Diary of Two Motorcycle Hobos

By Lois Wilson

Introduction

Bill and I were married during World War I, and after he returned from France, he wasn't sure in what field of endeavor he wanted to earn his living. He had taken an electrical engineering course at Norwich University, a military college in Vermont, but, because of the war, did not graduate. His grandfather, with whom he lived after the divorce of his mother and father, wanted him to become a lawyer.

So, after a succession of unsatisfactory jobs, either to him or to his boss, and while employed by the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Co., he took a night law course at the Brooklyn Law School. His job as investigator of theft had shown him much of the seamy side of the law and dissuaded him from becoming a lawyer. He finished the law course, however, and paid for his diploma, but never bothered to pick it up.

He had been interested for some time in the stock market, and in why people buy into companies that they know nothing about, gambling with stocks as they would with chips in a Casino. Would it not be much safer and surer if investors knew something about the companies into which they were buying?

When his grandfather wanted to purchase a cow, he went to look at the cow, feel its legs, inquire about how much milk it gave, its age and forebears, etc. Why shouldn't this same principle be applied to the buying of stocks?

Feeling he was just the man to do the investigating, Bill consulted with several friends on Wall Street, but, finding no one enthusiastic about his ideas, and knowing the proof of the pudding is in the eating, he decided to take a year out to test his theory.

My reasons for wishing to take the time off were quite different. Although I thought Bill's stock theories were sensible, I wanted to get him away from New York, with bars (saloons they were called then) on many corners, and away from his buddies, both of which I considered contributed greatly to his excessive drinking. A year in the open, which we both loved, would give me a chance to straighten him out.

We had given up our apartment on Amity St., and were leaving from my parents' home on Clinton St., Brooklyn.

It was not always convenient to write my diary every day on the trip, so the headings often cover several previous days. As I sent my notes home in letters to Mother, I made no reference to Bill's drinking; in fact he drank very little during the year, and the trip did us both a lot of good.

During the editing of the diary, for clarity's sake, I have added a few place names and explanations of now-unclear activities; otherwise the diary is as a young couple found their world in 1925-26*.

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*Bill and Lois wintered 1926-27 at Clinton St., in Brooklyn. The last of diary of Motorcycle Hobo trip" was completed in April 1927. The author scribed this work in the 1920's, but it was not typewritten until 1973.

PART I

New Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
Thurs., April 16, 1925

It is cold in April riding a motorcycle without a windshield, but breathing in the ozone as we whiz along is most invigorating! When sitting on the driver's seat and turning on the gas I feel as if the whole world were mine. The sense of power, somehow not the machine's but mine, is tremendous.

We are off at last, and such a time as we had hitching and tying all our bundles on the motorcycle, before leaving Brooklyn this morning! The passers-by must have thought we were bound for the Arctic with presents for all the Eskimos. In the bow, on the rear of the sidecar, behind the driver, or in between, we finally found niches for everything that we could possibly need during the year--books and radio, gasoline stove and basket of provisions, seven army blankets and a mattress, a small trunk full of clothes, a tent and many odds and ends, including ourselves under several layers of underwear and as many strata of sweaters.

Our friends and relatives bid us goodbye as if in truth we were headed for the Arctic, for most of them considered it just as wild and crazy an undertaking. No doubt they are right for we both tossed up good jobs and have but slim funds for a long trip, planning to stop and earn more as soon as we run out.

He has a definite plan to make the trip useful in a business way, and has taken along to study four huge Moody's Manuals on industry, each as large as an unabridged Webster. Crazy or not, it is fun to have the open road and unknown adventures ahead!

When it began to rain soon after leaving Brooklyn, we did not mind too much, for both of us wore home-made waterproof zippered coveralls that keep out wind and wet, and every box and bundle has its waterproof cover, laboriously home-made out of army shelter-halves.

The preparation for this trip has taken some time. A mattress filled with kapok is warm and soft and yet so light it can be rolled into a small bundle. Seven army blankets sewn together on three sides make a fine sleeping-bag, better than the store ones for we can choose the proper layer according to the

weather, under one on warm nights and four or five on cold ones, and each morning they can be turned inside out to air and rotate their use. A toilet article kit made out of black oilcloth, lined with rubber and bound with gray tape, looks quite stylish and has plenty of room for pajamas and towel besides the toilet articles. Our food is all in waterproof oiled silk bags which occupy very little space. It would seem we are well prepared for rain or cold.

About fifty miles from home the trunk began to rattle and bounce, so we hunted up a blacksmith and had him install an iron brace extending forward from the trunk rack to the back of the driver's seat and on to this brace the trunk was belted. We hope it will turn out to be as satisfactory as now it appears to be.

This took time and together with a late morning start it was nearly dark when we reached Poughkeepsie. Luckily we found a splendid spot for our first camp, a glade in the woods beside a brook and quite sheltered from the wind. Violets, both yellow and blue ones, spatter the grass in front of the tent and bloodroots whiten the hillside.

After studying the whims of our new gasoline stove, lighting it many times only to have it blown out by the wind again and again, we finally caught the knack and ate supper in front of a roaring fire. We could hardly wait till dark to try out the electric light in the tent which Bill hooked up to the motorcycle battery. So right after supper we crawled under the blankets to read for several hours while listening to the radio, a superheterodyne which Bill had made himself. Such comfort and luxury for motorcycle hobos!

"The Camp," Lake Emerald, North Dorset, Vt.
Friday, April 17, 1925

This morning early we took baths in the brook while the sun was drawing the frost from the ground and making a great steam about it in the tree tops. The spot was so lovely that we dawdled with our breakfast and packing, which delayed us of course in starting.

Near Kinderhook, N.Y., as we were readjusting our luggage, a large touring car stopped beside us. We thought it was out of gas, but the sober one of the two occupants got out and found the tank nearly full. Then pulling up the hood, he gazed vacantly inside. Apparently neither he nor the other, who was giving varied and fanciful directions from the dark recesses of the car, knew a thing about engines in general nor this one in particular, so he called on Bill to help.

However, my husband also knows little about a car but, being electrically minded, sought the trouble in the parts he knew best. After a few peers and pokes he called for the radio earphones and then for the radio itself, and, like a doctor with his stethoscope, he sounded the lungs of the patient. By attaching a wire from one of the radio B. batteries to the engine he discovered something wrong with the timer. Thus scientifically verifying the practically proven fact that

the car could not run, Bill decided to t[ake] it to a garage, although it was heavy, being loaded with several cases of something that had played its part in unsobering the unsober one. Bill, proud of his Harley-Davidson, thinks it can do anything. So he hitched the two machines together with a rope and our good little one, heavily loaded herself, valiantly towed the big sick one three miles to a car hospital. But the ordeal was too much for our cycle. When we tried to start her she would not budge. The strain had apparently burnt out her clutch.

We were pretty discouraged, but Bill endeavored to fix her. The other machine was soon cured, the sober occupant insisted upon giving Bill $5 for his trouble and the injury to the motorcycle. Bill would not have taken the money if he had not felt that the poor buzz-wagon was badly hurt. Fortunately, however, after Bill had tightened a few screws, the clutch worked as well as ever. Overheated, it had only been paralyzed for a while.

So once more we started on our journey. Upon reaching Troy we bought some provisions, including half a dozen eggs, which we put in a canvas washbasin in the bow of the sidecar where it would not matter if they broke. After driving sixty miles to North Dorset, Vermont, in order to get around Emerald Lake we had to cross railroad tracks, the planks between which had been taken up, so we bumped over in great shape. We could hardly believe our eyes when we found not one egg even cracked. No wonder we are proud of our pop-cycle.

We have just scrambled and eaten the six eggs, after pitching our tent beside the lake, as it was too late to get from Charley, the local handy-man, the key to "The Camp," Mother and Dad's bungalow.

"The Camp"
Sat., Apr. 18, 1925

In spite of the beautiful stars last night we awoke this morning in six inches of snow. Gritting our teeth, we ran down to the lake for a most refreshing and invigorating plunge, the water being warmer than the air. We did not loiter, however, but hurried back to the warm tent heated by our gasoline stove, where, after a good rubbing down, we tingled and glowed all over.

Having gotten the keys to The Camp we are making ourselves completely at home. We plan to stay a week or so to fix up some of Bill's grandfather's affairs in East Dorset. He died last summer and his estate has a number of loose ends to be found and tied together.

The Camp
Mon., May 25, 1925

Two tragedies occurred in the insect and bird life today. For years I have wondered what funny little bugs come from the ugly brown beetle shells seen in the spring near the water's edge, and today I found out--to my surprise--a

glistening, iridescent green dragonfly? Fascinated, I watched the metamorphosis.

This morning on a rock near the water I noticed a clumsy insect body, with wings tightly furled, protruding from one of these shells. Its six legs were all out and I could see just where they and the folded wings had fitted into their housing. Placing it on a chair on the porch I watched it emerge. Slowly drawing its rather chunky body free of the casing, it began to teeter and seesaw and to my astonishment, its body lengthened and grew thinner until it was twice as long as the shell it discarded. At last, appearing satisfied with its slender green length it began to unfurl its wings, which were crumpled, webby and opaque. But as they unfolded they became smooth, iridescent and transparent; then before my eyes the dragonfly lifted high four perfect, glistening new wings. They took my breath away they were so beautiful--so bright, shiny and shimmery. Fluttering them a few times it flew several feet to the porch railing, where it posed a moment to catch its breath before plunging into the big world. Alas, it soared only a few yards before a phoebe bird darted down and gobbled it up! I sat down and cried. It had been so fresh, young and new!

Later this afternoon one of the babies of the same phoebe bird fell out of the nest and was killed instantly.

The Camp
Sun., June 7, 1925

I have hunted and hunted during the past week hoping to find a beetle shell with the creature still inside. The nymphs must live in the water for the discarded cases are mostly close to the bank, although a few apparently crawl inland several yards. There are many empty husks, one or two with the dragonfly nearly out, but none with the complete beastie within. I did so want to observe the entire drama, to watch an earthy grub crack through its cage and emerge-transformed.

We stay on and on, still trying to find and tie those loose ends. Although we are working hard and things have not turned out as we planned, we are enjoying our sojourn. The country never smelt so sweet, it seems, as it does this year since the apple blossoms first budded.

Everybody in the neighborhood is catching the biggest and fattest trout, that is, everyone but Bill and me, though we have often tried. Bill, however, is improving, for in the Battenkill yesterday, he caught a mess of four whappers, from about 5:30 A.M. till 1:00 P.M., saying he did not dare come home again empty-handed.

Hoping for continued luck, after supper last evening Bill and I drove to the Battenkill and, as usual upon leaving the machine, locked it. Returning later

with three nice trout, we discovered we had put on the wrong lock to which we had no key. Perhaps it would be a long drawn out chore to remove the lock and better be left until daylight, so we departed to Grampa's near-by empty house to spend the night, and hopefully, in the morning, to enjoy a tasty trout breakfast.

The whims of fate are often trying! In the morning there were no three nice trout, not even one! A neighbor's cat had had a piscatorial treat instead of ourselves. Luckily someone had left a sample of wheatina at the door, which with milk from the creamery, made a passable breakfast after all. And to think, in two minutes, the garage man knocked off the lock with a hammer.

The Camp
Mon., June 15, 1925

The weather was perfect this morning, crispy clear with creamy clouds casting interesting shadows on the mountains. The sun was hot but the breeze fresh and cool, blowing away the mosquitoes and gnats, which, by the way, have been terrible this year. But this afternoon in our pasture, brimming with strawberries, as soon as I started to pick them, it began to thunder, the sky grew black and the breeze died down, just the opportunity the gnats and skeets had been looking for. Even when it started to rain my companions were not deterred-and I suffered the tort[ ] of Tantalus. A harder job I never had than to keep to my silly resolution to pick every berry in a certain luscious spot. I did it, however, and with a full quart and a half in my pail, ran for home and into the pond.

The frustrating gnats are so small they can hardly be seen and are never heard. They get inside your clothes and into your hair. They sting your eyes and lips and ears. Not one inch of your body is safe from them. Mosquitoes are far better sports, announcing their approach and challenging you to catch them before they catch you. But enough of such an irritating topic!

We had a funny lunch today, or rather, as it was nearly three o'clock, high tea without the tea (Aunt Emma used to read to us about high tea in her old English story books)--ice cold coffeemilk, strawberries, crackers and penuche. Too hungry to wait for the latter to harden, we spread it on our crackers--odd but good.

The Camp
Mon., July 13, 1925

There had been so much rain lately that our brook gushes and foams down the mountain into the lake just as it does after the melting of the snow. I have been using one of its shallow pools as an icebox and one morning when I went out to get food the cupboard was bare. After some hunting I found the butter and bacon way down under the bridge, but a whole quart of milk had disappeared

entirely--swept out to sea, no doubt.

Recently while picking raspberries in the pasture I heard a peculiar snort and turning just in time, saw three deer waving their white tails high in the air as they leaped over the fence and bounded out of sight. Also thrilled by discovering two pink lady-slippers, I transplanted them in front of the house for Mother.

Bill and I are having great adventures with the East Dorset Water Works which Bill's grandfather had owned. When he died, maps of connections and shutoffs from the main pipes running down the town's two streets could not be found. So Bill with Charley's help has dug and dug until every shutoff is located, repaired or its good condition verified.

We had to be sure at night that lanterns were lit near the holes dug in the roads. One night it was already dark when I placed the lanterns and not being very familiar with the locations, I walked straight into a hole and down, just as neat as could be, landing on my feet. However, I did not make such a neat job of climbing out, for the top of the hole was above my head and the sides steep and slippery.

Another night we were in bed when Bill began to wonder and worry about those lanterns, afraid that Charley, who was supposed to attend to them, had forgotten and that somebody would fall and hurt themselves. So up we got, throwing on coats over our pajamas, and down to East Dorset we steamed. Luckily the lanterns were in place, thus easing Bill's mind. Back in bed, this time we slept.

Until today when I came across an old white cloth window shade in Grampa's attic, I had been unable to find anything suitable on which to make a map of the water works. The material, length and width of the shade are just the ticket. Careful measurements have been taken and the location of every connection, every house and almost every tree in town, sketched in. From now on we will know where the shutoffs are alright, alright.

Today Mr. Shaw's cook, a singularly thin and angular woman, stopped on the path around the lake, and gazing up at the bungalow with her arms akimbo, asked, "Where does Mr. Shaw's Dr. Burnham live?" (Answer: "here.") "If this is not the Big House can I go to see hit?" (Answer: "yes.") Returning, she observed, "My God, what a 'ouse; my God, what a rookery! Mr. Shaw, 'e 'as a strong, 'ansome 'ouse."

At the other end of the lake, Mr. Shaw lives in two buildings, one a stone "Big 'ouse" and the other a wooden dining room and servants' quarters. But here at my Dad's, both bungalows are on a par, one primarily for guests.

The Camp
Tues, July 14, 1925

Before leaving Brooklyn we had decided this expedition must pay for itself and that we wouldn't diminish the scanty store left in the bank. Although we

had hoped to travel a long distance before it would be necessary to earn more, the prolonged stay here has eaten up most of the $80 we brought with us; and now we must find work.

After first looking into the water power development on top of the Green Mountains near Readsboro, Bill hopes to get a job at the General Electric Co. at Schenectady, N.Y., thereby killing two birds with one stone: learning all he can about G.E., and earning enough money to travel another leg of our journey.

We hate to leave so soon after Mother and Dad's arrival yesterday but we feel we must be on our way and have been packing, tugging and tying all day. Our duffle is piled high on the motorcycle and tomorrow we become vagabonds again.

PART II

Near Somerset Dam, Vt.
Thurs., July 16, 1925

Saying goodbye to our friends took so long yesterday, that it was nearly dark and we'd covered only thirty miles from North Dorset before we found a camping spot in an orchard on a hill. It seemed ideal--except that apparently there was no water. After pitching the tent we set out with a lantern to find some, walking and walking until we met a man in a buggy who told us there was a good well, half a mile back, in an orchard on a hill--right where we were camped!

This morning, noticing that there was a house near by, we hid behind bushes while dousing each other with buckets of water. Then, gazing at the extensive view, we breakfasted on sandwiches and fresh pineapple Mother had put up for us; the pineapple having worked a little, Bill found delectable.

We were still in sight of our own Dorset Peak when the front chain of the motorcycle broke with a terrible bang. Bill tried but couldn't fix it. What a forlorn couple we were as we walked the machine into the Harley agency in Bennington--mechanical trouble so soon on our long journey.

However, with the cycle wearing her brand new chain, our spirits rose, as she flew up the mountain without a grumble or whimper, the grades steep but the road fine, leading through the wildest country. Five young partridges, hardly able to fly, fluttered across the road and a big hare leaped ahead of us for a long distance. We passed a few deserted houses, one bearing the sign, "Town Clerk's Office," another announced boldly that it was the "Town Hall"--everything handy but the town itself!

Somerset dam is huge--nearly a mile long, forty feet wide at the top, and sets back eight miles of lake. What Bill calls a penstock carries the water, and crawls out of the dam like a great wooden centipede, worming its way to the

power house.

After carefully selecting a spot with a marvelous view of the distant hills, in no time we were attacked by every known species of gnat and fly, forcing us to eat supper inside the tent, with the netting drawn tight.

Near Bennington, Vt.
Sun., July 19, 1925

Because of the insects yesterday morning, we could hardly stay down at the river long enough to take our plunges. Later while fishing, the only bites Bill got were on his face, neck, hands, wrists and ankles, even though slathered with fly-oil.

