw the miniature crystal jewel box with its sterling cover on my mother’s dressing
table as far back as I can remember. Then it was only glass with a tiny Greek female on the silver lid, drawing an arrow from a quiver about to shoot at a deer. Now, as with many things we come to see differently, I cherish it as a charming relief sculpture of Diana who metamorphosed Actaeon the hunter into a stag, later torn to pieces by his pack of fifty hounds. I question the ferocity of her modesty—all he did was see her bathing—but that is the legend of the hunting goddess.

There are no things in this house we do not love, perhaps because our maturing tastes have set value upon that which is closest to our lives. I look around at a milk-glass lamp and a student lamp that illuminated our evenings in the first decade we lived here, at wrought-iron thumb latches and spear-end hinges that serve us as they served those others before us, at a chunk of sandstone from the barn foundation that evolved under my sculptor’s chisels into Ruff’s head in his prime with eyes that seem to follow me still as they did in life, a spirit that entered the stone as much from his sensitive beauty as from any talent of mine.

One man’s trivia are another’s treasures. Six demitasses from an old house on Bloomery, a trout stream made memorable by a large rainbow taken one West Virginia springtime, repose in the corner cupboard. Their burnished gold inner surface reflects candlelight on rich black coffee at the end of a woodcock dinner. What these lovely things meant to their original owner I can’t know; I know only what they mean to us, bringing back the old friend who gave them to us.

There is an antique chino clock on our bedroom mantelpiece, its rococo form hand-painted with flowers in Bonn a long time ago. Several years my senior, it came from my parents’ house and sets a good example of survivorship from treatment no clock should have to endure, stopped each night to quiet its ticking and striking that would disturb our sleep, restarted each day when I set the hands and give it a jerk, upon which its pendulum picks up its heartbeat in the rhythm it left off. Charming old thing, you are family, your aging yellowing face telling off my hours.

My guns mean too much for me to tell of here, like the hundreds of coverts I possess, but there are those many small associations with shooting that at heart are memories. There is a ragged shooting vest I can’t discard because it game pocket from a woodcock Bliss a generation ago. One Abercrombie & Fitch gift case with an engraved back: a hero in his followers’ lady, if the War.

I have joy in some sensation Methodist: the vanilla/cinnamon white azalea, called “run house” exquisite fragrance along the strange primordial essence root.

The North Porch Maple was in diameter when we came 48 first story of the house. Tadies across and its fan of branches height of the roof. I see to myself among its branches were our bedroom onto the second red-eyed vireo construct a nest slender branches, pressing gently. A I see Autumn come in September leaves like gilt-edged pages of orange-green of the September 8th, or very nearly always, the fire so intense I feel the wall hence explode, and the North liness to me. It is small wonder myth of Enaela, the first time Rain picks up color, dripping yellow leaves like melted ice: the leaves on the North Pines count and smell each leaf I have.

On a dry day a rude wind see her leaves go with a breeze comes and goes—and there I look out my bathroom win
I can't discard because of a blood stain soaked through the pages. It was a book I'd brought with me on my last visit to Paris. An old, leather-bound journal filled with memories of my time there. I used to read it every evening, sitting by the window with a cup of tea and a candle. The pages were filled with stories of romantic adventures and the city's vibrant nightlife.

I close the book gently, not wanting to damage the delicate paper. As I set it aside, I notice the way the light from the street lamp outside casts long shadows on the walls of my room. It's a peaceful moment, and I allow myself to bask in it for a few more minutes before finally getting up to tend to the rest of my affairs.

I slide into bed, feeling content with the day's events. Perhaps it's the rhythm of the city that always finds its way into my heart, even after all these years. The sound of my name spoken with a smile in the morning sun, the scents of fresh coffee and croissants, the thrum of life on the streets... It's all a part of what makes Paris so special. And even though I may have left it behind, those memories will always remain with me, a constant reminder of the magic that pervades the city's every corner.
Porch Maple from first-gold through intensity of blaze to the last brittle leaf a quiver in cold November winds.

After the leaves are gone there are the bare aorta trunk and main branches and capillary twigs, a pattern I have come to know without realizing I had memorized it. In rain the tree looks like diamond jewelry, the droopy drip-drop, drip-drop telling me there will be no gunning today. When those drops of light stop moving along the slanted branches toward the trunk and become stationary pearls I know there is a good chance the weather is breaking and the dogs and we will get to hunt.

In November’s sunshine the tree’s twigs and branches are etched pink-gray against dead-russet goldenrod and dark rich shadows of the hemlocks. When those hemlocks and the maple’s branches whisper and write I know it’s no use going out, for wind and grouse don’t mix.

One day in the breathless stillness of early morning the bone-gray branches were immobile except for one twiggy extremity extending beyond view, hidden by the porch ceiling—that single branch jerking illogically as in a wind. When I opened the Dutch door a flash of motion from above became a grouse rocketing from the maple across the clearing to a grapevine in the spruce woods.

I watch the North Porch Maple in all weather and all seasons. I see hoarfrost furring the twigs on a cold daybreak; I see two dried leaves brought back to golden life by a soaking December rain in brief resurrection, then next day turn brown again in Death; after a wet snow its branches delineate parallel lines of black and white, looking like an iced cake decorated with a cock cardinal waiting to be fed.

