

THIS PETTY PACE or THE HOOMLY TREES

HARVEY MANNING

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BEGINS THE CREEPING

Lips pursed as she studied the EKG, the CCC, the LSMFT. I knew what she was going to say. "I want to put you in the hospital for some tests."

I'd last been in hospital at seven, going on eight. They'd strapped me to a table under a battery of lights as cruel as the sun, pinioned my arms, crushed a mask on my face, and just-like-that ended me.

I'd last been to a doctor at seventeen, going on eighteen. He warned me to wear a hat in the hot sun and take it easy climbing steps and I'd make thirty.

Doctors don't cure diseases, they cause them. Hospitals aren't to fix you but to kill you. Toujours gai. I was dying anyhow, had been for the sixteen days since I threw away, half-smoked, my last cigarette forever, and began sweating the drug ~~out~~^{from} of my system, arteries roaring and synapses shorting out. The jig was up.

Of course, Betty wouldn't take my word for it. Teacher-like, she'd demand a permission slip. That's what I'd come for at Group Health this March 11 of 1976.

It took me half a minute to grasp that what the doctor actually said was, "I want you to go walking two hours every day."

I gasped. My usual day on the trails was four or six or eight hours, on big peaks as many as twenty. "Two hours"?

Was I falling apart that fast?

She was dumfounded by my appeal of the sentence -- the ~~implication~~ of "only." Fat old guys like me fell to their knees and wept for mercy when told to walk around the block twice a week.

She allowed as how three or four hours couldn't hurt, or eight or twelve or twenty, though she found that hard to believe. The crux was "every day."

For political reasons Congress classifies smoking as a "habit," nasty and dangerous yet socially tolerable among respectable white people. Black, brown, and poor people, as well as musicians and whores, aren't content with a poison that is merely fatal but insist on "addicting" themselves to "hard drugs." Our hair stands on end at the frisson of movie actors squirming on the floor, moaning and barfing, "kicking" cold turkey. Breaking the "habit," however, is comic relief, as when the office goof jitters around trying to bum a smoke.

One night in a bar I was lapping up Scotch with an old comrade of the book-peddling road. I was puffing up a cloud. Not him. He'd been clean for years. I was thinking about quitting, of course. Smokers always are. Mark Twain said it was easy. His punchline was that he'd done it thousands of times. The booze led me over the line to intrude on my friend's deepest privacy.

"How long did it take you to quit?"

"Two years."

There sure as hell was frisson in that.

The doctor spelled it out for me. Tobacco, she said, is more addictive than heroin and the withdrawal at least as tough. Hucksters quack-quack fifty-seven varieties of snake oil. But neither does medical science have a magic pill. I had only one way out. Cold turkey.

Hip bones were connected to knee bones, knee bones to ankle bones, ankle bones to toe bones. The mindless autonomic sequence of legs and feet had to drown out the cacophony of internal organs, the chaotic anarchy inside the head bone, the racket of noisy blood and the electrical crackle of misfiring neurons.

"Every day."

Vividly I recalled the sudden darkness in my buddy's eyes as he said, "two years." I'd served sixteen days. Seven hundred more to go.

Walking, walking, walking...

STEP ONE

The first step was out the door of the 200-meter hut, *then* through our three acres of woods, onto the route of what had been, after we arrived here in 1952, my customary after-dinner constitutional. I'd walk the Latta Road a quarter-mile to their pasture, turn off on the swath of a buried telephone cable, leave that for an ancient wagon road occasionally still used by firewood cutters, and finally climb steeply up a horse trail to Peak 1190, that being the elevation on the U.S. Geological Survey map. Slopes fell off from there to The Pass, 825 feet, between Lewis Creek and Coal Creek. No view from the thicket of dog-hair alders. A summit makes a decent destination, though. I explored no farther because the 200-meter hut, after all, was a basecamp for real mountains, the test for these being, in climbers' German, "nein gletscher, nein berg," and the glaciers of a dozen thousand years ago didn't count.

My constitutional of 1952 was entirely in forest, no roads, no houses, pure wilderness, second-growth but good, but good. That was what Betty and I had come for, and to get it, to live in it, a half-hour's drive from downtown Seattle was a miracle. Studying my library of maps, I determined that it would be easy, with a few artful dodges, to walk from our hut to the Cascade Crest without ever seeing another dwelling and crossing only two paved roads and several unpaved (only one

on our mountain), most of which never knew wheels except of logging trucks. At the Crest grab a left, skip across highways ~~over~~ ^{through} Snoqualmie Pass, Stevens Pass, and (in Canada) Allison Pass and from then on the way was freely wild to the North Pole. Some miracle, by golly. A half-hour from the bright lights of downtown Seattle.

There was another miracle that let us in on that miracle, ~~our~~ happening on a place to get out of the rain that we (with "loans" from our folks) could afford. This other miracle was no simple business of the Lord rearing back and passing his hand over the land. It was nigh onto a century in the doing, a series of events unrelated to each other except by chance.

President Lincoln started the sequence when he signed the Northern Pacific Land Grant. Weyerhaeuser employed this and other grand thefts to acquire most of the United States west of Minnesota. The company's criminal geniuses did not devise until later the "tree farm" tax dodge. In the 1920s it transferred the skinned mountain to the Weyerhaeuser Logged Off Land Company Inc., which would sell stumps, slash, and weeds to stumpranchers and the like for not much more than Frederick W. had paid Jim Hill, \$6 an acre.

The earliest customer in our vicinity was Theodore Krippendorf, who had come over from the old country at the turn of the century and by the time of the Great War ^{had} become a prosperous builder in Seattle. When hamburger became Liberty Steak and movie theaters were playing The Beast of Berlin, his guttural accent forced him out of business and civilized

society to a refuge for Huns in a thousand or so acres of Weyerhaeuser trash.

In Seattle he had built handsome ~~dwellings~~ ^{houses}, here he was content with a miserable hovel. A kitchen garden provided the staff of life, potatoes. In fruiting season the woods were a cornucopia of salmonberry, thimbleberry, Oregon grape, salal berries, Indian plum, wild cherry, serviceberry, and the queen of Puget Sound cuisine, the wild blackberry. To guard his potatoes, he trapped (and ate?) mountain beaver, but didn't molest any other wildlife. For protein he took the Greyhound to Seattle and from slaughterhouses and wholesale butchers brought home a gunnysack of entrails and condemned meat. In the city he also shopped the discard bins of Goodwill and other thrift shops to refurbish his wardrobe. Garbed in rags and patches, lugging a reeking gunnysack, his trips to Seattle were infrequent, but enough to spread through an amazingly wide circle of citizenry his identity as a bonafide Hermit.

The next event in the evolution of the other miracle was the arrival of Charlie and Sophie Latta in the early 1920s. Charlie, operator of a marine-repair boatyard on Lake Union, for personal sport built a sleek and slick and swift "sea sled"-- and painted it black. Out for a romp on Puget Sound, the Lattas would spot a naptha launch lying in ambush in a cove. Charlie would step on the gas, the revenooers would leap out in hot pursuit, whiskers twitching. Charlie would let them keep up as he twisted and turned through a maze of passes, ~~then~~ Round

a point ^{he'd} ~~^~~ tromp on it, and the ~~pursuing~~ ^{rounding after} feds would see naught [^] but the wake of a vanished ghost boat.

For summer fun the Lattas bought a chunk of stumpage adjoining Krip's, cleared a pasture that did double-duty as a firebreak for their barn and cabin, and rode horses from one end of the mountain to the other on "lokie" grades, ^{those} recently abandoned and ^{those} still in use cleaning out the old-growth. The only automobile road on the north side of the mountain was the one between the Lake Sammamish basin and the mines in Coal Creek. Charlie and his toy bulldozer gouged a wheelway of sorts from ^{this} ~~the~~ Newcastle Road to his pasture.

The final event that enabled Betty and me to live so close to both Seattle and the Pole was the Great Depression. An Issaquah real estate dealer, A.J. Peters, was in tough because nobody had the money to buy real houses. Scrambling to stay in some sort of business, he ~~completed the two-thirds-of-a-century-in-coming-miracle-by~~ ^{took} ~~undertaking~~ the very first housing development on the mountain (or for that matter, east of Lake Washington). Not much housing, and minimal, but definitely ~~a~~ place ^s to get out of the rain.

The Weyerhaeuser Logged Off Land Company Inc. sold him forty acres fronting on the Latta Road. He platted ten-acre lots and hired a hungry carpenter (plenty of them around) to tack together, largely from scavenged lumber and "Number Three", four places to get out of the rain. Purchasers could at their convenience dig two holes in the ground, one for water, one for the privy.

In 1952 Betty and I became the third owners of one of the sixteen-or-so-years-old shelters, with improvements by our predecessors including a septic tank and, thus, indoor plumbing. Our immediate predecessors kept most of the ten acres, upon which they were building by hand a genuine house. They sold us the hut and 3.18 acres for \$6,250, down payment of \$1,500 (our folks), monthly payments to the mortgage company.

One of the Peters shacks never was occupied, was recycled (in the dark of the moon, the favorite time for it), the remnants then collapsing ~~and~~ into the forest floor. The Latta Road neighborhood when Betty and I arrived consisted of three "Peters families,"^{the} the people from whom we bought the hut, and the Lattas, who took advantage of the Lake Washington Floating Bridge to join the new influx of exurbanites, building a year-round home in the pasture. At a little house-warming held to welcome Betty and me, we were informed that "we in the neighborhood get along together pretty well. Mainly because we don't see much of each other."

That was assuredly so of the ^{initial} ~~first~~ member of the neighborhood. Charlie visited the hovel an April day in 1961 to check on Krip, as had been his habit for some years, and found him dead. In the wake of the little ^{newspaper} obituary~~s~~ ~~in the papers~~ the population of our neck of the woods rocketed to an all-time high. At night. A stone's throw from where we slept, unaware. Who could have guessed so much of the world even knew of Krip's existence, or cared?

Among the intelligence networks hidden in the lower and more disgusting ~~areas~~^{levels} of human society is the one that keeps track of hermits, awaits their demise, and comes in search of their gold. The Greyhound drivers could have passed on anecdotes of the crooked little man ~~in dressed~~ in rags, carrying a stinking gunnysack, his ~~own~~^{personal} aroma enough to stun birds. He would be a familiar figure at the slaughterhouses. Word would get around. How? How far? Silent though the night-prowlers were, their number was so great^{as} to bring the police to investigate. Asking for identification ~~by~~^{of} Searchers caught in the flashlight, shovels in hand, they were amazed ~~to find~~ that they had come from a dozen counties. Night after night they dug. It was a cop who noted a loose floorboard in the hovel and found the Hermit's Gold -- \$94,000 in bonds, savings accounts, and cash. Some years passed before heirs were found, in Germany.

Ghouls are an interesting subspecies of man. Creepy. But apparently not dangerous. Why did they wait for Krip to die? Why not invade his hovel, torture him, then murder him? Why didn't they make the trip from ~~the city~~^{Seattle} or wherever pay by burglarizing our neighborhood? There are more dark alleyways of the human spirit than are dreamt of in your psychology departments, professor.

There also, professor, are a lot of things you are goddamn positive about that just aren't so. For instance, the Law of Demography I was taught in school. A nation's population rises so far, tops out, then declines to a civilized

stabilization. One that the land can absorb and tolerate, that the people ~~can~~ find comfortable. Betty and I had been raised in Country, been drawn like moths to the bright lights of City, and after a decade of it longed for the dark and quiet nights of childhood.

We found them on Cougar Mountain in 1952 and looked forward to a continuing home-cozy future. Seattle would slop some distance south toward Tacoma and north into the Country where I grew up and across Lake Washington on the Floating Bridge to Mercer Island and the brandnew Bellevue Shopping Square and that would do it for City. Our three acres were guaranteed by the Law as permanent Country. The Money Industry affirmed the Law. When we tried to borrow money to add onto the hut to make room for the kids, we were informed that Cougar Mountain lay beyond the "Red Line." Bad business for banks. The Floating Bridge was fostering the new breed of "exurbanite[^]," ~~but~~ ^{yet} if they wanted to live in the woods close to City offices but beyond the suburbs of the huddled masses, they darn well better bring their own cash to the table.

Weyerhaeuser was getting in the game. The Logged Off Land Company had been replaced by a Real Estate Division, which was ^{experimenting on} ~~testing the water on~~ the mountain with "Willow Ridge," a plat of five-acre tracts ^{watered} ~~provided~~ by a drilled community well and mains, build your own house with your own money. ~~The~~ Exurbs were friendlies. The mountain had so many thousands of wildwood acres that a few hundred more folks could be folded in and

not upset even the bears.

Suburbs did come in the late 1950s, incredible though it was that people would drive this far into Country to live on City-size lots. However, the masses huddled not on the mountain but on the flats down by U.S. 10. GI City. The vets were spawning families, needed homes, Congress responded in such a way as to take care/of Business. Home loans were available to the vets on easy terms through the Federal Housing Administration. However, the terms were such that for practical purposes the homes had to be provided by private industry on a scale thousands of times bigger than that ~~known~~^{• f} to A.J. Peters.

Eastgate!

The billboard beside U.S. 10 on the height of land (elevation, 325 feet) between Lakes Washington and Sammamish bragged up the site of a coming companion to Northgate, the postwar wonder of the Puget Sound world. But by 1952 the sag and the flaking paint of the billboard were a good laugh. Several small storefronts made a row in the lonesome prairie of Canadian thistle and tansy ragwort. Evenings on the way home we stopped at the mom-pop grocery for milk and bread. The hardware store supplied Dan'l Boone tools to pioneer our acres. Close by^w as Harms Truck Stop, which ~~serviced~~^{did upkeep on} over-the-hump trucks. Self-service pumps sold cheap gas, unbranded. The water faucet filled our five-gallon milk can after the well went dry.

Time passed. The fantasy in the diseased mind of ~~the~~ ~~some~~ developer^a became faux-real. The billboard was gone, the joke hadn't been funny after all. U.S. 10, become Autobahn 90, sprouted concrete ribbons north and south to a matched pair of shopping centers. The height of land between the lakes had become City. I tried not to notice that the creeping crud was creeping up from the flat at 325 feet, closer and closer to our 200 meters.

An afternoon in the mid-1960s Penny, home from school, came screaming into the house, "BULLDOZERS ARE IN OUR WOODS!" Well, they had been Krip's woods, ~~but~~ ^{but for us, too,} green by day, dark by night. "Cougar Hills" snuggled up to our north property line. Yard lights invaded ~~my~~ ^{our} bedroom. Then, on our west boundary, the Latta acres became "Cougar Heights." On the south, "Whispering Heights" happened. A beautiful morning, calm and free, I was awakened by jingle bells just out my window. A Good Humor wagon was peddling ice cream bars to ~~the~~ little children.

I began my prescription walking in 1976 by revisiting my old constitutional, to see what had happened since I and the wilderness had gone away. What had been the Latta Road-A.J. Peters neighborhood I already knew. We lived there. Cougar Hills-Horizon Heights-Whispering Heights, these were now the neighborhood of the 200-meter hut. Afoot I climbed through Horizon View, Eagle's Mere, Somerset. The assembly line extended without a break from Eastgate to Peak 1190.

At the end, the bottom, furniture vans were unloading

the worldly goods of new arrivals from Seattle, California, Nebraska, Alabama, and Switzerland.

Next higher were landscapers installing alien boulders from quarries in the Cascades and on the Columbia Plateau, alien shrubs from distant continents via nurseries, and unrolling instant lawns from the lawn farms that had replaced cow farms of the Sammamish valley.

Next, hammer-hammer saw-saw, to the rhythm of hillbilly and chili-dipper music from portable radios, one per house-in-becoming.

Next, instant streets being blacktopped and sidewalked, lines being buried for water, sewage, electricity, and phones.

Next, slash and trash heaped for burning --lichen-silver alder where the birds ^{had} sang, logger-beheaded stumps with huckleberry topknots, logs that in their rotting nursed linear gardens of salal, nurtured civilizations of ants and beetles and worms.

There, too, black soups that had been bogs of devils club and skunk cabbage, torrents of brown mud that had been green-ravine trickle-creeks -- and then the bulldozer cometh.

Next, brilliant plastic ribbons tied to stakes to guide the Dan'l Boone bulldozers to their churning and chewing and oiling.

Finally, Peak 1190, the dog-hair alder scythed, the view opened north to Mount Baker and the San Juan Islands,

west to towers of downtown Seattle, the Whulge, and the Olympic Mountains, east to Mount Si and the Cascade Mountains, south to Mount Rainier and Mount St. Helens. A person didn't have to be a congenital land-raper to know that here, in years to come, would be the jackpot, ^{The Summit} the mansions of millionaires.
^

THE BEARS' ORCHARD

To walk west, north, or south from the hut did as much for my synapses as touring Dresden cathedrals in the middle of the thousand-plane raid. East was the only therapy.

Our remnant of the Latta Road dropped steeply to the Newcastle Road's Milk Can Turn, named for the gravel-whitening switchback where a farmer trucking his morning's milking to the dairy went too light on his brakes and spilled the cans.

The Newcastle Road leveled out atop The Precipice in a shallow valley. When a toe of the Canadian ice rested momentarily (in geologic time) at this point, meltwater flowed south toward the Pacific Ocean. Glacier and river gone, the shrunken stream reversed ^{course,} ~~direction~~. Lewis Creek trickled through swamps a scant mile from The Pass and plummeted 700 feet in a half-mile down The Precipice to U.S. 10, in a post-glacial canyon that demonstrated the power of not much water (or geologic time) when combined with a whole lot of gravity.

The thousand-plane bombardment was yet to reach the valley. The Precipice brink east from the Newcastle Road was platted in the 1960s for a row of picture windows. Southward, though, the valley had more horses, cows, and sheep than people. The half-dozen houses scattered about the pastures were mainly built by miners who worked the Newcastle seams until the Coal Company was put out of business by Utah bituminous and California oil.

In 1925 I was brought home from Ballard General Hospital to a handsome three-storey structure built by Great-Grampa Clark for the refugees from North Dakota, his daughter Carrie, husband Frank, and their two sons and five daughters. Clark, who during the War of the Rebellion served in Company I, New York Volunteer Infantry, had come West to Washington Territory to ~~help~~ build Ballard. Photographs of the period capture the incivility of civilizing. Cities commence as butcher shops because, as the townboomers say, "You can't get hamburger without hurting the cow." Ballard had healed, been humanized. So, too, the University District, whose bright lights and dancing girls kept me well-entertained for a decade. In 1976 Cougar Hills already was neat and tidy, and so too would be Horizon View and Eagle's Mere, but at this moment in geologic time the world that ringed our three acres ran red with blood.

To be sure, there was history ~~a plenty~~ in the valley of Lewis Creek, and mind's ear could hear the wild things screaming and moaning. But at any one spot the savagery was over and done in a single summer. The monster stumps of old-growth Douglas fir that had been toppled by Swedes with jaws full of snoose and hauled away by the "lokiess" on their steel rails were mossed over and capped by huckleberry bushes. The second-growth forests reached a goodly distance toward the sky and shadowed a lushness of shrubs and ferns and herbs. That brutal summer was a snap of the fingers in the dozen

millennia since the Canadian ice melted and all began becoming as it had been before the misery whip.

From the Newcastle Road a narrow lane led from the pastures into the woods, to the brink of Lewis Canyon. A hop-skip on boulders crossed just above the start of the creek's waterfall plunge. The lane sidehilled the canyon to a ~~horror~~ ^{thicket} of hellberry, a mixture of two Frankenstein monsters created by demented arboriculturists, the Himalaya berry and the evergreen blackberry. Many a bloody day on the plains of Hell I'd done battle with the huge thorns and vines intent on ripping my eyes, slashing my jugular. It is a wicked alien from outer space, which is to say the Devil, its big black lumps of sugar fruit so seducing the pioneers that wherever their covered wagons paused they stuck cuttings in the ground and thus condemned their grandchildren to the horror, the horror.

But a ~~children's~~ horse trail skirted this torture chamber to other aliens, benign, row upon row of apple trees, hung along the bough with springtime white. Another thing every pioneer did was plant an apple tree. ^{as trees were} This ~~is~~ however, ~~was~~ not to keep a family in apple pies, apple butter, and apple cider. This was an honest-to-golly full-scale orchard. Backward o backward rush time in thy flight... I grew up in an orchard that was ^{was} planted the same time as this, by Judge Ronald, and also/abandoned in the long ago.

From Fred Rounds I later learned it had been Bill Leifhelm's orchard. As did many a Newcastle miner, he kept

one foot in his family's agriculture past. His tending ended with his death in 1940, no successor in the fruit business, glutted as it had become by the shiny red candy apples grown in the hot sun east of the Cascades.

The orchard was still tended. Many trees had become sculptures in bare sticks swollen with lichen, but those still fruiting were systematically top-pruned to keep apples in easy reach. The care was not done neatly, with a pruning saw. The high branches had simply been snapped off and left to hang.

Later in the year, when the crop was in, I sampled the small apples splotched with rust and tunneled by worms, natural apples never poisoned by spray. Not lipstick red, demurely streaked with blush. Not sweet, not tart, an olden flavor remembered from childhood. In that harvest time I realized ~~the~~ who ^{of} ~~were~~ the top-pruners. Fruit-bearing trees were ringed around with heaps of black shit. Since 1940 this had been the Bears' Orchard.

Bill had done pretty well with his orchard during Prohibition. Squeezed from the fruit, fermented and distilled, his grapa was sold at drugstores throughout Seattle, tolerated by the revenooers because it was labeled for medicinal purposes only, and ^{was} not such a taunting nuisance ~~was~~ as the bonded whiskey whisked from Canada in little black boats like Charlie's.

DEJA VU

Another time, thirty-five years earlier, I went to a doctor. His diagnosis: "growing pains." His prescription: "stay out of the mountains a year."

Turned age twelve and ~~joined the~~ ^{become a} Scouts, I'd shouldered the Trapper Nelson made for me by Dad and at Marmot Pass, in plain view from Richmond Beach, where we went swimming, discovered wilderness. I'd thought it all was in Darkest Africa, the Roof of the World, the Poles.

The wall of the mess hall at Camp Parsons commanded:
 Something lost behind the Ranges,
 Lost and waiting for you. Go!

In three Parsons summers I spent sixteen days in wilderness of the Olympic Mountains. In four Troop 324 years I added as many more in the Cascades. Now there was to be a year of -- why bother even having the year?

As pains began to relent, my legs began to twitch. I obeyed the doctor's orders -- the letter, not the spirit. I went walking, or limping. Not in my horizons. From the door of our shack in Judge Ronald's orchard. Gloryosky! The wilderness wasn't all in the mountains. A big chunk was less than a half-mile from the shack.

Once upon a time a wealthy logger had spared a square mile of virgin forest to serve as a pleasuring ground for fellow grandees of The Highlands. A creek had been dammed to

impound a lake. Rearing ponds stocked it with trout. Trails had been built for wealthy little girls to ride horses. On fine summer days picnic tables in a gazebo overlooking Puget Sound were loaded up with fried chicken, tuna fish sandwiches, pickles and olives and lemonade. Wealthy kiddies gamboled in the grass.

The logger's airplane-building hobby grew into a company that went broke. The wealthies developed a taste for the golf courses and swimming pools in the desert sun of California. The "Boeing Tract" reverted to wilderness, became my personal pleasuring ground.

But that didn't happen until a decade after our family settled in the orchard. All those years I looked west to a wall of trees of a different order from the second-growth hedging the forest, never wondering what lay behind the wall. Discovery Day came after the doctor's verdict, the spring of 1941. From then to the spring of 1943, when I moved to the University District, I spent part (sometimes all) of 200-odd days exploring beyond that wall.

In 1976, *deja vu*.

An old lokie grade sidehilled the slope above the Bears' Orchard. A scant mile to the left it deadended at "Owens' Creek," as I named it later, when I met Ralph and Peggy, who lived beside it farther up the mountain. A scant mile to the right it led into pastures near The Pass. The cavalry of the children (and many parents) trotted and cantered and

galloped the rail grades, the buried telephone cableway, and a network of paths criss-crossing a second-growth wildland of two square miles. Every path had to be walked to find where it came from, where it went. The "two hours a day" was forgotten in a compulsive inventorying that could not be measured in clock hours because here the clock had no hands.

The deadend at Owens' Creek frustrated me. Horses quit there, as had the lokies. The only trails beyond were those of bears, deer, coyotes, big cats, and little critters. The air distance from the Bears' Orchard to the first road (Kline's) was a long mile plus a scant half, double or treble that on the ground, along the brink of The Precipice. The ~~large~~ ^{large vast} white on my personal map had to be filled. So one bright morning I hitched up my britches and set out.

My route was not the lokie trail but the brink. From Leifhelm's bench the going was easy, sidehilling reasonably gentle slopes over logs, rotting and nursing, around salmonberry thickets and vine maple tangles, through new-greening leafery of white-flowering elder, new-unfurling fronds of swordfern and lady fern, and new-upthrusting stalks of nettle. Trees marched above me toward the summit of the mountain, and trees marched below me ~~off~~ ^{down} the steeps to the deeps of Lewis Canyon. It tickled me to look down on birds, thinking they owned the sky. Some other day I'd descend into the canyon, as ancient mariners used to cross the Equator to see if Nature's Law of Symmetry

required men of the Antipodes to stand on their heads and put their pants on backwards, and the women, well.

The brink went up a bit, the brink went down a bit, and so went the critters and so went I. A pretty little creek babbled ~~down~~ⁱⁿ a ravine ~~and~~^{to the brink and} spilled into the void. I slid down on my rump, clambered out on my knees. The map didn't show it. The contour interval was twenty-five feet. The ravine was only twenty feet deep and therefore invisible to the U.S. Geological Survey. The camera in the sky saw not the forest floor but the forest canopy.

I came to Owens' Creek flowing not on the flat, where the lokies had ~~gone~~^{steamed}, but neither in a ravine, much less a gorge, much much less ~~than~~ a canyon. A cliff-walled slot more than a hundred feet deep. Owens' Chasm. Should I climb ~~along~~^{upstream} it to the leveling-out at the lokie ~~crossing~~^{dead end}? I'd then have to descend back to the brink. A waste. Suck it up and damn the torpedos.

The duff of the chasm wall was not attached to solid bedrock, was greased by a scum of scrawny herbs. Boots skidded out. My descent was slowed only by collisions with trees, bumpity-bumpity-bang-groan. Then the ascent. How? Claw at the scum to excavate sandstone handholds, but these were halfway to mud and, in climbers' parlance, "portable." Was I doomed to muddle and whimper here until things got better,

namely when I went to Hell? Verily, it was the devils club that released me, the thorns clutched so tight, pressed so deep in flesh of my hands, that I was to be days squeezing out the pus.

During my stay in the chasm I failed to note the absence of sawn stumps, the presence of tall, fat, old Douglas fir. Why hadn't the Swedes with double-bitted axes and misery whips done their springboard dance? Sissies, after all? No. Risking a dozen-foot fall when corks lost their bite, that was all in a day's logging. But in the chasm that would be merely the start of a tumble that sure as shooting would make a guy choke on his Copenhagen.

Protected by the gravity of the situation, this was virgin forest, well on the way to ancient ~~the~~ Within loud sound of traffic on U.S. 10, "Main Street of the Northwest."

Onward, ho, to a gash in the mountain too big for a ravine, too small for a canyon, too wide for a chasm. Kline Gorge.

Kline had settled in a vale near the foot of the mountain. His wagon road up from the Newport Road became known as the Kline Hill Road. It stopped where The Precipice got mean, never connected up to the Leifhelm Road, which deadended at the spread of Ed, brother of the grapa man. The ~~exurbanites~~ who ~~placed~~ ^{erected} their picture windows along the brink had nightmares about the 1912 Holocaust and pled with the King County Commission for a fire escape. The Leifhelm Road, they claimed,

was the "longest dead-end road in King County." (With the qualifier added, "west of the Cascades," it may have been so.) The commissioners didn't care. But fellow exurbanites, though their own homes were securely lower on the mountain, mainly in the domain of the Willow Crest Community Club, did. Seattle newspapers were charmed by the doughty volunteers wielding axes, saws, mattocks, shovels, delighted in rotogravure displays of Boeing engineers and wives mucking about the cliff on weekends. The deed was done just before Betty and I arrived, and our neighbors still glowed with pride. The Kline Road was the sole vehicle route from the north base of Cougar to the heights except the Newcastle Road, and that switchbacked (the Milk Can Turn) around the western dwindling of The Precipice. The Kline Road ascended beside the Kline Gorge, the most awesome section of The Precipice. Some years later, King County grudgingly accepted the road and at the tightest corners installed signs, "Speed Limit 5 miles per hour." More years passed and fame spread far and wide of the Cougar Mountain Grand Prix.

My Brink Expedition ended at the brink of the gorge. I was startled by big fat old Douglas firs with unnaturally naked trunks ~~with~~ ^{below} normal topknots of branches. What in the wild world?

Not wild. Abruptly the brush ended, I stepped out onto green lawn, passed a picture window that looked through the topiaries to Lake Sammamish and the Cascades. The sun setting, I came to the Leifhelm Road and so home.

SKY COUNTRY

The University District quieted somewhat, as normal after the taverns closed, the next-to-last night of 1949. It became a semi-silent night. Then, as we slept unawares, a sort of holy night because the kindly heavens floated gently down to earth and ended civilization as we knew it.

Alone in our basement apartment (Betty having gone off yo-yo skiing for the weekend at a Mountaineers lodge) I awoke in morning to a "hiss" outside my bedroom window. A skier sliding down the street.

