

## THE HORIZON AT OUR FEET

My father said, "Your work  
is never over- always  
one more page."

                    This  
from a traveling man whose life  
was always one more mile.

I told him that.

                    "Sometimes  
I hate the road," he said,  
"it's made me so I'm never  
happy in one place.

                    Don't  
you get started."

                    I never did,  
spending my days at universities,  
my nights at home.

                    Not  
typically the academic, not  
totally at home at home,  
I think of how I could have lived  
and come up blank.

                    What's  
better than sharing all you know  
and all you don't with students  
who do just the same?

                    Even  
on the worst of days it justifies  
the time.

                    Or inking out

your real future on white  
paper with a fountain pen  
and listening to what the writing  
teaches you?

Compared to walking  
on the moon or curing polio,  
it seems so ordinary.

And it is.

But isn't living ordinary?

For two and fifty summers  
Shakespeare lived a life  
so ordinary that few scholars  
deal with it.

And what of Faulkner  
down in ordinary Oxford, Mississippi?

Or Dickinson, the great recluse?

Or E.B. White, the writer's  
writer?

Nothing extraordinary  
there, but, God! what wouldn't  
we give for one more page?