As we prepared to leave our "buggy" camp, a tiny field mouse played hide and seek between the cylinders of the motorcycle, remaining there unafraid until Bill started the engine. At the Seersburg Power Station on the Deerfield River, we were greeted by the most terrifying sound, like express trains rushing towards us from every direction--the starting of the generators. After Bill had an informative talk with the operator, we drove to Whitingham Dam, a third as long, but three times higher than Somerset, with an interesting "Tunnel to Hell," a tremendous concrete funnel preventing overflow. We camped last night near another power station, Davis Bridge, also on the Deerfield, and the coldest water in which we had ever bathed.

In the morning we drove back over the mountain towards Bennington to this attractive stop I had noticed on our way up. While I did a huge washing in the brook, Bill caught a couple of nice trout. After putting them on the fire to "stodge" for supper, I had the most ideal shower imaginable, lying back in a perfect armchair in the rocks, under a small, not too cold, falls.

In my writing now in the tent with the electric light hanging over my page, and catching faint strains of harp and fiddle from Bill's earphones. A Bonfire crackles in front, near the brook, and there is not a bug or beastie to annoy. In fact this whole camp has been perfect.

Morowski Farm, Schenectady, N.Y.
Tues., July 21, 1925

Perfection is short lived. Late that evening a thunderstorm came up, raining cats and dogs all night, the first chance to test our new tent, especially its guaranteed waterproof canvas floor. We had always dug a ditch around our army pup tent for drainage, but naively, we imagined this to be unnecessary with our miraculous new one; that we could even pitch it in a puddle and remain dry. We soon learned the truth, however.

Feeling the dampness seeping through, I awakened Bill. Whereupon, donning his waterproof zippers, he bravely launched forth into the rain and

discovered that the tent was standing in a small lake, three inches deep, in a clay-like hollow. The canvas floor hadn't done too badly, after all. Sponging up the puddle and pushing a mass of ferns underneath to raise the floor off the ground, he then ditched the tent. Inside, dry newspapers and shelter halves kept us fairly dry the rest of the night.

But what pleased us most about the test-run was that the window I had meticulously made similar to windows in Abercrombie tents did not leak a drop. It is equipped only with mosquito netting but a waterproof shade, conveniently pullable from the inside, and running between outside flaps--thus preventing wind and rain from blowing inside. Pretty trappy, I can tell you, both inside and outside!

In the morning the sun and wind dried everything thoroughly. But we have learned a lesson--always ditch the tent, even a grand new "explorer's" one with a canvas bottom and a window!

Near Schenectady we obtained permission to camp on an attractive looking farm. The presumably Polish family--father, mother, three daughters and two sons-is cordial and helpful. They all seem devoted to the younger boy, Leon, obviously sub-normal and decidedly unprepossessing. He fell on his head when six months old, they say. The parents run the farm while the children, except Leon, work at the General Electric plant, helping with the chores when they return.

After pitching the tent under a large oak in a field and buying provisions from our neighbors, we built a table and bench for eating and cooking, from boards Mr. Morowski gave us, so we are quite elaborately established.

Yesterday and today we both looked for jobs in town, as our capital has sunk to $4. Work is slack and the G.E., as well as other companies, is laying off employees. I tried for a sales-clerk's job in a department store, but the man would not take me on my face alone, telling me to come back tomorrow with references, and if I had experience in selling linen he would take me immediately. My selling experience being as non-existent as my references, I am out of luck.

A sign hung in front of a restaurant saying, "Dishwasher Wanted," but I simply could not bring myself to go in. I had had a theory that it would be interesting to take any job that came along, for the experience as well as pay. But reality often explodes theory. At any rate, after three days neither of us had yet found a job.

Leon has been a big help, bringing water and keeping the stray cows and boys from disturbing our things. His conversation is unique. "You wop?" and "When ya goin' to git married?" comprise most of it. He is a good-natured and the pet of the neighborhood. The girls never return from work without bringing him candy, or some trinket.

Goldfoot Farm, Scotia, N.Y.
Wed., July 22, 1925

We have jobs! Both of us! Working on a farm! This morning Mrs. Morowski came running out in the rain waving a newspaper, containing a want ad for a farm hand. We set out immediately to persuade the unknown farmer that he needed both of us. The rain simply poured down, but could not dampen our spirits; it did, however, dampen those of the motorcycle, causing a short circuit. We hated taking the time to fix it, scared that someone else would nab that job.

However, no one did--but neither did we. The man was sure he needed only one person, adding that Bill looked higher priced, anyway, than he cared to pay. Whether this was a compliment we never could determine. At any rate, the man told us about neighbors who might need two people.

Upon arriving at this second farm, down a muddy sideroad, we must have looked so wet and bedraggled that we were engaged purely out of pity, for the folks kept reiterating they should not spend the money on help this season. However, Bill's boast that he was a good milker clinched the matter. So we are hired help at $75 a month for both, with board and keep. I'm to assist with the housework and Bill to milk and work in the fields.

Goldfoot Farm
Fri., July 24, 1925

We are laboring like Trojans, trying to keep up with our bosses. Mrs. G. especially is a human dynamo. When she was younger, she says, she used to carry 2 one hundred pound bags of meal upstairs, one on each shoulder--a regular Amazon. As I am willing to do all the housework, she is free to work in the fields, which she loves, and is worth three of her husband who, though tireless, is a putterer, going round and round in circles. Although this rainy season has provided much time for repairs, a pleasant day was chosen for Bill to fix the mowing machine, the "boss" having little mechanical sense. In fact, besides milking ten of the twenty cows night and morning, most of Bill's time has been spent doctoring implements and tools.

Robert, a little boy about 11 years old, whom Mr. and Mrs. Goldfoot are bringing up, is a most pathetic youngster, wistful, cowed and overworked. Mr. and Mrs. G. are both good-natured and kind to him in their way, but they don't seem to realize that a boy, particularly such a delicate, sensitive child, needs something besides work, work, work. He is most inquiring and constantly plies Bill with whys and wherefores.

It's fun experimenting. Having never made a pie in my life before, I made two today, a blackberry and a custard as well as six blackberry tarts. They were darn good, if I do say so. Let's hope my luck continues for I have not confessed

my ignorance to my boss. Just before leaving The Camp, Mother tucked a little cookbook into our duffle, thus saving the day.

Such appetites and so many potatoes! I am sick of them! We eat potatoes three times a day, sometimes sliced and fried, sometimes diced and fried, sometimes baked, creamed, mashed or just plain boiled. Tonight we are having potato cakes. I wish I could think up some new way to cook them. I won't french-fry them for this bunch, because I would be at the stove all night. Yesterday I spent over an hour frying forty-eight slices of squash. For once I overdid it, and we had fried squash again for supper.

Goldfoot Farm
Sat., July 25, 1925

Today we have been exceptionally busy. It is now 9 P.M. and the folks are still in the fields, haying with a lantern. It will be all hours before the dishes are washed. A few of today's accomplishments will be: three meals prepared and three sets of dishes washed, a pudding, two pies and a cake with icing made for the weekend, nine milk pails and separator washed in the morning and again at night, windows and lamp chimneys cleaned, lamps and oilstove filled, range blackened, floor swept twice and mopped thoroughly, rugs and porch swept, and my knickers mended.

When we first came we got terribly tired, but now we are feeling fine and really enjoying it. After supper Bill goes up to our room (Mrs. G. calls it "the office") and studies his big books, four Moody's Manuals, while I write, and Mr. And Mrs. G. listen to our radio, Bill having rigged it up for them. Robert reads a while, then goes to bed.

The Goldfoots took us to a church social last night, where the people seemed a hard-shelled bunch. But Robbie had a wonderful time, eating four plates of ice cream without batting an eye. Being very timid, he is afraid to do anything but eat. When asked if he wants to drive the hayrake or do something mildly adventurous, his one reply is, "I daresn't take a chancet." However, he seemed to enjoy his ride in the motorcycle last night, though holding on tight all the way.

Goldfoot Farm
Sun., July 26, 1925

It's Sunday and the day has been ours--except for morning and evening chores, and a runaway calf, almost as hard to catch as a greased pig.

The first thing we did on our own was to take a bath in a nearby stream. It was certainly great to wash in something larger than a basin, even though we could only splash in a shallow pool.

Ma and Pa Goldfoot are very particular about Robert's washing his face and hands, but I bet, during the week we've been here, not one of the three has

washed any further. Every bit of water has to be lugged in and, after use, lugged out again and thrown away. To complicate matters, there are two kinds of water, pump water for drinking and cooking, and brook water for washing and cleaning. The pump is 100 feet from the house and the brook as many yards. Robert keeps two big milk cans filled with brook water and brings in a pail from the pump when he thinks of it. I never ask him to get water, because he has so much else to do. Besides helping with the milking, haying and churning, his particular job is feeding the livestock, consisting of four horses, hundred of chickens, eight pigs, twenty cows, one bull, twelve calves, six cats and a dog. The cats are the favorites of the establishment and have to be fed hot potatoes, mashed up in either gravy or warm milk. No cold dried up stuff for them!

After our baths we visited the Adirondack Light and Power steam plant on the Mohawk River, and experimental station for G.E. Not only is it kept in applepie condition but is decorated with potted palms; swallows fly among the high steel rafters. A grating in the floor permits one to observe masses of gayly painted pipes of all sizes, resembling a tangle of huge angleworms, and to follow the course of each pipe by means of its identifying color. The boiler room is a good place to keep cool on a summer's day, for no heat is wasted. Bill absorbed much interesting information.

The Mohawk River is used here as a barge canal and we enjoyed watching a good-sized launch go through the nearby lock.

At Amsterdam we felt in such holiday spirits that we hunted for something reckless to do to celebrate, but nothing better turned up than gorging ourselves on three ice-cream sodas apiece-disgusting!

The low rolling hills in this section are covered with cultivated fields and trim prosperous-looking farm houses. Driving home the long way around, under a flaming sunset sky, we reached here just in time for milking.

Our first week as farm hands has ended.

PART III

Goldfoot Farm, Scotia, N.Y.
Mon., July 27, 1925

From all we hear we have struck the best place to work in the neighborhood. We hear that most everybody hereabouts is either stingy or cranky. George and Ella Goldfoot certainly are neither, although they have no flair for management. Everything in the house is placed most inconveniently, so the least little job takes innumerable steps. Their chief fault, I imagine, is over-ambition, trying to tackle more than they are able to accomplish. One of two large farms goes almost entirely to waste because it is impossible to get

around to tending it. Cherries, pears and apples rot for want of picking. For a couple of years they have had to buy several hundred dollars' worth of hay because there was not time to cut their own. There are fields of rye, oats, wheat, alfalfa, and corn, yet they buy grain for the chickens. They try to grow watermelons and cantaloupe, besides the regular garden vegetables. They sell eggs, chickens, veal, and butter; every other day Robert and Mrs. G. churn as much as forty-three pounds at one time.

This morning Bill was astonished by the missus' saying that right after breakfast she had to kill a calf to take to town. Sure enough, before the men had finished milking she had caught and killed a calf, strung it up on a pulley over the barn door, all quartered, ready for market. Nothing fazes her; certainly she is the "swashbuckleer" Bill calls her. It used to take a full day a week to deliver her produce in town with horse and buggy; but today Bill took her in the motorcycle, calf and all, thereby saving her at least half a day.

Goldfoot Farm
Tues., July 28, 1925

Lately Bill has been talking a lot about "dirt farmers." Well, Mr. Hall, a neighbor, is certainly of the earth, smelly, and a good example of the tightness of the folks hereabouts. Before going to the field where he was supposed to help with the haying, he gave me a long harangue about the evils of the world in general, and his wife in particular.

"You'll never save-by anything unless you git up at sun-up, no matter how hard and long you work the rest of the day," he says. "I've seen folks that telt how hard they worked, goin' out at night a-mowin' with a lantern. Wal, mam, I've been over to see them same folks at seven or eight in the mornin', and they hadn't had their breakfast yit.

"And another thing, you can't git along unless you and your wife pull together. That's what ails me. My wife is terrible extravagant, and no matter what I save-by we'll never be well off, for she spends such a heap. I took her and the gal down to git shoes yesterdy. They each liked a pair marked $2.95. She would've paid that price, but I says to the clerk, 'That's pretty steep. Can't you make 'em cheaper?' He says as how I was a good customer he'd give 'em both to me for $5.75. Some better, hey!

"I bought two oat forks in town yesterdy, also. Don't ye tell anyone I paid only 40¢ apiece for 'em, 'cause I told Seth Smith I'd git him one for 50¢ and I don't want him to know I'm taking 10¢ off him.

"I don't care whether your man smokes or not, it's a filthy habit and I'd rather see a man dead drunk than smokin'.

"I tell you, my old woman is mighty cranky these days and don't do a stroke of work any more. I don't know what ails her. She says her glasses are broke,

so she can't darn my socks, but I caught her down churnin' and reading some old trashy magazine at the same time. She could see well enough for that alright, etc. etc. etc."

Mrs. G. told me Mrs. Hall makes their clothes, bakes bread, raises garden vegetables and berries and sells them in town, while the mister sits around, complaining about her, and comes late to help his neighbor with the haying!

Goldfoot Farm
Thurs., Aug. 6, 1925

Bill and I often have a hard time keeping our faces straight, the male boss being such a scream. Talking incessantly, everything he says is by way of, or in parenthesis to something else, which he seldom reaches. He changes his mind a dozen times whether to water the horses before or after supper and then ends up by asking "Ella." Tonight there was an unexpected letter for them. Pa, striding to the door for light, read out loud an invitation to a Variety Shower. Coming back to the supper table he sat quietly while I explained a Variety Shower to them. Then, thinking of some point he wanted to verify, he went to the door again to reread the note out loud. Discussing the matter and starting to sit down, he didn't quite make it before, wanting to satisfy himself about another point, to the door he went again. He must have done this at least five times. We stuffed potatoes in our mouths to keep from howling with laughter.

As is to be expected, Ella and her mother-in-law do not see eye to eye. The last time the old lady was here George had a lot of green apples on the cellar floor, to make cider. Ella, noticing they were rotting and breeding a thousand little flies, said to George, "Get this dumb mess out of here." The old lady, hearing the remark, said Ella wanted the applies out because she was "too darned lazy" to make cider. So Georgia's mother, laboriously grinding up a few apples with a cheese grater, squeezed the mush through a rag, so her George could have his glass of cider. This, of course, via Ella.

The missus has showed me how to stew up elderberries so they are delicious, with lemons, vinegar, raisins and lots of spices. I serve them nearly every day either in a pie or as sauce.

Goldfoot Farm
Fri., Aug. 7, 1925

Being very religious, the farm folks here never work on Sunday, or not more than is absolutely necessary. They are shocked at Mr. Green who "claims to be a Christian, yet plows on Sunday." Instead of swearing, they modify most every noun with "dumb." Did not Pa learn his lesson when he was a young man working at G.E., by losing two fingers after he had sworn a naughty "damn!"

When Ma is mad at the horses she calls them many terrible names; all of them, however, escape being swear words.

The old man cannot rake hay in a straight windrow to save his life. Bill says he tries to rake his name in hay. When an appealing wisp at the other end of the field catches his eye, he heads for it, but a still more irresistible bit off at an angle will change his course again. Bill, the missus and Robbie laughed all afternoon at his capers, until finally turning too acute an angle, he broke the rake.

My heart aches for poor little Robbie, who has been looking forward all week to a picnic tonight. The Sunday School teacher was to pick up the boys and take them to a nearby lake for an outdoor supper. As Robbie was crazy to go and as it seemed harmless enough, I put in a good word with the missus, but she said there might be tough boys along who would teach him swear words. So Robert did not go.

Goldfoot Farm
Thurs., Aug. 13, 1925

The folks barely skinned into the barn with a load of hay today, before it poured. It has rained a lot lately, but the weather makes little difference with my work, although one sunny day I enjoyed weeding the garden. One showery day Mrs. G. remarked, "It jest let up rainin' a few minutes in order to git a fresh holt."

When we first came, no haying could be done even on a clear day, because of broken machinery. Now Bill has repaired most of their trappings, or purchased parts--the hay wagon pole, the tedder, the big fork that lifts hay into the barn by horse pulley, and the mowing machine were all mended. Since then Pa has broken the hayrake and another wagon pole. Yesterday, however, they got in all the wheat, four loads.

The boss had a couple of teeth out the other day, and when he complained the next day about his jaw aching, the missus replied:

"Why don't ya' keep ya' mouth shut? Ya' go around chin waggin' all day and ya' mouth gits full of fog."

Robert says funny things too. Bunching hay after it has been raked he calls "deedlin' the hay." The other day it looked like rain and Robbie said:

"Oh, dear, we jest deedled the hay and how we got to undeedle it all."

Robert's grandfather used to be a policeman, but now he cuts the grass in a cemetery, "scuffles" the gravel walk, and gets a nice big tip from the undertaker every time he helps dig a grave or let down a box.

Among the array of Pa Goldfoot's jobs before he became a landed proprietor, were turnkey in a jail and coachman for Sam Insull, a new prominent public utilities magnate. Pa has great stories about working for Mr. Insull, whom he

calls "a high-daddy" now but says he weren't "such a big muck-a-muck" when he drove him, in a who-wheeled gig drawn by a high-stepping horse, into Wall St. and back from Orange, N.J., where they often saw Thomas Edison.

The missus also has stories about working as an upstairs girl for a Major and his wife in Saratoga, N.Y. Now the Goldfoots have hired help of their own.

Last Sunday, before looking over a small power plant at Mechanicville, N.Y., we watched two shiny oil tankers go through a nearby lock and talked with the canny Scotch lock-keeper. It is a great relief to Bill after his disillusioning experience with defaulters and shyster lawyers in his job as investigator for U.S. Fidelity and Guarantee Co. in New York City, to find the real workers of the country to be honesty, kindly people.