The phone rang. Dick ^{was} outraged by Nature's treachery. He and I would not, as planned, be touring the high white wilds of the Olympic Mountains. But dammit all to hell, neither would we be sliding down city streets. Having chained ~~to~~ his car, he picked me up and we slithered and skittered the empty highways to the nearest mountain-like geography, across the Floating Bridge, east of Lake Washington. The county plow had been out early, letting us wheel to an elevation a thousand feet higher than the District. On skis we continued up an opening in the forest I'd often wondered about, seeing it from campus. It proved to be an old orchard, the boughs now heavy with snow, ~~but~~ masses of lichen showing through. We looked back across the lake to the campus. Then we proceeded to the summit. No view there, in a thicket of young alder. I

photographed Dick up a tree he climbed to see what he could see. My caption in the album was, "Dick up a tree on a hill southeast of Lake Washington."

From Boy Scout days I had a map of the area where I grew up north of Seattle. It also showed this hill. The U.S. Geological Survey's Snohomish Quadrangle was surveyed in 1893-95 by G.E. Hyde and R.H. McKee; their names were on the map because the doughty mountain men who packed plane tables and sketch maps into American wildlands rated a place in historical records. The contour interval of fifty feet was less than half the height of the ancient trees that then formed the forest canopy, making the portrayal of the ground mainly a product of the sketcher's artistic imagination. Our hill lay within a circle formed by the 1500-foot contour line, at its north end. The circling line extended south a scant mile to the hill's plunge into a canyon, off the map.

This frontier reconnaissance was replaced in 1960 by publication of the Issaquah Quadrangle, surveyed in 1950 by "aerial photographs and multiplex methods." The works of man (suburbanization, transportation) were revised by new aerial photographs in 1968 and 1973. The contour interval of twenty-five feet gave a fairly good notion of the ground surface beneath the second-growth canopy.

The new quadrangle replaced the old circle ^{with} ~~by~~ a horseshoe of summits that wrapped around headwaters of Coal Creek. Near the end of one limb of the horseshoe was our hill, Peak 1459,

and close next was Peak 1450. The progression of summits was interrupted by a wide saddle that drained east to Tibbetts Creek, west to Coal Creek; in the middle was a reference point marked "1235." Slopes rose from there to Peak 1525. The summit line went on to the mountain's apex, Peak 1595, two air miles from Peak 1459. The other limb of the horseshoe bent west from there to Peak 1450, Peak 1200, and at the edge of the Issaquah quad, one-and-a-half miles from Peak 1595, Peak 975.

In March of the new year I introduced Betty to the sky country. Patches of snow lingered in shadows, last gasps of the wintriest winter in living memory, the heights continuously white since October. Exurbanite pessimists were despondent (and mountaineering optimists exuberant) at what promised to be a revival of the Little Ice Age, during which a resurgence of glaciers overwhelmed centuries-old villages in the Alps and compelled Norwegian farmers ~~to~~^{to} go fishing.

Betty and I agreed that this was where we had to live, escaping from Seattle's single season ("Is this July or February?") to the richness of a four-season world.

A drill rig was chunk-chunk-chunking, its sponsor eagerly watching. When it hit water he was going to sell lots, found a Utopian colony of winter-lovers. We immediately signed up. No money down, of course. We were too poor to leave our basement ^{apartment,} build a chalet and learn to yodel. Two years later came the miracle of the hut. A mere 200 meters, but on the mountain.

Utopia never happened anyhow. During the Pearl Harbor hysteria, when Seattle was blacked out and radio stations signed off at sunset to baffle the bomber pilots from aircraft carriers poised offshore, when barrage balloons were moored on approaches to the Boeing B-17 factory and anti-aircraft batteries ^{were} [^]emplaced in city parks, and when one night while walking the beach I was arrested on suspicion of being Japanese, the Army had aircraft spotters on the brink of The Precipice and 120mm guns on Peak 1450.

For this new war, the Cold one, the Army returned ^{in 1956} preempting Utopia for one of the dozen Seattle-area batteries of the Nike Ajax missile. The radar-and-command facility was atop Peak 1450, the siloes a mile away at 1200 feet. The troops were good neighbors. The Newcastle Road was widened and paved. The county plows were out when the first snowflake neared Earth. A row of neat little homes was built for families in the valley of Lewis Creek. Our kids went to school with their kids, possibly the first "mixture of races" east of Lake Washington. At Christmas the command detachment threw a party at the site for all the mountain's kids, so even those years when we didn't have a white Christmas at the hut there was snowballing and snow^wman[^]-building on high.

During the Cuban hysteria ~~of 1961~~ a local couple out walking their dog on the road to the siloes met the troops coming down the road, away from the siloes, at quick-step. U.S.-Soviet

relations had just been clicked up to within one notch of WAR. The officer in charge advised the couple to turn around and join the Army. At the one and only test firing of the Ajax, he told them, things hadn't gone well. "When we push the button, we're not sure what will happen." Subsequently the CIA determined that the Russians had, in 1957, scrapped their last bombers that could fly this far. After pondering that a while, to 1973, in fact, the Army semi-secretly went away.

So now, 1976. Explorations that could reasonably commence by stepping out the door of the hut were exhausted. I therefore relaxed my prejudice against wheels to let the VW beetle give me a jump-start to trailheads.

Peak 1459, for example. The alder forest had been mowed to make way for a forest of towers. The folks in nearby eyries now had to take out their false teeth at night and shut them in drawers, wrapped in towels, to muffle the guitars. When the toast popped up, the toaster would burst out in police calls. When my therapy instigated a collateral political activism, for strategic reference I named this "Radio Peak."

The county road had been extended to a deadend at the fence around the Nike site. In honor of the missiles that had defended us against Russia, and the 120mm guns that earlier had defended us against Japan, I named Peak 1450 "Anti-Aircraft Peak."

A hole in the fence let me roam the summit, the topography radically remodeled for command center, radar,

barracks, mess hall, blacktop driveways, and concrete sidewalks. Mount Rainier stood mighty high and white to the south, Mount Baker ditto to the north. The winds blew free between them, residues of typhoons from the Pacific, howling northers from the Pole. When trees at the hut were barely swayed by breezes, Sky Country gales drove rain deep in your pores^{or} froze your nose, icicled your tears.

One morning when several inches of new snow were on the ground at the hut, on AA Peak I plowed hipdeep through drifts of airy powder. Would that I had known what was happening, that I might leap from bed into boots and parka and go be a part of it! Only once had I experienced a true blizzard -- judged by meteorologist-historians to have been Seattle's only true blizzrd in memory.

At a quarter to eight the morning of January 13, 1950, when I left our basement apartment to walk to my job on campus, the temperature was well below freezing. Feathery flakes were ~~just~~ beginning to stick, slicking the frozen streets. Already the cars bringing folks to work were turning right around and heading for home. At noon when I walked home for lunch the north wind had got up to near-gale speed, drifts were blocking campus paths, and my right (windward) ear froze. That was my only frozen ear, ever.

Outside the Nike fence, on the lip of a bluff, was the "Million Dollar View," so called because when the tsunami of millionaires arrived they would not be allowed to privatize

it because though the Army had taken it away from Utopia, they had given it to King County. When we locals lacking picture windows wanted to astonish guests, this was the place. Puget Sound country was laid out as if from the wing of an airplane. Abruptly below were Lake Sammamish and the suburbanizing sprawl of Bellevue-Rēdmond-Issaquah. Swing eyes left to Lake Washington, Seattle, the Whulge ("the saltwater we know," in Lushootseed), and the Olympic Mountains. Swing eyes right to Nanga Pilchuck, Skagit Flats, San Juan Islands, Mount Baker, and Mount Shuksan. Swing a bit farther to Mount Index, Monte Cristo summits, and Glacier Peak. Finally, Nanga Si.

A truck road, little more than a bulldozer track, had been extended beyond the deadend of the county road. To what, where? A halfmile of gentle descent brought me out of forest to the edge of a gasper of a clearcut. New. Not of second-growth because firestorms/slash-burning had nipped conifer seedlings in the bud. Alder, a vastness of it, had been chainsawed to stumps, the logs run through a chipper into a van for hauling to the pulpmill.

"Pulpers' Junction," I called the spot, because the main road began a steep descent to the Issaquah Plain and a lesser branch turned off south to the broad flat at 1200 feet. Pulpers' truck roads crossed to the base of Peak 1525 and ended there, the reason being that in one direction the West Fork of Tibbetts Creek oozed from a swamp ("Beware the

Jabberwock, my son!/ The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!/ Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun/ The Frumious Bander-snatch!") and in the other waterfalled into a ravine that shortly ^{expanded} ~~grew~~ to a canyon. A big old cedar log spanned the swamp-ravine. It was much walked by wild feet, prominently by canines, and thus it was the "Coyote Log."

I climbed forest to sky -- enormous sky. Trees were gone and also bushes, ferns, herbs, and moss. Also a huge gulp of the mountain's guts. The most famous geographical feature of our high country, reminding me of the hole where Old Butte used to be before tunnel-mining gave way to ~~the~~ open-pit^{ting} The Clay Pit.

THE CLAY PIT

Nearing the Sky Country (the Wind Country, the Snow Country) the county road split, the left to Radio Peak, the right to -- what? Where? Signs intimidated: PRIVATE PROPERTY, HEAVY TRUCK TRAFFIC, CAVE HOLES. Children who went on innocent safari in forests of coal country ~~were~~^{might} nevermore^{be} seen again.

So I parked outside the forbidding gate and explored firewood-cutting roadlets to Radio Peak and thereabouts. Returning one day to the beetle, I found under the windshield wiper a card warning that should anything funny happen beyond the gate and the cops be called they would be given my license number. Signed, "Fred Rounds," whoever he might be. Good enough for me.

One morning I got a call from Jerry Peltola, son of a miner and father of kids who went to school with my kids. He had dropped in on a neighbor to swap lies and his neighbor was none other than Fred Rounds, the designated watcher of the PRIVATE PROPERTY. He had a strange tale to tell. A mysterious stranger parked a Volkswagen at the gate, day after day. Didn't try to break into the mothballed siloes to steal copper wire. Didn't fire guns at animals or targets. Didn't dump garbage. Just parked. Then what did he do? And who the hell was he?

Jerry laughed and laughed and invited me for a cup of coffee. Thus began years of mining the mind of the keeper

of the history of old, vanished Newcastle. Of immediate consequence, I was granted freedom of the gate.

The other half of the Nike story:

The Army had given most of the silo site to King County for an eventual park. A bit of a piece went to the Issaquah School District, which had too many kids and not enough classrooms. The ascent from the Issaquah Plain was lengthy, especially when the bus had to be chained to attain the 1200-foot elevation. Instruction was further delayed by firing up the cranky space heater to raise the temperature above freezing. Snowballs and snowmen comprised much of the curriculum. The kids loved it but one winter was enough for the Issaquah School District.

How the forlorn band of hippies discovered the refuge, so far from the University District and the nearest public transportation, was a mystery. The snows came, Fred ~~noticed~~ ^{heard} pitiable sounds from the barracks-classroom, found them ^{band} humbly dying of starvation, exposure, and social diseases, and they were hauled off to hospital.

The genesis of the Klondike Swamp:

From Dr. Mackin's course in Geomorphology ^{I learned} how ice and meltwater could combine to scoop out, then fill, a flat basin a mile long and a quarter-mile wide. From Professor Fred I learned that Newcastle miners of the turn of the century who worked at elevations ^{less than} ~~only~~ half ^{that as} far above sealevel considered

the climate of the lake to ^{be} ~~resemble~~ that of the Far North, where the gold was much in the fevered imaginations of the times.

Coal mines require wash water, miners need drinking water and bath water, wives need water to boil the potatoes. Wire-wrapped wooden pipeline carried the water down to Newcastle to serve all these purposes. An earthen dam increased the lake's storage capacity. Until... Where did the lake go?

In our early relationship I was seen by Fred as a leg prime for pulling. For example, the Big Whoosh. Mines often have drippy ceilings, but the diggings under the lake were getting drippier all the time. A Sunday when no shifts were underground a supervisor went down to inspect. Before his very eyes the drips grew to trickles, to gushers. He ran for his life and only just got out when the lake busted through and washed so much coal to Lake Washington that during World War II ^{Coal Creek} the/delta was mined.

Well, Fred never apologized but eventually/^{confessed} the WHOOSH was a favorite yarn of the miners. The creek cut several seams and had been carrying coal downstream since the glacier went away.

But why had the lake never refilled? Well, primevally it was shadowed and cooled by ancient cedars and firs. Haul them to the mill and the hot sun ~~can~~ shrivel^{ed} it to a swamp -- the largest for miles around, but no lake no more.

Fred's Railroad:

Where the main truck road past the siloes site took a sharp left uphill, a mucky-brushy lane proceeded straight ahead . It was a continuation of the lokie grade of old, puncheon added by Fred so he could get his flatbed truck to and from the alder he was cutting for firewood. At three score and ten, this was his hobby, "to help out the old folks."

One day I ran across him out there. He shut off his chainsaw to chat. "This was my first man's job. Fifteen. The law wouldn't let me go underground. The loggers took me on to clear a way for the rails." Thoughtful pause as his eyes, I'd guess, remembered the ancient giants of his boyhood, where now the alder grew. "Haven't gained much ground in sixty years." Pause. "Haven't lost much, though."

The Pit:

The main truck road leveled out into a vacancy monstrously vaster than all the underground holes dug in more than a century of mining.

Clay, I knew it well. "Blue" clay, that is. Since childhood I'd been digging it out of creek banks and shore cliffs, molding bowls and ashtrays and just plain squishing it for the sensuous pleasure my fingers got from the squishing. It was everywhere that the Pleistocene ice milled rock flour that was carried by meltwater to ponds and lakes, where the rock milk settled out in still waters. It was "varved," the alternating bands of light gray and dark gray (sort of bluish)

represented^{ing} the depositions of summer and winter (perhaps).

The stuff here wasn't really clay at all, it was mudstone. It had been clay when the streams that entered the seas where giant lizards roamed the shores deposited fine silt that became bottom mud. Compacted to stone by the weight of succeeding layers over the eons, rumped into mountains, eroded free of overburden, it became the material of the "Clay" Pit. Gouged out by bulldozer, trucked down the Coal Creek valley to the Newcastle Brick Plant (said to be the largest on the West Coast) it was crushed and ground to become, once again, clay.

"Fire" clay. The "blue" of the Pleistocene^{was} good enough for the common brick and paving brick of the era ~~that~~ preceding^d asphalt and Portland cement. The "fired" clay of the Pit made classy fireplaces in mansions and facades of steel-boned office towers.

Standing at the entry to the Pit was comparable to being on the rim of the Grand Canyon or a peak in Darien. I've never felt comfortable with the Cenozoic and Paleozoic, no more than with the Big Bang. The blue clay of the Pleistocene is home-like, next door to the Holocene, which is where I live. This awful vacancy, a few years of man's bulldozing in the making, represented a horridly huge bite out of eternity. Contemplating the eons of this mudstone was not comprehensible to a mind imprisoned in flesh as transitory as a candle flame in a hurricane.

"This House of Sky":

To grow up in the Big Sky of Montana ("This House," as Ivan Doig's memoir calls it) is to suffer from claustrophobia when walled in by Olympics west and Cascades east. To grow up under a roof of Puget Sound forests is to feel, beyond the Cascade Crest, on the edge of the world, where one false step...

North of Seattle, I used to hike from Judge Ronald's orchard to the shore of the Whulge, "the saltwater we know," and gaze through miles of empty air to the spot in the horizon where I first was in wilderness and knew it was wilderness. Ridgerunner and then climber, I exulted in the escape from encumbering greenery into the freedom of the tundra and the felsenmeer and the summer snowfields. But sleeping there... The storms that blew apart the night, the stars whose ferocious twinkle mirrored the Big Bang... The comfortable beds were those protected from the sky by forest. The 200-meter hut.

Yet as on the beach and on the peaks, the Clay Pit gave a release from this too too ^{solid} ~~mortal~~ flesh, a window on the ~~eternal~~ ^{sky's} ethereality of the blue, or gray, or pink-rose-orange, ^{the} unblemished by civilization, ^{le} where all the noise comes from.

FRED

Steam made the civilized world go round. Coal cooked the steam out of the coal. The Europeans who dug the coal there crossed the ocean to dig in America. Newcastle folk came from England (the original Newcastle), Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia, Macedonia, and Greece. A group photo dated 1907 included a man of African descent. Immigrants who crossed the other ocean to build railroads subsequently picked waste rock from the conveyor belt that carried coal to the bunkers -- or did until September 12, 1888, when the Knights of Labor burned their dormitory at China Creek and chased them into the woods. For a little while, a long time ago, there had been an Indian.

Fred "Rounds." The family name suggested nothing about his ancestry. Neither did his appearance, that of a British Isles mongrel, like me. So I asked.

"We came from the old country in 1907."

"What old country was that?"

"North Dakota."

An old Seattle joke. Newspapers reported with glee the festivities of the North Dakota Association at Woodland Park, "Stove Number Seven."

Our family wasn't ashamed of North Dakota, and certainly not of Grampa Hawthorn. His diploma, issued May 18, 1880 by

Troy High School in Bradford County, Pennsylvania listed subjects in which he was "found proficient." A century later the curriculum might well have earned him a bachelor's degree. Cultivating the prosperous family farm, teaching school, what was wrong with that? Horace Greeley exhorted, "Go West, young man!" Run the plough through the loam of the short-grass prairies like a hot knife through butter, load sacks of wheat for shipment East.

For a dozen years "we had the blizzards, then the droughts, then the prairie fires, then the hailstorms, then the locusts, and then we had Jim Hill." In bad years the freight rates were lowered to keep the homesteaders on the land. In good years they were raised to keep the homesteaders from making 'er pay. Yes, but in 1892 the Great Northern reached the end of the line, far, far from the prairies. Why did Grampa stay another dozen-odd years? God, probably. Faith in His reputed mercy. Patient acceptance of the trials that fit a person for Heaven. Soon after the last child in a homestead-size family, Mother, was born in 1906, Grampa said the Hell with Hill and his Heavenly confederates, loaded the Hawthorns on the Great Northern, rode to the end of the line. In Seattle he received ^{due}~~just~~ respect as conductor on the Ballard streetcar line.

The Rounds arrived soon after Fred was born, in 1907. Birthplace, Devils Lake -- the same as Mother! Were our families neighbors? Not likely. Fred commented that the courthouse served a mighty lot of land but very few bodies. They could have been on the same trainload of refugees. The trains ran

to smoulder in peace.

Fred became so good at cutting coal he elected to work on contract, scorning wages. He filled so many carts so fast that he made more money than a bank president -- and never put any of it in a bank. The super gave him and his three brothers the job of mining out a new air shaft. In twelve working days they blasted 780 vertical feet up the Muldoon to the surface. Some digging.

Also did some drinking. Brawled now and then, had a heck of a punch for a lightweight, but only was locked up once, in the Issaquah clink, a restful conclusion to the Fourth of July. As a member of the Newcastle Mine Rescue Team he hauled miners bent and broken from the local underground and was summoned to major disasters in the Rockies and Southwest.

He was a tough guy. Didn't throw his weight around -- there wasn't much of it anyway. The eyes, they did it for him. He had "the look." He carried the payroll from Seattle on the train, cash box in lap, .45 in holster. The miners lined up on steps of the Newcastle Hotel for the paymaster to clink out gold and silver. When a Catholic reached the head of the line, a swarm of black habits crowded in for tithes. The super got disgusted and muttered to Fred, "Clear that lot out of here." No rough stuff, but the look worked with nuns, too.

A sad day it was in 1926 when the Company closed the Ford Slope. King Coal was being edged off the throne by

California oil. They were digging better coal at Black Diamond and on the Green River, not to mention the best, in Utah. Workings in the Muldoon and Bagley were ~~getting~~ farther from the Ford Slope, expensive to get at. A slope was opened into the Primrose Seam farther north on the mountain, the coal from a different geological age and not very good, but offering the thrifty possibility of producing some product, ^{on the way to} eventually crosscutting into the Muldoon and Bagley. In 1930 the bunkers burned, the Pacific Coast Coal Company banked the insurance payoff and quit the business.

Newcastle vanished. Not all at once. House by house, board by board. Fred paid the Company \$10 for his family's old home, which before that had been the superintendent's house, and paid a teamster \$5 and a jug of moonshine ("the good stuff," said Fred) to haul it a couple miles up the mountain. The doctor's office was moved to Renton. Hardly a home built on the mountain during the Depression didn't have pieces of recycled Newcastle. Including our 200-meter hut.

Fred worked a while at a major mine on the Cedar River but the owner was a skinflint, slow pay and always in trouble with the state inspectors. The Company was gone from Newcastle but there was more coal in the ground than ever had been mined. The truck miners, the "gypos," leased rights from the Company and, after it sold local holdings in 1957, from Palmer Coking Coal, a family operation that had had mines at Palmer, on the Green River, and enjoyed owning coal lands for the nostalgia.

The Company ^{mines} had kept well clear of the surface, leaving two-hundred feet of overburden just to make sure. The gypos could drive short and easy slopes into upper reaches of the Bagley, May Creek, and Muldoon, as well as the Number Three where it was walled off from the fire, and "mine to the grass roots."

Working for the Strain Coal Company, Fred set off a charge one day and when the dust settled he saw alder roots. Said Strain, "Lot of good coal in the roots. Give 'er one more blast." Fred did and the alder fell into the mine. Said Strain, "Cut 'er up. My yards sell firewood too." Thereafter Fred could brag about his horse-shit mine and his alder mine.

The gypos generally mined to somewhat short of the grass roots to avoid getting faces full of mud. The unsupported surface ^{afterwards} ~~then~~ slumped into the vacancy. Fred had counted a hundred-some of these "cave holes" around New Town. In themselves they were not dangerous, since the holes a person might fall into had rather quickly been largely filled by the undermined surface. (Slopes, airways, and timber shafts were another story. They could readily serve as a convenient grave.)

After the underground no longer was Fred's occupation it remained his hobby. He had inherited the Company's blueprints and used them as maps to explore diggings. He had poked cautiously into some of the pre-Company mines and worked in or ~~simply~~ toured all the gypo operations ^{of} Strain, Baima & Rubatino, Scalzo, and the drunk who pushed a slope into the Bagley from

Tibbetts Creek and was perennially on the inspectors' most-wanted list.

He was sentimentally fond of the "Finnish peoples' mines" on the north side of the mountain, close to (and in one case, under) U.S. 10. On their own time, after getting off shift at the Company mine~~s~~, they dug into small seams that outcropped on land that "didn't belong to anyone." They had only one customer, owner of Seattle apartment houses, a Finn.

World War II provided Fred with a favorite tale, tall -- but true. In certain atmospherics, the Coal Creek valley reeked of coal smoke, and in snow time certain spots on the forest floor never got white. The Number Three Seam had been smouldering half a century and was likely to continue forever. The wartime demand for coal made Strain so greedy he had begun stripmining the closely bunched Bagley, May Creek, and Muldoon. So why not go after the adjacent Number Three where it wasn't burning?

In a rush of fresh air, the smouldering blew up. Newspaper reporters in Seattle saw the towering cloud but the censors made them keep their mouths shut. Terrified citizens swamped telephones of Civil Defense, which wet its pants. Anti-aircraft crews in parks and golf courses manned their guns. Jeeps scurried around, seeking the mysterious horror perpetrated by the Japs. Strain closed the Number Three.

JUNGLES OF THE YUCATAN

Over the concrete arch that framed the mouth of the Ford Slope: "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." In the gaping blackness swam with such faces as those seen by the Ancient Mariner, "where the very deep did rot, slimy things that crawled with legs." But say this for the Ford, the black hole was in an open field beside a truck road used by sometime firewood-cutters. Stay well back from the brink, not to be hypnotized by slimy eyes, and you'd be safe.

Not so in the wildwoods amid the cave holes that connected to the underworld. Fred belonged to the present, the sun in the sky. But he also belonged to the past, where the sun never shines. In company of his fellows he had walked many years, many hundreds of miles, by the light of a carbide lamp. How many ghosts walked there now, below my feet, far below below below?

I never met any where I wandered and wondered, out under the sky, where Jesus our Savior He came for to die. Fred walked with them daily. I was alone in the ruins of Newcastle.

The Ford Slope lay on the cusp between now and then. At the edge of its grassy field began the yesterdays, a jungle. Coal Creek should have emerged from the jungle. But there was no creek, ^{only} ~~rather~~ a swamp, a tangle of willows and trash, jaws that bite and claws that catch. I battled through, my

jaw going a mile a minute, cursing and groaning -- until it dropped wide open.

Above the brush rose a mighty construction, four great masses of concrete. Explorers of the Yucatan were struck dumb by pyramids immensely old, terribly abandoned. I clambered up one of the masses and cleared away ferns and moss to see what it was, exactly, and try to guess why it was. What were the constructions in Yucatan all about? Something to do with the gods of the builders, no doubt. The builders were long long dead. So were their gods. Dead gods are spooky.

I went straight to Fred for an explanation. This was the Steam Hoist. The jungle had swallowed the furnaces where coal was burned to generate steam to hoist coal from below sealevel to the mouth of the Ford Slope. The four masses of concrete anchored the hoisting. In a trench ("the ropeway") from Hoist to Slope a steel cable had hoisted the loaded mine carts.

Upstream (except there was no stream) from the Hoist was a low concrete dam. From a drain hole in the dam Coal Creek ran underground to the Hoist; in the glory days it had continued, planked over, [^]through the mine yards. Above the dam was a pond into which the creek flowed.

The old mill pond! Where I first met you, with your eyes so blue and your gingham true. Newcastle town never ~~had~~ exported lumber, nor even logs, leaving that to Washington Timber & Spar. However, mines always need timbers and so

there was always a mill, in one location or another. This was the last. The crew's six-day work week was split in half. Three days they were loggers, in the old-growth of Marshall's Hill. The big sticks were dragged to Coal Creek by ground-lead cables rigged from a series of spar trees, powered by a series of steam donkeys. (That explained to me the creek gullies that had no creeks and that ran sideways across sidehills.) Then for three days they were mill hands.

The mill pond did serendipity duty as the Ol' Swimmin' Hole. Strictly boys-only. Until a delegation of mothers demanded equal rights for their daughters. Thus the Hole became co-ed. Not at the same time. Swimming suits were unknown. One day the girls would swim and the boys would hide in the woods to watch. Next day the boys would swim and the girls would hide in the woods to watch.

Few other artefacts had survived obliteration by greenery and recycling by scavengers. Near the Ford Slope was a jumble of busted concrete that had been the Number One Escapeway (in case the Ford got blocked). An airway in the Muldoon Seam served as the Number Two Escapeway.

Fred had a 1927 Fireman's Map that plotted every structure in the mineyards and every home in New Town. The map failed to make good sense of the chaos I encountered, partly because most buildings weren't there anymore but also because the gypos screwed things up.

The Company practice had been to carry loaded mine carts on a railway to where ^{coal} was picked out by hand, ~~the cart~~

then washed and dumped in the top of the bunkers, from whose bottom it would be dumped in gondolas for rail transport to Seattle. The waste rock would be taken down the valley by rail and dumped in what eventually became known as the Cinder Mine. (Spontaneous combustion of the mixed-in coal cooked the water of hydration out of the ~~mudstone~~^{rock}, leaving colorful cinders, or clinkers, that were trucked throughout the area for driveways and running tracks, or to the Newcastle Brick Plant to make cinder blocks.)

The railroad was gone when the gypos arrived. They dumped waste rock anywhere that was handy. One place was the site of the Wash House. Miners would come off shift in the Ford, ~~would~~ walk there, shower, don clean clothes, and proceed home to grimy-stinky wives. A delegation to the superintendent got them a weekly Ladies Day at the Wash House.

Another place was the site of the burned-out bunkers, ^{dumping} directly into Coal Creek. The Company had gone to a lot of trouble reshaping the valley to accomodate mineyards and railroad and all. When the gypos got through messing up the landscape it was enough to drive an archaeologist nuts. Like the pyramids in jungles of the Yucatan.

SEATTLE & WALLA WALLA ~~RAILROAD~~

July 14, 1873, a telegram informed Arthur Denny: "We have located a terminus on Commencement Bay." Not Elliott Bay. There, on a cold and rainy day in 1851, the schooner Exact had landed a band of townboomers on a windswept beach backed by gloomy forest. The women began to weep. The men began to plat. "New York By and By," they called, because the place manifestly was intended by God to be the goal of the Northern Pacific Railroad that Congress had chartered. But the Eastern scoundrels, the infamous Robber Barons, had defied deity and reason by doing their "locating" at a place that didn't exist, had no townboomers' plats, didn't even have a name until they borrowed one from The Mountain. Tacoma!

July 17, 1873, the local scoundrels rallied round the famous flag of "Seattle Spirit" and incorporated the Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad. They would outflank the rails planned to come north from Portland by striking across the Cascades to intersect the transcontinental before ever it got to Portland.

The line never made it over the Cascades but on February 5, 1878, the first train steamed into Newcastle (Old Town) and by 1883 was extended to Coal Creek (New Town). Though the gold was black, it sufficiently gratified "Seattle Spirit," which was in fact the same thing as the Robber Barons called "doing business."

In 1883 Newcastle produced 22 percent of coal mined on the Pacific Coast and was King County's major industrial center. The road to riches was, however, slippery. In November, 1880, the tottering line was sold to the Oregon Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the old enemy, the Northern Pacific, and the name changed to Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad. In 1897 Oregon Improvement went bankrupt, the rails and mines devolving on the Pacific Coast Company; in 1916 the line was renamed Pacific Coast Railroad.

None of this interested me before 1976. The real estate lady who introduced Betty and me to the 200-meter hut said it was in the Newcastle Hills. Our new neighbors rather sniffily informed us we were on Cougar Mountain. That name struck us as an authentic pioneer banality, contrasting to the slick cuteness of a realtor's "Newcastle." We went along with the pioneers, learning only years later that "Newcastle" had been on maps ~~for~~ for a century and "Cougar" had arrived mere months before us.