In a far future some knowledgeable person will examine the shaggy bark for spile-hole scars and announce that this is one sugar maple that has never been tapped, and he’ll be wrong. One March a wet spot on a branch caught my eye and, waiting, I saw our resident rascal the red squirrel hanging slothlike to the underside sipping new-run sap. He had pierced the bark with his incisors, leaving gashes bleeding in the warm sunshine. Each March he is back, working the same branch when the sap is running.

The first prick of luminous Winslow Homer green are the erect leaf spikes like diminutive canes the upper branches develop and is not yet in lace.

What never ceases to be sane form each year, like the setter gun dogs. In 1984 there were normal leaves. It was a wondrous thing to do with it, but the vitality with a realization that.

After late hay-fever succumbing a touch of gold to my tree the opposite side of the house he was a time when it was distant be when the North Porch Maple fifty years after first I saw the corner of the house and decide comfort in the years she has gotten. It takes decades for a touch of Time, Time nothing can take.

Possessions are not pleasure; the part of the possessor, a cost are your offspring. Only you exactly as you have loved them for and, if possible, loved by an affect these things that are parts of Time—the indifference if not care. I see it in certain ancient birds, I want to see go on the constant pressure to explore of subdivision for “recreation”

Nothing is more touching the recently gone being scattered in his grave, the spectacle of a postman setting prices on postcards.

Richard Johns told me a bit in northeast Pennsylvania. It be
of blaze to the last

the bare sorta trunk and main
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wings and branches are etched
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early morning the bone-gray
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spruce woods.

all weather and all seasons. I
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brown again in Death; after a
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cock cardinal waiting to

be person will examine
announce that this is one sugar
he'll be wrong. One March a
by, waiting, I saw our resident
to the underside sipping
ark with his incisors, leaving
March he is back, working.

Homer green are the erect

leaf spikes like diminutive candles on a Christmas tree, then in May
the upper branches develop stemmed seeds while the rest of the tree
is not yet in leaf.

What never ceases to be a wonder to me is that the leaves are the
same form each year, like the working of genes that governs a line of
setter gun dogs. In 1984 the North Porch Maple grew larger than
normal leaves. It was a wet spring and summer, which had some-
thing to do with it, but she seemed to put out a greater burst of
vitality with a realization that she was getting age on her.

After late hay-fever summer, September comes once more, bring-
ing a touch of gold to my tree and promise of The Season. From the
opposite side of the house her crown fans far into the sky. There
was a time when it was disturbing to contemplate what age I would
be when the North Porch Maple would reach that height. Nearly
fifty years after first I saw the young sugar maple as a sapling at the
corner of the house and decided to let it grow, I find a strange
comfort in the years she has given me, the two of us growing to-
gether. It takes decades for a tree to grow that tall and rich and full
of Time, Time nothing can take from you.

Possessions are not pleasure alone; they involve responsibility on
the part of the possessor, a concern for the future, for in a sense they
are your offspring. Only you could have brought them into being
exactly as you have loved them; it is yours to see that they are cared
for and, if possible, loved by someone else. There is a factor that will
affect these things that are part of you that is more than the erosion
of Time—the indifference if not actual greed of strangers who do
not care. I see in certain attitudes toward grouse, those magnifi-
cent birds I want to see go on forever. It is particularly evident in
the constant pressure to exploit the land, “improve” it in the form
of subdivision, for “recreation”—the hunger of Thoreau’s financial
pauper who can’t afford to let things alone.

Nothing is more touching than to see the belongings of someone
recently gone being scattered to the wind, like the dead flowers
from his grave, the spectacle of a public sale with the babble of the auc-
tioneer setting prices on possessions that once were priceless.

Richard John told me a bizarre story of a house in the Poconos
in northeast Pennsylvania. It had been the home of a setter fancier
containing his treasure of old sporting books and Edmund Osthau
prints. For a year after his death, his son kept the house and his
father's possessions intact. Then one day he saturated the walls with
gasoline and touched a match to it in a symbolic funeral pyre, reduc-
ing everything his father had loved to ashes. The impact of the story
has stayed with me, but over the years the initial shock has changed,
and I wonder if the son didn't, in a way, dignify his father by placing
those possessions his father had cherished, including the house,
beyond the grasp of profane hands.

Old Hemlock is not just a house and trees on 200-odd acres of
the Earth's skin, it is a possession all the way down, converging to
the core, radiating upward to the mountain constellations whose
starlight in some strange way purifies the air.

Looking out the sunset window through an interweave of hem-
lock branches, I see the big trees getting bigger. They, like the old
clock, tell that Time is passing, telling us that we have lived more
fully than we dreamed when Kay and I were dreamers.

These things I love. I need only Time enough to possess them.

Flight

Along with a few marks my
three-sixteenth-inch scar just a
of courage, but I like it. In one
November afternoon in 1972,
from Briar's retrieve with my
a head-shot bird. That gosh fast
to Briar's point left a scar that
cock covert nearly every time.

It was in 1966 that I was
seven hundred acres of private
landowner and each season was
when I met him on the old in
previous year's permit and so
regretted my longevity, but in
heaven.

The covert is a large basin of
best seasons there, as did Dick
died, Briar loved it for all the
Quest see the gold of each Oct

On the day of my nose we
last flight birds before the dusk
week. Briar had searched hard,
his bell went silent in the fur of
his side and was stooping onto
the bird. The shot had to be
some intervening thicket but a