Goldfoot Farm
Wed., Aug. 26, 1925

Robert has changed greatly in the last two weeks, often smiling now and even occasionally getting the giggles when Bill kids and plays with him. While haying Bill will say,, "Sock 'em, Robbie," or "Stamp 'em down, Robbie," or when Robert, a little sulky, mumbles his words, "Speak up like a man, Robbie," and Robert smiles and reacts playfully. He's evidently crazy about Bill. Today they went together to buy a calf.

The Goldfoots pay $5 for a calf, feed it for about six weeks, then sell it for $19 or $20.

Four kittens were born yesterday, thus rounding out a dozen.

The house is filled with empty bottles in brilliant blue, of all sizes, for the folks are large consumers of patent medicines. The small ones with holes punched in their tin tops are used on the table for salt and pepper. A medium-sized one stands on the stove filled with cooking salt. Preserves and pickles in the large ones line cupboard shelves. A couple of spoonfuls of "Nervo" from the blue bottles, in a glass of water, is swallowed upon arising every morning by both master and missus. It evidently takes some time for Nervo to work, for the missus is pretty silent and sullen for a couple of hours but as the day goes on she brightens, although occasionally she needs a second dose.

A row of various bottles adorns the sideboard: Balsom of Myrrh, Sloan's Pain Killer for Man and Beast, Epsom Salts, Castor Oil, salves of various kinds, a pink liquid in a bottle without a label, a bottle of large flat yellow pills and one of round red ones. The boss takes the latter after every meal and recommends them to Bill, saying they must be good because they come all the way from Chicago. Bill calls them, "the boss' Chicago dynamite." Somehow they constantly drop on the floor and roll into out-of-the-way corners, where I find them when I sweep.

The missus says Robert needs something to "sweeten him up," and that

even by giving him salts in his coffee every Monday, he is pretty sour by Saturday. Last Monday, wary, he did not touch his coffee and thought he was getting away with it, but the missus had come down late that morning, so had not put in any salts. The next morning, however, when Robbie took a big unsuspecting gulp, oh, boy what a sputtering!

Yesterday morning Rich Morton, the wealthiest, canniest but stingiest bird in the neighborhood, came ostensibly to get butter, but probably really to pump Bill about G.E., as he has some of its stock. Rich has never been known to have been bettered in a bargain. How his splendid, intelligent wife stands her existence I fail to see. Since a horse eats his head off during the winter, Rich buys one in the spring and sells it in the fall, thus making it necessary for Mrs. Rich to walk to shop or to church, often in the snow.

Rich has a lot of labor-saving devices for his own farm needs, but nothing to make the housework easier. At one time he had a phone, but Mrs. Rich called her mother twice in the same day, whereupon it was immediately discontinued. No one knowingly will work for him, so during the haying season he depends upon drifters who soon quit, the pay being poor. Consequently Mrs. Rich has to work in the fields.

Rich, a real mortgage shaver, holds mortgages on most of the farms in the valley, including a large one on the Goldfoot's, as they were completely burned out four years ago. When he says he'd like some apples or asks Pa to help him with the haying, as he often does, Pa always does what Rich wants, as he is afraid Rich might foreclose or refuse a future loan, if needed.

The Goldfoots can't see what is the good in having all that money, anyway, as the Mortons never enjoy spending a cent and have no children to inherit it.

Morowski Farm, Schenectady, N.Y.
Thurs., Sept. 3, 1925

We left the Goldfoots yesterday, and are now camping, for a day or so, at our old stand on the Polish farm. The $93.75 we received for our labor seems pretty big to us, after having been so flat broke, but believe me, we worked for every penny of it. Our bosses seemed sorry to have us leave; the old lady, usually demonstrative only with the cats, actually kissed me goodbye. They asked us to stay another month, but we hanker after the open road and made quite a concession in remaining two weeks over our month. We do hate to leave Robbie, and wish we had more to give him than one of Ernest Seton Thompson's books we had with us.

A letter, arriving at the Morowski's soon after we left, was waiting for us, because Mrs. Morowski did not know where to forward it. One of the Power and Light Companies where Bill had applied had offered him a job. Such employment might have been more interesting and profitable mentally, but I doubt if, at the

end of six weeks, we would have been any better off financially; and I am sure we would not have been as well off physically, for we are both fit, husky, and as brown as Indians.

We spent the morning making our camp ship-shape and are off to town now to spend some of our hard earned cash on provisions.

Yonkers, N.Y.
Sun., Sept. 13, 1925

You never can tell where you'll be, one day to the next. Ten days ago Bill received a wire from Dr. Strobel, his Mother's second husband, telling about a recent accident to his car, and asking Bill to come down to Yonkers to straighten out some sort of legal trouble it had caused. So we stored our camp-gear in the Morowski's barn and left Schenectady immediately. Driving all night, we arrived in Yonkers at 4 A.M., awakening the household.

Today Bill heard a dealer's demonstration of the talking movie, in which he had been interested, and I am just over a light touch of the flue.

Dr. Strobel's legal troubles are not too serious and are now settled. Tomorrow we leave for Schenectady.

PART IV

Farm, Schenectady, N.Y.
Tues., Sept. 15, 1925

After driving all the way in the rain, we arrived about 8:00 last night here at the Polish farm. The Morowski's insisted we spend the night, and as many more as we wanted, in their best bedroom upstairs, and as I still had a bad cold, that we sleep under a feather quilt. As there were no other covers, we sweltered with it and froze without it. Although everything is nice and clean, the hundreds of hungry, dazed flies in the room persist in getting under foot. There were no flies downstairs, so I presume, when shooed out below, they sought refuge up here.

Huge pouter-pigeon pillows, the cases edged deep with lace, adorn the bed; tall tinted statues of saints stand on each end of the mantel; and brightly colored religious chromes in gaudy gilt frames boxed in mahogany and glass hang on the walls. These bright religious pictures and statuary color every room in the house.

As it continued to rain we stayed another night, but this time took up our own blankets, sleeping the night through instead of it in spurts under the feather bed.

I cooked our food my way and Mrs. M. cooked hers their way, at the same time, on the same stove. She gave us milk, pears and cake, but when I offered

her one of our cheese omelets, she said she never had eaten anything like that and guessed she never would.

All day, while I cut out and sewed up a new trunk-cover to replace the one we had lost, she talked about matrimony, her friends' matrimony, the chances of her daughters' matrimony, her own matrimony, and just matrimony in general. No wonder Leon's favorite expression is "When ya goin' to git married?"

A fortune teller had just told the daughters some remarkable truths, of course: their mother would receive an important paper from a big company which a tall light haired man would explain to her; she must do exactly as the man says. When we were here before, a letter had come to Mrs. Morowski from the state about eliminating the grade crossing of the railroad which skirts their land. She had asked Bill about it, and he, a tall light haired man, had written a letter to the state for her. Everything as the oracle foretold, with one slight exception--both letters were written six months before the girls visited the fortune teller.

Hudson, N.Y.
Mon., Sept. 21, 1925

Leaving the Morowskis' on Friday, we headed for Hudson where Bill wants to look into a cement plant. Because of a puncture just as it was getting dark, it behooved us to camp immediately. While Bill labored on the tire I scouted out a peach of a site, near a garden loaded with vegetables, and picked up four rather passe tomatoes and two shriveled ears of corn, from the ground. Somehow, it seemed perfectly ethical to walk into someone's garden and help myself to inferior produce, fallen off the stalk. Be that as it may, I l soon had my "come-up-ance," as the Irish say. With my booty safely in the motorcycle, I got permission to camp on the hill, from a man walking towards us. Then, noticing a perfectly good ear of corn on the road, I picked it up. Thereupon the man called out to help ourselves to corn and tomatoes, as he had more than he could use.

Bill swears he could tell by the twinkle in the man's eye that he saw me raiding his garden and was heaping coals of fire on my head. But I think he only saw me picking up the corn in the road, and out of the kindness of his heart, gave us the vegetables. At any rate, I surely felt cheap.

Three days after leaving our vegetable garden camp we still have corn and tomatoes. The corn, slightly old to eat on the cob, had made luscious fritters with the honey Mother sent us, making a hit with Bill.

Our new location, outside of Hudson, is not far from a pump, and also has a pear orchard handy. And, what is more, we obtained permission to pick the pears. Our tent is pitched under a cedar tree with a barberry bush at its base. Along the fence grow wild grapes and bittersweet. In the nearby field scrubby sumac and purple asters set off each other. We certainly are lucky in finding

charming places to camp.

Saturday we went through the cement plant that Bill wanted to see, finding it efficient and well run.

A queer thing happened on Sunday. It was easy to do our week's washing with our two canvas pails and the nearby pump, and afterwards I hung it on a low line. Upon returning from a long walk with Bill I noticed a lot of grasshoppers on the clothes. Closer inspection showed certain garments, the woolens and silks, were simply riddled with tiny holes, while the cottons were not eaten at all. I caught a couple of grasshoppers in the act of devouring my only pair of silk stockings. How pure their taste is-nothing cheap or sleazy for them! I can understand now what a terrible thing the plague of grasshoppers in the Bible must have been.

Hudson, N.Y.
Tues., Sept. 22, 1925

We had an annoying time at another cement plant yesterday. It must have been the irritating color of the office walls, a sickly mustard, that rubbed everyone the wrong way. Upon Bill's stating that he was interested in the company's stock, and asking if he could see the plan we were passed (like the perennial buck) from one person to another, till the assistant superintendent was called. After a long wait and endless questions he said he had no authority to give permission, but if we cared to wait he would wire the general superintendent in New York City. As Bill determined to see the plant, we waited and waited until finally the answer came that Bill could go through, but not me. Maybe they thought my purse had a bomb. At last a guide arrived and Bill was taken around the whole establishment--but on the run, as closing time was nearing. When the assistant super said he was afraid Bill had not had time to see very much, Bill answered, on the contrary, he had seen very striking comparisons between this and the rival cement plant. The man seemed to take the remark as a compliment, instead of the way Bill meant it.

Near Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
Thurs., Sept. 24, 1925

Again we visited the first cement plant and again we were shown cordiality by the powers-that-be, Bill having a long talk with the chief chemist, whom he considers A-1. After which we drove to Hudson for an early dinner.

Stopping in front of a rather pretentious looking restaurant, he hesitated about entering in our camping togs. However, when we took the plunge the Jewish proprietor bowed and pulled our chairs out for us, and after a fairly good mean, asked if everything had been satisfactory, saying:

"I noticed you hesitated about coming in. I hope you will never do so

again."

After our explanation he replied (now for the point):

"Ah, but it is not your clothes, but your personalities that count."

Leaving Hudson this noon we are now sitting in front of a huge bonfire on the same spot near Poughkeepsie where we camped the first night out of New York last April. A lot has happened, but we haven't gone very far since then.

Egypt, Pa.
Sat., Sept. 26, 1925

Our Poughkeepsie camp was so charming that we played around till almost 11 o'clock before crossing the ferry to New Paltz.

Delaware Water Gap was a great disappointment. Hot dog stands spoiled every site, forcing us to camp way down in the valley on the far side.

The country in this part of Pennsylvania, though, is fascinating, steep hills like green chocolate drops, little toy villages hidden in narrow valleys down each of which runs a brook and a road. At the frequent crossings the long Dutch names can hardly squeeze into the signboards. Formal brick or stone houses are softened with lacy iron railings and fences. One fence, realistically painted green and brown, was made to look like a privet hedge, another resembled a grapevine growing on a trellis.

We pitched our tent on the top of a hill where we could see in all four directions, but there is no brook, so we have to lug water from the not-too-far-away house. Mrs. Baer, the farmer's wife, and her three little girls, came to see us this morning, bringing carrots and cabbages.

Bill is very much interested in the stock of Giant Portland Cement and has come here to look over the plant.

Egypt, Pa.
Mon., Sept. 28, 1925

Today Bill received a letter from Leonard, his brother-in-law, reporting a terrible car accident, in which Dorothy and the baby were badly hurt. We cannot wait to be with them and will leave in the morning.

Bill, finishing some matters in the cement plant, did not return until nearly 9. I was left with only candle light. Two of the farmer's little boys kept me company while Bill was away, Harold entertaining me with stories and riddles, and Joseph singing to his own accompaniment on the ukulele. Just as their father came for them Bill pulled in.

Egypt, Pa.
Sat. Dec. 5, 1925

We are back after nine weeks in town. Our invalids are well on their with to

recovery, and it is good to be on the road again. We left Yonkers Monday noon with a brand new windshield, a great protection in this wintry weather.

When we reached lower Jersey it had looked like rain, so we decided to camp immediately, in the lee of an old deserted farmhouse near a brook; and where, because of the rain, we stayed two nights. We can drive or sleep dry in the rain, but we cannot either make or break camp dry in the rain. However, we enjoyed a walk in the rain, returning to read in our cozy, warm tent. It developed we were on some hunting preserve, for a friendly and chatty keeper came to see what we were up to.

The next day, feeling we had to go on in spite of the rain, we reached our old camping ground here in Egypt, just as it cleared long enough to pitch the tent and get our duds under cover. But it has rained and blown hard every minute of the four days since.

We have slept, dressed, read, written, listened to the radio, received visitors, cooked, eaten, washed dishes--and ourselves to some extent--in this seven-by-seven space for about one hundred hours and the tent and its appurtenances, including ourselves, are beginning to show wear and tear. Considering everything, however, we have kept remarkably dry, warm, clean and orderly. The trick of sleeping with newspapers under and over us has kept out wind and cold. Bill has gone down to the plant every day and I have taken several walks. I certainly wish it would clear, though!

When Bill wasn't at the plant he has used every spare minute to write a detailed report on the Giant Portland Cement Co., its management, efficiency, production, labor situation, and prospect for future growth, and is sending it to Frank Shaw, the only one of his Wall St. friends who might be interested in paying for Bill's continuing such a service.

He has bought some of the stock himself and is giving two shares ($37 worth) to Mother and Dad for Christmas.

Today being Saturday, Harold arrived at 8:30 A.M. and stayed all day. After helping Bill with the motorcycle, they both drove over to North Hampton to get supplies. Harold says he is going to go camping the way we do when he grows up.

This afternoon the Baer's boarder who works at the cement plant dropped in, staying about three hours. Having had "a bit of a nip," he generously offered us anything we wanted at the farm, saying, "Just charge it to me." His language was often quite "salty." When I asked him if he had been in the navy, he replied, "Yes, mam, I'se sailorized a heap."

One afternoon the three little girls came over with apples, then later Harold brought corn he had popped. I am more and more impressed by the kindness and generosity shown campers.

Washington, D.C.
Sat., Dec. 12, 1925

During the eight days we stayed in Egypt it rained, snowed, froze or blew on every one of them. Sunday, the day it froze, the sun came out, so to celebrate, we took a long walk and had dinner in a small country inn near Ballietsville. The dinner hour being past when we arrived, the proprietor gave us what was left, but the roast duck, fresh killed pork, celery, pickles, bread, butter and coffee tasted darn good to us. The owner put nickel after nickel in one of those awful electric pianos that sound like a whole brass band off key. Between firings, a little girl played melancholy records on a raucous phonograph, so altogether we felt very festive.

When leaving Egypt on Thursday we were bundled warm, and the new windshield, the mattress and a hot water bottle made riding in the sidecar very comfortable. Shifting seats often, the driver had little chance to get really cold.

As it takes so long to pack and unpack in the cold we spent the night in a small hotel near Lancaster, where my Dad had lived as a boy. I wish I had known earlier that we were passing this way, for I would have loved to visit some of his old haunts. Because of fog we could see little of the country, but the Susquehana River was splendid, twice as wide as I had expected. Crossing it on a toll bridge I wondered where my Dad's old swimming hole had been.

Although the old machine worked irregularly, we managed to reach Washington in pretty good time. Bill immediately called a business friend, H.E.C. Rainey, who directed us to a hotel where we revelled in hot baths and clean clothes, before dining with him at the University Club. It seemed queer to be so grand after having been so otherwise. Next day we moved into a cheaper room--large, clean but not elegant, with a bathroom far from modern. Bill took the motorcycle to the Harley agency, not only to find out what ails her, but to save garage rent.

Today Rainey showed us embassy and residential sections of town. Bill is crazy about Washington and, having been overseas during the war, says the European cities, being older, are more picturesque, but for sheer beauty, they can't beat this town. We spent an interesting and instructive evening with the Bells, my mother and dad's best man and his wife.

Washington, D.C.
Sun., Dec. 15, 1925

This morning we visited Arlington Cemetery, solemn and impressive, the new amphitheater stunning. Walking over to inspect the Radio Station we found no visitors were allowed, so spying a trolley in the distance, ran for it, but missed. When the conductor finally spotted us he stopped the trolley, backed it up, and we jumped aboard, amid the amused glances of the whole carload of

passengers. That's service for you!

The Washington monument being under repair, we could not ascend, but we walked along the tree-bordered lagoon to the Lincoln Memorial. The whole effect is perfect, so simple and dignified yet on such a magnificent scale.

For dinner we went to a neighboring boarding house where the table was loaded with enough food for an army, all for 65¢ . One could have as many helpings as wanted, and maids were constantly refilling the serving dishes.

Washington, D.C.
Sun., Dec. 22, 1925

Yesterday morning I planned to go to the Walter Reed Hospital to visit the Occupational Therapy Department where I had worked during the war when Bill was in France. Before going I called Peggy Beckwith, who summers in Manchester, Vt., as my family does. She invited me to meet her at the Corcoran Art Gallery, have lunch with her, after which she would drive me to the hospital. Hating to remind her that it would then be Saturday afternoon and the O.T. Department closed, I succumbed to her invitation.

At the Corcoran we saw some fine portraits of Laszlo and then were driven in her grandfather's Rolls Royce by chauffeur to the Freer Gallery, where we enjoyed pastels by Whistler in the Peacock Room. Peggy's home, where we lunched, is a fascinating two-story white house with green shutters and fir trees on either side of the front door-like a Christmas card. Being one of the oldest houses in Georgetown, it has a passageway to the Potomac, used, they say, by freed slaves in "underground railroad" days. When Peggy drove us in her own gray Franklin roadster to the Walter Reed, where, as I had imagined, all occupational therapy was over for the week. Although we had a swell day and it was interesting to visit the hospital, I missed my sentimental reminiscing of the O.T. Department.