The "Willow Ridge" acreage platted by Weyerhaeuser had been snapped up by some of the earliest exurbanites to exploit the Lake Washington Floating Bridge. Exhilarated by their conquest of The Precipice, their Willow Crest Community Club forged ahead, venturing into a grand plan for the entirety of -- of whatchamacallit.

Doc Russell came down from the Sky Country to preach up his New Jerusalem in the snow. He loved to bundle family

and friends in a war-surplus, four-wheel-drive command car (the original "jeep," a nickname subsequently preempted by the littler "peep") and romp through snow or mud on remnant roads from anti-aircraft batteries of WW II, gypo logging, cow-milking, and mining. Most were on the property of Palmer Coking Coal, the care taken by Fred Rounds. Fred tolerated the romping but took exception to ~~the~~ Doc's smart mouth.

Being knocked on his ass surely affected Doc's opinion of coal miners but it was the coal he hated. The dust blackened the earth, the smoke darkened the sky, the burning stunk up the cities. His New Jerusalem was to be a green and pleasant land under clean skies in air that smelled good. "Newcastle" had to go. The exurbanites bought that. When the Army brought its Nike rockets in 1956 and ~~bought~~^{purchased} Doc's New Jerusalem, it asked where they were and Doc said "Cougar" and the Army, the U.S. Geological Survey, King County and the State of Washington said okay. Down in the valley, valley so low, old settlers might laugh at memories of when Fred patted the Doc in the snoot but didn't really care what the city folk and the government said, the past was theirs, that's where they lived, and the place was Newcastle.

The Newcastle Road dropped from The Pass to Coal Creek. Just before the crossing a mailbox post bore a ^{home-made} sign, "Newcastle." In the front yard of the house was a coal cart. This was the home of Milt Swanson, second of my history professors, useful for straighter versions of Fred's tales. Milt was born in Old Town in 1918, as was his mother in 1894. She refused to

let him go down in the mines ^{because} in 1894 her father died there. However, Milt worked for the gypos [^] ~~that last~~ ^{the final} seventeen years of their operations hereabouts -- above ground, as a machinist. The Swansons had lived in that house since 1923, buying it from the Company in 1930 for \$25. Company House No. 180, it had been, part of Greek Village. Remodeled, it was the last survival of the four-hundred houses of New Town.

At the start of my odyssey ~~away~~ from the cigarette, I flailed about Coal Creek as bewildered [^] as a person would be who went for a walk in his backyard and stumbled on Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall and Tintern Abbey. Or rather, bits and pieces, overgrown and swallowed up by the omnivorous Green in the half-century since the Mayans, or whoever, packed up and vanished.

I empathized with Doc Russell. In my time I'd shoveled some coal. As Bobby Burns sang, "My heart's in the highlands, my heart is not here." However, one bit led to another piece and the fascination, albeit rather morbid, grew. I'd been underground -- in hard-rock mines and lava tubes -- from British Columbia to California. Had enough ~~of that~~. That Fred had walked more miles inside Cougar Mountain than I had outside was awesome. But I'd peered far enough into those depths to take my stand with Milt's mother.

Yet as I explored the creek valley, my imagination stripped away the Green to see a town that for a time was of a size with Seattle, an industrial complex that gave it more

of a shove toward becoming a city than the speculation in real estate that was the "Seattle Spirit," more even than the Skidroad's business of serving up hot sin to Puget Sound loggers and millworkers and fishermen.

Milt's house was smackdab in the middle of what had been the downtown of New Town. Up the county road toward ~~The~~ Pass, on one side of the street were garage, stables, meat market, carpenter shop, drink parlor, barbershop, and Finishⁿ Brotherhood Hall (band concerts, dances, and movies). On the other side was Finn Town. Next door to the Swanson home was the sixty-five room Coal Creek Hotel; in 1918 it became, with a new sign, the Newcastle Hotel. Next door to that was the Company Store, which from 1916 to 1935 housed the postoffice, relocated from Old Town.

The industrial section extended along Coal Creek better than a mile, upstream from the bunkers past the railroad terminus to the Ford Slope and Steam Hoist and the sawmill.

In the field next to Milt's house was a ^{small} ~~little~~ concrete ruin. Milt kept the grass around it mowed because this was the last easily visible artefact of downtown, foundations of the hotel's boiler room. To expedite archeological access I pioneered a rude trail down to the creek and up and over the mountain of gypo waste rock.

My path descended to the railroad grade exactly where had been the passenger waiting room. Milt had relocated the little building in his backyard as a chicken house, then a

mini-museum. Among his artefacts was Volume 1, Number 1 of the Seattle Daily Chronicle, published "in Washington Territory," dated October 10, 1881, carrying the schedule of the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad "from Seattle to Renton and Newcastle, carrying passengers and freight." Trains left Seattle daily at 7:30 in the morning and 2:00 in the afternoon, arrived at Newcastle at 9:30 and 4:00. Trains left Newcastle daily at 11:00 and 7:00. Also announced was that the Oregon Improvement Company had instituted a "new steamship line between Seattle and San Francisco."

(Passenger service from Seattle to Renton ended September, 1925. All service to Newcastle ceased in 1930. The line was abandoned in 1933, the rails pulled up and shipped to Japan in 1937, returned to America after Pearl Harbor.)

Downstream from the waiting room site the rail grade was a walkable path, passing the North Fork of Coal Creek where it frothed ~~down~~ a fifty-foot cliff. The falls frothed all year because the Company's mine in the Primrose Seam tapped the all-year water table. From the confluence the united Coal Creek ran all year downstream, as the South Fork did not; by summer's end its water had either sunk into the mines or evaporated.

The Coal Creek valley had been shaped by a sizable Pleistocene river with quite a wide floodplain. The ice gone, the post-glacial creek had incised in the plain a steep-walled gorge. The railroad had no business down there, stayed high on the floodplain and valley wall. So did I, mostly.

Often, though, I gazed down to the primeval where no creature that had evolved to the level of reason ever went, but many creatures whose instincts kept them safe from murderous hunters, children, dogs, and cats. I had to go see. Why? Because it was there.

I left the grade at what had been the junction with ~~the~~ Washington Timber & Spar's thirteen miles of narrow-gauge lokie line. Exactly there began the post-glacial gorge, a savagery of wildness unequalled elsewhere on Cougar Mountain or anywhere else ^{so near} ~~to hear~~ the heart of Puget Sound City. My distance traveled in the depths, a scant mile. Travel time, most of an afternoon. Crawling over cedar logs that had pressed ^{as trees} mouths against Earth's sweet-flowing breast nigh onto a thousand years, then fell here to spend another millennium rotting into soil. Yelping through devils club and salmonberry thorns. Wading the creek for easier progress on the far bank. Re-wading.

The ice had been digging and dumping on the mountain effectively forever, in several glacial advances, interglacial retreats, and ^{the} ^(or inter?) past dozen post-glacial millennia. Man had been here -- well, not here ~~x~~ in the gorge, but nearby above -- only a century and odd decades. The creek rippled over chunks of rusty iron from gigantic machinery that fell apart. Flowed under logs that had been squared by axe for some mysterious purpose, then tumbled into the gorge by some disaster or other.

Above the gorge was the rail grade. Beside it was a large circle of concrete, half-buried in duff -- the locomotive turntable, also serving miners' skids as a merry-go-round. A path climbed to the site of the Newcastle School, four classrooms for eight grades, serving both Old Town and New Town. The few who sought higher education boarded in Seattle, rode the train home on weekends. Retired in 1943, ~~it~~ ^{the school} had a second life as the Masonic Lodge. In March 1970 a "concert" by a "hippie band" caused so much damage the building was declared a public nuisance and demolished.

The Cinder Mine! The grade skirted its upper edge, ~~from~~ where rail cars dumped waste rock from the Ford Mine. Trucks hauled the burned-out clinkers, a gaudy red-yellow, to the close-by Newcastle Brick Plant.

The Farm! King County had acquired the property with funds from Forward Thrust to expand Coal Creek Park. Park development was years away ^{so} ~~and~~ farming continued. The farmhouse on the brink of the gorge overlooked a broad cow pasture. A billowing Yellow Transparent apple tree turned lushly yellow in summer fruiting, a regular stop on the bears' cafeteria tour.

Old Town! Site of the first successful mine, in 1865, and ^{bunkers of} the last gypo mine, in 1963. A sidetrip from the railroad, of which it had been the terminus until extended to New Town in 1883.

In 1942, spring of our senior year at Lincoln High School, I didn't know what it was. A friend and I, intending

to ~~enroll~~ enroll in the to study
 ^ at the University ~~some~~ fall in geology, had come in my Model
 A to see bedrock, so unusual around Seattle, where the rocks
 are all from Canada, ground up into gravel, sand, and clay.
 I didn't like it. Sediments are dull stuff compared to the
 granitics and metamorphics we knew in the high mountains.
 Fossil clam casts were no more interesting than clam shells,
 still full of clams, on the beach. There were no dinosaur bones.

Miner^s trucks littered road shoulders with spilled
 coal. Dust blackened trees. The valley stunk (the Cinder
 Mine would be smouldering for years to come).

From the valley road a sideroad passed bunkers to
 a scattering of cows and chickens and decrepit little shacks.
 Faces peered from windows, suspicioning us as revenooers?
 Were squirrel guns leveled at us behind those window curtains?
 The Company had abandoned Old Town in 1921. New Town, abandoned
 a decade later, had gracefully vanished. Old Town remained,
 a tableau of Old Appalachia.

to some birds as a
 ^
 Back at The Farm, a cow path descended from the grade
 past a pond dammed up to give cows a drink (and incidentally,
 rest-and-feeding stops on the Pacific Flyway), to the Grand
 Canyon, where waters had smoothly sculpted mudstones and
 sandstones, and swirling pebbles had reamed out potholes. A trout
 swam by, close enough to grasp had I been in a mood to grasp
 fish, as do the bears.

I was forced into the creek to wade past a tributary
 gulch that carried no visible water, was a revolting morass
 of orange slime, orange being the color of algae that thrive

on iron salts. A short distance up the gulch were timbers framing ~~an airway~~ to Tony Scalzo's 1933 water-level entry of his Newcastle King Mine into the Primrose Seam. (Years later the City of Bellevue incorporated ^{and platted} to the brink of the gorge. The proud owner of a fancy new house stepped out his back door one morning and screamed, "There's a hole in my yard!" City Hall started screaming, the police unrolled CRIME SCENE tape, ~~by the yard,~~ newspapers crowded around to photograph the hole in the ground, lawyers thronged to get a piece of the action. Fred commented, "Had they asked, I would have warned them to watch out for Tony's airway."

Past the Scalzo slime I came upon a trail whacked out by Scouts, closely following banks of the creek. One day when the valley reeked ~~with~~ ^{of} salmon carcasses I in several minutes came upon a kingfisher, a great blue heron, and a bald eagle. Tracks in the sand evidenced ~~that~~ ^{that} coyotes had been at the feast, and various little critters, including raccoon, no doubt. The bear had missed out, so far, but plenty remained for them, whenever.

RED TOWN

~~Jerry Peltola and Fred Rounds were coffeeing up, chewing the fat. Fred was shaking his head about the beetle that suddenly had taken to parking golly knows why at the PRIVATE PROPERTY gate on the Clay Pit road. Jerry laughed, "That's Harvey!" and telephoned me to join them.~~

Jerry ^{Peltola} had lived in the pasture at The Pass since his folks brought him home from the hospital. Fred ^{Rounds} had lived in Newcastle since his family arrived from the Old Country. ~~Jerry had ridden his horse from one end of the mountain to the other. Fred had crawled all over its insides.~~ Neither ever had come across anybody who spent day after day poking about their backyard.

"Have you been to Red Town?" Jerry asked.

I'd never heard of it. "Red. Was that because of the Wobblies?"

A big laugh. What was so funny? When Fred was a kid the newspapers headlined the Everett Massacre and the Centralia Massacre and other bloodlettings from Greys Harbor to Montana. Everybody who lived in the woods or near had heard about spikes driven into trees by loggers to destroy headsaws in the mills as revenge for weevils in the mess hall bread and bedbugs in the bunkhouse blankets and short pay in the envelopes.

But this Red wasn't political. It just happened to

be the Company's favorite color.

My shot in the dark was fair enough, though. The mines of America had been rumbling forever. The Knights of Labor had raised holy hell in Newcastle after 1886, until President Cleveland declared martial law and the militia and the Pinkertons ~~goes~~ busted the union. The United Mine Workers began stirring the pot locally in 1907, and in 1919 gave the shout, "Hit the bricks!" The Big Strike. In 1921 the Company struck back. The Lockout. Families evicted from Company property, not only from Company-owned houses but from those built by the miners themselves. Shacks at the site of the original town, west of Old Town, gave temporary shelter -- "Uniontown." A sympathetic Superintendent let Jerry's mother's folks ~~to~~ move their house to The Pass, the last survival of Finn Town.

Where did Fred stand in all this? No place, I guess. By the time he was old enough to go underground the United Mine Workers were gone and the shop was wide open. Curiously, Fred showed me with pride his membership card in the Industrial Workers of the World. He was pleased as punch by my gift of the Little Red Songbook -- he'd lost his copy. But the sabot's Black Cat, the legions of "I Won't Work" (pitted against the Establishment's Legion of Loyal Loggers) were in the woods, had nothing to do with the Big Strike. Likely as not Fred had enrolled in the Wobblies in a saloon and the card

was the souvenir of a good drunk. Yet...

Willis Rounds wasn't forced to choose between loyalty to the working class and loyalty to the boss. He was a teamster, and the Teamsters' Union was in Seattle, not Newcastle. He had skidded logs to the Company sawmill, the old one. When the new mill was built in 1916, steam donkeys replacing horses, he managed the Company stables, delivered coal to miners' houses, and performed other horse-and-wagon services.

Fred and I had another thing besides North Dakota in common. When the Depression was being ended by World War II, Dad drove truck in Seattle, delivering saws-knives-cutterheads to mill-supply firms. He carried a card in the Teamsters Union, the logo featuring a horse-drawn wagon. Ancient history. Not all that ancient, because Dad also had been that sort of teamster. When he got out of the Navy he had supported his bride and new baby pushing a handtruck for an outfit that shipped, by mosquito fleet, hay-grain-feed-seed-building supplies around Puget Sound. One customer on the Seattle waterfront had been there since Territorial times, didn't like what the world was coming to, and wouldn't allow a truck on his premises. Dad's employer kept one old wagon and one old teamster, just for this one old customer. One morning the teamster showed up dead. The straw boss yelled to his crew, "Any of you guys know how to handle a team?"

As a lad in Lowell, Dad had worked for a grocer, filling orders by the bushel and the peck, delivering by wagon. A noted historian has commented, "History picks bits and pieces from the wreckage of the past that sinks silently out of sight." The picking done by the Establishment annals has omitted the fact that Dad was the last horse-and-wagon teamster on the Seattle waterfront.

A third thing the Rounds and the Mannings had in common was ambivalence in the war between money and muscle, capital and labor. In the grimmest of the Depression, Dad kept our family barely afloat by brandishing billyclub and shotgun. Never cracked a skull or filled a belly with buckshot. None the less, a goon. (As mehitabel the alley cat explained to her friend archy the cockroach, "the things i had not ought to i do because i got to.")

When Everett families gather at holidays, they share happy memories of the past. Nobody brings up November 5, 1916, when the steamer Verona, on her regular run from Seattle, approached Pier No. 1. Aboard was a large party of Wobblies coming to join a Free Speech demonstration. On the dock was a large party of "special deputies." Who fired first? When the Verona backed out in the bay, two men lay dying on the dock, sixteen wounded. On the steamer thirty-one Wobblies were wounded, five dead, and perhaps a dozen more dead and forgotten overboard. At any sizable gathering of Everett families, some great-grandfathers were on the dock, some on the Verona.

Fred's position as local charge d'affaires for Palmer Coking Coal told me nothing about his feelings for the Company. Anyway, the past is past. His Wobbly card was as relevant now as Great-Grandfather's headstone in Crown Hill Cemetery, "Harrison W. Clark (1841-1910) A MEMBER OF CO I NY VOL INF."

When the Company banked the insurance money from the burning of the bunkers and decamped, Fred glommed onto a file of three-by-five cards. As a veteran of the Big War would show photos of fellow doughboys in the trenches, he went through the file with me, card by card. Some cards said little, others a lot. When and where hired, when quit or fired, sullen/slow or eager/quick, sober and reliable or comes on shift straight from the Saloon, good family man or wifebeater, union member or keeps his nose clean, current at the Company Store or left town owing, reported to be a malcontent in Black Diamond or Montana. The file was contemporary with the Palmer Raids, Sacco-Vanzetti, and the file instituted in Washington, D.C. by J. Edgar Goodguy. ^{Many} ~~Most~~ of my campus friends had cards in that file. Mine noted only that I had been an Eagle Scout.

The Company file had no card for Fred. He was entrusted to bring the payroll box from Seattle and to run off the nuns. Good enough.

Red Town.

Jerry and Fred insisted that if you ain't seen Red Town you ain't seen nothing yet. But there was a PRIVATE PROPERTY

gate, and close by (within gunshot) was the toll both at the entry to the "landfill" (garbage dump), Strain's WW II strip mine, now accepting (for a fee) debris from the construction of highways and cities. The toll collector was a pitiable wreck of a feeble-minded drunk with a shotgun. A word from Fred was Dutch's command. Shots were not fired at the green beetle parked at the gate.

Fred gave me a copy of the "Pacific Coast Coal Co. Map of Coal Creek," showing New Town as it was when I had my third birthday, far away on Bainbridge Island. A window on the past, my guide to that "...foreign country. They do things differently there."

South of Coal Creek, above the bunkers and the railroad terminus, ^{are} ~~is~~ First Avenue and the dozen-odd houses of Rainbow Town. Connecting to First at the bridge over the creek is Second Avenue North, the main street through downtown. On the west side are the Company Store, the hotel, and a dozen-odd businesses and dwellings. On the east side are the eighteen-odd houses of Finn Town. Reichert Street ^{connects up} the slope east to a scattering of two dozen buildings on Third Avenue North, which leads to Cross Street and its twenty or so buildings -- White Town.

A deep ravine interrupts. Paralleling it on the south is Hill Street, climbing from Second Avenue South to a broad bench. In a 1909 photo, smoke billows from a slashfire.

With the bench cleared of forest, the Company brought in from Franklin, its mine closed and town defunct, ~~the~~ eighty-five board-and-batten cottages that were neatly placed along Second, Third, and Fourth Avenues South. Red Town.

For a time after Dutch's gun was silenced, I climbed Hill Street nearly every day. A short bit up from the gate I noted a distinct sag in the roadway. I asked Fred. "The Number Three." Beside the road was a strange pit. My first cave hole.

The tale was told of a local driving home on a dark and stormy night from the swing shift at Boeing. Where the Newcastle Road (Second Avenue North of yore) passed Milt Swanson's place, he drove his Packard station wagon through a large puddle of rainwater. Not all the way through. The Packard nosedived into the puddle, only the rear bumper sticking out. The local escaped out the rear hatch, woke Milt, who called Fred. In the morning a wrecker retrieved the Packard, Milt and Fred dumped mine timbers in the puddle, then clinkers from the Cinder Mine. In time the County topped off with ~~pit run~~ gravel, later blacktopped. Nobody ever whispered a word of it to the state, or even the County Courthouse. There ^{is} ~~was~~ a state law forbidding messing around with mine calamities until after a thorough examination. That would have closed the Newcastle Road for golly knows how long. The blacktop now was developing a distinct sag. Driving his truck over it, Fred always jumped up in his seat to lighten the load.

Up Hill Street from the sag there were, on the right, sites of the Doctor's House and the Hospital. To the left, on the brink of the ravine, had been the Saloon. In a 1918 photo of a Fourth of July parade down Second Avenue North, the structure rivals in size the ~~H~~otel. What was its status in Prohibition? Revenooers had a reputation of staying clear of miners. The instinct for self-preservation. By the time of Repeal there was no town. The chronology never was made clear by Fred. He had tales to tell, though.

The Saloon was a short stagger from the Ford Slope. A drunk in the hole was a danger to the entire underground world. Several bad happenings caused the Company to close the Saloon. Buggies and flivvers streamed south on the Thomas Rouse Road to Tobacco Road, as the dens of iniquity in May Valley were known. Homeward bound on dark and blurry nights, buggies and flivvers failed to make the turn at the Blind Corner. So the Company ^{re-}opened the Saloon.

A bridge was projected across the ravine from the Saloon to White Town and the Dance Hall, the Union Hall, and the Finnish Boarding house. The bridge never was built, a substantial footlog serving sufficiently. A woman from White Town nightly bellied her considerable mass up to the bar. One morning her neighbors discovered her not at home. She was found sleeping peacefully in the creek below the footlog.

Outweighed though he was, Fred hoisted her on his back and packed her out of the gulch, fit as a fiddle once she sobered up. Said Fred, "She could have been killed if she weren't so drunk."

At the top of Hill Street, on the bench, a sharp right turn hitched it to Third Avenue South. At the corner was the Superintendent's manse, long gone now. The site was a jungle of scotchbroom, an alien whose yellow blossoms brighten the early summer, the rest of the year bring down curses on the ~~gullibility of~~ the pioneers. The rest of old Red Town had been conquered by ^{the} most evil of all the aliens, hellberry, thousands of murderous thorns per square foot.

What was it here that Fred and Jerry expected would fill me with awe? The history, of course, but that was all in their heads. I couldn't see it.

Except for an artefact I found at the hellberry edge. Fred identified it. Miners used to light their way with whale-oil lamps -- accompanied by caged pigeons, carefully watched for symptoms of asphyxiation by colorless, odorless carbon monoxide or dioxide or (explosive, as well) methane. My artefact was part of the newer headlamp, a bronze unit of two chambers, one for calcium carbide, the other for water. Brought together, they reacted to generate acetylene. (If the flame burned low, add carbide and water. If that didn't perk it up, get the hell out of there.)

Is that all there is?

Of visible history, yes. But more could be deduced from the post-history of Nature's reclamation. Bigleaf maples had sprawled magnificently in the half-century since the Company went away. Ivy, another nasty foreigner, crept high on trunks, sucking the blood of hosts, but did preserve memories of the eighty-five boxes and the hundreds of people who had lived in them. What were those lovely festoons of white and pink flowers? Maples don't bloom so pretty. Climbing roses! No garish bushes for them, only the sky was good enough for their simple elegance.

The sky also was the aim of the slender, graceful natives, the cottonwoods/^{whose leaves}went a-dancing in the breezes that filled the air with ~~the~~ cotton balls sent high and far to seed the ~~the~~ species. The poplars were immigrants but could be forgiven because planted in rows on the prairies they served as windbreaks, and here just gave the wind something to do.

At the base of the poplars were masses of large white and purple flowers, periwinkle, a favorite garden groundcover to keep weeds away. Other descendants of gardens-that-were contrasted with vulgarly garish inventions of hothouse engineers, ^{were} exquisite jewels, "infinite riches in little room."

A book on wildflowers of Britain connected Red Town to the Seven Hills of Rome, the walls of Ilium, the pleasure

dome of Kublai Khan, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Tower of Babel. Weeds they had been in Britain, and before that in Serbia, Persia, the Scythian steppes, wherever the Roman legions marched or the barbarians irrupted. These weeds had begun their journey to Red Town when my ancestors huddled in sod huts, choking on peat smoke, gobbling porridge with the three-finger spoon.

Up and down Second, Third, and Fourth Avenues South, Willis Reed and his helper, Fred, had delivered to household bins ^{coal} dug by the cottagers from beneath their cottages. The milkman, Reichert, made morning rounds, filling pannikins set out on porches. Rising before dawn to milk his cows, he filled a pair of five-gallon cans, hoisted them on a shoulder yoke, and carried the eighty pounds the three miles down from his farm atop Reichert's Hill (Radio Peak, I later renamed it, before I knew about him). He then went underground for his day's work. Cottagers were expected to rouse themselves before dogs and cats emptied the pannikins.

I walked across the ~~surface of the~~ Bagley Seam. To my right was a buzz of flies in a cave hole, a stink of Dutch's kitchen garbage. Brushed in (until I later brushed it out) was a creek valley without a creek, a caved-in water ^{level} entry to a Bagley mine of the previous century. To my left [^] was a river valley without a river, a World War II Strain strip mine. When I lived by Lake Union in a rooming house built before

Washington entered the Union, I cooked and heated with coal scavenged from the railroad tracks to the University steam plant, so I had a thirty-year-old connection to the Bagley. (The Seam, that is. My first school, in 1931, was the Daniel Bagley, apparently a man up to here with the "Seattle Spirit.")

At the far end of the hellberries, of Red Town, was a field. There had been an orchard; a solitary apple tree remained free of encroaching brush. A bear watched over the blossoming, the fruiting, the blushing. In a single night the crop was processed into black heaps, the top branches pruned.

Fred had neighbored with that bear (or one just like it) since childhood. The Rounds family had inherited the Superintendent's old house when the new one was built at the top of Hill Street. The old one was the second-largest home in Red Town, plenty of room for the elbows of a half-dozen coal-miner sons. Fred had bought it from the Company, had it moved two miles up the mountain, and painted it a fitting color for a green and quiet place -- green. However, by the time I came at Jerry's call to be introduced to Fred, he had restored the Red. It was the last survival of Red Town.

THE FAR COUNTRY

The bear's apple tree was in pink-white bloom the morning I first walked beyond Red Town on what Fred called the Indian Trail, said by anthropologists to have been ~~used by~~ ^{a route of} the Original Inhabitants in centuries past, though it seemed to me odd they'd get so far from their Whulge, its acres of clams and its wide-open water road for cedar-dugout canoes. They had their reasons. I had mine. That spring day in 1976 I had no notion where the trail went. Good enough that it led away from the now into a timeless nowhere.

On the other side of the mountain, Mother lay dying. Fred was of her age. Sometime I should ask how it was in Newcastle in the Spanish flu. Mother was barely a teenager, clock-around nurse of the whole Hawthorne clan, one at a time and in bunches. She fell asleep exhausted on a couch and heard the guttural German of the Beast of Berlin and awoke in feverish hysteria to find her pulse being taken by Dr. Klemptner, newly in Seattle from Vienna.

The flu had drastically thinned the human herd in 1919. Our family herd was being thinned this spring of 1976. Dad's mother, born in a Nova Scotia village in 1876, had celebrated her hundredth birthday surrounded by all my New

England relatives, and died. Cousin Patsy, born the same summer as me and sister-close in our childhood, died. Cousin Bruce, three years older than us, and like us an only child, our older brother, died. And Cousin Bonnie and Aunt Yvonne in the East and Uncle Bill in the West. I wasn't feeling so hot myself.

Going, going... Red Town long gone. In the naked semi-desert of the Southwest the ghost towns mummify in the parched air to a death-eternal Egyptian brown. Here the Whulge ceaselessly breathes gaseous and liquid and solid water for an irrepressible English re-springing. The tiny mouths of mould and fungus and slime and the big mouths of worms and beetles gnaw without pause through the days and nights and seasons and years, and the mouths of trees are pressed against the earth's sweet-flowing breast in close company of ferns and devils club and brush-brush and weeds-weeds. The ghost towns here dissolve in the ectosphere to ^{be} sensed ^{only} by solitary walkers but nevermore to be seen, no more than the dozen or whatever millennia of the Original Inhabitants, the immigrants from Siberia.

The road-trail that had been widened several years past by the pulpwood loggers and now was kept truck-passable by firewood cutters sidehilled the valley wall (a valley too spacious for the post-glacial trickle, its eroding done by

meltwaters of the living glacier, now another ghost).

Jerry mourned the bosky shadows of his horsing around before the forest was pulped. My walkabout was adequately shaded by the non-pulpable bigleaf maples, vine maples, willow, and bitter cherry (in cheery white bloom!), as well as creekside cottonwoods, an eminently pulpable species but defended against loggers by the soggy tangle of the wet. Gypos had gutted the valley walls for sawlogs some two decades past, ^{time} enough for a vigorous beginning of third-growth Douglas fir, western redcedar, and western hemlock; thus turns the wheel of the forest cycle as it has for the hundred-odd^c [^]enturies since the glacier went back to Canada for more rocks.

The valley bottom was a swamp -- a virgin swamp, so formidable that it daunted the bulldozers as it had the bullteams. Salmonberry thickets (in lovely red bloom, but beware the claws that ^e [^]s^ratch), the snarl of wiry vine maple, the rotting logs half-floating in quick-muck. Brer Rabbit would love to be flung into this briar patch.

Say this for the pandemic pulping -- though cave-like shadows retained the bite of winter, thanks to the ~~saw~~ ^{by the saw} daylighting[^] the summer was a-coming in, lewdly sing cuckoo! Fresh new leaves of cottonwood were flipped by breezes to show velvet~~y~~-white undersides. Redtail hawks circled, warning me (spee-oo! spee-oo!) to stay away from nests. Brilliant in the sun, cumulus cloudlets drifted through the dense blue beyond the city's miasma.

The trail crossed Coal Creek where it tumbled out of a ravine onto an alluvial fan ^{that stretched out} across what had been the bed of the glacier's river. Glancing at my watch, I was startled by how few minutes it had ticked since Red Town. The clock measures city time, linear time. Wild time circles around, often stops entirely.

The alluvial fan was neither swamp nor forest. The Ball Park!

The enormously fat President of the United States rode the Seattle & Walla Walla to the end of the line, was buggied to the Ball Park and feted through the Fourth of July afternoon. The band played on as roast chickens and potato salad and home-baked chocolate cakes and apple pies were washed down with cider and porter and ale and wine and whiskey. The enormously fat President passed out in the hot sun and was carried by a dozen patriotic miners to the buggy and loaded on the train.

Some of the legend was almost true. The first American president to visit Washington Territory was Rutherford B. Hayes. He arrived in Seattle October 11, 1880.

In a regional perspective, the "Seattle Spirit" should have put Hayes on a steamer to view some of the mills ("the largest in the world") then rafting in logs from around the

Whulge and loading lumber on windships bound for San Francisco, China, Australia, and Africa. But those weren't Seattle's mills. The townboomers understandably failed to take him on tour of the ^{major} ~~indigenous~~ industry of "New York By and By" ^{in its own right} ~~itself~~, the Skidroad. (In the 1920s, when Dad was in the Navy, Seattle was renowned throughout the Pacific Fleet as "the best liberty town on the Coast.")

The "City on Seven Hills," reported by the federal census of that year to have mushroomed to a population of better than 3000, had more to boast about than sin. A railroad! To Newcastle? Had heads been honestly counted, the population the full length of Coal Creek was likely around six hundred. Scoff as you please, the town was hitched by railroad and ship to an honest-to-golly go-getter city, San Francisco.

Newspapers of the time reported that General William Tecumseh Sherman stepped into the main mine. The president, outside, made a speech. So much for the chicken and potato salad. As for the Ball Park, the railroad then terminated at Old Town, so the Ball Park would have been the earlier one, not its successor near Red Town. Finally, Hayes was ^{preposterously} ~~scandalously~~ abstemious and was the sole president of that era who lacked a "corporation," big bellies being esteemed as evidence of reliable economic loyalties.

The Red Town Ball Park dated to 1921-22. Fred may or may not have played there. Jerry certainly did -- until an idiot bulldozer heaped up piles of the fan's soil, leaving no

room for three bases. The bulldozer was driven by an idiot prospector who discovered a trace of white stuff in the alluvium and in the way of idiot prospectors everywhere, sought the mother lode of a valuable something, talc or diatomaceous earth or pigeon poop. The idiot in chief was, of course, Palmer Coking Coal, which had bought out the Company not to mine coal but just to own more coal country than anybody else. When the world ran out of oil it could get rich as Croesus. Meanwhile it would coddle any idiot who strayed its way.

Also any sharks and vultures. The Razore empire whose founder proudly declaimed that "my life is garbage" plotted to fill the valley of Coal Creek to the brim with Seattle's kitchen swill. The idea sounded good to King County but was shot down by the proposed neighbors in Newport Hills and Cougar's Hilltop Community. Developers and highwaymen then began to run out of dumping grounds for construction debris, threaten^c_^ to stop Progress in its tracks. Government wrung its hands. (What shall I do, what shall I do?) Razore rode to the rescue by leasing rights to ^{use} ~~dump in~~ Strain's old strip mine ^{as a dump.} Evan Morris, Palmer's managing partner, came by every afternoon to gloat over the tolls collected by Dutch.

Then, the pulping. This wasn't idiocy, just plain stupidity compounded by cupidity. There was a great hunger for pulpwood. A gypo hired a crew to pile alder and cottonwood in decks. But he failed to talk to mills about buying the logs.

By the time he did the bottom had fallen out of the market. He skedaddled, leaving Palmer holding the bag. Also his crew. There sat the decks, dry rot and conk destroying their worth for pulp or firewood or anything else but habitat for beetles and worms and bugs. The crew boss, himself ~~destitute~~^{stiffed}, made a deal with Palmer to salvage whatever wood in the decks still would make a fire.

By the time of my arrival on the scene, the deck-salvaging was done and the logger had moved to standing trees outside the places Fred reserved for his own cutting. He was a decent enough guy but sloppy. Fred's code of etiquette required a clearcut to be neat. "Dirty Bill," Fred named him. "He leaves a mess." I wasn't much offended. The alder groves he slaughtered would ^{rather soon} again be alder groves ^{neater} ~~made neat~~ by Nature. I did resent his obscene brutality with bigleaf maples that had cool-shadowed Red Town and picnic spots along the Indian Trail.

To be sure, a maple can't be killed by whacking off limbs or even attacking the trunk. In Britain similar species exhibit some of the oldest trees in the civilized world despite having been logged repeatedly over thousands of years. "Coppicing" it was called in Keltic and Saxon and Danish-Norman times, and into our own time, cutting pieces that the tree, its roots let alone, replaces over and over again, Nature's method of "sustained harvest."

As for the Ball Park, the sport there never was mine. I could not hit, throw, or catch a baseball and didn't much

care to watch others hit, throw, and catch. Baseball for me was a sport in my head. Summer evenings before World War II our radio was tuned to Leo Lassen, whose rapid non-stop rasp constructed games that half the time he wasn't watching, was seeing only on the telegraph ticker tape. We cheered at his "backbackback -- and it's OVER!" The fence, that is. The Seattle Rainiers, that was our team, jousting with the Portland Beavers, Sacramento Solons, San Francisco Seals, Oakland Acorns, Los Angeles Angels, Hollywood Stars, San Diego Padres. Leo knew with his eyes closed the gestures and tics of our players. Kewpy Dick Barrett or Farmer Hal Turpin on the mound, Gilly Campbell employing the tools of ignorance behind the plate, George Archie on first, Alan Strange on second, Schuster the Rooster at short, Dick the Needle Gyselman at the hot corner, Jo Jo White in left, Bill Lawrence patrolling center, Home Run Hunt in right.

The players at this Ball Park I knew only in a team photo, nattily attired in uniforms that declared "Newcastle," ready willing and able to combat other town teams in the Coal League, along the rail lines that connected Newcastle to Renton, Black Diamond, Franklin, Cumberland, Kanasket, Kummer.

Seattle's basic credential for cityhood was the best harbor on the Whulge, protected from roaring southerlies and northerlies by the outthrusting bulks of West Seattle and Magnolia Bluff, ^{the bay} deep enough close enough to shore for ocean-going ships to have handy dockage, centrally located for the mosquito fleet to ^{bring} customers ^{from} north and south and west to the

fun and games. But what made a going business was the demand of a genuine city, San Francisco, for black gold.

Was some of the Newcastle gold yellow? A miner -- of coal now but of other treasures earlier, in Montana -- built a sluice box in the Ball Park and hired punk kids to wheelbarrow and shovel sand and gravel. At week's end he cleaned the rug. Never let the punks watch, so Fred never learned if there were fines of gold dust caught in the rug. Where the Primrose Seam outcropped in the Clay Pit, my nose wrinkled at the faint bite of sulfur dioxide, indicating the presence of iron pyrite, commonly a gold-bearing mineral. Too bad Fred never got a look at the secrets of the rug.

The ravine from which Coal Creek tumbled onto the alluvial fan came from the high basins ^{along} ~~at~~ a contact zone between the coal-bearing sediments and the volcanic andesite that constituted the heart of the Newcastle Anticline. This I knew because of a little old quarry.

The volcanics bothered me. Not for what they were, but for when. Too long ago for my head to grasp, too many zeros, especially in this year when members of my family had so few ^{left}. Earth ought to have been created in 4004 B.C., like Bishop Ussher calculated. The Precambrian can be written down by a professor as a number on a blackboard. Were he to comprehend it in terms of human life he'd throw the chalk in the air and run shrieking from the classroom, toppling dinosaurs. Who but mystics, which is to say physicists, dare look straight on into the Big Bang? Peering through a microscope at microfossils

had sent me fleeing from Lower Campus to Upper, where "old" meant Old English.

The glaciers, now, the Pleistocene, I could handle that. Homey. ~~Only~~ ^{Just} a few zeros. Our Holocene is only post-glacial in an interim sense. The Cordilleran Ice Sheet is expected to come again, as some four times previously, ^{and} send a Puget Lobe south to ruin real estate values in Seattle. The ice is biding its time in Canada: the Illecillewaet Neve in the Selkirks (we climbed Sir Donald, by the Northwest Ridge), the Columbia Icefield in the Rockies (Athabaska), the nameless "extensive icefields" of the British Columbia Coast Mountains (Nuit One, a first). The ice was still here, too, in view from Seattle any clear day, south on Rainier and north on Baker.

My University years were worth it for Plato and Hume and Gibbon and Spengler and Wordsworth and Housman and Mozart and the Eastlake Gardens and Blue Moon. Not to forget the geomorphological eye able to strip away the green to expose the naked gray moraines, to replace swamps and marshes and bogs and kettle lakes with rock-milk-gray torrents being flushed from snouts of glaciers. The Pole was not far away, here on the Indian Trail.

The trail narrowed. Trucks hadn't wheeled through since the end of the pulping. The mud had settled in mudpuddle[^], the water ~~clearly reflecting~~ ^{perfectly mirroring} the sky. No footprints. No human, that is. Deer. Bear. Coyote. A ground squirrel skittered by. A [!]chimunk clung to a fir, staring at me. A Douglas squirrel scolded on high. At me, or the circling redtail hawk (spee-oo)?

Where was I? Wherever it was, apparently it was where I was supposed to be. Had the Lord intended otherwise, I'd be elsewhere.

I recalled a movie of my childhood. The Grim Reaper has come for an old man the Lord wishes to bring Home. The reaper is not grim, he is wise and kind. And ~~trusting~~ ^{gullible,}. The old man tricks him, I forget how, into climbing an apple tree. There's a rule in such situations that Death can't climb down until the old man permits and he won't. Mr. Death argues that living and dying are part of the same game. Can't have one without the other, so let me down. The hell with you, says the old man. And so said I, walking on to golly knows where.

The trough of the ancient glacier, the valley of the vanished river, was ending. A ridge blocked the way south. But there were intimations of a large emptiness to the east, around a corner. Something new: the ooziings in the Long Swamp ~~were~~ ^{were as} silent since the Ball Park, ~~were developing a voice~~ ^{as they had been} ~~But a~~ ^{beginning} ~~A~~ ^{grew} tumbling of water, ~~the~~ ^{the} louder with each step I took. It must issue from around the corner, a headwaters basin leading to a pass. To where? I'd never been this far south on the mountain, hadn't studied the map.

Louder and louder. Almost I could feel the splash and spray. Faster and faster I walked. How long had I been walking? Beyond time. How far? Beyond miles.

The corner. I stumbled to a halt. The water was not falling toward me from the (hypothesized) basin but away, though a gap in the (supposed) barrier ridge, ~~off the edge~~

into that Ocean Sea on the maps of navigators of old who pictured there the dragons guarding the White Space beyond.

The swamp seepage south from the Ball Park wasn't Coal Creek, it was some other creek. I had planned to ascend my basin to my pass, proceed east to the Cascade Crest, turn north for Canada, and in that great waking-up morning scratch my name on the North Pole.

I wouldn't do that today. Instead I would sit me down here in this very Far Country. Somewhere off the map, the dragons roared. Sounded like dogs barking.

THE WILDERNESS

The highest point of the Newcastle Hills/Cougar Mountain lacked strikingly unique geography or history, had to make do with my initial naming of "Peak 1595". After getting there by half a dozen routes, I honored it as "Wilderness Peak."

Granted, it fails to satisfy the terms of Zahniser's definition in the Wilderness Act of 1964. (What on Earth does since the sky got filled up with machinery, or on the Moon since Flash Gordon vacationed there with his golf clubs?) Still, the national wilderness, the "wildness without," gives an experience far removed from any in the workplace-living space of civilized man.

The regional park system bordering San Francisco Bay acknowledged the value of a wilderness experience in lands not beyond civilization but ringed by it. Their "wildness within" satisfies the criteria for a regional wilderness. The size of the unit and the shape of the terrain mute the sights and sounds of civilization. Trammeling can be ameliorated or obliterated by Nature in her own sweet time.

In my hiking guidebooks I have extended the "within" to the community wilderness that can, if protected from playground kinetics, offer the mood of concert halls, art galleries, and churches, and to the neighborhood wilderness where a person can sit on a bench and listen to the birds.

Actually, Wilderness Peak is, as Zahniser's stipulation requires, a place "where man is a visitor who does not remain." Much of the peak's forest never was logged, is well along to ancient. Wilderness Creek was worked over by gypos in or around World War II, but they were here only a summer, and in any one spot merely a few hours, and they did not clearcut, they high-graded, dragging out by bulldozer the scattering of old-growth giants. The trees they disdained were then a half-century or more older, and now ^{are beyond past} or near the century mark. Their ^{tracks} [^] ^d cat ~~scarcely~~ scarcely molested the understory and groundcover. The [^] visitor sees it as a virgin forest and is startled by coming upon, here and there, an outside stump.

In my initial recon to "1595" I took the least-wild routes. "Ellenswood," said the billboard on the May Valley Road. No water, power, phones, or sewer, but the platter had provided a minimal road up (my) "Cabbage Creek" nearly to the top of (my) "Ring Road Peak," 1250 feet. Another platter's road climbed from the old Sunset Highway to the summit of the peak, which took its (my) name from its terminus in a ring around a plateau. The Ring Road and the gypo's vestigial truck road from Cabbage Creek met at the most illustrious point of the local topography, a heap of boulders at a 1210-foot benchmark.

From here ~~there~~ ^{travel} proceeded a gypo road become horse trail, deeply mucked by ~~horses~~ from pastures of May Valley. At a split, the left fork climbed to the 1450-foot top of (my) "Long View Peak," where an andesite cliff dropped to

Cabbage Creek. At the brink^{was}, an open window, artfully framed by dogwood, serviceberry, and ceanothus^{that}, gave the long view over May Valley to Rainier and St. Helens; in the middle ground, when the atmosphere was cleansed by a north wind, were the Tacoma Smelter/^{stack}and the city's pulpmill plume.

The right fork dropped to (my) "Shy Bear Pass", 1300 feet, at the head of (my) "Wilderness Creek," and ascended the remant["] gypo track to its end on the "Penultimate Plateau," a short brush-beat from the "Ultimate Plateau," 1595 feet. No view from the snagtops and wolves, semi-ancient, but who needdd to see Southcenter Mall and Sea-Tac Int^rnational Airport?

These routes were easy but inelegant, like driving a road up a mountain to a glacier and getting out of the car, ~~but~~ letting go of the handle just long enough to throw a snowball for the camera. I had walked the summit line of the Sky Country from Radio to Anti-Aircraft to Claypit. The way was plain to ^{filling}~~completing~~ my bag with the topmost top. A bulldozer had prospected along the crest from the Clay Pit. The trench, filled with rainwater, became (my) "Blackwater Ponds,"^{which} ended at the contact with andesite. I paralleled the ponds on a gameway so heavily tracked by canine feet that I named it the "Coyote Trail." A steep little climb led to the Penultimate Plateau. A short brushfight took me to the horse trail from Shy Bear Pass. I whacked bushes to the Ulfimate Plateau and even affixed a summit register, a notebook placed in doubled poly bags and hung by nylon cord from a huckleberry bush.

The route that became my favorite for quick trips went from the terminus (a landing, it had been) of Fred's Railroad, on the brink of a little valley. A few steps down I was surprised to find a trail, well-marked by paw prints and signatures of black crap. Halting to marvel, I heard a frantic commotion in the brush. The "Shy Bear."

Down ~~the~~ valley the trail was obvious nearly to the Far Country. Up the valley it was vague, ~~easy~~^{open} going through the alder forest but easy to lose on my return to Fred's Railroad. After a couple trips where I ~~lost~~^{spent} an hour fumbling around, I drew my trusty Swiss Army knife and scratched blazes. But alder blazes quickly heal over. As it happened, surveyors had begun to throng on the Coal Creek side of the mountain. Removing surveyors' tape is always good public policy. Thus commenced the Great Tape War, me against --Who?

The headwaters of Wilderness Creek were the field of battle. I had gazed down into that ~~battle~~^{valley} from Wilderness Peak on one side and Ring Road Peak on the other and quailed. Nevertheless, it had to be done. I stood on the Ring Road, rolled down sleeves to soak up the blood, clenched teeth to stifle the screams, and dove right in.

No blood, no screams! Those high-grading gypos had left their truck on Ring Road and tractored halfway down the creek. They had tractored halfway up from the Sunset Highway. Their catways scarcely could be discerned by the eye but were obvious to the feet. They hadn't quite joined ~~up~~ but were

readily hooked up to become (my) "Wilderness Creek Mainline."

The classic way to do it was from the bottom, where the creek flowed under the Sunset Highway into May Creek. A salmonberry thicket by the highway ^{obscured} ~~hid~~ the start of the cat track that climbed mercilessly straight up the fall line, ^{its} ~~the~~ sole difficulty ^{being} the andesite pebbles ^{that} littered ^{ed} ~~ing~~ the andesite bedrock, causing boots to skate and asses to hurt. A sidepath (mine) ended at (my) "Favorite Sitting Spot" in deep shadow beside a gentle babble. The fall-line ascent culminated at (my) "The Boulders." Boulders the size of (small) houses, fallen into the gorge from a glacier-oversteepened cliff, complemented the waterfalls. Very nice.

Above The Boulders a ^{bit} ~~way~~ were more boulders from another cliff. ^{Beneath} ~~Under~~ one was the "Cougar Mountain Cave," a tight squeeze for such troglodytes as bears but ~~found~~ comfortable, said the scat, for critters the size of weasels.

The gorge opened out into the "Big Bottom," a broad marshy glade. Its best feature was a fire-blackened cedar snag topped by an ebullience of greengoods -- the "Sky Garden."

Then there was the smaller "Beautiful Bottom," a smorgasbord of big trees, middling shrubs, and little herbs. Moss and ferns too, of course, and forbs and fungi and what you will.

At the valley head, Shy Bear Pass and the gypoway/horseway to the Penultimate Plateau.

My first time at Shy Bear Pass I was bemused by mysterious squares of translucent red celluloid stapled to trees and hung from bushes. Surely the horseway to the Penultimate Plateau was too perfectly evident to need marking. True enough. I realized it was part of a grander plan when I came upon ~~the~~ squares leading ^{beyond} the Penultimate, and soon after ~~saw~~ ^{found} them in the Beautiful Bottom, and then on the Ring Road. Somebody had built new trail to make a loop, and a grand loop it was. Intersecting as it did my new-built Wilderness Creek Mainline, the looping proliferated in a most delightful way. I became a great fan of the "Beautiful Bottom Trail."

The new project that occupied me at the time was my "Wilderness Cliffs Mainline" from The Boulders, up cat tracks to "Bigview Cliff" (source of The Boulders), then "Wildview Cliff" (source of the Cougar Mountain Cave boulder), and then from the gypos' deadend along a critters' path through shoulder-high salal in a virgin forest of semi-ancient Douglas fir. My goal, of course, was the Penultimate.

~~Done and done!~~ Mysterious red plastic squares! Uphill to the right they intersected the Beautiful Bottom Trail. Downhill to the left they fell straight down (in the "Fall Line Trail") to Wilderness Creek. The salal of the new construction was so freshly cut the ^{leaves had} ~~color was~~ not yet turned ~~to~~ brown.

Precisely at the brandnew junction of the two brandnew creations ^{were} ~~was~~ black heaps of crap at the doorway of a sheltered

nest. No wonder this bear was shy. It picks a spot at the mountain's pole of remoteness, where the hand of man has never set foot, and virtually at the same moment in the history of the universe two separate strangers invade its refuge, the "Shy Bear Bivouac."

To this point in time we were neither friends nor enemies, we inhabited two parallel but separate ^{time tracks.} ~~worlds.~~ Then my attention shifted to inventorying the maze of gypo catpaths. One day I arrived to pursue my exploration and ribboning and my bright red surveyors' streamers ^{near shy Bear Pass} were all gone. Why? I replaced them. They were removed again.

I could understand the Who's motives. Greater Seattle-Bellevue was on the march. Surveyors' ribbons foreshadow road grids, shopping malls. The Who thought I was one of Them, didn't know I was seeking to bring wheelfree feet into the Wilderness. Use it or lose it. Walk-walk-walk or soon new settlers will be firing up machines on Sunday morning to mow their damn lawns.

Who was he? Not "he," that's sexist. Better say "person." No, that's humanistic. Say "creature." Mysterious Red Plastic Creature. MRPC for short.

Our paths crossed repeatedly in the Wilderness, yet we never met. Or so I thought, though in years to come I was to hear that we had, but out of a sense of humor (or shyness?) It never revealed Its identity. We were allies, for sure.

It took it upon Itself to be custodian of the summit register I had instituted atop Wilderness Peak, replacing my poly bags with a metal canister, changing booklets when full.

I say, as a friend, It was not quite right in the head. It began to refer to Itself in the register booklets as the veritable Shy Bear. There may be problems in my head too, but I damn well know the difference between a ^{paranoid bear}~~Shy Bear~~ and a MRPC.

THE MALIGNANT DECEIVER

Mountaineering (recreational) in the Alps (European) began with the First Ascent -- the Golden Age. Then came the Great North Wall -- the Silver Age. Finally the Elegant Diretissimo -- the Age of Steel-Aluminum-Chromoly. The Firsts on Cougar were by loggers. None of its Walls is Great. But there is Elegance in the eye of the beholder.

I had long since recovered from the superficiality of the Orthodox faith, attained the Gnostic wisdom that a mountain is more deeply felt from the bottom than from the top. Despite what the reporter thought Mallory said in his haste to get from the lecture platform to a double gin, the "there" is incidental to the "getting there."

I had got to Wilderness Peak by every conceivable line except parachuting from the sky and burrowing from the bowels of the earth. One brave morning, candyflower brightening the forest floor, birdies twittering and tootling and banging drums and clashing cymbals, the time had come for the supreme Elegance.

Discovery of the Far Country had not opened my way to the Pole. It had, however, entertained me no end with ~~my~~ geomorphological hypothesizing. The "Curious Valley," for openers. The USGS map showed its creek as a continuous blue line from Newcastle to May Valley, the veritable embodiment

of Paul Bunyan's Round River, because both Coal Creek and May Creek flow ~~ed~~ into Lake Washington. Eyes in the sky are myopic. The boot-borne eye could see (on a second look, at least) that a gypo logger's truck causeway across the valley had established an artificial hydrographic divide. Coal Creek flowed north to the coal mines, (my) "Long Swamp Creek" oozed swampily south, never making more noise than a swampy ooze except in rainy season when it tumbled down a little andesite wall and thence to May Creek.

As for my "basin" that never was, three times during the glacier's retreat there might have been a meltwater lake dammed behind my "barrier ridge," the dam breached three times. Once would have been by Long Swamp Creek; in its ravine below the falls I found a scrap of tread, conceivably a relic of the Indian Trail, the original.

A second was by a tributary to May Creek that headed at (my) "Indian Gap," also a candidate for the Indian Trail.

The third, heading in a wind gap at the southeast end of my non-basin, was (my) "Far Country Creek," which became my standard entry from May Valley. ~~When~~ The May Valley Logging Company had run a lokie line part of the way to the Far Country, ~~but~~ ~~that was~~ before the turn of the century, the first large-scale logging on the mountain. They had merely high-graded ~~giants~~, and visitor man had not remained or returned, and the wildness was purely exquisite. However, the two miles from the May Valley ~~that was~~ ~~war~~ Road ~~pioneered~~ (?) by Captain McClellan, before he went East

to become a non-hero in the Civil War, took an easy grade that may well have appealed to the Original Inhabitants when they wanted an overland shortcut. A little old wagon road had been there beyond memory. My favorite memory of olden times in the Far Country is borrowed from Fred's memory. Every workday morning two miners came by his childhood home in Red Town, driving a buggy, commuting from their ~~farm~~ ^{farm} in May Valley, in season bringing vegetables and fruits for sale.

If the Far Country failed to give me a run at the Pole, it never lost ^{that} aura of Farness. Ascending the pulp-loggers' clearcut to the jut of ridge at 900 feet, looking across the dragon habitat of May Valley to the Cedar River, and beyond to the broad plain of the Osceola Mudflow that swept down from Mount Rainier a half-dozen millennia ago, was a dependable epiphany.

The Far Country Lookout and Wilderness Peak: they cried out to be hitched together by Diresissimo.

Okay, so it was no Eigerwand. The air distance was less than two miles and the net elevation gain barely 700 feet. The boot distance would be double at least, and the ups and downs to and from a 1200-foot plateau ^{that} I hadn't yet named and to and from Long View Peak would add to the gross elevation gain. Still, the most wicked connubiality of the vilest greenery could not make it more than a several-hour Elegance.

From the Lookout I passed the tidy little bowl of (my) "Lookout Marsh," the columbine garden on the slope above the

cattails in sprightly bloom. A briar patch at the boundary of the pulping would ^{have} annoyed me had not Brer Rabbit kept hopping-ways beaten down, one boot wide, enough. The ridge crest then rose gently into second-growth fir and hemlock, scattered though with old-growth stumps that provided massive pedestals for huckleberry gardens. The forest floor was sometimes a duff of fir needles that seemed to give the air a reddish glow. Sometimes the whole forest was inner-lighted by the candyflower and the incandescent lichen on the alder. Here and there were sky-blue patches of forget-me-not -- was it the native, or a garden escape seeded here, far from any gardens, by birds?

The ascent brought me out on the 1200-foot nameless plateau, where the exploration went all to hell. Quite literally.

The flattish crest sprawled this way, that way. Which way should I go? I'd brought no map, nor compass. No matter. Any way would do. Peak 1595 was a mile or so away. Close my eyes and I could stumble there in an hour or so. As I stumbled onward, from memory's depths there began to creep a summer afternoon of 1941.

Banned by the doctor from ^{what} was to have been my fourth summer of hiking the high-country wilderness, I'd adopted the Boeing Tract as my personal pleasuring ground. The forest was as sweetly virgin as in Mount Rainier and Olympic National

Parks. I'd lie in the moss by a waterfall and cleanse my mind of fleshly distractions, fill my spirit with water and trees and sky, strive to become more fully Myself, whoever that might be, to know all the world and Creation by knowing this portion intimately.

I followed every trail to find where it came from and where it went. I fantasized. Might I not step amazed from forest to alpine meadow at the snout of a glacier too tiny to have been found by the U.S. Geological Survey when making its 1890s map? That would be a miracle. But this was a place for miracles. How else could ancient forest have survived barely ten miles from downtown Seattle?

I set boots on every acre, virtually every square foot, of the Boeing Tract. Except a single large trailfree wildland. On a blue-sky, north-breeze day I struck off due west from the route of the buried pipeline that carried water from Hidden Creek to the mansions of The Highlands, Cyclone-Fenced redoubt of "Seattle Spirit" robber barons. Though not for years would I learn to speak Alpine lingo, my goal was a Diretissimo through the trackless wild to Puget Sound. No need for a compass. You can't miss an ocean. The distance was a scant two miles. There'd be plenty of the summer day left ^{to have} ~~for~~ ^{wearing} a swim ~~in~~ the official Boy Scout uniform for lonesome beaches.

What wonders awaited? What did Lewis and Clark expect when they set out for the Pacific? The Englishmen who sought

the sources of the Nile? The Spaniards questing the Seven Cities of Cibola?

A ravine. Rather than deviate even a bit from the purity of my westward line, I slid-slithered down a swordfern wall into a tangle of salmonberry and a stinking rot of black muck that swallowed my ankles and reached for my knees. I clambered over a jackstraw of cedar logs whose branch nubs were daggers stabbing at my vitals. I pulled myself up and out, hand over hand, on wiry salal and barbed devils club that inoculated arms and cheeks with poison.

A ridge. I rested, sweat cooling. The forest was heavily scented by resins baked from firs by the hot sun. Yet the green ceiling of forest overstory was flecked by cool blue.

Another ravine, another ridge, another rest. The aromatic resins clogged up my throat but I had no canteen, that was for Tenderfeet, Eagles like me stuck a pebble in the mouth and sucked out the juices. A breeze stirred and in it was the tang of salt. I was near.

Another ravine, another ridge, and the sky was still there, and the beach was still far.

Two hours I was in and out of ravines, up and down ridges.

Three hours.

I was not lost. Like Jim Bridger said, I knew exactly where I was every minute, it was the rest of the world I wasn't sure about.

In the fell clutch of muck and thorn I was comfortable. Content. Happy. Secure. Wherever I might chance to be, that was where I was supposed to be.

My brush-plunging stride flung me out of brush through empty air, face-down in an open place. A trail! As wide as the pipeline trail I'd left these four or five hours past.

Had I gone as staring mad as a Hatter in Wonderland? Half a summer day I'd been slashed by thorns, stung by nettles, muddied to knees and face, bruised on thigh and shoulder, sweated to perilous dehydration, and here was a miracle indeed -- I was precisely, to within a stone's throw, of where I started.

Hadn't got to the beach. Hadn't got anywhere. Eventually I came to realize that I'd got everywhere I ever would that was worth it.

Deja vu...

Where did all these creeks come from? Twice as many as I'd ever come across hereabouts. What were all these summits? They all looked alike. I had no map, no compass, none of the sacramental Ten Essentials that faithful wilderness pilgrims ^{carry} to deliver them from evil.

A broad bottom. New hatches of mosquitoes milled in pubescent frenzy above the swamp pools that birthed them. Black muck overtopped my boots. Skunk cabbage flamed yellow spathes. Wrens flitted. The rule is to follow flowing water, it is sure to get you to civilization (or the Arctic

Ocean). This water wasn't going anywhere, just sat there hatching mosquitoes.

Up to the high ground. Deerflies swarmed in to suck the dust from my veins. The Lord of the Flies chortled. I knew Him by another name.

Descartes, ^{while} /seeking ^{to believe} /that "I think, therefore I am (and God, too)" had speculated that his presumed God-given reason might be, in reality, the trickery of a Malignant Deceiver.

I found that credible. It had toyed with me in the Big Tree ^{Skylark} ~~Wildland~~ of the Boeing Tract, and over and over again in the high Cascades and Olympics. Never had I truly escaped, It always let me go, to play with another day, the old cat-and-mouse game. Descartes got it right the first time. God had created the world, that was ^{a fact} ~~okay~~, but then He'd turned ^{over} the whole thing/to the Other Guy to manage while He went about other business in His cosmos. The Gnostics' Second Pillar of Wisdom is: ^{so} respect the Creator, but He ain't around these parts no more, /worship the Manager.