Bill spends hours at the patent office and is excited about all that he is learning. However, living in Washington costs too much for us to stay long.

We had a charming dinner and a second visit with the Bells one night, and on another dined with Peggy Beckwith and her mother. Most every other evening we have met Rainey, had supper and gone to the movies with him, as he is a great movie fan. On several visits to the House and Senate we enjoyed hearing the arguments of the "gentlemen," but one day it was more like a cockfight--anything but "gentlemanly" or dignified. We have also spent quite a time in the Congressional Library, looking at engravings, lithographs, old government documents and portraits. I was much entertained by some cartoons of the Civil War period.

My Christmas shopping is done--cards written, bundles wrapped, and nearly all mailed.

Robert Lee Camp, Pelham, N.C.
Thurs., Dec. 24, 1925

While we were packing our paraphernalia on the motorcycle, an old lady, poking her head out of a window, asked if we were going to Florida. Nodding my head, she gave us a long list of real estate men in Miami, haranguing for nearly an hour about the great opportunities in Florida. We did not get a word in edgewise to say that we were not interested in real estate.

Mt. Vernon was our first stop. George Washington's lovely and interesting home has a glorious location, and the grounds are superb. We both loved it.

Although all signs say, "To Richmond and the South," the sunny south seems a myth to us. When it grew dark and began to rain, we were forced to crawl for hours through slippery red clay, between endless tall dark pines, all the way into Fredericksburg.

At an old-fashioned boarding house where we ate rabbit for the first time, our friendly and chatty supper companions were a young flying lieutenant and his wife, and a truck driver on his way to deliver a Ford chassis in Florida; the latter giving his name and address, even urged us to look him up. Certainly everybody down here is most cordial.

When finally bedded for the night, I continued to ride the motorcycle, and the reflecting silver screen of raindrops ahead, between walls of tall dark pines, kept recurring before my eyes, until at last I fell asleep.

The next day on the road a car with a New York license passed us, its occupants shouting, "See you in Miama." Later they stopped and when we asked if they needed help, they hollered back that we could help make away with their extra hot coffee and sandwiches. The excitement and comradery among those on route to Florida is as if we were all on our way to the Klondike.

It was dark when we reached a little town called Burkville and the manager of the only inn was at the railroad station to round up customers. Finding us getting gas nearby, he hauled us in. It was not much of a place, but warm, which was the main thing.

The state of Virginia has greatly surprised us, for we had expected it to be enchanting. From Mt. Vernon down we never saw another fine southern mansion or even a cute little house; nothing but ramshackle, dilapidated, unpainted shacks and log cabins. Evidently the "gentry" live out of sight or in some other part of the state. The terrain is heavily wooded-pines, pines, pines and almost tropical tangles of briar and southern smilax, reminding one of Brier Rabbit and Uncle Remus.

Virginia is also the "shootinest" place. You'd think by the sound that each day was the Fourth of July. Every other man and boy carries a gun, particularly at this Christmas season; making as much noise as possible seems part of the

celebration.

When we reached Danville, almost on the Carolina border, late this afternoon, we found lots of mail and a big Christmas package from home, filled with all sorts of good things. A delightful surprise was a check from Frank in a letter congratulating Bill on his fine report, promising to carry him for some of the stock and suggesting Bill continue his investigation and reports on other appropriate companies.

Spying a pine grove on a side hill out of the wind, we inquired at a log cabin if we could camp there. The folks seemed delighted and the old man and the boys came along to help.

So here we are, ensconsed in a tent--to spend Christmas. Although it is bitter cold, we hope, with the aid of the newspapers, heated stones and our faithful hot water bottle, to be cozy enough.

Robert Lee Camp, Pelham, N.C.
Mon., Dec. 28, 1925

Early Christmas morning old Mr. Brown came over to invite us to Christmas dinner. Such hospitality! We did not learn its full extent until we had been here several days.

The senior Browns live in one log cabin, their son, daughter-in-law and children in another, close by. Each cabin consists of two separate buildings, living quarters and kitchen, joined by a covered breezeway. Bill has to bend to enter the low doors. There is one small glassless window in each room, but the whitewash log walls help to lighten the dark interior.

The whole family gathered around the kitchen table for Christmas dinner, five of the six children standing, as there were not enough chairs. Salt pork, turnip greens, sweet potato custard, corn pone (coarse white corn flour, salt and water baked in a frying pan), cake decorated with jelly beans, and the vilest coffee we'd ever tasted. Coffee beans bought green are roasted and ground. At each boiling a little fresh coffee is added to the old grinds. The brew (I cannot again call it coffee) grows bitterer and bitterer as it is reboiled again and again, and the pot gets fuller and fuller of old grounds, until of necessity it has to be emptied, and then half an inch of old grounds is kept to "sweeten the pot."

Before dinner we women-folks had picked the new tender greens from turnips left in the ground all winter. The sweet potato custard, more like a stack of pies, was served a layer at a time, our three days here having reduced the pile by six layers, with four soggy ones still to go. The children were too excited to eat anything but cake, jelly beans, and custard, although they drank that awful coffee. Probably having dessert only at Christmas they were allowed to make the best of it.

Raising tobacco for a living, the Robert Lee Browns are paid only once a year

when the crop is sold, which generally is after Christmas. If the crop is poor very little money remains after their rent has been deducted. Mr. Brown took us into one of the delightfully fragrant tobacco barns--a small log building with chimney pipes from the brick fireplace, running around inside to dry the big crinkled leaves hanging from every rafter.

In spite of being terribly hard up they are a jolly crowd, with apparently no self-pity. As the children have received no Christmas presents this year, other than a little knitted cap given the baby by his grandfather and a few jelly beans for the othes, Mrs. Junior hopes to get a doll for Barna with the first dollar she can lay hands on. Having had eight children she looks older than my mother, yet I am sure she is about my age, in her early thirties. A cheerful, capable soul, she is never at a loss for a bright answer or a joke.

Saturday we dined at the Juniors' on the identical menu we'd had on Christmas, the old folks bringing the food over with them. Robert Lee, J., away looking for Santa Claus, must have found him all right for he returned slightly "aweather." His uncle has a still hidden in a bush.

Yesterday we took over much of the food Mother had sent us, the old folks again insisting we eat with them. We feel they would be really hurt if we refused. Surprisingly the kids had never tasted butter before nor had any of them eaten celery before. Besides the things we brought, including a greatly enjoyed canned plum pudding, potato pumpkin (what we call summer squash) was the only variation from the previous meals. The youngsters "ooed and ahed" over the candy, crackers, peanuts (here called goobers), as well as the Christmas cards, fancy wrapping paper and ribbons from our gift box.

In the evenings, with the baby crawling on the warm floor boards before us, we all sit around the open fire, telling stories. There is no light but the flickering flames which silhouette dancing giants on the rear wall. The men chew dried twisted tobacco leaves kept in a jar on the mantel, while the women gnaw on sticks of snuff. The hiss of spitting into the fire is continuous, and all the honors for aim and distance should be pinned on the old lady. By the hearth stands a broom made of tassels from crown grown especially for this purpose. Several times passers-by have stopped for hot water to thaw their radiators and have been invited to join the circle. The first night when we were strangers, and each night since, both families have urged us to sleep inside.

I don't remember ever being so cold--even up in Vermont--as on our hike yesterday. The folks here say the cold has seldom been so intense. The blue bird I saw today shows how unexpected this cold must be. There are also lots of cardinals and, of course, millions of buzzards. All the way down from Washington there was one or more circling overhead.

I was hoping there would be mistletoe near this camp but, although we saw plenty on the way down, we can't find a twig here. Mistletoe, little green wads

in the tops of oaks, is a vampire or parasite or whatever the word is.

We plan to leave tomorrow, and near Winston Salem, only sixty miles from here, to drop in on Bill Smith (an old Brooklyn friend) and his wife, to beg the use of their bathroom. Our bathing has been sketchy these cold days.

PART V

Rural Hall, N.C.
Thurs., Jan. 7, 1926

When we left Camp Robert Lee Tuesday morning, the family all turned out to see us off. They surely were good to us and seemed sorry to have us go.

Now we are under a roof again, visiting Bill Smith and his peach of a wife, Ethel, whom we had not met before. Both urged us to stay on and on. Although they had only recently moved into this large old house, they are now expecting to move out again. They call it "just camping out," but to us it is luxury.

Wednesday evening we all went to the movies in Winston-Salem and Thursday Bill sought information at the Chamber of Commerce, while I bought two shelter halves for 75¢ each, a doll, a baby's sack, some candy and toys for the children at the Robert Lees'.

Although North Carolina, with surfaced roads and many up-and-down towns, appears far more prosperous than the parts of Virginia we saw, Winston-Salem is an unattractive, messy tobacco town, with small, disorderly shops. At sales counters, I was pushed around just as rudely as in a lower New York bargain basement. However, the Reynolds Tobacco Co., makers of Camels and Prince Albert tobacco, and the leading industry, is putting on a campaign to renovate the town.

Friday, mild and balmy, Bill Smith took us in his Studebaker to High Point, a splendid city about thirty miles from here, laid out on modern lines, with fine public buildings and one hundred and forty factories, mostly for furniture, segregated in one section of the city.

Bill Smith is quite a chicken fancier and has some very fine birds. My Bill calls him "the Squire" and it certainly fits him for, although he is manager of the toy wagon department of the furniture factory across the way, he has the air of the country squire and the master of all he surveys. Tonight we are to have [a] couple of the farm's own pullets for dinner.

The Smiths think the factory where Bill works is on the rocks because of competition with the better located factories in High Point, so they are looking around for the next jump. My Bill and Ethel have great arguments on economics, she having keenly observed the trends about her and formed a number of interesting opinions.

Charlotte, N.C.
Tues., Jan. 12, 1926

We haven't gone far in the last week, the weather was so sleety and cold. Since we left the north we have had hardly anything but rain or snow. There one expects the cold and it is invigorating, but here, it chills to the bone and is most annoying.

On Wednesday Bill looked into the matter of glue used in the manufacture of furniture in High Point. As Thursday was fine we could find no excuse to linger longer, so with many regrets, we left the Smiths.

Reaching Charlotte too late to camp we took a room in a small hotel and left the motorcycle to have new spokes put in the wheels. Expecting to leave the next morning we arose early, but found an inch and a half of snow on the window sill. We were snowbound, for our machine skids badly in the snow, which remained on the ground for the next three days.

Charlotte is a fine town, the center of the cotton industry. Today I had lots of fun fixing up the box I have been intending to send the Browns. The doll for Barna wears a store dress, a pair of rubber bloomers and a shirt I made out of an old handkerchief of Bill's. The maid, noticing that I was cutting up a handkerchief, gave me some pieces from the linen room to put in the box. For the boys are 10¢ store toys, and the baby gets a little knitted jacket to match the cap her grandfather gave her. Mrs. Junior had told me her eldest girl planned to get a jacket for the baby, but hadn't been able to because funds were so low. So I feel sure our gifts are what they want. I also included some snapshots I took there.

Near Marion, N.C.
Fri., Jan. 15, 1926

Tuesday the snow was still on the ground, but we were spending so much money in Charlotte for room and food, and extravagantly for movies every night, that we simply had to go camping again. Before we could leave, as usual Bill had to call on a few odd bankers (not that these were any odder than any other bankers). One of them phoned another that, "Mr. Wilson of New York is here." The mystic words, the “open sesame” everywhere in the south seems to be, "New York." Just whisper them and the door flies open. On the other hand, they want to think that the growth of the south is entirely due to their own energies and imagination and will stoutly say, "This town is growing from within, without any help from the outside."

Of course, what really started the expansion of the south (and evidence is everywhere, especially in North Carolina) is the influence of two men, Walter Hines Page who aroused interest in better education, and J.B. Duke, who through his power developments, has made industry possible on a grand scale. Another

factor was the coming to the south of northerners with money and initiative.

The experience of Danville is an example of what happens to unprogressive towns. J.B. Duke wanted to bring his own cheaper power into the city, where there were a few small industries, the largest (we are told) cotton mill in the south, a municipal power plant and his own huge tobacco factory, but the authorities would not permit it. So he moved his factory to Durham, and Danville has rued the day ever since. Although the cotton mill remains in Danville, the other industries have moved to where cheaper power is available. As a result many merchants have failed.

Unmistakably a sectional feeling exists here. We northerners pride ourselves on having pep and initiative, while the southerner scorns these characteristics, calling them by very different names, such as "arrogance" and "intrusion."

Sunday, while still in Charlotte, we walked the five miles and back to a Ford Assembly Plant, and peeking through one of the thousand sparkling windows, were so intrigued that upon leaving Charlotte on Tuesday, we went out of our way to drive there. Unfortunately, it was not visiting hours, so again we could only peek. A man dressed in spotless white was tending gleaming, efficient looking motors--and a sign read, "Every man is required to wear clean overalls every Monday." At least we know the plant is bright and shiny.

So on we went to the Southern Power Co.'s steam plant at Mt. Holly on the Catawba River, a fine big layout with two old-fashioned 10,000 kw. turbines, and two new 15,000 kw. ones. The chief engineer told us they could not hope for the efficiency of northern plants because of the higher caliber of labor there; nevertheless the plant was very fine. At Mountain Island, three miles further on, we went through another waterpower plant with four upright 15,000 kw. Turbines.

By this time the day was nearly gone, so we found a suitable place, in the piney woods, although we had to shovel the snow away and put down boughs. When we were purchasing provisions earlier, the tiny store soon filled with curious observers. Everywhere, we are the cynosure of all eyes, and lately, of all ears, since, in a vain attempt to find what ails the motorcycle, Bill had removed the muffler.

It seems as if he had excluded every possible source of trouble, and yet the poor old buzz-wagon runs a temperature, having not been really well since we left New York. When we run fast she loses power and backfires, and now she can hardly go up a little grade in high, sometimes even necessitating a shift to first. It used to be my pride and joy to pass every car on a hill, but now it is my shame and sorrow that every car passes us--and with the muffler off we make such a hullabaloo about it!

After leaving Washington we thought she would be hunky-dory, and she was for a while, but soon the old trouble came on her again. The carburetor had been

cleaned there, new spark plugs put in, and a block of wood discovered in the oil tank. Seeming to know their business, the garage men assured us they had put her in fine shape.

In Winston-Salem the brakeband had been eased up in case it was dragging. In Charlotte a new chain was put on and new spokes placed on the wheel. Bill, wondering if the new carburetor put on in Brooklyn might be the trouble, went for the old one as a last resort. But nothing seems to do her any good. In fact she seems a little worse after all this doctoring-probably just plain tuckered out, carrying such a heavy load. But enough of the poor pop-cycle!

Gastonia is called the "City of Spindles," because it has more cotton mills than any city in the south. The other day, Bill, wearing his traveling coveralls, "uber-alles," we call them, much tattered now, torn and generally disreputable, his sweater cap and pipe, strode into the Gastonia Chamber of Commerce. The man, after looking him up and down, asked what he could possibly want with pamphlets about the city, apparently it being difficult to recognize what a mighty brain and heart lay hidden behind the eccentric garb.

Speaking of eccentricities, the ramshackle barns in these parts have no doors--thus, probably giving rise to, "Close that door. Were you brought up in a barn?" I have always wondered where that remark originated, because all the barns I had ever seen had doors. Sheds on all four sides are sometimes added to barns here, making them look like wooden circus tents. In Pennsylvania the barns are wonderful, stone halfway up and the rest of red-painted wood. White scrolls decorate the windows and doors, with often a sheep, horse or cow painted white on the side wall. When it rains, cattle in an enclosed yard crowd under the deep overhang of the eaves.

Tuesday, about halfway from Gastonia to Asheville, we camped up a side road, and again snow had to be cleared away. Bill walked quite a distance for water, the nearby wells being dry. At best here, the water is not very good; it's pretty muddy from the red clay soil. When dry or not frozen, clay makes good roads, but slipperier than the dickens when wet. Most of the roads in North Carolina are concrete and marvellous.

Again Bill tinkered with the machine and corrected something out-of-whack in the carburetor, optimistically hoping this is the end of our trouble.

At Chimney Rock big realtors, expecting the bottom soon to fall out of the Florida boom, have purchased a large tract of land for a summer resort. A tremendous lake, fifteen square miles of water, is being constructed and large hotels erected. Lots twenty-five by seventy-five feet, with a view of the Rock, are selling from $2,000, to $10,000, with no building restrictions. Some of it will probably develop into what Bill calls, "A hot-dog vendor's paradise," like the Delaware Water Gap, but on the lake further from the road it ought to be truly beautiful. About halfway up the mountain, a small inn with cottages, called the

"Cliff Dweller," resembles a colorful toy train of cars from below.

The sun was bright, the sky a deep blue and the ground and mountains white with snow on this cold brisk day, as we climbed into the Blue Ridge Mountains, through gorgeous scenery. The road wound, circled, horseshoed, and tied itself in knots all the way from Chimney Rock to Asheville, which we reached in early afternoon.

The mountains are not in long ranges as they are in Vermont, but poke up here and there in separate peaks, Asheville being on a high plateau with a circle of mountain caps around it--a huge pie with a crinkle crust. The city itself is higgledy-piggledy and dingy--but the surrounding scenery is superb.

While I waited at the Asheville post office for Bill, four separate individuals asked where we were from and where we were going. One woman from New Hampshire, remarking that only Yankees would have the initiative to get up such a rig, invited us to her home, giving us the address. Coming here with $2,000, she has made $6,000, in real estate, at the same time supporting her daughter and grandchild.