I relaxed. Elsewhere, all the world was as a darkling plain where ignorant armies clash by night. I was lost in the Wilderness, safe.

The shades of night would soon be falling fast. I had no Essential flashlight, soon would have to sit down and await the sun. Having quit cigarettes, I had no matches to light a fire. The only Essential in my pockets was a Swiss Army knife to make ~~le~~st man's blazes and fight off lions and tigers and

bears, oh my. No hymnal for singing "Nearer my Deceiver to Thee."

I dreaded the dawn, trying to sneak through the swarming Explorer Scouts, Good Sams, 4x4 Rescue, Mountain Rescue Council, deputy sheriffs, Red Cross, grief counselors, TV cameras, and old climbing buddies getting set to give me the horse laugh.

I stumbled on a trail, was momentarily befuddled, as I had been by the pipeline trail in 1941. It was the Far Country Trail! How did it get here? How did I get here?

Betty ~~and~~ the kids were away somewhere, no supper had been missed, no frantic phone calls made. The affair was our secret, the Malignant Deceiver and me.

THE MILITARY ROAD

The introduction on the back of the map, written by the Director in September 1928, begins: "The United States Geologic Survey is making a standard topographic atlas of the United States. The work has been in progress since 1882, and its results consists of published maps of more than 42 percent of the country, exclusive of outlying possessions. The topographic atlas is published in the form of maps on sheets measuring about 16½ by 20 inches. Under the general plan adopted the country is divided into quadrangles bounded by parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude."

The Snohomish Quadrangle was surveyed in 1893-94-95 by G.E. Hyde (the north half) and R.H. McKee (the south), published in October of 1897, reprinted unchanged in 1930. I bought my copy in 1937 as a brandnew Boy Scout studying for the test on pathfinding.

Seattle's fabled "ton of gold" was, in 1893 and still in 1897, as yet underground in the North, and the downtown of the city was confined to the shore of Elliott Bay. Northward a whole lot of white space extended to the waterway (lake and creek and saltwater bay) ultimately to become the Lake Washington Ship Canal. Along the waterway ^{were} Seattle's companion city, Ballard, where I was born; the hamlet of Fremont, where our family lived briefly when I was a child;

and the hamlet of Latona, where I lived (two places) in my University years. The map was mostly white where, ^{in the area} in the 1890s, the University moved to its second campus, soon joined by the bustling little University District.

Except for the early years on Bainbridge Island, and the year in Massachusetts, just about my whole life is on the Snohomish Quad. The biggest chunk is from 1952, when Betty and I moved to Cougar Mountain. Next biggest are the decade in the University District and, before that, the decade after my family fled West from the Great Depression, having fled East from it the year before. My growing-up country, 1933 to 1943. When G.E. (north half) Hyde surveyed there I doubt he ran across much of anybody but loggers.

The map's legend identifies ~~d~~oubled solid lines as "good motor road" and doubled dashed lines as "poor motor road." I wonder what the wording was on the first ^{printing} ~~edition~~? "Motor" surely dates from 1928, not the horse-and-wagon 1890s. Even in the 1930s I had to push my bike or give it up altogether after winter rains and spring thaws. The only "good" (paved, that is) road in our area was the Aurora Highway, and that didn't exist out our way until Uncle George helped engineer it in the 1920s. The "old Everett highway" that ran a circuitous route through Bothell was "good" in dry weather, ^{but} the red-brick pavement was slick as an icesrink in a light mist or heavy dew.

Just in time to make it onto the Snohomish Quad, in 1893 Jim Hill's Great Northern steamed into Seattle from Everett. Of more immediate consequence to the environs of Cougar Mountain,

Seattle, Lakeshore and Eastern (or

in 1888 a "Snoqualmie Branch" of the Seattle International/
Northern Pacific) had passed through Issaquah to a deadend in
North Bend. In a mere several decades the Industrial Revolution
had steampowered together two oceans, all the cities of the
nation worthy of the name, and just about every pasture with
more than two cows. Now it was beginning to bring the
mountains (their forests) down to the saltchuck (the sawmills).
In 1881 the first "lokie logging" began in Washington. The
Snohomish Quad shows just one "Lumber R.R." Quads of the next
decade have them all along bluffs of Puget Sound and front peaks
of the Cascades. Bull teams still skidded logs along greased
skid roads. So did horses. But the steam of lokies -- and
the steam donkeys that whistled wherever there were misery
whips and snoose -- were putting the beasts out of business.

Much of my personal history, and much of my family
history, is on the Snohomish Quad. While it was being surveyed,
Great-Grandpa Harrison Clark was busy building Ballard. When
daughter Carrie and husband Frank Hawthorn arrived from North
Dakota he built them and their homesteader-size brood a three-
storey home on Phinney Ridge. Grampa Hawthorn died several
months before I was born. I used to look at his photo in the
family album and think of the story he used to tell Mother,
about the rider galloping past the farm in Pennsylvania,
shouting "They shot Lincoln!", and how he ran in the house and
hid under the bed because he knew they'd be coming after him next.

War. Somewhere I read that somebody said ~~that~~ war is the cutting edge of civilization. Grampa Hawthorn was under the bed during the birth of a nation. Great-Grampa Clark was in CO I NY VOL INF. An old coot ("crazy as") in my growing-up neighborhood was with Teddy Roosevelt (though not riding roughly) in the Spanish-American War. Dr. Brown, whose madrona tree's leaves I raked for 10 cents when I was eight and whose lawn I mowed for 50 cents when I was ten, had helped suppress the Phillipine Insurrection and hang Emilio Aguinaldo, the George Washington of our "little brown brothers", as a terrorist. Uncle Bill went "over there" in 1918, never saw a Hun, but got corporal's stripes for unsticking a caisson from French mud. At our Boy Scout Camporall the spring of 1940, an Englishman gave a speech, telling how Lord Baden-Powell was inspired by the lads who scouted for the British army in the Boer War, and challenging us to be prepared, be prepared to do our bit in the business just getting started in Europe.

But I knew we didn't have to. To keep us from it we had floating fortresses armed with 14-inch guns. Dad, having graduated from high school at fifteen and been sentenced to be a bank teller, had ridden his motorcycle to Boston and signed up for a "short hitch"/to see the world and make sure America ^{in the Navy} preserved its splendid isolation.

The Mannings never had fought for the United States. They'd been expelled from Massachusetts on account of congenital rowdiness. In the Old Northwest they fought the French and Indians, drifted north and on the Plains of Abraham drove the

frogs out of Canada and then defended the ~~king's~~ land against invasion by the sanctimonious churchies.

The Simpsons (Dad's mother's family) were Tories on one side and fled to Canada, and on the other side/^{were} descended from a Scot lad who beat on a drum at the burning of the White House and took up a Redcoat's grant of land. About the time that Hyde and McKee were surveying the Snohomish Quad, the young David Manning came down from New Brunswick and the young Louise Simpson came down from Nova Scotia and they got together at the famous Yellow Meeting House.

Meanwhile there ^{had been} ~~were~~ the Indian Wars. The White Wars. Our own Cougar Mountain Military Road, though nobody has ever explained to me why the Regulars would have wanted to ride over the top. Captain McClellan, on his way to the Civil War, went around the mountain, through May Valley. In fact nobody ever has confirmed to me that the Military ~~did~~ indeed build the road.

The 1866 "U.S. North West Boundary Survey, Western Section," shows a Military Road from Steilacoom to Whatcom, and others from here to there, wherever soldiers might be called upon to prevent revengeful slaughter of Methodist missionaries, drunken prospectors, and real estate speculators. But from Coal Creek to Tibbetts Creek? In history ^{had the sound of} ~~it might be~~ myth, but on the ground something was distinctly there.

I searched at the Newcastle end. I followed this bit of what might have been a wagon road (or logging road), that

bit, bits here, bits there, bits everywhere. One day I straggled out of the brush, sweaty and scratched, at the gate on the Clay Pit Road. Fred chanced to be there. "Where the hell is the dang thing?" I cried. He pointed to my beetle, parked where it always was for hikes in this area, and to the wall of brush behind it. I swear his pointed finger ^{magically} opened an obvious wide gap in the brush. I followed the road-trail, plain as the nose on your face, down to the foot of Hill Street. Said Fred, "When the Army built, they built good."

Knowing where it came to the Clay Pit Road, I crossed the road like the chicken, and there it was, plain as the nose again, the entire wildwoods way to that clearing in the forest I used to see from campus, the clearing Dick and I skied the last day of 1949. The milkman's orchard! There, at an elevation the Snohomish Quad gives as 1350 feet, were the map's only two houses between Coal Creek and Tibbetts Creek.

Reichert's kids left home as soon as they could. When they were gone, his wife left. He had no social life except in the mines and filling Red Town pannikins with milk. Came a morning with no milk. Another. Willis Rounds and son Fred went up for a looksee. They found Reichert groaning in his bed, loaded him in the wagon, and then on the train to Seattle.

Folks who learned of my explorations used to ask if I'd ever come across the goats. What goats? No, no goats. Plenty of goat-like tracks. Deer tracks, I supposed. However, domestic Nubians are known to declare independence. I've

heard of them wandering the wilds. Could have happened here. Didn't, though. When Fred at last trusted me to keep a deep dark secret, the burning scandal of old Newcastle, he let me in on it. Two "Swede gals" had set up in business in a shack on Reichert's Hill. The traffic of young miners past his door stirred up the dour milkman. He finally went next door to socialize and contracted a social disease, and thus his groans of pain. In Newcastle the whispers called the Swede gals the "mountain goats." Another name for Reichert's Hill was Goat Peak.

A cutbank in the hillside led from the orchard to the county road to Radar Park. Beyond the crossing the Military Road had been employed as a driveway to a new home, so I broke off my explorations from Newcastle. That left the other end.

The county road to Radar Park had rather recently sprouted an extension, a bulldozer gouge actually. I followed it down through forest to an enormous pulpwood clearcut, then down more into forest again, and out again into a large green pasture, completely detached from any and all public roads, superbly isolated in forest. From high on Tiger Mountain I'd gazed across the Issaquah Plain and wondered at it. Now I was in it.

Cows were there, and a man and woman. The Thorbergs. I stopped to say hello. A stranger emerging from wildwoods owes it to residents to explain himself. My curiosity wanted to hear them explain themselves.

He'd been a gypo ~~logger~~, cleaning up the long corners left on Cougar Mountain by the lokie loggers. At an elevation given on the newest USGS map as 500 feet, high above the near-sealevel Issaquah Plain, he had discovered in the forest a broad flat, a lateral moraine or perhaps a fragment of a meltwater lake. He had bought it, cleared it, and he and his wife had farmed it ever since. I do not apologize for naming it "Thorberg's Shangri La."

Yes, he knew the Military Road. Had hauled logs on it. And on many other roads that were not it. "Where is it?" He waved his hand northerly. "Can't miss it."

The Snohomish Quad showed it, a (dashed-line) road angling up the steep bottom slope of Cougar Mountain from Goode's Corner, on the (solid-line) road that was to become the Sunset Highway.

From the corner I headed straight up the swathe of the Puget Power line. A new house at the top of the bottom steepness had utilized the angling-up Military Road as a driveway. But from there the powerline had obliterated every trace. However, in close parallel was the swathe of the buried Bell Telephone cable, and there I found bits of what might be the soldiers' switchbacks. Or might not.

To 600 feet the mountain slope had been steep but wiggings back and forth gave a quite ~~possible~~ wagon-possible grade. Then The Precipice leaned out and the walking was barely foot-possible. The hell with it. There were better

ways to spend the rest of the day. Like say, that road coming out of the woods to the left. A Thorberg cat road? Where did it go? Across the swathes and into the woods, as if completing a switchback. I tried it on my feet and the fit was perfect. Remove fallen logs and whack the devil's club and there was good room for wheels.

The grade sliced into The Precipice was perfectly preserved, never had been used for logging or driveway, nor for fun-running by motorcycles or four-wheelers. There had been no wheels here since James Bush ran stage and mail wagons from Newcastle to Issaquah, and it was variously known as the Bush Road, Post Road, Stage Road, Emigrant Road, Summit Road.

No wheels, and no sawn stumps, except for several trees that had crowded the grade. It was a virgin forest. Ancient Douglas firs had survived the 1912 firestorm, but they were too unhandy for bullteams from below or lokies from above. Firs and cedars grown up since 1912 also were not worth the trouble. But the trees I loved best were billowing bigleaf maples. So steep was The Precipice that I looked down into the billows, down to birds singing.

I dawdled an hour or more on the quarter-mile across The Precipice, above the broad green amphitheater, in swordferns and lady ferns and maidenhair ferns and deer ferns, stepping over creeklets trickling and splashing. At 725 feet

the way topped out on a flat bench and ascended more gradually to a crossing of Anti-Aircraft Creek at 850 feet, and a litter of rotten boards and rusted iron, artifacts of that second house on the Snohomish Quad between Newcastle and Goode's Corner. Here was the spread of the other (not the Bears' Orchard) Leifhelm brother. A few steps beyond was a brandnew house, on a driveway from the Leifhelm (county) Road.

Before the arrival of the "Snoqualmie Branch" tracks in 1888, the swiftest way to Issaquah from Seattle was the railroad to Newcastle and the Military Road over the mountain. A photo exists of Bush and his wagon, without a date, perhaps as late as the turn of the century.

Fred told me that in his youth the road was no longer used by wagons, strictly by horses and walkers. When inviting an Issaquah gal to a dance in Newcastle, a swain would walk the five-odd miles to her home and escort her the five-odd miles to the dance hall, but would not walk her home because shortly he would have to go down in the mine. So the gals would band together, light the ^{carbide} headlamps provided by their beaux, and walk home over the hill.

CANYONS AND GORGES AND CHASMS AND GULCHES

Canyons

Lewis Canyon.

little more than a

~~little more than a~~ decade had rocketed from an unincorporated Blueberry Festival in the bogs to a shopping mall to Washington's fifth-largest "city," trumpeted in a newspaper headline, "COUGAR MOUNTAIN IS A CHINESE WALL THAT MUST BE BREACHED!"

The body of the story failed to specify whether the breaching was required that Bellevue might pour through the wall to pillage-burn-rape-murder Renton, or vice versa.

The highwaymen didn't care which. Somebody had to pillage-burn-rape-murder somebody. Not theirs to reason why, theirs but to facilitate. Residents of Cougar Mountain, all couple-three hundred of us, including Betty and me, were astounded to see a stub-end sprouting from Exit 13 of General Eisenhower's autobahn (U.S. 10 being upscaled ~~into~~ Interstate 90) into the mouth of the post-glacial canyon ^{where} ~~in which~~ Lewis Creek waterfalled the best part of a thousand feet in a scant mile.

The hastily mobilized Cougar Mountain Residents Association engaged an attorney who took a crowbar (the Freedom of Information Act) to the highwaymen and pried out of them their suppressed study that a rational society would have no need for an Exit 13 and ^{its attached} ~~the~~ Lakemont Boulevard over Cougar Mountain until the next century. This study neglected the

non-rational needs of the Arab sheiks-Hong Kong tongs-Las Vegas Mafia=Seattle dentists who had snapped up thousands of cheap acres of wildwoods for tens of thousands of upscale dwellings for wall-breaching Bellevue.

Early in my odyssey, even before discovering the Far Country, I regularly descended the canyon on the cat road that had been gouged for core-drilling the bedrock. At the stub-end of concrete ^{that was} poised for the breaching, I'd sit me down to be properly appalled by the autobahn tumult. When the end-of-the-world thunder of the over-the-hump behemoths on the 'Main Street of the Northwest' had sufficiently gelatinized my brain and shivered my timbers, I'd stand, turn my back on civilization, and in several steps enter the rain forest of Olympic National Park.

Bellevue recently had won a national beauty contest and had strutted the runway as Bert Parks crooned, "There she goes...". Was the pubescent not-yet-city to be allowed to grind up this museum of primitive America in a sausage machine? How could it do that? It could do that because that is what Bellevues are for.

West Tibbetts Canyon.

The dentists' pulp-logging roads led me from the Shangri La Road across West Tibbetts Marsh to the creek, which was entrenched in a jungle gulch conveniently bridged by the Coyote Log.

I knew where the West Fork came from -- (my) "Cougar Pass," not a "height of land" but a glacierized flatness on which a geomorphologist could identify the hydrographic divide between the Klondike Swamp and the Lame Bear Swamp. I knew where it went -- from the 1000-foot elevation of the Coyote Log to the 175 feet of the highway. However, of that descent I knew naught. Therefore, ~~on~~ one fine day I braced shoulders, stuck out chin, and went down down down.

The gulch instantly broadened to the mountain's champion canyon. No, not a glory of pristinity ^{like} ~~as~~ that of Lewis Creek. Bull teams from below and ~~high-line cables to the~~ ~~loki~~ies at the top had clearcut every stick worth milling. But that was long ago, man had not been a visitor here since I was a babe in arms, ~~and~~ The high-billowing exuberance of big-leaf deciduous and the high thrust of needle-leaf conifer^{ous} ~~ous~~ were wilderness enow. This "empty quarter" of Cougar, the quiet side of the mountain, was not buffeted by the racket of cities and autobahns. Indeed, the mountain's mass and the canyon wall perfectly bermed out the bellows and even the whispers of mass man and his machines.

^{also} Down and down without end, the air itself greening, and [^]my hands and eyes, the quiet heightened by the rush of the creek. On my first nearing of the Far Country I had felt the immediacy of the Pole. Now I readied my soul for entry into the Garden of Eden.

NOMBRE DE DIOS! I reared back in sudden fear and trembling! So close to my mortal flesh that I almost could hear ^{my} bones cracking and blood spurting, a monster hurtled [^]

past. Not the serpent in the Garden. An automobile on the Sunset Highway.

The apparition was traveling at/^{not}much above the posted limit of 50mph. That was anachronistically fast for a narrow, shoulderless strip of old, cracked-and-tarred concrete laid down in the 1920s for the Model T. My Model A, built in 1930, bought by me in 1941 and driven by me until 1947, could do a brief spurt of 45mph when I was in a wild and whirling mood but for any lengthy journey preferred a patient 28.

Gorges

In my taxonomy, a gorge is ^{perhaps} skinnier and/steeper than a canyon. When the Canadian ice melted away, the gravity-energized post-glacial streams quickly sliced deep into the morainal drift and even the softer strata of underlying clayrock.

AA Gorge.

Anti-Aircraft Creek flows quite mannerly to the brink of The Precipice -- and plunges. After Ralph Owen actualized my projected Precipice Trail, the crossing of this gorge became one of my favorite places. Ralph was irrepressibly ingenious. I never was able to find any other spot where a crossing was not potentially lethal. This crossing was just below the confluence of two tumbling forks. In rainy season the slippery slithering over muddled boulders was ^{done in} a showerbath. The descent to the crossing was safeguarded by an old climbing rope tied around a stump bearing a sign, "Harvey's Slide." That was the method most hikers used ⁱⁿ ~~to descend~~ the mud.

In snowtime I came with ice axe and enjoyed the best sitting glissade that Cougar ever had to offer.

Kline Gorge.

Kline had a wagon driveway to his spread above the Newport Road at the base of the mountain. The exurbanites who installed picture windows at the brink of The Precipice fretted about forest fires. The Willow Crest Community Club turned out volunteers to build an escapeway, and thus the Kline Hill Road.

The road properly belonged on the French Riviera, Cary Grant whipping around the blind corners in a Bugatti. There was nothing like it in King County west of the Cascades. In Sunday pre-dawns it was the route of the Cougar Mountain Grand Prix. In the following morning it was the rendezvous of tow trucks and ambulances. In my Volkswagen beetle I took the ~~blind corners~~ ^{switch backs} at 5mph, honking my horn. At this speed I could enjoy the frisson of gazing into the gorge.

Because it was there, Ralph had to push his Precipice Trail through, not around. Because he had been there, so did I have to be, probably the second of our species. No logger had preceded us, for sure. The Douglas firs were awesomely tall and ancient. Fallen ancients were formidably jackstrawed. Trying to untangle a squeezeway through roots was like running your fingers through Medusa's hair. Logs too high to climb over ~~had to take~~ ^{required use of} the snakeway under. Ralph made no attempt to built a footway up and out, simply flagged a crawlway in the duff.

Wilderness Gorge.

Wilderness Creek sprang from a crack in the andesite. It flowed summers as well as winters. It was the only Cougar stream to which my lips were pressed that my thirst might be quenched by Earth's sweet-flowing breast.

The valley was gentle below Shy Bear Pass, at the two ~~Bottoms~~ ^{was} even flat, but from there to the Sunset Highway the waterfalls and rapids were continuous and the gorge was narrowed by Wildview Cliff and Bigview Cliff.

Chasm

Owens' Chasm.

I knew it before he did, on that early venture from the Bears' Orchard along the brink of The Precipice, easy enough going until that bloody awful gash which I didn't have the sense to detour around.

Ralph did, but not without making a footway ~~just~~ ^{from} ~~above~~ the bottom of the gash ~~from~~ ^{up} Lewis Canyon. He did so to enable his wife, Peggy, to commute from the school at which she taught, down near Exit 13, to their home on (my) "Owens' Creek." It couldn't be called a trail, "scratch" was more like, barely wide enough for Peggy's running shoes. A person did not want to misstep.

Neither did Paul Bunyan want to fall off his springboard. A little lokie line ^{had} ascended Lewis Canyon to the lower end of the chasm and the bigtime lokies passed the top end but

never did Swede with jawful of snoose venture into the chasm to swing double-bitted axe or pull misery whip. The command by Nature was, "You can look all you want at those virgins, but mustn't touch."

Gulches

A day when the wildwoods teemed with surveyors ribboning ~~up~~ plats, I met a pair cursing ~~at~~ one of the innumerable winter-only creeks coursing post-glacially through the half-century-old second-growth. It was one of the many to which I applied, for lack of specifics, the generic "Pretty Creek." They were bitching not at the creek but at the reaction the platter ~~has~~ would have to their discovery. The cameras-in-the-sky of the USGS, and the greedy eyes of Arab sheiks-Hong Kong tongs-Las Vegas Mafia-Seattle dentists saw a smooth green sea of forest canopy concealing, some dozens of feet below, thousands and thousands of hospitable house sites. The surveyors were accused of conspiring with Mother Nature to take money out of the pockets of ~~legitimate~~^{honest} land-rapers.

Ah, gulches. How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. The names (mostly mine):

Coal Creek, waterfalling from the High Basins to the Curious Valley. West Fork Tibbetts Creek at the Coyote Log. Wilderness Creek, above the Bottoms. China Creek, above and below the falls. Long Swamp Creek, below the falls. Cabbage

Creek, below Doughty Falls. Shy Bear Creek, below the swamp.
Far Country Creek, above and below Trog Swamp. AA and Kline
~~Kline~~ Creeks, above their gorges. Dave's Creek. Coyote Creek.
Erratic Creek. Claypit Creek. Newcastle Queen Creek. Surprise
Creek. Military Creek. Stagecoach Creek. Extra Creek.
Scalzo Creek, Squibbs Creek. Vasa Creek. Hilltop Creek.
Inez Creek. Pretty Creek Pretty Creek Pretty Creek...

LAKES AND MARSHES AND SWAMPS AND BOGS

The one lake on Cougar that outlasted glacier-melting time was the Klondike. A low earthen dam reservoirized it. A wooden pipeline took the water down to Newcastle to wash coal and boil potatoes. Then the Company quit and the dam broke and the clearcutting of big old trees let in the hot summer sun and dehydration shriveled it to a swamp. Not that the ecosystem complained. It's the largest swamp for miles around and swamps are more effective than lakes in preserving terrestrial wildness.

The wildness was enhanced somewhat after the gypo miners went away in 1961, then diminished somewhat for a time when Rocket Research Inc. leased a site from Palmer. I called it the "Vanished Village", an allusion to quaint old villages that suddenly vanished and became Broadway musicals. Near the swamp in the middle of nowhere was a short stretch of concrete sidewalk as good as any in downtown Seattle. Beside it was a dirt mound that I speculated was where the bodies were buried.

Fred replaced my fantasy with a real-life farce that would make a much funnier Broadway show, not to mention a movie that could be a candidate for an Oscar or, to go the other way, a vehicle for the Three Stooges. Long black limousines ^{had} ~~would~~ manage^d to slither along Fred's Railroad to the test site. The CEO and CFO and COO in their Italian suits ~~would~~ ^{ped} step out onto

the concrete, whose role was to keep their Guccis clean, and crouch^{ed}/behind the mound ^{during test ~~safe~~ firings of} ~~when~~ the rocket fuel ~~was tested.~~

For other tests, or just for the fun of it, workers ~~in~~ rubber boots ~~would~~ ^{ed} mush into the swamp, wrap ^{ped} packets of rocket fuel around giant cottonwoods and blow 'em to smithereens. Nearby residents knew from the emplacement of the Nikes that the Russians might be coming and found the explosions hard on their nerves. Experimenting with a means of muffling the sound, the rocketeers brought in a highway culvert, inserted explosive, pulled the trigger, and watched in awe as the culvert rocketed on a trajectory toward Renton, disappeared behind Marshal's^l Hill, and nevermore was seen again.

The testing completed, Rocket Research built a manufacturing plant in the middle of a more remote nowhere. It was staffed exclusively by the members (all of them) of a small sect whose faith included the virtues of being clean, quiet, calm, cheerful, trustworthy, teetotalers, and non-smokers, ideal qualities for persons handling touchy chemicals. However, nobody's perfect, and the entire sect was blown to smithereens.

Abandonment by the Canadian ice left the Puget Trough landscape in the condition known to geomorphologists as "infancy," which is to say the plumbing isn't all hooked up. Where there had been rivers when the glacier snout was spouting, now were creeks. Where there had been rushing creeks, now were dribbles or dry gulches. Amid the chaos of moraines were Kettle lakes-marshes-swamps-bogs. Gravity-powered water quickly advanced the steep periphery of Cougar into the "youth" of

canyons-gorges-chasm-gulches. As for the Sky Country, it remained as if new-born.

In my walkabouts on high I visualized the landscape of the womb, when Wilderness Peak with its summit of 1595 feet was thousands of feet beneath the silent white plain that stretched west to the Olympics, east to the Cascades, north to Canada. A story in the papers ^{fold} about a fellow who skied across Antarctica and didn't write a book, ~~about it~~. Asked why not, he stared inward to the memory and said, "It is a monster."

A climber buddy of mine got a ride on the gravy train to the South Pole, one of the perks of ~~being~~ a scientific Rover Boy. Freeze-dried steaks. Cold beer. Hot showers. A library of porn cassettes. A token female scientist as a dancing partner. Because it was there he took the short walk outside the hut to the pole erected to mark the Pole. He sent me a postcard to brag that he had pissed on it. That's what you do at the Pole.

In the Sky Country, mind's eye looked up up up ^{in horror} through the ~~womb of~~ ^{entombing} ice-that-was. The Pleistocene was awesome for what it did but the Holocene is much nicer for what it is.

The Puget Lobe put its main weight in the Cougar vicinity behind thrusts east and west of what was to become the Sky Country. Enough ice slopped over from these channels to do shallow, cirque-like excavations. On the Coal Creek side of Cougar Pass is the basin of the Klondike and its lesser companion, Coyote Marsh. On the West Tibbetts side is the

basin of Lane Bear Swamp-West Tibbetts Marsh. The Wilderness Fork of Coal Creek heads at Blackwater Ponds, seeps through swamps, and ^{in confluence} rattles down the sedimentary-igneous contact to the Curious Valley, ~~where it~~ joins the Main Fork,

My original name for the stretch of the Curious south of the Ball Park was "Long Marsh." Eventually I conceded it had mere bits of marsh and changed the name to "Long Swamp." Looking down as I walked the Indian Trail, my eye was intrigued by a stand of puny, sickly-yellowing hemlocks. What was their problem? Why didn't they just drop their needles and die? For the same reason that little children of the Third World often take years starving to death. Conifers trying to colonize bogs suffer from a chlorophyll famine. I was looking at a veritable bog! The only one I knew on Cougar! I searched for the plants ~~for~~ which ^{q.v.} bogs ~~are~~ famed -- the enchanting pink kalmia, the carnivorous sundew, the piquant cranberry. My sole find was Labrador tea,

I awarded "Shy Bear Creek" that name even though it never flowed except after a prolonged downpour. However, the Shy Bear Trail crossed a small bottom of little cedars and deep black muck -- "Shy Bear Swamp."

China Creek is an archipelago of swamps until it gathers itself together to hurl ~~it~~ waters over the brink of the falls.

At the Trog beneath Trog Wall, Far Country Creek has a stellar attraction, Trog Swamp.

My route that fell short of the Pole has Indian Gap Marsh (Indians may have walked there, who knows?), Lookout Marsh (the columbine that blooms in the spring!), Dave's Marsh on the way to De Leo Wall (was that a redwing blackbird I saw in the cattails?).

Had the Shy Bear, in fleeing me, established a new trail? I crossed the valley to where I'd heard it crashing brush. No trail, but an explosion of a hundred suns, "Skunk Cabbage Farm," from whose muck oozes "Cabbage Creek."

The fellow who cuts clayrock for trucks to haul to the brick plant has little company in the pit except wildlife. To do them a favor he ran his bulldozer high on the side of Claypit Peak, ^{his} ~~on the~~ ^{pretense} ~~of~~ ^{being to} prospecting but really to scoop out "Jerry's Duck Pond," the largest body of open water on the mountain. Mallards instantly moved in to raise families.

The pond fills with runoff in winter, continues to be fed by springs, and never dries up because the clayrock strata are watertight. Indeed, when the main Clay Pit reached a certain depth, Jerry had to trench an exit, which became the head of Claypit Creek.

When the brickery is done doing business here, the trench can be readily dammed and voila, Claypit Lake. The shores will be a Claypit Marsh, ^{joining} in the progression now underway at the Duck Pond. Mallards mallards mallards. Redwing blackbirds

Cottonwoods will grow quickly tall. The great blue herons being urbanized out of ~~their~~ long-established heronries will spot their last chance for a guaranteed ^{local} replacement. They will come in winter to build massive nests of big sticks, refurbish them each winter, lay their eggs in spring and in summer initiate ^{youngers} ~~them~~ in where to find the spawning salmon. The pit will be reshaped to provide sanctuary islands for herons and friends and non-intrusive viewing sites on slopes of the peak where birdwatchers can train binoculars on the annual pageant of mating, hatching, and nurturing, keeping their peace in order not to disturb the actors.

FALLING WATER

The still water of night is nothingness. Substance and life ^{are} given by winds that ripple, sun that sparkles, clouds and mountains that are mirrored.

River water is alive all night, all day, eternally. That's why it's so excellent for sleeping beside. The "death of each day's life" isn't. The ear keeps the soul safely connected to the continuum.

Falling water endlessly entertains the knowing eye. Few people have ^{that knowing} ~~in~~ since ~~the~~ invention of the camera. The ~~the~~ machine is ingenious, particularly in partnership with the darkroom, but ~~it~~ lacks the subtlety of the eye. For example, a single lens opening can't render deep shadows and brilliant water side by side. The nature photographer trying to capture the contrast-in-unity of wild water in wild forest has to strip rapids and cataracts of motion. White blurs. That's not what the eye sees. The tourist ~~seeking to~~ collect ^{ing} waterfalls for his scrapbook ignores the forest for the water, takes a freeze-frame still, ^{photo} top to bottom, a seamless homogeneity, / That's not what the eye sees.

To see a waterfall as a whole cannot be done by the eye alone. The eye must ^{separate out} / the individual particulars, one at a time. The mind then assembles them, ~~into the whole~~. Gobbet by gobbet, that's how it's done, and the doing requires experience, conscious training in the technique of using the eye.

Fix the eye on a lump of water as it flings off the brink, ~~into descent through space~~. So long as it keeps a distance from the rock face and companion gobbets, it will retain separate identity until it attains the speed beyond which the eye cannot preserve the separateness ^{and} prevent the gobbet from blurring into the general tumult. So, return the eye to the brink to pick up another gobbet.

As a climber (may) mature to the understanding that a summit serves merely as the pedestal for his cock-a-doodle-do, that the whole of the mountain experience begins at the base -- or at home in the city -- or from a distant view years in the past -- so, too, ~~will~~ ^{may} a waterfall-seer not click the camera at all, ^{but} ~~will~~ close his eyes, weeks ^{and} [^] months afterward, to ^{assemble} ~~remember~~ thousands and thousands of gobbets.

But why bring up all this here? Cougar Mountain doesn't have a lot of gobbets. Not enough water. But there's more than that to a waterfall.

I've never really seen, and hardly ever have heard Far Country Falls (of Long Swamp Creek). Too much brush for a good look. Except for a few days in the wet season, it's more of an ooze or a dribble than a creek. But it was while turning the corner from the Curious Valley that I heard the dragons bark and felt the call of the Pole.

I never would have found Doughty Falls, just down from the Skunk Cabbage Farm, had not Chuck, who was building his home in the lower valley, told me it was there.

The cliffs and plunge basin of China Falls ^{ranks} ~~perhaps~~ ^{among} ~~make it~~ the most spectacular on the mountain, and I once spent a bit of time building a trail and cleaning up trash ~~in order~~ to showcase ~~it as~~ one of the Wonders of Cougar. However, the location close to Thomas Rouse Road make it too handy for the trash-flingers, and the real estate industry and the parks departments don't ^{envision} ~~see~~ house lots or soccer fields there.

The two forks of Owens' Creek at their confluence, at the head of Owens' Chasm, have Cougar's most dramatic shows of falling water -- Ralph's Falls and Peggy's Falls. Not a lot of water. To get a proper photograph would require a helicopter. When Ralph tipped me off ^{what was there} I set out with three dogs down the short sidetrail from his Precipice Trail. I crept out on the skinny cleaver between the two forks, praying not to skid off the crumbly slimy sandstone-mudstone into the horrid depths I recalled too well. Elianne had the good sense ~~and temerity~~ to heel, ready to shift into quick reverse should I go over the edge. Myfy and Trooshka galloped across the cliff on pawholds, ^{seeking} ~~hoping for~~ a lap-lap of the tasty-sounding water. I prayed they'd not fall because if they did I'd have to summon Mountain Rescue, I sure as hell wasn't going down after them.

My discovery of Coal Creek Falls was an accident. As a regular commuter on Dirty Harry's logging road, ^{which} closely following [↑] ~~ing~~ the creek's gulch from the High Basins to the Curious Valley, I was familiar with the splashing in the brush a stone's

throw below, but the brush made me content to hear, not see. However, while untangling the maze of gypo cat tracks south of the Cave Hole Road, on the slopes above the Curious Valley, I found myself (and my loppers and pruning saw) hitching together bits that might add up to something or other.

Around a blind corner, in the gulch that I didn't at first recognize as the gulch, there it was -- the closest I ever got to Fred's underground. Gulch walls ~~allowed~~ ^{admitted} only a sliver of sky. It was one of those places "where the sun don't never shine." Mists clung to trees, dripped from branches. Where moss didn't enwrap logs and rocks, lichens did, and where they failed was slime.

That splashing I'd so often heard in the brush was out in the open, sheeting down a green-grown slab to a churning and frothing in a plunge basin. From there the creek babbled and burbled and chattered over mudstone bedrock, swirling out potholes, ~~and washed~~ ^{splashing} the largest collection of granite erratics on the mountain.

Not the water but the ^{setting} ~~stage~~ were the makings of the something or other. The drip-drip-drip down the moss slab befitted ~~the secret~~ depths of the earth. The ~~best was the~~ ^{was absolute} ~~absolute silence~~ after a hard winter freeze. Top to bottom, side to side, the wall was a glittering white ~~armor plate~~, the plunge basin and creek bed a gallery of such crystal blossoms as might please the esthetic tastes of Fred's companions down below. Gnomes aren't big on bee-and-butterfly flowers.

WALLS AND HOLES

The Precipice is, for sure, a Chinese Wall . When Betty and I came to the 200-meter hut in 1952, and until well after my divorce from cigarettes in 19~~52~~⁷⁶, in all the way east from the Milk Can Turn to Goode's Corner, and south from there beyond Wilderness Peak and into May Valley, public wheels had ascended through the steepness to the Sky Country by only two routes, the Kline Road built by exuberant new exurbanites, and the Military Road that had seen its last wagon at the turn of the century.

Of course, The Precipice is not strictly a wall. The sediments of the Newcastle Anticline's north arm were fashioned by the glacier into steepness but not wallness. That requires solid ^{material} ~~stuff~~, such as the andesite that forms the heart of the anticline. Ice freezes to the ^{rock} ~~stuff~~, the glacier moves, taking chunks of mountain with it, and thus the headwall cliff.

When the glacier goes away, the unsupported cliff has no defense against gravity. In Wilderness Creek are pieces of mountain that fell from Bigview Cliff and Wildview Cliff. In Far Country Creek is Trog Wall.

o The andesite of Licorice Fern Wall is totally draped, top to bottom and side to side, by a ~~spectacular wall~~ ^{tapestry} of licorice fern. The top of the wall is a tiny ridge that somehow (I have

no hypothesis) splintered off the main mass of Cougar. The view down to pastures of May Valley pleases. The crest is so skinny there never was room for a Swede to swing an axe. Virgin forest! Not many trees, and scraggly, but my goodness, the virgin-forest flora: Easter lily, chocolate lily, pipsissewa, and a ^tbreathaking patch of sea blush.

The top of De Leo Wall, which we named for ^{the} man who staked out the only homestead hereabouts that remains in the hands of the family ^{whose leader} ~~that~~ drove the claim stakes, also gives a good gaze down to May Valley, foreground for Rainier, St. Helens, and the stack of the Tacoma Smelter. A ^{meadowy} ~~naked~~ buttress at the east end of the wall is Cougar's choicest natural (that is, not the result of man's denuding) viewpoint. The magic of the picture is in its framing -- a grove of madrona, a billow of serviceberry, and one of the only two occurrences I ^{know} ~~found~~ on the mountain of ceanothus sanguineous, member of the genus that gives the Ponderosa forests of the Cascades rainshadow their haunting "ceanothus reek." A few steps from the buttress are specimens of Oregon white oak, hangers-on from the drier "climatic optimum." A lucky (or not) person might discover (later on) that he has met up with poison oak. The ^{garden} beside the sky ^{features} in season the two lilies, [^] baldhip rose, vetch, strawberry, paintbrush, blue-eyed Mary, and honeysuckle.

The first glaciers to be identified as such were in the Alps. They obviously were responsible for the heaps of debris in their troughs. It was also ~~was~~ assumed that the gigantic terminal moraines in Cascade valleys near the lowlands were dumped by ice trundling down from the Cascade Crest. It was left to my professor, J. Hoover Mackin, to discover in the moraine east of North Bend a distinctive rock that was not to be found except west of North Bend. Defying the nose on your face, the ice had trundled up from the lowlands (that is, from Canada). His lectures were my introduction to implementation of the scientific method by the technique of the "multiple working hypotheses."

Until the extent of glaciers in the past was realized, geologists were puzzled by chunks of rock perched on alien bedrock -- "erratics." In the whole of the Issaquah Alps I've found only one other ^{specimen} comparable in size to the "Fantastic Erratic" in the canyon of West Fork Tibbetts Creek. It is not granite, ^{are} as/most erratics in our area, but something whose surface is so muddled by weathering and organic crud that I haven't a glimmer of a hypothesis about what it is, except that it is not sedimentary. Metamorphic? A lot of heat and a lot of pressure went into ^{in a} make a rock so solid and tough that I've never been able to bust off a piece for some geologist friend to ^{prepare} ~~make~~ a thin section to put under a microscope.

Before ever I took a second look at Cougar's walls, my eyes were glued to the ground. The crude but huge warning

signs posted by Fred, "CAVE HOLES," put me in mind of Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher and their frightening encounter with ~~the~~ ~~dreaded~~ Indian Joe.

The reality explained by Fred wasn't all that fearsome. The Cave Hole Road was my safe introduction. As a kid he rode along in the wagon when his father went up to check condition of the Klondike dam. The road switchbacked some, staying as much as possible away from the Company diggings, lest wagon traffic shake roof rocks down on miners. The Company, of course, kept a prudent distance from the surface. Not so the gypos, who "mined to the grass roots." The "Cave Holes" weren't real holes, they were pits, where the grass roots slumped into gypos' diggings. What with the switchbacking, the Number Three seam was on the left of the road, then the right, then the left again. The Bagley-May Creek was on the right, then the left; the "Big Bagley" pit was a stone's throw across and a dozen feet deep. The Muldoon was always on the right.

To complete my education I spent the best part of a day battling brush to trace the Bagley-May Creek from Red Town to the Klondike, then the Muldoon back down to Red Town. The Number Three took another day. These seams were pretty much the whole of the gypo story. My count of the holes -- the pits -- agreed with Fred's, a hundred-odd. I grew pretty casual about the risks of being swallowed up by the earth. The only real danger was the pooling-up of mine gases in the summer calms. Fred once saw a deer browsing ~~its way~~ down into a pit, start gasping, and fall over dead.

But there were true holes that were truly dangerous. Such as, timber shafts opened vertically from the surface to avoid carrying support timbers the long way around underground. I looked down into one beside the Cave Hole Road and could swear a face was looking up at me. I had that face in mind the day I was plunging down steep brush and one of my boots plunged into emptiness. I went in a fright to Fred and he nodded. The B&R had run a slope into the coal at that point. The mouth of the slope was close by, brushed over. I'd have hit bottom ^{no} in/more than a dozen feet.

My favorite hole also was not a slump but ^{the} ~~an~~ airway ^{that} Fred and his brothers had opened ~~up~~ from the Muldoon diggings. Airways are awesome but not particularly dangerous because they follow the dip of the seam. If you fell in you would wear out your fingernails clawing to a stop but no real harm done. What I enjoyed was envisaging the moment when the last blast took out the grass roots and Fred and his brothers were deluged by mud and duff and shattered salal.

Researching the Number Three ^{gave} ~~had~~ the best laughs. At the bottom was the puddle that had swallowed the Packard. At the top was ^{the} site of the Nike siloes. Happening by when the Army was digging these, Fred, the good neighbor, remarked to the general that the bulldozer was exactly above the Number Three. The general dismissed the scruffy civilian with a har-umph, the bulldozer vanished more completely than the Packard, was

winched out, and Fred was entertained by a parade of trucks dumping ready-mix, enough that when there was no call for coal the Number Three could do business as a concrete mine.

My personal underground experience also came from war, the Cold One. I was in a B-52 hangar at Larsen Air Force Base, writing manuals in how to blow up Moscow. Periodically I'd go out to the Titan I siloes to check my drafts against the hardware. Sites One and Three were refreshingly cool, a welcome relief from the summer bakery of the Columbia Plateau. Site Two I absolutely refused. At the bottom of the elevator descent through the lava layers there was an unholy roar. The reservoir impounded by Grand Coulee Dam had leaked into a lava tube. The tunnel walkway was just several feet above a river. So what would happen in event of a power failure? In minutes the waters would flood to the ceiling, too fast for anybody to reach the escape ladders. In the B-52 hangar we heard the Air Force was negotiating with the Navy to take it over for a Polaris.

CHESTER AND SUZIE

I'd hear the chainsaw and sidetrip to visit. First came a hello to Chester, the burly 200-pounder from Montana, said by the Indian who gave him to Fred to be half German shepherd, half wolf. As a paperboy I delivered to 175 homes, studied ~~175 instances~~ ^{example cases} of canine psychology, so Chester didn't fool me, he was a sweet old thing, not really a racist. When ~~she~~ ^a lost stranger knocke^d on the door for directions, Fred had been hospitable, but Chester never had seen a person of that complexion. Some while later, Fred in the supermarket, Chester in the truck's driver's seat, a passerby stuck his hand in the open window to give a friendly pat on the head. Chester neither growled nor bared fangs, just clamped jaws on the wrist, gently but firmly, to await Fred's disposition of the case.

Fred speculated Suzie was half German shepherd, half coyote. Somebody driving by had thrown her out of the car, a sick and starving puppy. Fred had nursed her back to health and her love knew no bounds. It would have taken five of her to make one Chester, but she did her share. While Chester was having his ears scratched Suzie would circle around behind me and place her jaws on the back of my leg. Not to bite, I understood that. I didn't need Fred's caution, "Don't pay her any attention. Jerk your foot or raise your hand or your voice and Chester will go for your throat." We all got along fine.

Fred wasn't my expert on mining alone. He'd always alternated between coal and trees. "I like^d to log in summer. When the weather turned bad I'd go down in the mines, where it was always good."

He logged on Tiger Mountain from the Hobart mill, riding the gasoline speeder from the bunkhouse to the show. I asked about the long, heavy cable abandoned along Fifteenmile Creek. He explained that some local folks on a visit to Alabama saw logs being hoisted by donkey engine to the top of a sparpole, turned loose to slide on a cable to the next sparpole, and so forth to the landing for loading on a flatcar. That explained the puzzling scraps of metal across the little valley from the terminus of Fred's Railroad, which Fred said was the first use of the highline in the Northwest. Fifteenmile was its firstst bigtime use.

How come the lokie line from Hobart had no stringer bridges? Because the engineer was "Trestle Johnson." Trestles were what he did.

What about the line that wrapped around West Tiger and crossed Many Creek Valley to Middle Tiger, at a constant elevation of 2000 feet and with no connection to the base of the mountain? The "Wooden Pacific Railroad," the Swedes called it, ^{climbing} from the High Point mill straight up the fall line, lokies and all pulled up by donkey engines and big sticks on flatcars braked down by donkey engines, one at the top and one halfway, where rusted pots and pans and broken crockery and rotten

boards were the residue of the loggers' camp.

The Squak Mountain mystery? A lokie grade hung up there in the middle of the air, never ~~had~~ made a move to get off the mountain. Said Fred, Squak was too small a mountain, too little timber, to justify a rail line. That grade was not for lokies, but for a species of machine I'd heard was used for mines in the high Cascades but never in places like this. A narrow-gauge truck!

Fred never logged on Squak but a friend once gave him a ride from the show down to the mill. Once. Enough for Fred. He wondered why his friend kept a front tire snubbed into the sidehill. He understood why when they ran out of sidehill and the truck took off over the Issaquah Plain like a ruptured duck. The truck didn't have bad brakes, it had no brakes.

When bigtime mining and logging both played out, Fred became a double-threat gypo, coal to the grass roots, second growth to the sawmill. Then ^{came} cutting firewood, "to help out the old folks."

The days were peaceful in the second-growth and third-growth forests he'd watched grow up since the passing of the old growth that had been there when he "came from the old country." Peaceful and quiet. Except for the black leather jackets. He hated them. Because he did, so did Chester and Suzie. The racket would be heard at a distance. He didn't have to issue orders or make suggestions. The half-wolf and the half-coyote would take off on the run. Fred would hear the

barking, the hollering and screaming, and keep on cutting alder. "I figured they could sort it out for themselves."

Fred was the official Palmer Coking Coal sheriff here. I joined Chester and Suzie as ~~his~~ deputy. With local kids I played good cop, in fatherly manner warning them to watch out for a flatbed truck. The driver used to strap on a six-gun to bring the Company payroll from Seattle. Put the run on the nuns. No need to worry about the six-gun. He won't shoot at you, though if not polite you may hear lead whizzing by your ear.

~~But~~ what you have to worry about is not the mean old man in a flatbed truck. It's when you don't see the truck that you could be in trouble. There are these two dogs who operate on their own and just go foaming crazy when they hear a motorcycle...

No fatherly advice for the black leather. Once, alone on the Claypit Road, I came face to face with a trio, stood my ground in the middle of the road. They tightened formation to give me a close shave, handlebars to the left, handlebars to the right. But I ~~happened~~ ^{chanced} to be returning from brushing a trail. At the last second the wingmen peeled off into the woods, crashed and burned. The centerman, trapped, fell off his bike and grabbed gravel to avoid having to swallow my loppers.

Another incident on the Claypit Road would have made an amusing sequel to High Noon. Alone (apparently) again.

Out of the Clay Pit there came down upon me like wolves on the fold a horde of black jackets. My stock-still stance and unblinking eyes sent them into a paroxysm of joy. The jackets ballooned. A civilian! Fresh meat!

But I was not alone. Close behind me, around a bend, were other pedestrians, King County Executive Randy Revelle and staff. One of them, walking ahead, came around the bend. He was of middling size and not in uniform and his pistola was not in sight, though ^{he being} ~~as~~ a county cop, Randy's bodyguard/driver, it surely was there. He didn't need it. He had the look. The jackets deflated as if stuck simultaneously by big needles.

Nor hide nor hair ever again were seen on Cougar Mountain of this gang of uneasy riders.

CRITTERWORLD

During my growing-up years in Judge Ronald's old orchard, I never saw a bear or deer or coyote or any creature not a respected member of our human community (dogs, cats, chickens) except the Norway rats that spooked our hens off the nest. For Hiking Merit Badge I walked up and back 20 miles on the recently abandoned Seattle-Everett Interurban grade. The entire day, not a human in shouting distance. A great place for wildlife. Except there wasn't any. The only thing I can figure is that with the Depression being such a hungry time, most of it got et. Varmints considered inedible but with a taste for fresh chicken and hot pies ^{set out} ~~left~~ on the back porch to cool just got shot. For them (and the rats) I kept my .410 handy.

One wild native I knew well. ~~Never~~ Never saw it because its habitat was the underground and the night. All too often, though, my foot broke through into ^{the} ~~A~~ cave hole of a "mountain beaver."

Revenge was sweet in 1952 when I heard a storm of barking outside the 200-meter hut and by flashlight watched the enemy spinning on its rump as Tamburlaine ("The Scourge of God") circled, at last darting in to break the critter's neck. New to the mountain, I was shaping up our three acres, whacking down "weed trees", taking pride in the way my henchdog was scourging bad animals.

Years later, during my escape from the cigarette, I was

clambering on hands and knees up a steep hillside in the Wilderness when there erupted beneath my boot a gray ball that rolled down the slope, whimpering. Trapped in the open in broad daylight was the critter of the underground night, the sole species in its genus, the aplodontia. Who was its enemy? The farmer, who since Mesopotamia has worked to civilize the land, which is to say, to disrupt the natural order. I'd hoed plenty of potatoes in my time. I was guilty. As the gray ball rolled I felt a sharp pang remembering Tam's (my) jaws, a quarter-century before, snap the innocent's neck. In this period of my ill ease, dis-ease, when might my spinning on my rump cease to amuse the Watcher?

There weren't many stumpranchers on Cougar Mountain, and hardly any were Depression-hungry. From the 200-meter hut it was (in 1952) a scant mile, people-free,^{north} to U.S. 10; four miles (ditto) west to (never-happened) Factoria, four miles south to May Valley, and four miles east-southeast, parallel at a distance of a scant mile, to Goode's Corner. Critters could travel any of those routes any time they pleased and never get shot or barked at.

I was amazed to discover, on Big Tree Ridge, ancient Douglas firs, a bit too far up for bullteams, too far down for lokies. My eyes were less delighted than my nose. Deer beds, the crushed greenery littered with pellets. Piles of black crap, speckled with berries of the bear's most recent lunch.

Scat of cats. Outputs from golly knows how many species of rodentia. The forest reeked like a barn, a wildlife circus of umpteen rings staging a day-and-night (unseen) show, just above the Main Street of the Northwest. Why here, where ears are banged by the clock-around ceaseless explosions of hydrocarbons? Because there are no Sunday-morning lawnmowers, no after-school thumping of basketballs on outdoor backboards, no dogs sniffing around for something to bark at and chew on.

One December I was at my typewriter dawn to dusk, battling the rebellious keys to finish the final draft of a Footsore guidebook. As night was getting ready to fall, I'd flee my frazzled synapses for a hasty hour's walk. I couldn't spare a minute to plan different itineraries, walked the same route every day, a loop around the Klondike Swamp.

The entire month there was no snow at the 200-meter hut. The swamp basin, at 1200 feet, was continuously white. Several days of clear cold would reduce the half-a-foot of snow to a crunchy hoar. Then the clouds would lower and, as I walked, the falling flakes would lay on a blanket of soft powder.

As did I that month, so, too, ^{did} the critters ^{take} ~~took~~ the same routes. Thus I learned where they came from, where they went. I knew enough about tracks to know ^{pretty well} who they were. Hooves of deer and paws of bear were easy. The leaping snowshoes of rabbits were unmistakable. Small tracks were of sizes to fit raccoons and the like, smaller still to fit

mice voles moles and the like.

Coyotes had a mainline down from AA Peak to the swamp, into it and through it to the companion, which I named Coyote Swamp because every twilight at the same time the conductor would tap baton and the evensong would begin, to be answered from The Pass, where the Peltola family sport was watching mice being hunted in their pasture, and from Marshall's Hill, and (I fancied) from Queen Anne Hill, where city folk see canines scavenging food left on porches for pets and fail to recognize the residents of city parks ^{that} ~~which~~ pass for dogs while rendering a public service by controlling the population of cats and poof dogs.

One evening I passed a porcupine snuffling around an old culvert on a ^{scrap of unused} road dating ~~back~~ to when the Army guns awaited the Japanese bombers. Next evening, it had settled in the comfortable quarters out of the snow. Another evening, the pastoral peace was broken by hostilities as another porcupine envied the accommodations. Peace returned as they chummed up as roomies. Then they were gone, and there was blood on the culvert, blood on the snow, blood and quills all muddled together, a sad end for the porcupines, though not for Ol' Coyote, red in tooth and claw.

Cats. When Charlie and Sophie Latta brought their horses to the mountain for summertime riding, their dogs would straggle into camp at morning clawed and chawed from a night-long feud with bobcats. I'd never seen them, in the secret niches

of their night, but a neighbor once rushed to me ^{as} the person known to know everything there is to know about wildwoods, to report seeing a very large non-pussycat in her yard. Another neighbor, another time, phoned me in a semi-panic about a weird critter trying to break into his chicken house. From his description I identified it as an opossum, an alien brought north to our area by good ol' boys with a hankering for possum stew. I didn't see one myself until my squirrel trap caught a baby, which I took down to the Eastgate shopping center to release.

Doc Russell made the mountain "Cougar," though chances are he never saw one ^{here}. Fred rarely did but knew when one had come by to exact the tribute due the top of the food chain. Rabbit guts strewn about the exterior of the briar patch, deer bones hither and thither and yon. Tours ^{were made} ~~occurred~~ two or three times a year. Cougar is too small to support a fulltime cougar, has to share one with Squak and Tiger.

Mark Gregoire, who lives a stone's throw from the onetime establishment of the mountain goats, was called to his door one evening by the scratching and ^{whining} ~~criing~~ of his beagle. Mark opened the door to admit the clawed-up dog and saw at the edge of his lawn, the boundary of wildwoods, a cougar licking its chops.

A woman just moved from Texas to a million-dollar mansion in The Summit, destination of my after-supper constitutionals in 1952, looked out her picture window ~~to~~ ~~Rainier~~ and saw a huge non-pussycat strolling through her

five zeros of nursery shrubbery and lawn-farm lawn. She was pleased to validate the advertising claims, that "Cougar" has cougar. I don't envy ~~her for~~ her wealth, but ~~I~~ do think it ~~is~~ grossly unfair for her to see a cougar on Cougar. I never have.

A morning of Christmas week after an overnight ^{foot-deep} snowfall, ~~of a foot~~, I went for a walk up the trail I'd recently built along Wilderness Creek. Unmistakable tracks, very fresh, in the virginal snow. I went faster. The tracks got fresher. I kept looking eagerly ahead. But never caught sight. I gave up the chase when the tracks turned off on the trail down to May Valley. Later I learned that a kid climbing from May Valley ran head-on into the cougar, which wasn't watching where it was going because it was busy looking back over its shoulder.

The national park (Mount Rainier) bear that licked the melted Hershey off my 5-year-old fingers finished the job (begun by the Teddy I hugged in bed) of brown-bonding me. In my heart there never is fear. In scores of close encounters in the Olympics and Cascades I've never felt the need for a gun, never have yelled and banged pots. It's not that bears are scared by me. They simply dislike me. Nothing personal. It's my species.

Whatever, the presence of bears is the affirmation of wildness, as wheels are the denial. Never mind Yogi Bear. The real-life bear has teeth that bite, claws that scratch,

is cousin to horribilus, is wilderness incarnate, always is capable at its whim of incardining.

A black pile on our three acres, close by our hut! We were "the visitor who does not remain." Well, we did ~~so~~, but there weren't many of us in the 20-or-so square miles of bear country, of wilderness, on Cougar Mountain alone, not to mention the route to the Pole.

I estimated the bear population of Cougar as maybe half a dozen. In the Wilderness was the Shy Bear, with its trail and its bad-weather bivouacs. The Lame Bear was a neighbor of Fred and Chester and Suzie. How many did it take to tend the Bears' Orchard, and the tree ~~at~~ ^{by} Fred's childhood home at the south end of Red Town, and the Yellow Transparent at The Farm, and the others all over the miners' country dating from before the coming of the Yakima candy apples?

I rarely saw any of them. The Shy and the Lame, never. Walking the Claypit Road south, into a brisk south wind, I surprised a bear with its snout dipped so deep in the muck of Coyote Creek it failed to hear or smell me until I gave ~~it~~ a friendly "hello," at which it ^{leapt} high in the air and came down running. In Red Town I saw a black rump protruding from the hellberries, and another ~~one~~ in the Klondike basin salmonberries, and politely did not disturb.

I've come across shrub-trees of Indian plum, torn to shreds because the fruit is mostly pit, and the bear rips off

a limb and runs it through its mouth, stripping off fruit and leaves and bark, meanwhile depositing black heaps that are mostly pits. Patches of my July treasure, the wild blackberry, often I find plundered by a previous picker, identifiable because the species seems unable to eat without immediately and simultaneously crapping. I've come upon rotten logs and stumps ripped apart for grubs and beetles. I've heard they consider the formic acid of ants a spicey treat. Surely they join the crowd at Coal Creek for the annual bacchanal of spawning salmon, such a riotous time for coyotes and herons and eagles and creeping beasties.

Raccoons bicker at night outside our hut's bedroom window, and now and then the death squawk of a banty roosting in a tree announces that in morning ~~we~~ ^{we will} find our flock of free-range chickens reduced by one. Natasha, our sheep dog with the piebald eyes, fraternized with a skunk and was mortified to be denied her proper sleeping place in our bed. She nosed a porcupine but so politely I was able to perform the necessary surgery with pliers.

The Eastern gray squirrel, released in Seattle parks in the 1920s by refugees from Minnesota, reached our hut from Eastgate ~~from Eastgate~~ simultaneously with the Norway rat. The latter I poison, the former I trap for release in Eastgate, where they came from.

The Eastern grays come to the Cougar Hills side of our hut ~~to infect~~ ^{raid} my bird-feeding cafeteria, which is why I do the trap-and-distant-release. The other side of our hut, the wild side, still is the habitat of the native Douglas squirrel

and the chipmunk. Ground squirrels are common on the Indian Trail. My one and only sighting of flying squirrels was on a dark winter day, snowshoeing Source Creek at Snoqualmie Pass, but friends whose house is on a steep sidehill enjoy the twilight show of mass flights in the upper limbs of Douglas fir. I enjoy our bats. And owls.