Journeying towards Marion, forty miles distant, we climbed down from the plateau with wonderful outlooks across deep gorges at every turn. Mt. Michel, down the side of which the road alternately snakes and plunges, is the highest of ten peaks over six thousand feet in this area.

To top off this exhilarating trip we found a peach of a spot to camp, in the woods, near a spring and under a sheltering hill. The machine ran smoothly all the way, up and down the mountains, no doubt also exhilarated by the brisk, clean air. Let's hope it lasts.

Near Marion, N.C.
Sat., Jan. 16, 1926

Winter is more colorful here and not as bleak as in the north. Besides the firs, many trees, shrubs and vines stay green all winter--holly, magnolia, rhododendron, laurel, azalea, and smilaz. Green blades of winter wheat pop up through the snow. Long slabs of burnt orange bark shingle the trunks of pines that produce exceptionally large cones. The birds are lovely: robins, bluebirds, brilliant cardinals and vereos with that nostalgic song that one hears on mountaintops in the north, and many others unknown to me.

Last night, sitting around the fire, we were startled by the most unearthly scream--perhaps a horse in mortal agony, or a hog being butchered. It had to be some animal in its death throes. In the morning, the anguished sound hit a remembered chord from Bill's army days--the braying of a mule. How could he ever have forgotten it!

The cold is so severe that water freezes on the dishes before I can wipe them, Bill's dampened hair stiffens upright before he can comb it, and we bite off

from the unspreadable stick as much butter as we want with each mouthful of bread.

Bill spent nearly the whole day writing a long letter to Frank, thirty-odd pages. When he finished, instead of moving on, while the sun sparkled on snow and water, we walked up an old wood road and across a stream, overhung with rhododendron, on a rickety bridge.

Speaking of sparkling, on several mornings the inside of the tent has been covered with tiny crystals, from our breath, I imagine. Living in a tent is far more interesting than between four walls. For instance: car lights make fantastic silhouettes of objects between; in moonlight grasses and boughs form decorative patterns on the fabric of the tent; looking from the outside, when our electric light is lit inside, the green, translucent tent is eerie, like a fairy habitation that might fly away at any moment.

The two extra shelter halves are just the ticket for wind breaks. Later I plan to make Bill a new "uber-alles" out of them, but at present they are too useful. After our walk I tied them to trees around the fire, making a cove for myself, and had a grand old bath while Bill wrote.

Between Hendersonville and Asheville, N.C.
Sun., Jan. 17, 1926

Yesterday morning we broke camp and drove the eight miles into the town of Marion--not much of a place. Gangs of seedy, seemingly ambitionless individuals hung around the street corners, gossiping Saturday afternoon. Up till now I had wondered where the "poor white trash" were, for all the folks we had met appeared intelligent and kind, but his mill hand bunch could fit the phrase.

The James Lake, a tremendous storage reservoir for the Southern Power Co., which Bill wanted to see at Marion, was nearly empty due to last summer's drought, but its location among the mountains is magnificent. Its fifteen thousand acres of water enclosed by one hundred and fifty miles of shore is being considered for a real estate development and will make a dandy. One old codger answered our question with an amusing but pointed remark: "No, there ain't many summer people comin' here, praise be! They and the campers that don't do any real work are the ruination of the country!" That for us!

It was much warmer yesterday, but today, Sunday, it is raining, and we are spending it reading and writing in our camp. The folks around here are very strict about the Lord's Day, and not even a gas station or a delicatessen is open.

Atlanta, Ga.
Thurs., Jan. 21, 1926

Monday morning, warm and sunny, we could not resist seeing more of this beautiful countryside, so we drove back up the mountain to Asheville, and calling

Mrs. Patch, our acquaintance from New Hampshire, rented a large, sunny room with bath and lots of hot water, in her comfortable suburban house. Mrs. Patch wanted us to be her guests but we insisted on a business arrangement. Her two stunning daughters and a really beautiful granddaughter live with her. Much interested in real estate, she lauds Asheville to the skies, expecting tremendous activity here next summer. Real estate companies, looking for the reaction from the Florida boom to come here, have bought most of the land in western Carolina, as they had around Chimney Rock.

On Tuesday, while Bill broke into several banks and real estate offices, I gleaned what was new and interesting from the industrial magazines in the library. In this way I have found some valuable bits of information for him.

Because the weather was so perfect for traveling, we left Asheville in the afternoon, driving down from the heights, through beautiful scenery till we came to a stunning wild spot near a place with the unlikely name of Tuccoa-on-the-Tugalo. The clear brook, supposedly the Tugalo, rippled over rocks, reminding us of northern streams, most every stream and river in the south that we have seen being muddy and sluggish.

Passing into South Carolina the next day, the roads, though not hard surfaced, were at first not as bad as we had expected. Further south, however, they worsened until, upon reaching Georgia, they became unspeakable. Pushing on in order to make Atlanta before the prophesied rain, we traveled through parts of three states and wound up at 10 o'clock at night in a mudhole called Alta, and I mean literally a mudhole. While, somehow, the two motorcycle wheels stood on terra firma, the sidecar wheel sunk completely out of sight, my elbows level with the mud, and Bill, a leaning tower above me, in imminent danger of teetering.

All were abed when Bill walked into the little town for help. However, he did find a huge beam and plank. After unloading everything from the machine, we began to dig, each step sucking off my shoes, the clay-mud being both heavy and sticky. We no longer wondered why the mule team we had noticed earlier could hardly pull a quarter load of this clay. Finally getting a path dug we put down the plank and while Bill pried with the beam, I pushed--and out she same. As it was then after midnight, the road ahead probably no better, and everything already off the motorcycle, we pitched the tent then and there, between the road and the railroad tracks, and fell asleep immediately.

Several times during the night a car got mired and we called advice from our store of experience, lending our shovel and planks. In the morning we were so anxious to decamp that we didn't bother to look for water for coffee or to wash. But we seemed glued to the spot, bogging down again in less than a hundred yards. We learned later there was a perfectly good detour used by the well-informed, but no one had bothered to put up signs.

Soon after we began digging again the road boss summoned his gang, and with all hands pushing, we slowly emerged. A motorcycle with a sidecar has more trouble than a car on such roads, but only because the low-slung engine runs into the mud, but also because three wheels cannot get as good a grip on slippery clay. Before reaching Atlanta we dug ourselves out twice more.

All this red mud grows tiresome to look at as well as dig at. Cotton and corn fields must be terraced to prevent erosion, as rain easily washes away the clay. In a short time a disused roadbed becomes a gully, and together with many other deep red gashes, scars the countryside. The terraced effect of the fields, however, is picturesque.

Georgia is flat with apparently few rocks, so that, about fifteen miles from Atlanta, it was astonishing to see in the distance the tremendous rock, Stone Mountain, rising almost perpendicularly hundreds of feet. The rock itself being a natural monument, is most fitting for a great memorial. Three men held by ropes of steel shafts sunk in the rockface work with electric drills, but only Lee's head has yet been cut. The work appears both perilous and costly and will take a long time to complete.

Atlanta, Ga.
Mon., Jan. 25, 1926

As soon as we arrive here Thursday Bill called up an old friend from East Dorset, Joe Reed, the breeziest, blusteriest, most likable salesman. From unending pep he is into every civic and charitable organization in the city, knowing everyone, high and low.

Joe, apologizing for not having room for us, settled us in the home of the parents of a friend, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, typical old southern folks. The most hospitable souls in the world, they have a fund of interesting information and anecdotes, but as neither can see very well and the old lady has been ill, no one tidies up, and the house is a mess, especially because of the soot from the open soft coal grates which provide the only heat.

Although Thursday was like spring, it has been really cold ever since. In the mornings the old folks light the gas heater in the bedroom for us, bring a pitcher of hot water, get us breakfast, and at night see that a nice fire is burning in our room. Treated so much like guests we cannot retire to our room to read or do an odd job until bedtime.

After looking over the town Friday afternoon, Joe took us in his Packard coupe to his home where we dined with his pleasant wife and two cunning children. A beautiful southern belle and her homely, slap-stick fiance joined us in the evening, and a rollicking, jolly, slap-stick time was had by all.

Atlanta, a cosmopolitan bustling city, is growing rapidly like most of the south, although prices of land here are not as high as around Asheville. Joe,

enthusiastic about Atlanta, talks climate incessantly, as they all do here, but we have experienced only two or three beautiful days; there is snow on the ground again this morning.

Saturday morning Bill and I again snooped around town, blowing ourselves to lunch and the movies as a one-day-early anniversary celebration. Coming out of the movies we ran into Harry Seward (he and Ethel, now passed on, spent their honeymoon at The Camp in Vermont). It was fun to have dinner and go to the movies with him, apparently contented and prosperous. Quite a movie-ing day.

The friendliness of the people is the nicest thing in the south--everyone speaks to you. Old gentlemen, particularly in the country districts, touch their hats as you pass. I had a funny experience yesterday. Earlier, when I remarked to Joe how charming this custom is, he told me it was dying out because northern women, not understanding, refused to return the bow. Soon after, while walking alone, a man in a car took off his hat to me and bowed. Not to be thought an intolerant northerner, I nodded my head slightly. He immediately stopped his car, saying, "How about a ride, kiddo?" Discretion in bowing is necessary, as in everything else, I have learned.

Sunday Joe took us for a ride before dinner at his home. I had no idea there was so much wealth here; beautiful suburbs extend for miles in every direction. In the evening we went to church with Harry Seward.

Fitzgerald, Ga.
Sat., Jan. 30, 1926

Joe tried to persuade Bill to go into a real estate deal with him, but, although Bill is interested in South Georgia farm land, he is not enthusiastic about going into real estate.

Leaving Atlanta Wednesday afternoon we camped in a beautiful pine grove, in fine weather with a romantic moon, outside of the town of Griffin. We enjoyed our Atlanta sojourn, especially the old couple where we stayed.

The land in southern Georgia has more sand and less clay than farther north. Many fine farms are separated by strangely intriguing swamps, where huge live oaks, festooned with long gray moss, grow out of black swamp water, as do small scrubby palms--the first we have seen. The live oaks which also grow on dry land have small uncut evergreen leaves, quite different from northern oaks. It was exciting to see even scrubby palms, evidencing our arriving in the deep south at last.

I am still trying to get mistletoe for Mother, but it is either way up in a treetop with no way to reach it, or if gettable, in front of a home. Yesterday, however, we spotted some and Bill climbed the tree in the rain to get it. Many of the berries, unfortunately, shook off before I could pack it. We also learned

today how turpentine is procured from pines. Instead of boring a hole as for maple syrup, a sliver of bark is sliced off and a container placed to catch the sap. Some pines here are so resinous that a lighted match is enough to set a log on fire.

At Perry Bill heard of a cement plant about twenty miles away at Clinchfield, the only one in this section of the south; so, of course, he wanted to investigate. We asked an old codger walking along the road how to get there. He didn't know, because he said, he had never been there, and added, "I never go any place that I have never been before."

The boss was away, returning the next day, so we set up housekeeping in another pine grove where I discovered two pine cones nearly a foot long, with their petals spread out like a flower.

In the morning Bill found the cement plant both modern and efficient, the quarries containing more clay and sand and less rock than those in the north; wages being lower, the production is easier and cheaper.

After leaving Clinchfield, so many conflicting directions were given us, that we found ourselves in one place when we expected to be in another. Making the best of it, we ate lunch and changed our plans.

The day was chilly and rainy, the road rotten, and I punk--either a little indigestion or the ill effect of foolishly drinking brook water. So Bill did all the chauffering in the rain and the digging in the mud when we got stuck, which happened a couple of times. Wanting to get me to a room for the night, we pushed on in the wet and dark, into this funny old inn at Fitzgerald. We hope to leave tomorrow unless it continues to rain or I continue to be ill--neither of which casualties we expect.

PART VI

Jacksonville, Fla.
Wed., Feb. 3, 1926

At the inn in Fitzgerald two girls who had just driven up from Palm Beach through Waycross said the road was practically impassable, that on the way up, they had spent $150 on repairs to their Ford. About twenty miles along what we hope to be a better route, passing through a colored section, someone yelled, "Look behind," and when we saw the stand dragging, the tent hanging by a thread, and the blankets gone, a dismal pall settled on us! Our funds were low, seven army blankets would cost a pretty penny to replace, the nights would be unbearable without them and there seemed little hope of finding them.

However, we retraced our steps, asking at every cabin, sopping every car, and spreading the rumor that there would be a reward if the blankets were delivered to Clark's Garage in Ocilla. At this garage where we last saw the

blankets on the machine, we left our name and address and then despondently resumed our journey. About halfway to where we had noted our loss, spying a cabin off the road, Bill had an immediate hunch that we would find the blankets there. Upon inquiring, the negros had at first "seen nothing'."

Persisting, he heard a couple of old folks in a rear room mentioning a large bundle, and after repeated questioning one of them finally said she had seen "two low-down niggers" stop their car to pick up something in the road, and she "reckoned they was agoin' to meeting'." The half-mile trail to the meeting house was so rough Bill had to hike in. While the hallelujahing enchanted him with its rhythm and harmony, he searched each of the dozen or so parked jalopies, and in the very last one found the blankets. My, but we were thankful!

Soon we came to another bad spot in the road where four mired cars were helping each other push through. They hung around to see if we needed aid too--but we fooled them. Carefully picking his route, when Bill gave the engine the gas, how the dirt did fly, to the admiration of the onlookers. Sometimes the old boat does do us proud.

After spending the night in the little town of Nashville, Georgia, we found mail waiting for us at Valdosta, just before crossing into Florida. Hardly believing we were in the famous state at last. We expected to have at least decent roads; instead we bumped over washboard, crawling in low gear for nearly twenty miles. Not only the monotony of mile after endless mile of poor road, through tall pine swamps, depressed us, but the fact that this type of terrain was staked out for building lots.

However, the picturesque and well-equipped tourist camp at White Springs on the Swanee River was a pleasant antidote, and the other campers congenial. The gray spanish moss draping the pines lends mystery to the woods. Being an air-plant it hangs on all kinds of trees, on telegraph wires and fence rails, but is said to kill the fruit trees.

Bill was determined to find what made the machine run so inconsistently, so it was late the next day before we got underway. The time and energy spent on the motorcycle is tremendous. While we were eating a snack beside the road an old black hog tried to join the party. We have not seen a white pig since leaving the north; those here are either brown, black or spotted black and tan, like the Hottentot man in the limerick.

Animals appear in the strangest places here, cows, hogs and goats running wild through woods and swamps. On the road you never know when a so-called domestic animal will pop out in front of you. The wretched, sorry-looking cows are used for meat, not milk.

A fine cement road leads into Jacksonville, but the tourist camp is miserable, crowded with all sorts of harem-scarem people so that nothing left outside is safe. Many people live here from week to week, some with jobs, but

most of them, having no money, can neither go home nor travel south, and like Mr. Micawber, are waiting for something to turn up.

A little girl died in camp and, as the family was very poor, other tourists chipped in for her burial. One man's tent burned down and the campers joined forces to buy him a better one than he had before. Much kindness is here, too.

A young fellow from New Jersey, who in October rode down in his Indian motorcycle with a dog in the sidecar, said his machine was so shattered that he sold it for $20, and has lived on the money ever since. Although a carpenter, he has no tools so he can't get a job, and is trying to scrape up a stake somehow, to return to the north. Our Harley-Davidson has not shaken apart, but it definitely needs repair. Our young friend offered to fix it, and Bill let him try--but to no avail.

Orlando, Fla.
Sun., Feb. 7, 1926

There is an old pavement with many holes between Jacksonville and St. Augustine, and so narrow that, when passing, one car has to go off into the rough. We would have liked to have had more time to snoop around enchanting St. Augustine, the oldest city in America. The view at sunset from one of the turrets of the old fort with its Spanish gates, guns and cannon was stunning. At the Fountain of Youth we paid 50¢ for a draught of the famous water and to hear the guide's spiel about Ponce de Leon and De Soto and the ancient chapel built out of coquina rock--shell ground and pressed by the action of waves and time. A daft reformer, the president of the society which collected the fee, gave us a diatribe against white slavery.

Although we had sworn to avoid tourist camps after Jacksonville, we were not able to resist the VERMONT Tourist. It turned out to be the best yet--running water, clean toilets, cement washtubs, cooking ranges under cover, and tiny bungalows to rent, for those who do not have a tent. Our motorcycle, N.Y. license and our pile of duffle are a great curiosity wherever we go. People are surprised at how much the machine can carry.

The next day the old bike made such a poor start that Bill gave her one more overhaul. Experimenting, he replaced the new Washington spark plugs with supposedly worn-out ones, when, lo and behold, she ran like a bird.

After crossing the toll bridge to Ormond Beach, I let her out all the way, and we whizzed along on the magnificent hard sand until suddenly losing power, she stopped dead. Again disappointed in the old bus, I looked down and saw the carburetor hanging loose. We had nearly lost it!

Orlando's twenty-nine lakes make it a charming residential city, but the folks on the downtown streets are a motley crew-sharpers, aristocrats, tough looking women, get-rich-quickies, and just plain people.

We arrived just at supper time at the home of Percy and Dora, Dr. Strobel's son and his wife, who are expecting us to stay a few days. Their two cunning boys are most well behaved, Percy being so strict they don't dare be otherwise.

Saturday our hosts took us and the children for a picnic on Cocoa Beach. Driving about sixty miles through endless swamps of cypress, oak and pine, many kinds of heron fished the black waters; mud turtles basked in the sun; and the blue sky and gray moss set off the delicious new red of the maples. While we ate lunch on the beach, sandpipers gingerly picked their way along the water's edge, and pelicans plummeted for fish offshore.