Somebody who wanted all of Shakespeare's birds in America imported the starling. I dusted off my trusty .410 and sent one to its reward, which did about as much good as when King Canute was offended by the waves of the North Sea, which prevented his ship from leaving the harbor, and ordered his troops to take whips and give the ocean a sound flogging.

I don't know who imported the black slug. Why can't it ^{be nice} ~~behave~~, like its ^{native} cousin, the banana slug? ~~Generally~~ ^{speaking} There is a case to be made for ^{certain} immigrants to go back where they came from. I believe I could be content in England's Lake District, though perhaps not in the jungles of Africa.

ON THE SEVENTH DAY

There came to Seattle an echo of Manhattan Island, the "alternative newspaper." The concept was made feasible in ^{the Emerald City's} less culturally rich ground by combin^{ing it}~~ation~~ with an urban-entertainment guide. The circulation was given credibility among advertisers by being free free free. One of the founders nourished a broader vision and solicited me for the green beat. My own vision was then in the process of broadening from the "wildness without" to the "wildness within." I was just commencing a new series of guidebooks, the Footsore series. This ^{added} ~~new~~ pulpit ~~for my preaching~~ fit right in. I sat down at my typewriter and reached for a cigarette. There wasn't one within reach, then or ever again.

Take away a climber's ice axe and he tends to fall down. Take away a writer's fags and his typewriter won't work. Goose quills couldn't help ~~out~~ because the fingers wouldn't work. The trouble was in the skull, the brain turning to mush.

The mind draws a bead on a wanted word -- and it flits away like a deer fly when the slapping hand approaches. Eyes fix on the keyboard and see naught but qwertyuiop. To make light among friends of my problem, I coined a whole new psychological jargon. I suffered, I told them, from "hysterical aphasia." The few who had taken Psychology 1 were amused. The rest of the carabiner crowd was consternated because ~~of~~ ^{for me} ~~my belief that~~ a joke is best when told with a perfectly straight face. The whispering went around behind my back that I was

on parole from a padded cell. My political career in The Mountaineers was ruined.

That, however, was for the future to ~~face~~ ^{worry about.} Now, after a frenzy of paging through Roget, I'd manage to pin a word, and it would refuse to cohabit with others in a sentence. Paragraphs that began headed north would finish somewhere south, or east-by-north-northwest, or in a foetal position. When my head was a TV screen after signoff, a blizzard of electronic snow, it was up up and away to walk walk walk...

The piece should have taken a morning to rough-draft, an afternoon to redraft, and next morning to clean-type. I was in torment day after day. Yet all the while that the battle raged on the plains of Hell, floating serenely above was ~~the~~ my Idea.

My point of departure, my Big Bang, was Whympers' book, Scrambles in the Alps. ~~As climbers~~ ^{climbers} driving to rocks and snows of Snoqualmie Pass, we followed U.S. 10 through what we called the "Issaquah Blobs." My intention was to use them to instigate a revolution -- "throw off the wheels that bind, you have a world to regain." Walk walk walk, even when you don't suffer from hysterical aphasia. But selling the revolution required ^{more stirring than "blobs".} a battlecry. So I reared back and created the Issaquah Alps.

"...alongside Rainier, Shuksan, or Olympus these Alps wouldn't deserve rating as respectable foothills. Ah, but they are not alongside Rainier, Shuksan, or Olympus... they thrust

deep into Metropolitan Seattle... For the location they are extraordinarily high mountains... More important, for the location they are very wild mountains."

The hoppers of the a-borning publication were bare. The editor begged me to rush copy, ~~to him~~. I drove to the city to hand-deliver the completed piece, thus saving a day or two in the mails.

That was in late March. I ~~eagerly~~ checked each week's issue. Nothing. In May I called the editor. He wasn't there anymore. At the conclusion of an internal scuffle, he'd walked the plank. The sniffy little Captain Bligh from Harvard Yard who had come West in search of a puddle ^{for a wannabe} ~~in which he could be~~ ^{sufficient.} ~~the~~ big frog felt the Skid Road was wilderness, ~~enough~~.

~~So be it.~~ I'd ~~pretty well~~ forgotten all about it, was startled by a page one headline, "Rambles in the Issaquah Alps," and an internal headline, "Issaquah Alps' Wilderness Park." Publication date, Volume I, Number 16, July 14-20, 1976. Weeks letter there came in ^{an envelope} the mail containing nothing but a check for \$25. That was the end of my relationship with The Weekly.

Though the rag later made a run at kissing up the cognoscente, and ~~that~~ early on was watched with interest by the few who hoped Seattle might be ready for an alternative, nobody ever mentioned to me that they had ^{seen} ~~read~~ the article. ~~and given it some thought.~~

I ~~therefore~~ took the revolution to the samizdat front. In October I completed 119 typewritten pages of "Reflections on the Future of the Issaquah Alps" and stuffed photocopies, personally, by carrier or ~~in~~ in ~~some~~ dozen mailboxes.

In the foreword I began, "As Truman Capote said of the novels of Jack Kerouac, the following is 'not writing, it's typing.'" (Only those few who knew of my reflexive lunges for the cigarette that never was there ever understood the poignance of my whimper.) "It is not so much a draft as a stringing-together in a crude organization of a bale of notes jotted in recent months while taking some 100-plus walks of 2-8 hours each in the 'Issaquah Alps,' covering maybe 600-700 miles on Cougar plus about 25 walks on Squak and maybe 50-60 on Tiger."

Not that I ignored the "without." ~~Between~~ the doctor's command ~~"go walking"~~ on March 11 and completion of "The Reflections" October 25, I'd been 30 days there: beaches of the Whulge, twice to ocean beaches, summits of Si and Pilchuck and Sparpole Hill and the Footsore like, twice to the Wilderness Alps of Stehekin, multi-day wanderings in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, Alpine Lakes Wilderness, Glacier Peak Wilderness, Pasayten Wilderness, and North Cascades National Park. ~~This~~ ~~content of~~ The "wildness without" gave perspective on ~~my explorations of~~ the "wildness within."

Susan Schwartz, brilliant young op-ed editor of the Seattle Times, happened on a copy of my samizdat. I gave her full freedom to do as she pleased with my mass of typing. On November 13, 1976, a full op-ed page of the paper was

devoted to her edited-down version, "Issaquah Alps: Preserve Green Belt Near Seattle."

My phone began to ring. When queried, I modestly acknowledged that the Creator was Me.

HOOMLY TREES

On a trail in the North Cascades I met a fellow from British Columbia. We joined in admiring the hugeness of the ancient trees, then fell to speculating the age of the community of trees, the forest, how long it was after the Pleistocene ice receded, some 12,000 years ago, before ~~the first~~ seedlings took root in the raw moraines. He had an interesting perspective, having walked over more of mankind's history, where it happened, than anyone I'd ever run across. Had farmed a spell in Africa, near where our species is thought to have evolved to modern form, some five zeros ago. Had gone back (the Mau Mau period) where he came from, a village in Scotland.

An evening after his return he was walking the moor above his village. When had his people settle^d here? The road he was walking -- the track, that is -- had been dated to Pictish times, before the Scots came over from Ireland.

This North Cascades trail likely was roughly contemporary with those Pictish feet, as was the Indian Trail ^{on} ~~over~~ Cougar Mountain. That, of course, is prehistory, and there's some of that in the Issaquah Alps. Not much history on Cougar. Swedes chewing snoose on springboards, Fred burrowing underground, lokies and the Seattle & Walla Walla, the Indian (White) Wars and the Military Road.

For 800,000 years the Earth has repeated a cycle of 90,000-year ice ages alternating with 10,000-year interglacials. During the present interglacial, the Holocene, history began in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and India. Cores drilled into the 100,000-year-old ice of the Greenland Icecap have revealed that the transition from a "warm" to a "cold" is not slow and easy but abrupt and catastrophic. If the old story is repeated, the ending of mankind's party is already 2000 years overdue.

When I had just turned seven, and until I turned eight, we lived in Lowell, with Dad's folks, in their home on the city's edge. He took me walking through the woods and fields to his Secret Camp. On the way we borrowed spuds from a farmer who wasn't looking. At the Camp he built a fire against a big hunk of granite that came from Canada, as had his father and mother, and roasted the spuds in the coals. In season Dad and his pals also borrowed corn and apples and whatever else the farmer wasn't watching. The granite wall was black from years of fires.

I went with Dad and Mother to see "the rude bridge that spanned the flood" and the memorial to Paul Revere and the Minute Men. A stone wall, one of the thousands in New England, was where the Patriots crouched^{and}/shot Red Coats from fathers' ambush. Dad's/family hadn't been Patriots, they'd been Tories, had to get out of Massachusetts, fought on the other side in the Revolution. Dad's mother was descended from a Scot lad who donned the Red Coat and sailed the Atlantic to beat on a drum at the burning of the White House. School was confusing for me,

not knowing which side I belonged on. St. Patrick's day I wore the orange. When we moved back West I brought along my New England accent, as in moving East I'd brought my Northwest non-accent. Wherever I went I was in a foreign country.

My growing-up country north of Seattle was light on history. I, myself, was older than the Aurora Highway. The Great Northern tracks had only just reached Seattle when Great-Grampa Clark got off the train from New York to build Ballard, followed in the next decade by the Hawthornes, including Mother, from North Dakota. Loggers were just burning slash when Judge Ronald planted his orchard. The Interurban had come in the 1920s and gone in the 1930s. The wild animals had all been killed off, except the mountain beaver and the Norway rat.

My Secret Camp was in the woods north of the orchard. A forest room floored with salal and swordfern was enclosed by walls of Douglas fir, the branches so tightly interwoven a person outside the green screen never would suspect the room existed. For the leanto I dragged fir poles from a distance, by different routes, to avoid leaving tell-tale evidence. I packed cedar posts from an abandoned pasture for splitting into roof shakes. The Boy Scout Handbook showed how to build a KYBO. My firepit was elegant, elevated atop a layered square of logs, the center filled with gravel brought in by bucket. A cedar slab made a bench for sitting. Not for thinking about life and school, God and girls. For listening

to the buzz of wings in shafts of sunlight, the pitter-patter of raindrops on the roof.

The sole initiates to my Secret were the scoutmaster, who had to make the examination for Pioneering Merit Badge, and Dad, of course. The Secret had to be closely kept because kids have flapping ears and lips and jungle-sharp eyes and what they hear about or find they will destroy for fun. Returning for a sentimental visit after moving to the University District, I found the destruction had happened. Not by kids. A guy riding a bulldozer, gouging a street for a development. He was intrigued by the green screen, busted through, crushed my elegant firepit and sanitary KYBO, and gave my leanto a smack, bringing down the roof and leaving the walls comically askew. Not for purposes of the development. Just for fun. That was my introduction to the grown-ups who make history. Terrorists who crouch behind stone walls and backshoot soldiers of the King marching bravely down the middle of the road. Developers. Cyclone fences and golf courses. Mayors of Bellevue.

When Betty and I came to Cougar Mountain in 1952 the human ~~history~~^{story} was, except for the past century, all prehistory, because the Lushootseed speaker^s had no written language. Their myths of Ol' Coyote and the Thunderbird and all ^{versions} gave glimpses of "what really happened," such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Mostly there is natural history, forest history, written in the trees. They grow up, they fall down. Then arrive the bullteams and skid roads, donkey engines and lokies, clearcutters and high-graders and scavengers, and here we are.

During the span of human history on Cougar, the most dramatic event of forest history on the mountain was the Great Fire of 1912, which appears to have pretty well blackened The Precipice from the Milk Can Turn to the Military Road. Charred trunks of Douglas fir too thick-barked to be bothered by a few hours of flames remember the day (or days), exclamation points amid the sprawling canopies of bigleaf maples, whose uppers were incinerated but whose lowers, the nigh-eternal root systems, were unperturbed. There were, too, the spacious virgin forest of the East Ridge of Wilderness Peak, and the virgin bits and pieces in AA Gorge, Kline Gorge, and Owens' Chasm. There was a virgin feel to Marshall's Hill, Far Country Creek, and Wilderness Creek, where only the mossy-old stumps testify that the Swedes had been here, one day, long ago.

The matter of magic, yes. Not for what they were but where. Kline Gorge could not be mistaken for the rain forest of the Hoh, or for the grand sweep of green from the Suiattle River up to the white snouts of ice on Glacier Peak, or for the giants that bestrode the blankets wherein five-year-old Cousin Patsy and I slept beneath a heaven of stars, or for the Big Quil trail where my back was bent by the Trapper Nelson on the ascent to Marmot Pass. Except for the bits and pieces, Cougar Mountain was second-growth wilderness. But it was within. It was where we lived.

I never had a Secret Camp on Cougar. Except the 200-meter hut.

Our first night was spooky. So dark. In the mountains, the flashlight always was by the sleeping bag, and in the country north of Seattle, by the door. But in the University District so much electricity was ~~spilled~~^{strewn} everywhere that total blackness was hard to find outside the insides of a cemetery. Here it pressed against the windows, as if wanting to come in the house, as it absolutely did whenever the wind rose above a zephyr and brought down a tree somewhere in the world that would not be removed until the maintenance crews came to work in the morning.

So quiet. In the mountains, always there was the creek by camp, distant waterfalls, raindrops on the tarp. In the country north of Seattle, Aurora Highway slept when we did, it (and us) only awaking with "the crash on the hah-way but ah din't heer no-bawdy pray, dear braw-ther." In the University District the hum-rumble of megalopolis was as constant as that cosmos-pervading something-centimeter buzz the astronomers attribute to the residual of the Big Bang. Here on Cougar Mountain, the Main Street of the Northwest shut down once the exurbanites got home from work. Eardrums tensed under the pressure of silence, awaited a Voice to break through... We walked softly and spoke in whispers in order not to wake It up to say "If you don't mind! Trying to get some sleep here!"

That was 1952. By 1976 the skyglow that in my growing-up years drew my eye to the distant south, hung heavy heavy over our heads on Cougar Mountain. Commute hour continued through

the night and all day Sunday on the Main Street ^{that was} being converted to autobahn. Neighbors' yardlights generously illuminated our three acres, spilled into our bedrooms.

Clarence Day, in This Simian World, contrasted our cities with those that would be built by cats. Absolute blackness ^{would be} enforced by police, no sirens wailing, no arrests made, throats neatly slashed on the spot. Noise ^{was} banned, except of cavaliers' rapiers clashing, death rattles of the losers. The supreme art form was the nightly opera, love songs and lovers' quarrels. Our cities, on the other hand, are built by and for monkeys.

Walking on the mountain one day, I abruptly came to full stop. Something, I heard something. No, I did not! I heard nothing. "The sound of silence."

From every side Cougar was pounded by the hum-rumble-bing-bam-boom of Puget Sound City. Valleys let it through to ~~deluge~~ the interior. But at the spot where I was startled to a stop I was enclosed by ridges that bermed it all up and away. High-flying birds flapped wings in a maelstrom ~~of sound waves~~. I was in a little sanctuary.

I became a collector of Silents. The best was in the ^{realm} ~~domain~~ of ~~the ultimate connoisseur~~, the Shy Bear. The lower gorge of Wilderness Creek was open to ~~the~~ noise of the Sunset Highway and Issaquah. But at the Big Bottom the valley grade bent back, putting a hump in the concatenary curve that made a perfect berm, connected to the berming by Wilderness Peak on one side, Ring Road Peak on the other. The Silent continued

over Shy Bear Pass and down nearly to the Far Country, where the Curious Valley let in the bellowing of jets from Sea-Tac International Airport and, of course, the barking of the dragons in May Valley.

One day, sitting in the Silent at Shy Bear Pass, I remembered the special thing about my Secret Camp. Not a house or street anywhere close. Aurora muted by a halfmile of dense forest. The peace that passeth all understanding. The freedom of solipsism. Not to think, not to be thought about, simply to be.

These paths I'd been walking since the doctor's command lacked the high drama of standing on the shore of outer space atop Rainier, the ballet on the quartzite of Sir Donald, the flight from Luna Cirque, the epiphany of Marmot Pass. They had no picnics in Cockaigne, but also no plunges into sloughs of despond. No special feeling at all, no more than is had by a wolf tree or granite erratic. Just being.

Within the Being was a whatch^amacallit, a soul or a gnawing at the vitals, that yearned for the mouth of Plato's cave, for the Whiteness of clouds, the Blueness of sky, the ~~Ness~~ of Nessness that remains while the **M**any change and pass.

The nose caught whiffs:

The vanilla leaf, sweet-after-death, crumpled in the pocket where the cigarette pack used to be.

Solomon's seal's evocations of the sultan's seraglio.

Stink currant, the best stink in the forest, crazing the newly awakened organ, so long deadened by smoke, now ravenous for grossness.

Skunk cabbage.

The tongue tasted:

Indian celery, the tips of young salmonberry canes peeled back for a sweet crunch-crunch-crunch.

Sour dock, to cleanse the palate after too many berries stolen from the bears.

Candyflower, in the genus of miners' lettuce, blossoms and leafs and stem stuffed in the mouth together, along with bittercress, for a walkabout salad.

The ear delighted in:

The love song of the varied thrush, which I first heard on a dawn walk, while the troop slept on, by Heather Lake. Number 54 on my list, ~~is~~ too late for the 50 ^{required by} ~~needed for~~ Bird Study Merit Badge. It winters at the 200-meter hut, sings for a time in early spring, then flies off, higher on the mountain, to finish the song.

A pileated woodpecker, Big Red, as noisy as the hammer-hammer saw-saw of the carpenters assembling millions of dollars in mansions ringing our hut.

A roaring wind, branches crackle-snapping, trunks of trees groaning, the earth shaking underfoot from the WHOOM! of a toppling.

A pond of frogs.

The eye sees, ~~close by~~ beneath the trees:

Tiny red ants fighting through the jungle of hairs on the back of my hand.

A mosquito sucking her gut full of blood, then becoming a red smear on my arm because a respect for all life must have limits.

Little black beetles creeping the yellow spathe of skunk cabbage.

A banana slug, good native, remote kin to the nasty immigrants from Eurasia.

Blue-gray snail shells, too numerous for the most considerate boot to avoid crushing.

Waterskates skimming a pool.

A granite erratic a dozen millennia from its home in Canada.

Up up in the sky:

A bald eagle flying between Coal Creek and May Creek to compare their cornucopias of spawned-out salmon.

A snowy owl driven from Alaska by a failure in the lemming crop.

The jaunty cap of lenticular clouds worn by Rainier, framed by Tiger and Squak, sailor take warning.

The sky falls down all around:

A sudden cloud dashes out of the blue into the alder greens, dimming them to Japanese etchings, dissolving them to nullity, then blowing away in the wind, the alder greens abruptly re-created.

Rain so blurs my glasses that the forest seems to be gelatinizing, slumping into creeks, oozing toward the Whulge.

The forest floor is whitened by a flurry of snow, greened by a burst of sun, whitened and greened again, and again.

Some of the best walking is the not-walking. When the world is shrinking, make it bigger by going slower. One of my favorite sitting spots was the brink of Coal Creek's gorge incised in the old glacial trough. An apple tree and a hawthorn and climbing roses told of a miner's home here beside the Seattle & Walla Walla. Another was by the tumble of Wilderness Creek when I was pioneering the trail. De Leo Wall, the garden beside the sky. The rim of the Clay Pit. The Million-Dollar View. Wild View Cliff. The Boulders. The Far Country Lookout.

From a sitting spot on a log, for example, I have looked up to white clouds in the blue, backing ~~ing~~^{ground} for black cedar snags rendered ~~under~~ to dirty death by a horrendously hot fire of a century or more ago, the charcoal partly flaked off to reveal wood that has been grayed by sun and wind and sleet, sculptured by woodpeckers. Are those faces I make out? My totems? They speak not, neither do they weep. Were there faces when I clambered at night to the roof of Parrington Hall and gazed in wonder at the mountain so tall so close to campus? Had they, for the ears that could hear, voices, saying, perhaps, "Come come come to the church in the wildwood, the wildwood, no finer place in my childhood, my childhood"?

Homey. In olden time, the word was "homely." The meaning has evolved to plain, unattractive, crude. It used to be "of the home," simple and everyday, "where one receives kind treatment." Chaucer said of a forest, "Many hoomly trees ther were."

In July, returned from fellfields of Mount Aix where the high alpines were in flowering climax, at Red Town I discovered Deptford pink and St. John's wort in bloom, aliens here, traveled from my family's Old Country, before North Dakota and Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and New York and New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In August, after ten days on Kangaroo Ridge, where I identified mountain misery and Labrador tea and witnessed flies being done in by the carnivorous sundew, I came home to the Indian Frail to pick the summer's last bucket of wild blackberries, the makings of three pies.

In September, home from a week in the gnomish underworld of mushrooms in forests of the Little Beaver and Big Beaver, I walked slowly through the Curious Valley beside the Long Swamp, breaking with my nose and eyelids and mouth hundreds of spiderwebs silvered by autumn fog.

In October, the morning after Mother died, I walked again to the Far Country. A torrent in the night had pounded leaves from the maples, carpeting the ground in gaudy yellow. Gusts were finishing the stripping of the branches, flinging the last leaves in my face. A puddle brimmed full with

sky-cleansed water, and I looked down to the reflection of the year-end color, and down down to white cumulus castles gleaming in the sun, and down down down into the infinite blue, and in sudden vertigo drew back from the brink.

APPENDIX:

HOW WE GOT THE PARK

~~Harvey Manning~~

m

Mr. Harvey Manning
15819 SE 44th St
Bellevue, WA 98006

As I write this, the fall of 1998, it is 46-1/2 years since Betty and I emigrated from the University District to the 200-meter hut, and 22 years since I renamed the Issaquah Alps (formerly known as the Issaquah Blobs), and 13 years since King County Executive Randy Revelle, addressing the multitude atop Anti-Aircraft Peak, formally dedicated the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and proclaimed May 21, 1985, to be, throughout King County, "HARVEY MANNING DAY." (Vanity whines, "Just one day? In merely the county?") Nevertheless, I and the legion of comrades who made my day rest content that the park has grown from the 1560 acres of Dedication Day to 3000 acres and isn't quite finished yet; that its wildness has been affirmed and guaranteed by statute law; and that it is THE LARGEST URBAN WILDLAND IN THE NATION.

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It is a wildland park, but also an historical park. From surveys of the "Etta Cartney Coal Range" in 1863 to closure of the last diggings in 1963 the story is told by our book, *The Coals of Newcastle: A Hundred Years of Hidden History*, by Richard K. McDonald and Lucile McDonald. The 1928 map reproduced in the book has a Newcastle Park, located just off Fourth Avenue at the edge of Red Town. In memory's ear one hears the Ford Mine Band, resplendently uniformed, playing Sousa marches on the Fourth of July.

The next precursing of today's regional park was the 1968 purchase by funds from the Forward Thrust bond issue of lower Coal Creek and May Creek as King County parks. Then, with junking of the Cold War's Nike anti-aircraft missile, King County obtained two surplus properties, one where the birds were buried and the other where the buttons were pushed. We now know them as the "Nike Park" and "Radar Park" entries to the wildland.

My personal involvement in the Newcastle Hills/Cougar Mountain began in 1943. Sitting on the ventilator-shaft cap atop the roof of Parrington Hall, I marveled that such eminences rose so high so close to Seattle. Other University of Washington eyes were similarly entranced and in the late 1940s a band of professors and friends bought the summit of a 1075-foot peak from Mrs. Farmer and pioneered the Hilltop Community. Exurbanites began to flow over the new (1940) Floating Bridge in a trickle that swelled to a freshet foreshadowing a torrent; by the 1960s it was obviously high time for Noah to be nailing together an ark. In 1971 the King County Department of Planning published an Urban Trails Plan in which a principal surveyor-author, Stan Unger, described a trail route from Coal Creek to the summit of Cougar and onward to Squak and Tiger. To promote a larger notion, remembered in the 1990s as harbinger of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway, in 1975 he walked from West Point to Snoqualmie Pass. In the same period John Warth, who had in 1961 published his proposal for an Alpine Lakes Wilderness, established by Congress in 1976, mapped a "Lake Washington to Cascades Ecology Trail," traversing Cougar, Squak, Tiger, and Grand.

Despite that mini-epiphany atop Parrington Hall in 1943 and residence in the Newcastle Hills/Cougar Mountain since 1952, not until 1976 did my concerns for wilderness of the Cascades and Olympics, "the wildness without," enlarge to that of my own backyard, "the wildness within." Between Thanksgiving Day of 1976 and Thanksgiving Day of 1978 (the long weekends of these holidays spent at the wilderness ocean of the Olympic coast), I walked some 3000 miles of beaches, lowlands, and foothills between Bellingham and Tenino. The footways I found in my explorations were the matter of the four volumes of *Footsore: Walks and Hikes Around Puget Sound*. This was my context for the 1000 miles I walked from spring to fall of 1976 on Cougar, Squak, Tiger, Taylor, and Rattlesnake Mountains and Grand Ridge.

Newspaper articles treating these Issaquah Alps set my phone to ringing. In 1977 a group of us came together for walkabout

seminars. November 13 we staged our first great big public stunt, "Wilderness on the Metro 210", Buz Moore the organizer and major domo. Some 100-plus pairs of feet got off the bus or out of a car in downtown Issaquah and set the dogs a-barking along streets to the city-edge trailhead for the summit of West Tiger Mountain.

April 22, 1979, we repeated the stunt as a "Public Officials Awareness Hike." Tim O'Brian, Issaquah City Councilor, invited fellow members of the Puget Sound Governmental Council, enough accepting that again 100-plus walkers struck off from the bus stop for a day in the wilds.

Meanwhile, Tim asked the young director of Issaquah Parks and Recreation, Kerry Anderson, what he was doing about the trails. Kerry said he very much wanted to get things going out in the woods, but didn't have the staff. Tim volunteered us, and under city sponsorship our core group led a series of spring hikes for Issaquah Parks, attendance ranging upward from half a hundred. The "Public Officials" extravaganza had been folded into the schedule and it was after this event, during rehydration at the Rollin Log, that the notion arose of a citizen organization which could co-sponsor hikes with Issaquah Parks while simultaneously engaged in politicking impermissible for city staff.

May 5, the historic and hallowed "Day of Three Thunderstorms," on the summit of Long View Peak, we put the question to a group of hikers, "Would you like to organize?" So was born the Issaquah Alps Trails Club.

The *Issaquah Alpiner* began publication, carrying our every-week schedule of year-around hikes and walks, and our action program to save the trail country. Simultaneously we intensified a drumbeat of public information and agitation — articles and interviews in newspapers and on TV, talks to environmental groups and pieces for their newsletters and magazines, and leading their members on tailored

hikes. "Guidebooking" had begun at the end of 1977 with publication by Mountaineers Books of the first volume of *Footsore*; a 50-page section introduced ". . . a geographical oddity, a finger of mountains reaching 20 miles out from the Cascade front and poking Puget Sound City right in the eye."

I long disclaimed, in public, any advocacy of a park on Cougar Mountain, aware that the mere hushed whisper of the word, "park," starts knees jerking and donkeys braying. (I *had* disclosed to fellow climbers in social gatherings at the 200-meter hut that my secret intent was to have the entire mountain declared a wilderness park, all the inhabitants expelled—except Betty and me, as park rangers.) On February 10, 1979, when I typed up a scurrilous little one-page flyer summarizing the potential of the mountain, and mailed half a hundred copies to environmental organizations and community leaders and newspaper editors and public officials, I called not for a park but "A Great Big Green and Quiet Place."

The response was what could have been expected: silence. Except . . . I was astounded by a hand-written note from the Mayor of Seattle, Charles Royer, pledging the support of his person and office, declaring "WE NEED COUGAR MOUNTAIN." Years later, as Mayor Royer was attempting to defend Discovery Park against the Metro sewermen determined to ravage West Point, he and Don Harris, long-range planner of the Seattle Parks Department, solicited my support. Don urged, "We helped you on Cougar Mountain, and would like your help now." That's how I learned that when I sat enraptured on the roof of Parrington watching the sun rise over the mysterious mountains, Seattle, too, was gazing east.

The newly inaugurated King County government, in which a nine-member Council and an Executive replaced the antique three-member Commission, had commenced a county-wide land plan. One unit, the "Newcastle Communities," extended from the Cedar River to U.S. 10, including the "Cougar Mountain Subarea." The Lakemont

Boulevard controversy (see below) of the mid-1970s had jumped up its priority to the top of the list. A 20-member Citizens Committee had been appointed, half by Executive John Spellman, half by the Council, the influential voice there being that of Councilor Mike Lowry, whose district this was. The 20 included Buz Moore and Dave Kappler, two participants in the 1977-78 walkabouts and the 1979 rehydrating at the Rollin Log.

I attended no 1979 meetings of the committee. However, a staff aide, Mary Macumber Bundy, asked me to lead a committee hike from Coal Creek Townsite to the Far Country Lookout. To enable members to do additional touring on their own, May 7 and June 25 I submitted to Mary the two sections of *Trespassers' Guide to Cougar Mountain Trails*, 100 single-spaced pages. She distributed photocopies to committee members; some of the major property owners were scarcely able to restrain their gratitude.

My first attendance at a meeting was January 22, 1980, when Barbara Johnson and I, as vice president and president, appeared at the committee's invitation to present the Trails Club proposal for a regional park. We had no clue what reception to expect. At one pole of the committee were representatives of large owners: heirs of the Northern Pacific Land Grant, Weyerhaeuser and Burlington-Northern; Daon, a Netherlands-based conglomerate which was acquiring the properties once belonging to Pacific Coast Coal and now to Palmer Coking Coal; a sinister combine rumored (by me) to be financed by Arabian, Las Vegas, and Hong Kong money; and the partnership I referred to as "The Dentists." At the other pole was the "Lowry bunch," led by the likes of Buz and Dave.