Florida seems either intensely cultivated or wasteland. The soil in the swamps, however, is said to be rich, so that to grow a fine truck garden it would only be necessary to cut down the trees, dig out the stumps, drain, plow, fertilize, and sow the seeds. No trouble? The profit from the resulting fine vegetables is said to be well worth it. But what about the birds, mud turtles and small animals? Where do they go?

Much of the Florida peninsula has a coral base, and there are strange tales that: water will bubble up anywhere a twenty-foot hole is dug; but by digging three hundred fee down, a swamp can be drained. Most confusing?

Tomorrow we hit the road again, after a most pleasant visit with the Strobels.

Near Winter Haven, Fla.
Feb. 9, 1926

Yesterday near Haines City, we had four blowouts, the first of our experience. Some time ago, realizing we needed new tires, Bill wired Frank for money, which we received in Orlando, but being anxious to reach Fort Myers where we plan to visit Bill's mother and her husband, Dr. Strobel, on their houseboat, we took a chance on the old ones--and lost.

Thinking a broken spoke had pierced the tube, Bill patched it, but it soon blew out again. Once more he patched it and once more it blew, all on the back wheel, the hardest to handle because the wheel itself has to be removed and both mudguard and brake loosened.

Although I had walked about a mile to buy patches, patches wouldn't do, so we had to put on the spare, to get at which all the luggage on the rear end had to be removed, then put back again. A man in a Ford stopped to help. We went only a short distance before wham, we could hardly believe the spare blew out! A new tire was a necessity.

The very beautiful sunset brightened but did not shorten my two and a half mile hike into Winter Haven. Trudging from garage to garage I could find no suitable tires, but I did spy a parked motorcycle with a delivery box in place of a sidecar. A little girl told me the driver was downtown, and I would recognize him

immediately because of his red sweater and fat cheeks. Sure enough, I did, and he drove me, riding on top of the delivery box, to still another garage, where again there was no success. A cop, however, in the police station opposite, gave me an old smaller tire with a slow leak, insisting it could be stretched to fit, and volunteered to put it on. So I was officially escorted in a police car back to Bill, who, by the way, had been terribly worried as it was pitch dark and I had been gone more than two and a half hours, during which time he had set up the tent and fixed camp.

Of course the cop's tire would not fit, but the helpful man in the Ford, after an unsuccessful search for me in town, did learn where two tires could be bought, the cop driving Bill to purchase them and back. People are certainly kind everywhere we go.

Now, after a surprisingly restful night beside the road, we are nearly ready to start--but those old tires cost us a full twenty-four hours. Although still one hundred and twenty miles north of Fort Myers, we hope to reach there today.

PART VII

Houseboat Diogenes, Hardy St. Pier
Fort Myers, Fla.
Mon., Feb. 15, 1926

My, but we were glad to get here Thursday night about 8 o'clock. The folks had been looking for us and had supper waiting.

The double-decker houseboat, painted yellow with white trim, is the most attractive abode imaginable. Purple bougainvillaea covers a trellis pagoda between the boat and dock and flower boxes edge the decks. A living room, kitchen and bath with all modern conveniences are on the lower deck, with two bedrooms above. Three folding double beds, one in each bedroom and one in the living room, built-in chests, desk and wardrobes are most compact. Mother Wilson has put colorful cretonne on the chairs and at the windows, and decorated with interesting sea things and dried grasses.

On the aft deck she feeds flocks of hungry wild ducks, a few coming to her hand when she calls. Most of them, though, are very shy and scatter at the least noise or unusual motion, so it had taken much patience and a long time to train even a few.

Out of the hundreds of varieties of palms in Fort Myers, the only ones I have yet learned are the Cabbage, Royal, Sago and Coconut, as well as the low-growing Palmetto, from the fibrous leaves of which brushes and whisk brooms are made. The Royal Poinciana tree, sometimes called Women's Tongues, is shaped like an umbrella, with delicate, finely cut leaves, and at this season, pods, perhaps eighteen inches long, filled with beans that rattle in the wind, hang like

earrings; Banana trees bear one handsome dark purple bloom on a long stem; water hyacinths crowd all the roadside ditches; the Flame Vine, with bright orange blossoms, climbs over every available post or tree; the Sleepy Hibiscus never fully opens its blossoms as the wide-awake varieties do; poinsettias grow ten to fifteen feet high, and although still in bloom, most of the leaves have fallen off.

Many challenging projects have been constructed lately in Florida; the concrete Gandy Bridge, six miles long crosses the bay from Tampa to St. Petersburg; lakes are made where there was dry land and dry land where there was water; a man named Davis has pumped sand from the sea bottom and made a large island near Tampa.

A plan is afoot to make a causeway and bridge on the unfinished Tamiami Trail, by filling in this part of the Caloosahatchee River, forcing Mother W., and the doctor to move the houseboat.

Stucco Spanish type dwellings are very popular here, some of which are built with imagination, but many of them are unpardonably ugly. Truly beautiful subdivisions do exist, however, like the ones outside of Jacksonville and Fort Myers; many others are poorly conceived and dismally located, the prices of all being sky high. The most depressing are the abandoned, half-finished developments, where people have lost their entire investments.

Both Ford and Edison have homes in Fort Myers that appear unpretentious, old-fashioned New England homes, but dense foliage makes them almost invisible from the road or water.

We are visiting with the folks, basking in the glorious sunshine, riding around the countryside, observing many interesting sights, and enjoying loafing after our strenuous trip down.

Hardy St. Pier
Sat., Feb. 20, 1926

Yesterday was like Christmas all over again, for we received a box of wonderful gifts from Mother--the pen with which I am writing, goodies, and a nice wooly dress for later when we drive north (it is too hot now to even think of wool); Bill has smelled grand all day from his new shaving soap.

Each day we have expected the houseboat to be moved. More than a week ago the men promised to drive the piles at the Fowler St. Pier. At that time the carpenters pulled the boards off the boat's gangplank, placing the heavy flower boxes along only one side of the deck, which of course caused a bad list. Consequently the oil would not feed into the stove, the icebox door hung open, and the water pipe was broken.

While we were all away one day, the iceman, climbing over the makeshift gangplank, dropped the ice into the river, and has not shown up since.

At another time I was pressing Bill's pants, when the iron suddenly got cold--an electrician had cut the wires; but before nightfall Bill had spliced them, and we were in business again.

In addition, after Bill had fixed the water pipe, a storm swung the boat back and forth so violently that the pipe was broken again. Dr. Strobel was terribly nervous during the storm, afraid the trellis and plants would be smashed; but we pulled through without too much damage.

To complicate matters, Dora and Percy Strobel, with the two boys, arrived in their Buick to spend the night. Percy had just been offered a partnership in the engineering company where he works, which of course pleases his father.

But we had no water, no food, no extra sheets, and as this was Sunday, none could be bought.

Then Mother W. had her turn at being upset, it being the worst possible time for unexpected guests. She hates housekeeping anyway, but hates worse not to be gracious, and not to have the house neat and clean, with plenty of good food. So she scrubs and polishes and cooks for dear life, hating it all the time. Therefore, we lugged in water, washed sheets, pillowcases and towels, hung them in the quick-drying sun and took our guests to a cafeteria for supper.

Fowler St. Pier
Thurs., Feb. 25, 1926

Finally the piles for our new mooring are ready, and after waiting two or three days more for someone to tow us, we at last got started. It was fun being pulled up the river by a tiny motorboat. The towing man claimed to know the Caloosahatchee River, its channels and tides, but when we were about one hundred feet from the new pier, the boat stuck on the he bottom, and pull as he would, he could not budge it. So he left it there and we were stranded for the night.

About 2 A.M. the doctor, feeling the rise of the tide, began to pole the boat ahead, and before long, with the aid of the rest of us awakened by the movement, had the boat tied up at the new platform. It was still a couple of days, though, before we had electricity, and as yet there is no water.

Although the remainder of the lengthy pier is empty, another boat has docked so near that we can almost touch it. No one being on hand to direct the pile driving man, he did the easiest thing--used one of our piles and drove in only one new one. The doctor and Mother W. are very unhappy with the situation, not only because of the lack of privacy, but because the other boat is in bad repair, and hence detracts from the renting or selling value of this one. Mother W. has offered to pay for the driving of new piles and the bowing of the other boat further down the pier. The pile driver man told Bill that because he got stuck when here before, he would not come in again. So that is that.

The first Sunday in Ft. Myers we drove to Crescent Beach for a picnic. Bill and I went bathing, strolled on the beach and found delicate shells, sea urchins, lovely orange and purple seafans, several kinds of sponges, and a type of seaweed that, when dry, resembles a snake's skeleton.

Another day we drove to Punta Russa, the little fishing village on the gulf where the news first arrived of the sinking of the battleship Maine. We were fascinated by a line of pelicans diving through the air to catch in their huge beaks, before it touched the water, the refuse thrown overboard from a fishing boat nearing the shore. Every post of the pier was decorated by a pelican finial.

One day at Estero we visited a strange community called "The Koreshan Unity." Koresh, the founder of the semi-religious, semi-scientific sect, believed that we are living on the inside of the planet Earth, instead of the outside. Upon entering the "Unity" the hundred or so members give all their worldly goods to the community and work without pay, the Unity supplying their needs. In charming thatched huts they ply their various crafts, and at the moment many are preparing for an exhibition of their handiwork.

One peculiar old codger undertook to explain their "inside the earth" theory: out into the bay for several miles stakes were set at right angles to the shore, all supposedly the same height above the water and equidistant from each other. He contended, though it didn't look that way to us, that the stakes farthest out are above the level of those nearby, thus proving to them that we live on a concave, not a convex, surface. No ship disappears under the horizon, in their book.

He later took us in his motorboat for a delightful trip down a narrow, winding river, while telling us stories and reciting doggerel of his own manufacture. Probably a poser, a bluffer, or even a charlatan, he was nevertheless entertaining.

For some unknown reason a reporter came to the boat the other day to ask us all "How come?" To Mother W. and the doctor--how come the houseboat, and to Bill and me--how come the motorcycle. We all tried to explain at once, with the most confusing result, as evidenced in this morning's paper. Bill, recently turned thirty, was termed, "a youngerly man just entering middle age." His mother rose up in arms saying, "Why, the very idea! He is barely out of his twenties!" Bill's explanation of his stock market activities was more than wasted, for the report said he had "a deep insight into some sinister methods." Dr. Strobel was practically in tears about his quoted remark that he had "forgotten surgery," being afraid one of his colleagues at the Memorial Hospital in New York would see it. The poor reporter must have been dazed by the various stories shouted at him and pinned the tail on the wrong donkey, so to speak.

At last we are well settled at the Fowler St. Pier. New flower boxes have

been made and filled with geraniums, and the water pipes are connected. One never realizes what a blessing running water is until it has to be carried in buckets. River water is too salty for plants or even for cleaning. Water in the artesian well on shore is too sulphury to drink without boiling, but all right for cooking; the sulphur evaporates entirely when it stands long enough. The water is terrible everywhere in Florida.

It is lovely at this pier in spite of the closeness of the other boat. Sunsets across the mile-wide river are magnificent, especially from the upper deck; the moon rises over the exotic gardens on the estate of Burroughs, the adding machine magnate; and an exquisite odor of orange blossoms is wafted on the air.

Crab fishing off the back porch was fun the other day. All we did was to fasten a chunk of meat to a nail at the end of a string, and we caught 21 crabs in as many minutes. At the moment a crab feels the air it tries to drop off. The trick is to give it a quick flip into a pail at the water's surface. With practice we became expert. As Mother W. had planned something else for supper, we threw them all back, thinking we could not provide a meal at any time. But the next day, when we needed them for supper, not a bite did we get. So we have never tasted Florida crabs.

At first the state seems dull and "samey," but on closer look the plants and birds are most varied and colorful; everytime we go for a ride we bring home armfuls of new and different flowers. The tall straight, ringed, cement-like trunks and feather-duster plumes of the Royal Palms, lining most every road in Ft. Myers, are very impressive. One luxuriant evergreen with spines on trunk and branch is called the Monkey Puzzle Tree. Many plants blossom the whole year around--a continuous performance, orange trees even bearing fruit and blooms at the same time.

We have just had new spokes put in the wheel of the sidecar, and it nearly broke us. Prices are very high here, the only cheap thing being grapefruit. At the local packing house, we can get all we want free by simply helping ourselves to "culls"--fruit with blemishes on the skin or of odd size. I wanted to send some to Mother, but decided they were too ripe to pack. I did send her a box of nuts, shells, seafans, coconuts, women's tongues, etc., packed in heavy underwear we no longer need.

Fowler St. Pier
Thurs., March 11, 1926

We had a most interesting experience today. The four of us ferried in a launch, about five miles out into the gulf, to Sanabel Island, fourteen miles long and undeveloped except for a few cottages, a small hotel, and a tanning factory for shark and porpoise skins. Mother W. wanted to see a friend there who she hoped might buy the houseboat.

On Sanabel beach, noted for its beautiful and unusual shells, there was no one around except two girls, one of whom knew all the shells by name--butterfly, angel wing, turkey wing, devil's toe nail, etc. Besides a stunning orange seafan and a huge starfish, I found a big conch with a beastie inside, its foot used as a door to lock itself in.

As Bill and I played along the beach, a big ship hove in view, and after casting anchor, a motorboat shoved off towards the beach. Having heard rumors that Henry Ford had just arrived in Fort Myers, we guessed it was his yacht, and sure enough, when easing up the beach I recognized his lanky figure in straw katy and long flowing duster. The party of six, all equipped with baskets, was busily picking up shells, so the two girls and I helped them find unique ones. Mrs. Ford told us she wanted to find interesting shells for her friends, as they had never before been to the seashore.

Bill would not go near the Ford party, saying, "I won't intrude on the Dall of all flivvers." They were gracious and friendly, and when the girls and I gave them most of our collections, mentioning we were from New York, Henry smiled pleasantly, returned, "We are from Detroit." (As if we hadn't guessed.)

Later Bill ran into a man who said, "It must be very shallow for your yacht out there." (His mistake is understandable, as Bill and Henry are both tall and lanky.)

After telegraphing Punta Russa for a boat, we sped across the bay just at sunset. Pelicans flying low in line were silhouetted against the sinking sun. The foam in the boat's wake reflected a lovely shade of lavender, and the peaks of the waves were touched with orange. Although the folks did not sell the houseboat, it was a glorious day.

The mystery of Ford's whereabouts is amusing to read about in the papers. "He and Mrs. Ford and his new treasurer and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Ives, left Punta Russa Monday night in the Ford yacht and none of their agents nor employees know where they went." We could help them out. Edison sat near us at the movies one night, so we have hob-nobbed with celebrities while here.

A gusty wind this afternoon bounced the houseboat around so gayly on the choppy waves that Bill found discretion the better part of valor and did his reading in the motorcycle on the stable pier. This is the second time that the boat has given Willie the Willies.

Fowler St. Pier
Tues., March 16, 1926

Tomorrow we leave for Brewster where phosphate beds are Bill's first objective, staying, we expect, only a day or so before driving on to Tampa. We are not going to Miami, at least not until after Tampa. Because the Tamiami Trail through the Everglades is not yet open, one must go north nearly to

Barstow to cross the state. Besides, Bill is loath to draw money from Bayliss and Co. (where he has an account) until the market improves, and living in Miami is expensive.

Several repairs are needed on the motorcycle. They did such a terrible job here of putting in new spokes that Bill thinks Tampa is a better place to have the work done.

In spite of the wonderful time we have had here, we feel we must hit the road again. When Mother W. gave us $20 for the trip, Bill said he would take it only as a loan. However, she explained it was a coupon on a bond left her by Bill's grandpa, who would want us to use it--for which we are mighty thankful.

PART VIII

Brewster, Fla.
Sat., March 20, 1926

We hated to leave Fort Myers, as it is a charming spot with an unusually fine climate, even for Florida. This was emphasized on our way north the other day. Near Arcadia smudge pots hung on the orange trees to prevent fruit from freezing. A bad frost had already killed young beans and other vegetables. One old lady said, "Frost don't matter much up north because they're ready for it, but here we don't expect it. Fertilizer costs a heap when you have to replant."

Thank goodness much of the road has been scraped since we came down, and the puddles dried up. We shifted into second only once, whereas coming down we hardly ever were able to drive in high gear.

Naturally spring is not as advanced here; the cypress hardly show green, but the few orange blossoms in bloom are enough to sweeten the air. White water lilies fill the roadside ditches, instead of blue water-hyacinths which color many of the drains usually paralleling roads in Florida. The swamps are blue with iris and a slender, grass-like blue blossom overshadows its more delicate pink cousin in the fields. I picked violets in the woods this morning. Spring is wearing her blue-flowered dress.

The American Cyanamid Co. Owns and runs the town of Brewster. We expected to find a ramshackle mining village but, arriving at night, a line of street lamps led to a veritable castle of lights. In the morning we discovered that Brewster, a town of about two thousand inhabitants was laid out like a subdivision--with vine-covered cottages, a central park, golf course, tennis courts and swimming pool. There are "barracks" for bachelor men and dormitories for bachelor women.

We found the city manager had gone fishing when we sought permission to camp, but his young assistant, Mr. Curry, was willing and kind. Bill seems to have a knack of painlessly extracting succulent scraps of information from

company officials, and it was not long before he had learned some spicy bits about the bidding for Muscle Shoals.

Now that it is warm, camping is much easier than it was in the wet and cold coming down. Mr. Curry suggested a good place in a pine grove, hung with spanish moss. In the morning, when he drove us to the mines, which cover about fifteen square miles, he picked up a bit of rock, saying, "This is probably a part of a tooth of an icthiosaurus. Anthropologists claim that the bones of the three-toed horse (about the size of a shepherd dog) and the three-horned rhinoceros have been found here." Bones were everywhere and we picked up a few interesting ones ourselves.

In the evening when we went to see Mr. Curry, he showed us a perfect specimen of a little crab-like "trilobite," over sixty million years old, which he had dug up near Buffalo. The only other known one, he says, is in the Smithsonian Museum.

At the mines, what is called the "overload" is pumped away by hydraulic pressure; streams of water everywhere play against the bank. When the phosphate matrix is reached, the rock is blasted out, causing one tremendous geyser, with little ones splashing around where the debris hits the water. At a nearby screening plant, much of the sand, clay and gravel is eliminated from the rock.

Water in the reservoir is used over and over again, and although they claim the waste is minimum, some of the phosphate is escaping.

Bill was interested to see that the Power House was using all General Electric equipment, and is thrilled at the efficiency of the whole establishment, estimating the stock is earning $45 a share.

While Bill and I were both trying to write--he, his report and I, a note to Mother--two "sharpies" invaded our camp. Nearly the whole afternoon was wasted listening to "clever" deals they had put over. Black lace spangled with blue glass beads edged the brim of Mrs. Sharpie's hat and like her stocking, she had had seen better days. She, as canny as he, kept slyly winking at us, as Mr. Sharpie told how he built their car out of two old Fords, one of which he had paid $10 for, then, taking out the engine, sold for $15. Some financing!

Tampa, Fla.
Mon., March 23, 1926

We came to Tampa to look further into the phosphate business; our good luck held in finding a camping location. Passing through the city we followed the Tampa River until we came to a grove of moss-covered oaks--a charming location and secluded except for a large tent at one end of the woods. At first this seemed a handicap, but then we considered that if our neighbors were friendly, it might be useful to have their protection for our duffle when we went to town.

As it turned out they were most kind and helpful, the man saying his boss owned the land he was camping on and if any question arose about our camping where we were we could move over to their lot. His substantial tent, with a lot of trick contraptions, has a wooden floor and baseboard about three feet high. He lent us planks to build an outdoor table and bench, and gave us a bushel basket of oranges. We feel quite settled.

Every once in a while racing motorboats come speeding up the river on trial runs, and most all day airplanes from a nearby flying field circle overhead, making it hard to tell which sound is which.

Mockingbirds sing all day long and whippoorwills call every night. Bill is intrigued by the mockingbirds singing on the wing as well as at rest. Each song is different, sometimes harsh like a catbird's or a red-winged blackbird's and sometimes higher and sweeter than any canary's. Frequently I couldn't distinguish between a robin's singing and a mockingbird mocking him. After the robins flew north, however, the mockingbirds no longer repeated their song. A little brown bird amused us, singing from a treetop, first a high note then a low one, while seesawing back and forth in rhythm. Many birds we do not know.

Tampa, Fla.
Wed., March 31, 1926

The other day Bill and I were walking down a residential street in Tampa when I heard a voice say, "Well, if that doesn't look like Lois Burnham," and there on a porch, sat Hortense Lopez, a schoolmate of mine. Mrs. Lopez invited us in for lunch, after which Tense, now Mrs. Bird, with her two cunning little girls, drove us in her Buick over to Davis Island, the foundation for which was pumped from the bottom of the bay. The buildings there are a fright, spanishly ugly and blatantly new.

Yesterday Tense again took us for a ride, this time across the Gandy Bridge, to St. Petersburg, returning the long way round, forty-five miles--and it was only nineteen across the bridge. Today we toured through her father's cigar factory. An old-fashioned Spanish gentleman, Mr. Lopez would have rather failed than use domestic tobacco; and all the best brands are hand worked.

Bill has spent much time here writing down his theories in letters to Frank. The opening paragraph of one, from which I quote, explains the motive behind his work:

"This trip has given me the time and material to indulge in what is to me the greatest pastime in the world--the construction of theories about things. Nothing seems to give me as great joy as evolving from a set of facts, some kind of theory. . . and then seeing the theory justified. I suppose that is just. . . satisfying my personal vanity--but whatever you may call such a state of mind, I

certainly do enjoy entertaining it."

Tampa, Fla.
Thurs., April 1, 1926

When Bill went to the spring for water this morning, he found a sloughed-off snake skin, about four feet long and as thick as my wrist. (Of the few snakes we have seen in Florida one was a water moccasin swimming across a pond, with his head out of the water and holding his long black body stiff and straight.) A whippoorwill was lying on the ground near the snake skin, and when she flew up two chocolate spattered eggs lay exposed, with no semblance of a protecting nest. It seemed a miracle that the snake had not gobbled up the eggs, particularly as whippoorwills act dazed in the daytime.

As we are getting low on funds Bill wrote Frank last Sunday to wire us some cash, but no word has come yet. Sitting on the park bench in town all day, Bill called every half hour at the two telegraph offices, Postal Wire Service and Western Union.

Fri., April 2, 1926

Although it poured all day we went to town hoping in vain that the money would come. Tense could not have been kinder and we had let her believe that we were leaving, as it is a bit embarrassing not to have a sou to treat to anything, even soda water.

Sun., April 4, 1926

Yesterday and today the rain, thunder and lightning were so bad and the wind was blowing so violently, that Bill did not go into town. We expect surely to get a wire tomorrow.

Mon., April 5, 1926

Again no luck at the telegraph office. Bill visited both at least a dozen times. So we sat on a bench in the park where all the old folks gather to gossip; I watched the passers-by while Bill wrote again to Frank. I do wish I could sketch some of them. The kindly, old country couples who must make easy prey for the real estate sharks seem awfully pathetic to me. The same folks come every day and just sit and talk, and talk and sit. They depress me as the abandoned subdivisions depress Bill.

Tues., April 6, 1926

We would have been getting hungrier and hungrier all this time if we had not had on hand a lot of staples, such as rice, pancake flour, Erbswurst, baked beans--all of which we hadn't eaten from choice because of the warm weather. Each day we have thought, "Tomorrow we will have a feast." Tonight we had

supper with our neighbors, and I guess they suspected something because Ed offered to lend us $10, which, of course, Bill refused.

Wed., April 7, 1926

Bill came home at noon with the sad tidings that he got a ticket for parking overtime and has to appear in court tomorrow and probably pay a fine. What he'll use for cash is hard to imagine. I haven't done my washing this week, not having the price of soap.

Thurs., April 8, 1926

It's come! When Bill went to town yesterday he was determined to solve the wire riddle or bust, and made a great hullabaloo at Western Union. At first the clerk maintained there was nothing for him, but then, at Bill's insistence, he looked again, and found a notice from the Postal Wire Service that a wire was being held for Bill. Flying over he was given a wire dated Saturday, the 3rd, which said Frank would send the money on Monday. Another wire from Frank to the Postal Service requested the first wire to be held till called for. Then a third wire from a man in Frank's office revealed that Frank was in the hospital with appendicitis and asked Bill to telegraph how much he wanted--which of course he did immediately, sitting right there from 4 to 6:45 until at last the money came. What a long drawn-out business--ten days! Why the Postal Service hadn't given Bill the wires earlier remains a mystery.

Although it was simply pouring we both went to town this morning, Bill to court and I to spend money. Bill's fine was only $1, the judge saying he would let him off easy because it was a rainy day. I wonder what would have happened if the money hadn't come or if Bill had to pay the fine yesterday.

Our camping neighbors are a type entirely new to us--professional itinerants. Ed is a truck driver, a follower of oil booms, and their last residence was in Wyoming. This is the first real estate boom they have tackled. They profit by the higher wages, not by investing in oil or land. Making a lot of money, they also spend a lot, often leaving with less than they brought with them. Ed seems to know the oil business from A to Z, and has great stories about Harry Sinclair, and how the Standard Oil interests nudged their way into this or that oil field.

Their sweet little ten-year-old girl, Vera, has just developed hip joint disease. Although still on crutches, she seems to be improving, but doesn't go to school yet. I am showing her how to make a raffia basket, and on one rainy afternoon we made doll's clothes together.

Tampa, Fla.
Thurs., April 15, 1926

Dinner and movies in town on Friday made a wonderful spree. I bought Vera a small hand-sewing machine that really works, costing only $1. Although Vera and her mother have lots of fun with it, Ed seems to enjoy it most and played with it all Friday and Saturday evenings.

Bill said I woke him up in the middle of the night by laughing and when he asked what was the joke, I told him, "We lost the rear wheel of the motorcycle."

In a few days we expect to look into the Phosphate Co. at Coronet, not very far from here. We still can't make up our minds whether to visit Miami. It is a long way from here and business does not take us there as it does to Birmingham. The time span is growing mighty thin until we have to be in Brooklyn for my sister Katharine's wedding. On the other hand, Miami is the showplace of the state, and we would feel we had missed an important feature by not going there.

A big jack rabbit owns a home in the woods near us, and a little gopher is continually digging up piles of dirt in our front yard. I couldn't imagine how the piles were made, until one day I saw the dirt flying, and stealing up, I watched a little brown animal shoveling like mad, before dodging down his hole out of sight. The mother whippoorwill and her eggs are still intact. How they managed to survive I fail to see. Two spanish crows, smaller than ours, fly back and forth over our tent all day long. Somewhere they have discovered a nice stock of building material, for on their up-town trip their beaks are always full of straw.

Yesterday I saw two funny brown birds, a little larger than robins, with white plaid wings. They were sneaking Indian file through the grass, on longish legs, their small heads near the ground, stopping occasionally to stretch their necks and look around, when they sensed danger they stayed very still a long time. As they fed at the gopher's pile I crept too near and they fled, making a low whistling sound.

Ed's wife, Louise, is a Holy Roller. She says her mother has had the gift of healing ever since both mother and father were converted at a revival meeting. Her father, who can't read or write, had been a "bad man who swore," but since his conversion has "never said a swear." Louise does not believe in doctors or operations, because she has "seen too many die under the knife." So she takes her little girl with a tubercular hip to a chiropractor. Clever with her hands, Louise makes all her own and Vera's clothes.

In the evenings, we are enchanted by Ed's tales of the west, told in his picturesque language. During his extensive travels he has run into most of the notorious badmen as well as marshals and rangers, including many of the characters mentioned in last week's Saturday Evening Post in a piece about gunmen of the west. Bill would rather hear Ed talk than eat. I'll try to recall a couple of the stories he told last night.

"Well," he began, "one day me and the gang jumped a freight at 'Tulsi',

headed for High Springs. We was lucky enough to find an empty boxcar and crawled through the half open door. And say, boy, didn't it get cold as it came on night. The five of us near froze. I figured we oughta have a fire to keep warm, so we pulled up some floor boards and broke up sidings and set her agoin'. We divided the night into ten shifts of an hour apiece, each in turn sitting up and minding the fire while the other slept. As soon as the fire got low, the tender was supposed to tear up some more boards to keep it burnin'.

"Well, we all worked fine 'till I was wakened by burning all over and my feet near singed. I'll be darned if the guy before my second shift hadn't fell asleep on watch and let the doggone car catch fire. I hollered to the others and we all fought the danged thing for a while but the blamed train was hitting the rails some, and the wind blowing like a trouper through the open door. We couldn't stand the smoke when we closed it, so I figured the only thing to do was to jump and take to the long, tall and uncut, before the trainmen got wise. But the other guys didn't see it thata way, and either didn't darst jump, as she was sure rollin', or else thought they'd take a chance with the trainmen. Anyway I jumped and landed on what seemed a mountain of gravel, sliding clean to the bottom. It took me some time to get my breath and when I felt myself all over, no bones was broke, but I was pretty badly scratched and tore.

"I limped along all night and the next day, till I hit High Springs in the evening. Hanging around the station for a while I heard some guys talking about four hobos who'd been arrested for setting' fire to a freight car, and believe me, I didn't waste any time in hittin' the straight and dusty. I never did meet up with them other hobos again."

Another tale Ed told:

"One year when the Pembleton rodeo put on their show in Casper, the boys left the town poorer than they come. Old man Smith in his ten gallon hat, and lawyer Case, they staged it to bring folks to town. The rodeo was a great hit and the gate receipts went big, but by the end of the week the boys in the show were pretty well broke, for the folks of Casper weren't the only one havin' a good time. A number of them went to the old man and asked for an advance on their pay. But he put 'em off, saying "the gate" weren't all in the bank yit, and he'd pay 'em off Monday mornin' but not a cent till then.

"Well, on Monday mornin' the boys all gathered at the court house where the old man had promised to meet 'em, and waiting and waited, but no sign of Smith or his money. The boys was begnnin' to think it was time for a little action, so they sent a delegation to Smith's house. Nobody home, so they went on to Lawyer Case's and dragged him down to the court house. He kept asayin' the old man would be along soon, that he couldn't pay 'em, as Smith had all the money. The boys kept gettin' a little rougher and a little tougher, till finally Case changed his tune and said he'd not wait any longer for Smith, but get 'em the

money.

"So again the boys waited a while, but soon began to hunt through the town, but they never caught another glimpse of either the Old Man or Case. Casper had to give a benefit performance to get the rodeo out of town, for the boys were dead broke. Although the folks were pretty well fed up with rodeo, they all turned out and the gate went high again.

"I drove my truck to and from the show grounds and sometimes I had a load of luggage or trunks, sometimes a load of Indian squaws, or feed, and one time a baby elephant. Neither I nor the rest of the bunch that worked around the show ever did get paid. After a year or so Lawyer Case come back, for he knew he was well liked in Casper. But Old Man Smith with all the cash never did turn up."

Then Ed told us the story of a well-known oil man, who started his career by sinking all his money in one oil well, and when it turned out "dusty," shet his tee off to get the insurance to drill another--this time a gusher.

PART IX

Coronet, Fla.
Wed., April 21, 1926

Arriving here in Coronet on Sunday, we set up camp on a farm outside of this little mining town. Our tent is pitched in a pasture overlooking a duck pond and marsh. We never can be lonely, for not only five children play around the tent all day, but every kind of domestic animal known to man, and a number of undomestic ones, are near at hand. The pasture is the abiding place of seven cows, two horses, a mule and a goat. Innumerable guinea hens, turkeys and chickens with their respective families, come often to visit. In the next field are a bull and three calves, the latter coming home for their meals night and morning, and in a far-off corner dwell a couple of hogs and their piglets. Eight large black ducks inhabit the pond as well as several marsh hens and their chicks, whom I have seldom seen but often heard, their singular call higher than that of the guinea hen. Lots of blue, white, and gray herons alight at the water's edge daily. The boys say a baby alligator lives in the pond, besides several water moccasins and hundreds and hundreds of frogs with almost as many voices. The baby frogs squeak, the grown-ups honk, and the big old grandaddies grunt, just like a pig. What a cacophony they make at dusk!

Several cats and dogs wander our way frequently, old Buck, the big shepherd, who sleeps by the hour under the motorcycle. One of the cats ate our butter last night and stole our bacon the night before. When Bill got up to shoo her she was so scared she dropped the bacon and, with a splash, jumped right into the middle of the brook. Last night a cow kept rubbing herself against the

tent. Bill helloed and banged the canvas, but nothing would stop her until he got up and threw a stick at her. Such are trials of the camping life!

Most of the people we have met so far have been tourists or sojourners like ourselves, but the Englishes, who own this farm, are real Florida crackers, and seem to work just as hard and long as the farmers up north. We buy milk, butter, eggs and strawberries from them very reasonably. I sent Mother a couple of jars of homemade guava jelly. But the Englishes have also given us a lot of vegetables, milk, hot biscuits. They had us to supper a couple of times, too.

Old man English has had sixteen children, ten by a previous wife, and six by this one, among which are adorable two-year-old Rita, spoiled by everyone, and boy twins, Lloyd and Moyd. The latter more appropriately should have been named Voyd, as he is a bit empty in the upper story. But that is rather unkind for Moyd is sweet and likeable. He is very fond of a billy goat and will say: "Watch me stand on my hind legs like Billy." Then he'll raise one leg, wrap it around the other and lift his arms in the air. Billy, by the way, keeps us awake at night, running up and down a fallen log near our tent.

The first wife's bunch are all married and moved away except a son living nearby with a nice young wife and cute baby, with whom we suppered one night. Their shack was very primitive, with no glass or even paper in the windows, just wooden blinds that shut out light as well as cold.

Mrs. English, Senior, is pretty and capable, but doesn't seem to know how to turn a house into a home. Everything is clean enough but not tidy or attractive. The children, and perhaps the elders too, go to bed wearing all their day clothes. Saturday night we heard the mother say, "Now din't ye go to bed with them dirty clothes on. You put on clean underwear and a clean dress afore ye go to bed tonight." It doesn't seem a question of poverty--just a custom, I guess. Bill and I think our manner of living is rather rough and ready, but our tent and cooking arrangements are trimmer and more orderly than their houses.

Mrs. English raises hundreds of baby chicks in incubators and breeders. The boys found a couple of marsh hen's eggs, which she hatched in the incubator, but the chicks died soon after she put them in the brooder. Although the hens are brown and white, the little fluffy chicks are solid black.

While swimming in the pond today, the boys saw a big water moccasin. They weren't a bit scared, they said, because a moccasin could not strike while in the water.

Coronet village and phosphate plant, newer and more attractively arranged than Brewster, are also company owned, this time by the Coronet Phosphate Co. After inspecting their Hopewell and Pembroke mines, the latter about thirty miles distant, we found them both to be in the same apple pie condition.

Birmingham, Ala.
Mon., April 26, 1926

Because of splendid roads on Thursday and Friday, we reached Florida's panhandle, about four hundred miles from Coronet, and camped the first night near Lake City. On Friday it was getting dark, and we had traveled about ten miles beyond Marianna, before we found a farm near which to camp. The spot seemed ideal--on real grass, under real northern oaks without any hanging moss, and quite a distance from the house. It took Bill a long while to get water, as the old Negro farmer had only a two-quart pail to let down into a deep well. Later Bill told me long narrow strips of newspaper hung from every foot of the rafters in the cabin, probably to keep flies away.