At the end of our presentation Barbara and I sat down to await the jury's verdict. A person in the audience arose, not a committee member or government official, but having the air of a stratum of authority at their level or possibly higher. He declared that in all his years of land-planning never had he heard so creative, so imaginative, so altogether beautiful a proposal.

After the meeting, Buz and Dave informed Barbara and me this Higher Authority was none other than Maestro of the Central Newcastle Property Owners Association (CNPOA). What is one to think when the Devil attends mass? My blood had run cold, at Far Country Lookout, when a fellow who had the looks of a Mafioso gazed over the ridges and vales and told me, "We owe you a debt of gratitude. You've showed us how to merchandise Cougar Mountain." Well, never had we expected to preserve the entirety of the Green and Quiet. Most was certain to be developed, and call it greed or the American Way, all we hoped for and sought for park was the developers' trash — the land that couldn't rationally be taken to market — the too high and snowy, the too steep, the too wet, the too riddled with underground holes. Another of the CNPOA group, hired hand (I conjectured) of a sheik, informed me, "I was in on the rape of Orange County and it weighs heavily on my soul. Cougar gives me a chance to do penance and gain absolution. Aside from that, the park will boost property values around the periphery so much that we could easily afford to give the public the whole park."

I was enchanted, at the start of 1980, by the prospect of becoming a bosom buddy of the CNPOA Maestro, who promised that come December we'd find the park in our Christmas stocking. Philosophically split down the middle though it was, the Public Trust Doctrine on one side, the Private Greed Doctrine on the other, PTD vs. PGD, the committee nevertheless voted unanimously to endorse the regional park as the core of the plan for Cougar Mountain. The Trails Club had been in business less than a year and won its first big victory slam-dunk. Onward, then, to Squak and Tiger and all . . .

But not quite yet. The PTD faction had presented a creative, imaginative, altogether beautiful two-part vision. There would be, at the center of Cougar Mountain, the Great Big Green and Quiet Place, the regional wildland park. The complementary and fulfilling beauty was The Villages. Much of the outside-the-park portion of the mountain was unsuitable or impractical for tract development. The

park therefore would be ringed by space mostly left open and green, the development confined to high-density "Villages" — each with a Village Center for convenience shopping and in concentric circles outward, "affordable" multifamily housing for the young and the struggling and the retired, then detached dwellings for single families, then "estate" tracts for the privileged, and finally, the public commons of wildwoods.

The Central Wildland Park was a pretty idea. So was the Village Concept. Put two pretties together and what have you got? The spirit swoons, the world gapes in awe. Not waiting until Christmas, on August 21, 1980, Maestro unveiled his "Villages in the Park." "VIP," we dubbed it. As was warned at Troy, "Beware of architects bearing pretty pictures." The Maestro's park far surpassed that of the Trails Club, was much much bigger, extending out from the mountain center to valleys all around, was much more people-friendly, homes for 50,000 located in the park, much easier of access, east-west and north-south "parkways" slicing through the park and a grid of streets within that put every salal bush just a step from the car door. There would be a golf course, of course. That and soccer fields would replace the jungle of Klondike Swamp. An "employment center" on Wilderness Peak would keep a village of quaint crofters cheerfully busy sheering sheep and knitting sweaters and posing for tourists' cameras. A "destination resort-conference center" in Lame Bear Swamp would depopulate Salishan and Fantasy Island.

By happenstance, the Citizens Committee had split exactly down the middle, 10 committed to the PTD, 10 to the PGD. Thus, no final decisions could be made. (By fortuity) the committee had 3 non-voting alternates standing by to sit in for absent voting members. The 3 alternates were all PTD. To maintain the standoff the PGDers had to forego vacations, miss weddings and birthday parties, stagger out of sickbeds. The PTDers, on the other hand, could ski in Banff, swim in Hawaii, do the Broadway season, and undergo childbirth and heart surgery. Two years of trench warfare broke the spirit of the PGD faction. Its members drifted away to seek other fish easier to

fry. In June, 1981 the Citizens Committee, by a 2-1 margin, adopted a "Preferred Plan" which embodied the park proposal of the Trails Club.

Four public meetings were held throughout the county. Environmental and civic-action groups, and individuals living on the mountain and throughout Puget Sound City, attended and testified, voting 9-1 for the Citizens Committee/Trails Club "Preferred Plan."

Proficiency in the technique of confidential communication in smoke-filled rooms, nose to nose, belly to belly, had earned the Maestro, around the County Courthouse, the pet name of "Bellybumper," or "BB" for short. October 15, 1981, stung by the 9-1 defeat, "BB" came to a meeting of the Trails Club board to unveil his upgraded VIP; the park now was even larger, and contained every swamp and chasm and cliff we had praised in the first edition of this guidebook.

We laughed at his Park #2, which still had 50,000 residents and miles and miles of paved streets; by the standards he employed, downtown Bellevue could be certified as "wildland park." We ridiculed the little green bits his map showed, the swamps and chasms and cliffs, calling it "a string of sausages." He therefore plucked from his hat Park #3 and, for good measure, Park #4. Cougar, he said, was in reality a mere prelude to Squak and Tiger wildlands (about which he also had learned from our guidebooks). If we would concede Cougar to him, he vowed to bump bellies from here to Tierra del Fuego to get us bigger and better parks elsewhere in the Issaquah Alps.

We had good fun with BB October 15. We laughed the heartier after the election of November 3. Executive John Spellman had resigned to run for governor. The Republican majority on the County Council replaced him with a former employee of Daon. BB, who had begun his political career as wunderkind in the Democratic Party, had long been twitching his nose at the reek of riches on the other

side of the aisle, and decided the present moment was most opportune to change horses. Hilarity reigned in the Courthouse the morning of November 4, the Daon-developer incumbent having been upset by Randy Revelle and Bellybumper scurrying around the corridors, trying to squirm back into the Democratic Party.

The interim one-year Executive had been careful not to tip his hand (though everyone knew what was in it, none better than BB) and had done nothing to interrupt initiatives begun in the administration of John Spellman, who was a sort of amiable mugwump Republican, virtually non-partisan, and had assembled a staff which included such stars as Mary Macumber Bundy and Jeanette Veasy, the latter having prepared a handsome 96-page booklet on the park proposal and an evocative slide show.

The election of November 1981 got us the park. At a September press conference in the fog atop Anti-Aircraft Peak, Randy had informed the audience (which, as he observed, "had more coyotes than people") that the park was at the top of his priority list. At his next press conference atop AA Peak, April 30 of 1982, the humans far outnumbered the canines as he announced that he had just delivered to the County Council his "Chosen Plan Concept" which was, in essence, that of the Citizens Committee and the Trails Club.

That was the good news of 1982. There was also bad news. PRO PARKS, a county-wide bond issue which featured Cougar as the "glittering star of the package," came before the voters in a spell of hard times and failed. However, precincts where Cougar Mountain was known voted solidly YES, convincing the knowledgeable that the park proposal was a winner.

More bad news: for 7 hours on December 6 the County Council listened to testimony on Randy's Chosen Plan and Bellybumper's VIP. The outcome? Our PTD testimony by dozens of spokespersons for community organizations, our petitions bearing 1106 names, were buried by the 5-4 Republican majority.

The Belly Bumped ecstatically at that day's enactment of the Newcastle Ordinance. After 3 years of resounding defeats by the PTD, the PGD had steamrolled to triumph. Among the disastrous provisions was a "parkway" from Coal Creek over the top of Cougar and down to Tibbetts Creek, splitting the wildland park in half, mocking the name of "wildland."

However, it's the last battle of a war that decides the victor. January 7, 1983, Randy vetoed the flawed ordinance. He then sat down with Bruce Laing, Councilor for Cougar Mountain and a leader of the Republican majority, and worked out a compromise the Trails Club could accept as the best available from a Republican majority.

June 5, 1983, at the Trails Club's first "Return to Newcastle," Randy signed the Newcastle Ordinance which gave (though on paper only) official existence to the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park.

At Return II, 1984, Randy announced the first land acquisition, an extension of the Coal Creek Park upstream to meet the regional park.

By January of 1985 the valley of Wilderness Creek had been acquired, from SR 900 nearly to Shy Bear Pass. In May the heart of the park, from Coal Creek Townsite through the Curious Valley to the Far Country, and up the slope to Klondike Swamp, was purchased from Daon, which had bought the holdings of Palmer Coking Coal Company. (The "Dutchmen" were skating on thin ice worldwide, desperate for cash, and were eager sellers ; their "betrayal" sent BB into a fury.)

By Return III, 1985, a land swap with the state Department of Natural Resources had added Malignant Deceiver Ridge and the Skunk Cabbage Farm to the wilderness. During the summer the adjoining "Pancratz Property" was obtained.

Some years later, reflecting on his defeat after a single term, Randy recalled, "I had one good press day from farmland preservation, one good press day from growth management, one good press day from the park, and a hundred lousy days from that baseball team."

The baseball team, Seattle's second franchise in the majors, the first having been hijacked out of town, as happens so often in a nation with so many wealthy "sportsmen" intoxicated by the aroma of big league locker rooms. Another of the ilk, a Mr. Argyros, bullied into the city from California, where his crimes as a land-raper had never quite got him into prison, and was forgiven for his sordid past and made a Seattle hero by rescuing the threadbare new team from bankruptcy. Following traditions of the "sport," he demanded outrageous subsidies by King County. Randy suggested, not the least belligerently, the subsidies ought to be carefully considered. Argyros blustered, "Your money or your team!" and threatened to pack up his franchise and trundle off to some more submissive city. The PGD didn't have to lift a finger to dismiss the dreaded Democrat, just sat back and let the sports pages jackals and brain-dead fans do the dirty work. In November 1985 Randy lost his bid for reelection, by the thinnest of margins, and only after counting of absentee ballots. A sufficiency of voters knew nothing about his opponent except that he would give the California developer what he wanted.

Obviously , Randy's replacement was committed to also giving local developers what they wanted. The park was dead in the water. However, it turned out the new Executive didn't feel strongly about the park, or anything else, didn't know anything about the park (or much of anything else). In 8 years (he was reelected in 1989, again by the thinnest of margins of absentee ballots, and against a political unknown) he exhibited so little interest in governance of King County he is remembered (that is not) as Executive Zero. When a decision was needed, he did what he was told by whoever had his ear.

Usually, of course, this was a tool of the kleptocracy. Fortunately, Councilors Bruce Laing and Lois North, members of Zero's own party, had accepted the 1983 compromise, supported the park, and obtained his acquiescence to do as they wished, so long as they let him alone. King County staffers, largely holdovers from the Revelle regime, jubilantly resumed full speed.

In 1987 another member of Bellybumper's defunct CNPOA cabal was hurting for ready cash and gratefully accepted same from the county for a fine, wild (and unbuildable) stretch of The Precipice on the north side of Anti-Aircraft Peak, including the "Million Dollar View," one of many such in that vicinity but the only one not privatized by mansioneers; thus the underclass is guaranteed a magnificent look out to Mt. Baker and the San Juan Islands. In November 1989 an open space-wildlife habitat bond issue approved by the voters funded purchase of 150 acres on the east slope of Cougar.

Yet for all this, when the County Council met on December 11, 1989, the park was lacking a large chunk without which its claims to be "regional" and "wildland" would be hollow. The Northern Pacific Land Grant signed into law by President Lincoln was described by a Congressional investigating committee of the 1920s as the most monstrous theft in the history of the nation, beside which the Teapot Dome scandal was filching nickels from the petty cash. In the 1940s the grant avoided being overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court on a tie vote, 4-4, one justice abstaining. In the 1970s the two senators from Montana sought to take back the grant lands from the railroads, which were violating terms of the grant by getting out of the railroad business to concentrate on logging and mining and real estate. On Cougar Mountain, 800 acres remained in the treasure chest of the Robber Barons, and their heirs not only had the loot but the genes of their Gilded Age great-grandfathers, they who gorged themselves on what Bernard De Voto called "The Great Barbecue."

From the inception of the park idea the assumption had been made by King County and the Trails Club that the two large holdings of Burlington-Northern (Marshall's Hill, the southwesternmost summit of the mountain, and Wilderness Peak, its highest summit) would be obtained through exchange for county properties. By the end of 1985 Executive Revelle was within weeks of striking a deal and confidently expected to appear at Return to Newcastle IV in June 1986 to celebrate completion of the legalities. Upon learning results of the "Argyros Election," however, Burlington-Northern decided to see what sort of offer might be made by the new Executive. The Trails Club was grieved by the delay but felt the County Council was now so solidly in support of the park there was no need to worry. We waited patiently, respectfully, through 1986 (no Executive and no announcement at Return IV), 1987 (ditto, Return V), 1988 (ditto, Return VI), and 1989 (ditto, Return VII). We began to grow uneasy. Burlington-Northern had spun off its local lands to Glacier Park Inc. and announced that the entire subsidiary was up for sale. To whom? A buccaneer from Montana or California? A faceless conglomerate from Boston? The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere? Glacier Park informed the county that its parent holding company insisted on settling the Cougar Mountain matter by the end of 1989 in order to clear the decks for the sale.

Mysteriously (to the Trails Club, which was neither consulted nor kept informed), the deal discussed by Burlington-Northern and Revelle, an exchange of the Cougar properties for county-owned air rights over a stretch of Seattle railroad tracks, had been dropped. The new proposal being haggled at inordinate length was an exchange for county lands on Grand Ridge devised by Executive Zero's staff. The holding company that was the successor to Burlington-Northern was adamant that its creature, Glacier Park Inc., must sign paper by midnight of December 31.

The Trails Club supports the principle that in this day and age no public lands ever should be yielded to private ownership, that all public lands should be retained and any private lands needed by the

public should be flat-out purchased. However, living in a mean, nasty, and brutish world, on occasion the club faces up to a cruel necessity.

A group of our friends and allies, admirable defenders of Grand Ridge, were confident the Eastern scoundrels were bluffing. A number of schemes were fabricated by which, through use of mirrors, sleight-of-hand, and puffs of smoke, we could eat our cake and have it too — King County would retain its property on Grand Ridge and obtain the Cougar Mountain parcels some other way, some other time. The Trails Club didn't believe it, was convinced the magic tricks would not work, that the Robber Barons didn't give a fig for the comfort and joy of King County, that they were holding a real pistol to our head, loaded with real bullets, finger on the trigger. If the smoke-blinded wishful thinkers succeeded in blocking the exchange, the bell tolling in the new year would be accompanied by the BANG! of a pistol announcing that 800 acres of Cougar Mountain wildland were to be platted for thousand of houses, miles of streets.

On December 11 the King County Council met for final action. The Trails Club restated its long-standing intention to obtain preservation of sensitive lands on Grand Ridge. But the club also affirmed its conviction that the gluttons feasting on their caviar and oysters and blood-red wine would suffer no indigestion from pausing in mid-bacchanal to rip the guts out of Cougar Mountain. At four o'clock in the afternoon the Council agreed that whatever might ultimately be done about Grand Ridge, the clock was striking for Cougar Mountain. The vote was 6-2, one Republican absent and 3 Republicans and 3 Democrats outvoting one Democrat and one Republican.

Thus it was that the Cougar Mountain Park began the New Year of 1990 actually as well as nominally, Regional and Wildland, the size increased to 2478 acres.

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A curious feature of Zero's 8-year regime was his staff's emulation of his monk-like avoidance of the public — or was it just the Trails Club? (During this period a Deep Throat friend of mine chuckled as he reported that a speaker addressing a secret conclave of land-rapers denounced "Harvey Manning and his Issaquah PLO.") Due to the cold-shoulder policy, only years after the fact did we learn that sometime during the 1985-1993 regime of Zero, the Ravens Crest plat at the base of the East Ridge of Wilderness Peak, long a potential threat to the valley of Wilderness Creek, had been obtained.

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If the Executive staff didn't talk to us, the Council did, particularly Larry Phillips, who before^s election to the Council had served as Randy's good right arm and now, though his district was in Seattle, remained a loyal friend of "the park Randy made." In 1994 he shepherded through the Council the purchase of 442 acres on slopes east of Anti-Aircraft Peak, encompassing Lame Bear Swamp and West Tibbetts Marsh and upper Bear Ridge to below the Fantastic Erratic. In 1996 he led the Council into buying three small but crucial "wildland protector" parcels on the park borders: (1) the Military Road Trail from Coal Creek Townsite up Red Town Creek to the Clay Pit Road; (2) several platted lots in the Licorice Fern Subdivision on Far Country Creek, sufficient to insulate the Far Country Basin from streetlights and lawnmowers and boomboxes; and (3) the "Finkbeiner Salient" atop the summit ridge of Radio Peak which would have had picture windows gazing down into Klondike Swamp.

The Master Plan

That the park went the best part of a decade after "Harvey Manning Day" lacking a formal management plan was not a fret. The King County Parks field staff, under the Cougar Mountain manager, Steve Williams, was in perfect philosophical tune with the Trails Club

and so too— sufficiently — were the powers above, as seemingly assured by the official designation *Wildland* Park.

There was a bit of a flap when the Parks Director loosed heavy machinery onto several trails to open them up to trucks. When I complained, she asked how I expected her to be responsible for the park if she couldn't drive to every corner. I referred her to the national wilderness areas. She then ranted at me that her top aides had voted unanimously that Cougar Mountain was not, could not ever be, a wildland. Luckily, before we had to declare open war she resigned to pursue other career opportunities.

In 1993 the master planning commenced, the field staff and the Trails Club, the County Parks planner assigned to supervise, the citizens advisory committee, and the Portico Group consultants working together efficiently and harmoniously.

The sole blip emanated from California, where at the turn of the 1980s garage tinkerers had devised a "mountain bike," the name referring not to such mountains as those of the Sierra Nevada but to the scene for which it was invented, Mount Tamalpais, north of San Francisco Bay, known fondly to generations of hikers and horsemen as "Tam." The new vehicle, more accurately described as the "fat-tire" or "knobby-tire" or "off-pavement" bike, gave good fun on Tam's many fire roads — but more thrilling sport by invading the foot-hoof trails for high-speed "bombing runs" down steep and twisty "single-track," as exhilarating as jumping off bridges. Quickly spawning a manufacturing-retailing industry, the vehicle and sport, heavily promoted by industry money, reached the Northwest in force by the end of the 1980s. A local zealotry incorporated a club whose highest priority was announced as making Cougar Mountain the premier mountain-bike gymnasium of the region.

The Trails Club, while admiring the new bicycle (as it does all bicycles and all bikeways), stated the self-evident: The Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park was (and is) a dedicated *wildland*;

the difference in speed between wheels and feet forbids the two from sharing a trail; "single-track" biking is athletic exercise of the body, incompatible with asthetic exercise of the spirit; basketball is not played in a museum.

That is, we *assumed* these matters were self-evident. But then an incompetent Parks Director (another one) opined that Cougar Mountain had plenty of room for wheels. I publicly demanded that he be fired. Luckily, he resigned to pursue other employment opportunities.

During the Council's committee hearings on the master plan, a leader of the Lycras predicted that by the turn of the millennium nobody would be walking, everybody would be on wheels. (From the cradle to the grave? Childbirth to cremation?) Attempts were made by a cannonade of noisy press releases to stir the media's blood lust; only one minor television station showed up and took barely enough footage for a half-minute on the 11:00 news; no print journalists at all acknowledged the releases.

The zealots were not quitters. September 12, 1994, the master plan came before the Council, and lo and behold, one Councilor opened her mouth to speak pure Lycra, proposing a zealot-written amendment that would allow wheels on some trails of the park; she devoutly repeated the solemn assurance she had been given that the yipping and giggling would be confined to the specified trails, the good little girls and boys and their toys never ever would sneak off for a scofflaw bombing run. A second Councilor, once assumed to have a brain in her head, seconded the amendment! However, by 11-2 the Council rejected the silliness and by 13-0 adopted the master plan as submitted.

It may therefore be said that the two decisive days which made the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park a *wildland* were June 5, 1983, when Randy Revelle signed the Newcastle Ordinance he'd beaten out of the County Council, and September 12, 1994, when

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the Council rejected monkeyshines in the wildland and adopted the Cougar Mountain Master Plan.

You Can't Win 'Em All

The Trails Club has shared astounding victories in the Alps, not the least being the subject of this guidebook. There have been, as well, resounding defeats. Two have left especially painful scars.

The first great victory predated the club, though many of our eventual members participated as activists in the Cougar Mountain Residents Association, a group formed in response to the traumatic arrival on the mountain of Modern Times. We-all had been puzzled by a feature of the new I-90, under construction to replace the old U.S. 10, namely, a stub of concrete thrusting from Exit 13 to a deadend in the Lewis Creek Canyon. Inquiry revealed this mysterious absurdity was to be the northern terminus of a "Lakemont Boulevard" which would climb the canyon and cross The Pass to Coal Creek and I-405.

Who wanted Lakemont? Not the mountain residents, who then numbered several hundred. But several large property owners, newly on the scene from Arabia, Las Vegas, Hong Kong, or wherever, wanted to arrange for thousands of mountain residents, tens of thousands, and thought it would be very kindly of the public to pay for a driveway to open up these homesites to development. The City of Bellevue also wanted those tens of thousands of new taxpayers, to fatten its civic ego and its bureaucracy. The handful of residents, decisively aided by County Councilor Mike Lowry, defeated the developers and the city. They celebrated their David over Goliath triumph at a victory potluck, at which a highway sign, "Lakemont Boulevard," was ceremonially torched, Mike applying the match.

Innocence was bliss, that happy potluck and bonfire night of 1978. However, the monsters conjured up by developers may be hunted down by peasants brandishing pitchforks and laid in coffins,

but come their hour and they will rise again to walk among us and suck our life blood. A mayor of Bellevue, strutting and fretting as developers pulled his strings, trumpeted (as reported in the press), "COUGAR MOUNTAIN IS A CHINESE WALL THAT MUST BE BREACHED!" (The press refrained from commenting on what the Great Wall of China had been built for, and from reflecting who, in the mayor's opinion, would pour through the breach in the Cougar Mountain wall to rape and pillage whom.) The engineers of Bellevue clapped hands in glee at being granted their wish, their Last Great Challenge, after which they'd have nothing left but patching chuckholes. They and the developers and the Bellevue City Council consorted conjugally in their accustomed menage a trois and the most costly 3/4 mile of highway in the state's history is scheduled to be ready for the Seattle-North Bend gridlock of the new millennium.

* * * * *

The Newcastle Ordinance of 1983 provided for three "villages," none ever built, though the term is perpetuated by realtors as a sales hook. Indeed, no village ever was intended by the faceless men from Arabia, Las Vegas, and Hong Kong, but as part of the charade the chimerical West Village site was given an eastern access from Coal Creek.

The speculator who was the supposed builder-to-be vanished into the sands of Arabia, the casinos of Las Vegas, or the fleshpots of Hong Kong, who knows? Therefore the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park was free to reach out to its natural western boundary, up from the Curious Valley to the height of land between Coal Creek and China Creek, China Summit. Several times over the next decade the County Council recognized the logical necessity. However, neither Executive Zero nor his successor exhibited the slightest interest.

If the fix was in at the highest level, who was fixed, by whom?
 77 Look to Adam Smith's 'unseen hand.' The Trails Club smiled fondly on incorporation of a new little citylet, Newcastle, as a defense mechanism against the otherwise inevitable annexation by Bellevue. We realized only too late that the new little faux-Newcastle was just of a tidy size to be tucked in the developers' pockets.

We should not have been so complacent, should have moved faster. We failed to foresee that in the very near future (which is now) city employees east of Lake Washington would be unable to live in the cities they serve, the housing priced beyond their grasp. A journalist put it this way, with only slight exaggeration, "Imagine you live in a town where last year 10,000 people were lottery winners and were now worth \$4 billion apiece. That's what the Eastside is seeing."

In the movie *Cabaret*, Liza Minelli sings the theme song of free-market America, "Money money money makes the world go round." It surely makes faux-Newcastle (and, of course, Bellevue) go round.

There is no wildland uphill from the Wildside (it is to weep!) Trail. There are to be, here, a 36-hole golf course, at the greens fee of \$100 for 18 holes the most expensive in the state, affordable only to those who can afford the mansions to be built beside the fairways, mansions which will sell for the enhanced price which reflects the Green and Quiet Place next door. (When the transfer of material value is in the other direction, to preserve through eminent domain or other means public necessities or amenities, private property fanatics call it a "taking," scream bloody murder, and call out the law dogs.) These are names to be added to the Cougar Mountain Wall of Shame as inheritors of the social ethics of the Gilded Age: the government of the faux-City of Newcastle, Mr. Garbage man of the Coal Creek Development Corporation, and the Microsoftie Billionaire who retired with his lottery winnings to pursue public acclaim and gratitude as The Philanthropist.

Into the Next Millennium

The Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park has attained, as of 1998, very nearly its maximum practical and possible boundaries. However, in addition to several small tidying-ups, the park boundaries are in several places yet to reach the ideal:

The Clay Pit

Since the early 1970s the fire-clay deposits of Clay Pit Peak have been mined to supply the Newcastle Brick Plant. When Glacier Park (a spun-off segment of "the railroad company") exchanged Section 31 (part of its remaining booty from the Northern Pacific Land Grant) for Grand Ridge lands, it retained the northeast corner of the section, which was on long-term lease to Mutual Materials, the brick plant.

The lease eventually will expire. The clay will run out sooner than that — perhaps very soon. Since no other exploitation of the location would be tolerated, addition to the park is certain. The existing truck road will be narrowed to a foot-horse trail through ever-taller forest.

The pit itself will become one of the park's crowning glories. The excavation has scooped downward into sedimentary strata as impervious as concrete, so water-tight that a notch has had to be cut at the pit edge to drain off waters that seep in from the peak above. At the conclusion of the mining the notch can be readily dammed and in a single winter the pit will become "Claypit Lake" (or Great Blue Heron Marsh?), partly open water, partly cattail marsh, the water level varying seasonally but the wetness continuous the year around. (For example, see the small pit higher on the peak, "Jerry's Duckpond.")

In the final manipulations of the terrain, islets and peninsulas can be fashioned to serve as nesting sanctuaries; plank walkways and platforms might be built for non-intrusive viewing. The very first spring the mallards will be nesting, by the next year the frogs and newts and muskrats and their ilk will establish themselves, and before long all the area's resident and migratory wildfowl will put it on their itineraries. Soon the walker will have to beware of the nest-guarding redwing blackbird. In a couple of decades the cottonwoods that will grow tall from the shores will catch the attention of the great blue herons, who will establish a heronry; to give the seclusion they want, their chosen sanctuary will be protected from public entry, a viewing site established so visitors can unobtrusively observe the February-to-June courtship, mating, nesting, and rearing of the young.

East Slope

The fantasy of the "East Village" died a lingering death. BB kept up CPR long after the corpse was stinking, hoping to bamboozle the granting of permits and authorizations and zonings which would, at the stroke of a bureaucratic pen, increase the market value of the land by a quantum leap so it could then be sold to some roving speculator who could blackmail the public into paying the inflated price. That's what bellybumping is for.

Gypsy speculators from every continent except Antarctica flirted with BB and fled after they came to us and we explained the realities. In 1995 there arrived on the scene people whose business was not blackmailing but genuine developing, and who operated not by bellybumping in smoke-filled rooms but by open discussion in public forums.

The Trails Club has several priorities: (1) preserve intact the pristinity of the twin canyons of West Fork Tibbetts Creek and Claypit Creek all the way down from the present park boundary to SR 900, no roads in or across the canyons, no developments in or

looking down into them; (2) dedicate open-space wildland to buffer the park from development. A proposal on the table at this writing would keep 450 acres of the 600-acre site as undisturbed public open space.

Far Country Ridge

The ridge south of Far Country Basin is crucial to protection of the basin. It is or has been owned for a century by descendants of the original homesteader. The portion of the homestead in the northeast corner of Section 2 must be obtained to guard the headwaters of Far Country Creek and its trail entry to the park and to preserve the quiet isolation of the basin.

Addendum

This appendix was written in the fall of 1988, for the fourth edition of the Trails Club's Hiking Trails of Cougar Park, published by the club in August, 2000.

No attempt will be made here to treat the whole of Cougar Mountain, as it has become by this writing, the summer of 2003. The Lakemont Boulevard was completed and opened, "South Bellevue" is a fact, and except for the walls and holes and swamps, the canyons and gorges and chasm and gulches, scarcely an acre has not been infilled or platted to finish the job. --Except a handful of little neighborhood parklets the thousands of new settlers have wrung out of the City of Bellevue -- and the Regional Wildland Park, which has grown to substantially more than the targeted 3000 acres, the total not known to us because King County has become nervous about having taken so much real estate off the market and is cagey about revealing the amount.

Two new coups can be cheered. The Clay Pit has been purchased by King County, added to the park, and in due time the truck road will be put to bed and replaced by a trail, and planning can begin for the heronry.

The Trails Club's long rearguard action to preserve the east slope of Cougar has been won. A relatively small

development will be located at a reasonably low elevation and most of the wildland will remain (we trust) wild under management of the City of Issaquah, which appears to have taken seriously the honor granted it by the Trails Club as "Trailhead City," capital of the "Issaquah Alps."

Though the incorporation of the City of Newcastle proved to be a disaster, the area of China Creek and environs is being partly reclaimed through efforts of city residents who are beginning to exercise their franchise.

Opportunities remain elsewhere. Discussions continue about salvaging a portion of Far Country Ridge still held by heirs of the homesteader.

The Precipice Trail that I envisioned a quarter-century ago, and that Ralph Owen made a reality (one boot wide), may be finally attained by a renewed and recharged campaign in progress by the Trails Club.

It is being publicly acknowledged that the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway, a concept developed in the Trails Club, and now become the charge of the Greenway Foundation, is anchored by the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park. A proper acknowledgement, inasmuch as the concern for Cougar Mountain, and its companions in the Issaquah Alps, was the basic reason we noodled up the notion of the Greenway.