In the meantime I started to get supper with the aid of the electric light Bill had fixed before leaving. Soon I heard a car drive up and stop near the tent. Turning my light to see what was up, there, coming through the bushes, with the lights gleaming on his white strips, was a big burly black prisoner. Believe me, my heart jumped. Managing to deliberately walk over to where Bill's army pistol was kept and to put my hand on it, I said, "Good evening, and what can I do for you?" Politely returning my greeting, he replied, "Is yall in trouble?" I told him, no, that we were camping for the night. Whereupon a white man's voice from the car said, "All right, Tom, come along." The car turned around and went down the road--but only two city blocks before stopping.

It was then that I really began to be scared. I kept hearing noises in the bushes and threw my light this way and that. Once, positive that something was moving nearby, I got quite panicky, and sure enough, there was an old sow walking sedately down the road. I thought Bill would never come. Then definitely hearing someone walking up the road, I called, "Bill?" There was just a guttural response, so I called again. This time a negro's voice answered, "Who-all is you?" I said I had made a mistake, and he went on up the road.

By the time Bill finally came I had worked myself into a "fine state." Taking the pistol in one hand and me in the other, he walked us down the road to see what this was all about--a black prisoner's camp. Evidently the guard had seen our light and heard the motor climbing the bank and thought we were in some kind of trouble, so came to investigate. We were greatly relieved to know my prisoner was not an escapee roaming around the woods. It had been too dark when we arrived to notice the prison camp.

The rolling farm country in Florida's panhandle apparently has more intrinsic worth than the rest of the state that is so greatly touted.

The day after the prisoner episode we made only about one hundred and fifty miles as the roads were terrible--actual corduroy in spots. But we found a nice pine woods in which to camp, fifteen miles south of Montgomery, Alabama. The next day, upon arrival in Birmingham in the rain, we hunted in all four

directions for a suitable place to camp, but the farther out of town we went, the deeper we got into foundries and smelting furnaces. We had come into Birmingham over steep Red Mountain, with farms only at the top and didn't want to climb the mountain everyday, so, as we were tired, wet and dirty, we took a room in the Caswell Hotel and enjoyed the luxury of hot baths.

In the morning, however, we did find a lovely camping location, about seven miles from town, near a village of about a dozen cottages--Fulton Springs, a tiny health resort. They say folks from Birmingham and environs come every day to drink from the spring of iron water, but we have seen no one. The hill on which we are camped overlooks the little village, rolling pasture and wooded land. Eighty-nine cows from a nearby dairy farm, the sound of their bells always in the air, wander over the hills, but luckily seldom come too near. The thrill of spring is in the air, which we missed in Florida.

Thrushes sing all day as well as at dusk, in the dogwood trees under which we are camped. We raise a whole flock of goldfinches every time we come up the hill. Besides lots of cardinals and bluejays, there are stunning redheaded woodpeckers, unlike any I have seen, their bodies divided in thirds, red head, white breast and wings, and black tail. Only a few mockingbirds are about. Thistles in Florida and the north are purple; here they are either deep red or yellow. Many of the dooryards are gay with red or pink ramblers and a low brilliant purple flower, more intense than healall, grows in the grass. In the woods low wild pinks abound, as well as an unusual short-stemmed, large-bloomed purple violet.

Now for the purpose of our sojourn here--coal and iron. We had a most interesting day yesterday, going through the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Co., owned by U.S. Steel, a tremendous plant, devoted entirely to the making of rails. Workmen handle four-ton red-hot ingots of steel as if they were rubber, shoot them here and there, turn them over and draw them out into long rails, with miraculous skill and speed. The mechanical perfection of the operation is astounding; everything is on such a huge scale it takes your breath away. It is both thrilling and terrifying to watch several hundred tons of molten metal being poured out of a Bessemer converter into a waiting car. In one place we saw water showered on a full car of hot coke to cool it, causing so much steam one would think a whole village was afire.

The blast furnaces look like huge organ pipes of different lengths, sticking up in the air. Bill, very much impressed by the steel plants, keeps saying, "Wham, blam, go the big wheels." Actually, there are very few wheels in evidence--just those in Bill's imagination.

We hear there is coal under one-seventh of the land in Alabama, and we know we are camped right over a mine. It was spooky to see miners, with black faces and little lights on their caps, coming out of a hole in the ground at the

foot of our hill. I am anxious to go down in a mine, but Bill thinks we won't be able to get permission.

The Negroes in the south are lots of fun and very different from their northern relatives. One day while sitting in the motorcycle waiting for Bill, a tall thin Negress, all dressed up, gnawing a gaunt ham bone as she was ambling by, stopped to ask me if I was selling dresses. Upon my negative response, she then asked, "Does y'all tell fortunes?" Not seeming to believe my denial, she stood for some time gazing at me and munching her bone. As she walked off, she said, "Ah sure do want ma fortune telt."

Muscle Shoals, Ala.
Mon., May 17, 1926

Here we are at the famous Shoals! We left Birmingham about noon and drove the hundred and sixty-odd miles in time to camp before dark, on the shore of the Tennessee River. Traveling home is certainly easier than our southward trip. Then, with a good start, we felt lucky to make a hundred miles. It is not only the better roads and more comfortable weather, but the machine is behaving splendidly--we haven't even lost a carburetor or a rear wheel!

While in Birmingham we visited both the Alabama Bi-products Co. And the Lehigh Portland Cement Co. Everything seems handy there. Coal, iron, lime, cement rock, clay, water power, as well as good farming and lumber land, are all close by.

People were so friendly that almost every evening we were invited to visit one acquaintance or another. Bill had a glorious time hob-nobbing with presidents, and chinning with colonels. But I didn't dare call up Winfred Ager (the son of the minister who married us) because we are so raggedy after our year's adventure.

Our drive yesterday was lovely, through weeded country and good farm land, crossing several large rivers, the Black and Tennessee among them. We ferried across the latter on the strangest boat, a rear-wheeler with flapping wings on either side and a one-lunger gasoline engine. As there were no decks, the ferry slid sideways like a crab, to the bank, let down one of its wings and ashore we rolled. More fun!

There are great plans for the development of the whole area around Muscle Shoals, because of cheap water power, but Bill does not agree with the idea of government ownership or management.

We are not stopping in Pittsburgh as first planned, but are driving straight home, in order to be on time for Kitty's wedding. Now that we are on the home stretch, we can hardly wait to get there.

NOTE 1973

Because of an accident on the motorcycle I discontinued my diary. The following account is set down from memory.

Just outside of Dayton, Tennessee, I was driving on a sandy road, which apparently ran straight ahead, when suddenly, hidden by a large barn, it made a sharp angled turn to the right. I tried to force the wheels, but the sand was too deep and over we went. Bill, in the sidecar, was thrown over my head, breaking his collarbone as he landed; I twisted my leg, causing water on the knee; the equipment flew in every direction; and the trunk burst open.

Luckily a man in a car soon came along and drove us, dazed and badly scratched, to a doctor in town who set Bill's shoulder, bandaged my knee, and there being no hospital, settled us in a hotel room over his office.

During our week's stay there, Bill and I tried to picture what the town had been like the year before during the Scopes Evolution trial. We imagined William Jennings Bryan as he paced back and forth on one of the hotel's five fancy grill-railed balconies rehearsing his speech, and Clarence Darrow with his chair tilted back against the wall and his feet on the rail, haranguing a coterie of youths; while the streets were crowded with visitors come to hear the great orator and see the show.

It wasn't too long before we were able to return to the fateful corner. The man who had picked us up had collected all our duffle and put it and the motorcycle into the barn, as he said he would. Although the door was left open, and more than a week had passed, not a single article was missing; even such attractive and easily packed items as the traveling clock, compass and radio were all there.

We made arrangements to have the motorcycle and most of the gear shipped to Brooklyn. Then in a few days, when the doctor said we could travel, we took the train for home.

Although we were in plenty of time for the wedding, I made a sorry looking matron of honor, when, with red gashes on my face, I limped up the aisle.

PART X
1973 NOTE

We recovered quickly from the accident, though at several periods during my later life my knee gave me considerable trouble. Bill suffered no permanent injury, except a bump on his collarbone. The little damage the motorcycle received was repaired, so, as Bill wanted to check up on the Giant Portland Cement operation, we left my father's home on Clinton St., Brooklyn, where we were living temporarily, and took off again on the motorcycle.

Early in the summer we had been flattered and amused by a letter from Pa

Goldfoot asking us to return for two months to help with the harvesting and offering us a better price than we were paid in 1925.

I kept diaries on the short Egypt trip as well as on the ones to Holyoke and Canada, which follow in Parts X and XI.

Egypt, Pa.
Tues., July 20, 1926

We reached Egypt in time to drive around the Bethlehem Steel Works, and to visit the Giant plant before setting up housekeeping in an alfalfa field near our old camping place, newly planted to corn. The views are lovely from our new spot.

After supper our old friend, Harold Baer, very much grown up, came to take us to pick blackcaps and funny little sweet red cherries. The bobwhite, and what they term here the rain-bird, were calling when we returned. The latter, more mournful than a dove, wailed coo-coo-oo-o, late into the evening.

During the night it blew, rained and thundered so violently that we had to get up to cover things more securely. When the rain stopped in the morning, we threw pump water over each other for our daily showers, but we might have saved the energy and just stood outside the tent, for it immediately began to pour again.

The chatter of guinea hens in the nearby potato field awakened us early. In Florida their call always reminded us of Egypt, for it was here that we first recognized it.

Bill has gone to the cement plant, and I am enjoying the radio and writing on our hilltop, for it has stopped raining and the sun pops in and out of the fast-moving clouds. This time of year the country is colorful. Tawny patches of wheat and lighter green fields of oats pattern the distance, while near at hand wild roses not only tint the hedgerows but sweeten the air.

It seems our luck to always have rain in Egypt, but it doesn't dampen our spirits, because the open road and living close to nature always puts us in fine fettle; seemingly we absorb a "certain something" from contact with the earth itself. In the city we both felt stodgy and stupid, but one night in the open has already set us up remarkably. We hate to go back tomorrow.

Holyoke, Mass.
Wed., Aug. 25, 1926

Bill and Frank have a new interest, the American Writing Paper Co., which is in receivership, so we came here to investigate. We had been at The Camp since returning from Egypt, and because of saying goodbye to so many folks in East Dorset and the Center, we made a late start on Monday. Having hankered for some time to revisit our old location on the brook near Bennington, although only

thirty miles away, the rain clinched the matter and we went no further.

To our disappointment, however, some painter has ruined the place by dumping his debris all around--plasterboard, empty paint buckets, papers, bottles, and excelsior in a barrel. We had a great time in the rain, picking it all up and trying to turn the water-soaked stuff in the barrel. The turpentine in the paint and the excelsior helped.

The next day, rather cloudy, was fine for travel. Crossing the mountain to Wilmington we followed the Deerfield river all the way to its junction with the Connecticut, a perfectly stunning drive. Bill wanted to see the new dam and power station they are building just below the Reedsboro Power plant, so we stopped there before driving through Shelburn, Greenfield, lovely Deerfield and North Hampton, arriving at Holyoke in time to locate the paper factories and to find a splendid place to set up our living quarters--on top of a hill of course, about a mile from town.

Mt. Tom, our nearest neighbor to the north, at night wears a crown of lights. Both nights we have watched the moon, large and red, rise over the city. In the daytime we can see another large river running parallel to the Connecticut, nearer at hand. We wonder what it can be. Three canals, leading out from the Connecticut, run through the factory section of the city.

Yesterday we just loafed, studied, took Bill's suit to be pressed and went to the movies. This morning we were Robinson Crusoes, and our hilltop, an island in a sea of mist. However, Bill left in high glee, all dressed up in his neatly pressed old suit, to interview the president of the American Writing Paper Co.

Holyoke, Mass.
Mon., Aug. 30, 1926

Yesterday and today have been sunny and clear, delightful except for a hurricane-force wind that blew the tent down.

Paper making had always sounded dull until we came here and learned a little about it. It turns out to be complicated and quite an art. Saturday Bill took me through one of the plants where red photographic paper for Eastman and blue paper for phonograph records are made. The company has the government contract for postcards and envelopes.

Bill raves about the ability and personality of the president, Mr. Willson, and instead of a report about costs and profits, he plans to write about the power of one man to make a success of a company that had failed. All those with whom Bill has talked, whether laborer, superintendent, or official of the company, has been full of enthusiasm and pep, eager to do a good job for Mr. Willson. He has won me over, too, for Saturday afternoon he asked Bill and me to go up Mt. Tom with him.

At 5 this afternoon Mr. Willson's chauffeur first picked us up at the Nonotuck

Hotel, then Mr. Willson at the Golf Club. As no road goes up the mountain, he left us at its feet where there is an amusement park, with scenic railway, small theater, merry-go-round, and dance hall. From there we took a cable car on tracks (like the one near Bill's hometown) at Friedleyville, Vt., straight to the top. The building there is not a hotel as we had thought, but a look-out and restaurant. We had also pictured an automobile road winding to the top, even picking it out as it followed the contours of the mountain.

Through the telescope at the lookout we spotted our tent with the towel out to dry, saw Amherst and Smith Colleges, peeked in the windows of Dr. Mary Wooley's home at Mt. Holyoke College, and discovered what I had thought was another river was a series of fine tobacco fields covered with white sun-reflecting cheese cloth, to keep the bees from cross-fertilizing the blossoms. Our imagination has certainly played tricks on us.

The sunset was magnificent from the top, and I took it for granted that after it faded we would go our several ways, for nothing had been said about dinner. So it was a surprise when Mr. W. escorted us to the restaurant where our fine dinner included a whole broiled lobster apiece. Then descending in the cable car, we watched the dancing for a while, until Mr. W. said he had never danced there before, but he would if I would. So off we went. My husband, not too enthusiastic about dancing, even deigned to dance with me, and we stayed until well into the evening. The crowd was like that at Coney Island, with freaky kids dancing the Charleston--making it all the more fun. Mr. Willson was a good sport to dance where many of his own employees must surely have recognized him.

Monday I called up Esther Congdon Blanchard, an old Brooklyn friend, and although Esther was on vacation, her mother invited us to supper at six. I foolishly said we'd be there, without consulting Bill, who had gone with a Mr. Nickelson, superintendent of the coarse grades mills, to inspect a factory. I waited and waited for him to come home, preparing everything so he could just jump into clean clothes--but all in vain. I had to call Mrs. Congdon that we couldn't make it before 6:30.

It was then that the tent blew down and in trying to raise it I punched the pole through the fabric, thus presenting myself a nice little job of mending. The folks at the foot of the hill, seeing my predicament, invited me to wait for Bill in their house, out of the wind, and kindly offered me a cup of tea and a piece of pie. Afraid to spoil my supper, I hesitated before accepting, but it turned out I was having it, because at 7 o'clock it was again necessary to call Mrs. Congdon, this time that we couldn't make supper but would be there later in the evening.

About 7:30 Bill and his friend showed up. They had changed plans and gone to a factory in Connecticut, fifty miles distant and stopped for supper on their way back. We had a pleasant evening when we finally did reach the Blanchards'. Gordon, whom I had not met before, is sales manager for a rival

writing paper company and evidently doing splendidly, for he and Esther have a beautiful home. We are sorry to miss her and the children.

The next day Gordon conducted Bill through the mill, more modern and up-to-date than the American Writing Paper Co., but Gordon considers Willson the best paper man in the country.

Mr. Yoerg, superintendent of fine grades mills, had offered Bill the use of his bungalow up the river in South Hadley, and while we were eating supper, he and his wife unexpectedly appeared to conduct us there, bag and baggage. We packed faster than ever before, dumping some things in their car and some in the motorcycle.

I always marvel at how good people are. The Yoergs, never having laid eyes on us until two days ago, have lent us the slickest, coziest, most convenient little cabin, equipped with heat, telephone, running water, ice and a lovely view of Mt. Tom. They have done everything to make us comfortable, even supplying clean linen.

This morning, as there was not a soul around we swam in the river "au naturel." Later, on a long walk, we picked a lot of hazel-nuts which I haven't found for a long time, and for supper I stewed up the blueberries and elderberries which we had gathered.

One night when Bill and I went to town to the movies, clouds of tiny white moths swarmed around the lights, whitening the ground with snow-like piles at the foot of every lamp post. Never having seen anything like it before we inquired and learned they were gypsy moths and a great menace to the trees.

One day while writing on our hilltop, a large orange butterfly lit on my shoe, remaining perfectly still with his back to the sun until he saw another butterfly and set chase. After circling around he came back to my shoe, keeping this up all afternoon, sometimes flying completely out of sight, but always returning to the same spot and always perched with his back to the sun. I had no idea that a butterfly had such a sense of location.

There are thousands of mushrooms on the hill, and one day I thought I would try out Cousin Louis Burnham's recipe for safely picking mushrooms--those that smell good and taste good are good to eat. I smelled and tasted and picked until I struck one that burnt my tongue the minute I put it in my mouth. Believe me, I spat and spat and spat and had horrible visions of Bill hunting but not finding me, curled up in agony under a bush. However, I safely returned home, but had lost my zest for experimentation. Only safe old puff balls were served for supper.

We leave for home tomorrow.

PART XI

1973 NOTE

Upon our return from Holyoke, Frank was so pleased with Bill's report on the American Writing Paper Co. That he gave Bill a regular weekly salary of $50, as well as options on stock. This permitted us to feel secure enough financially to buy a second-hand car, in which it would be much easier to make the extended trips for Bill's work.

So in early October we left Brooklyn for Vermont and parts north, in our new-to-us 1924 Dodge, for which we paid $250.

Hotel Frontenac, Quebec City, Que.
Sun., Oct. 10, 1926

Mother Wilson and Dr. Strobel have sold their houseboat and are now living in New York but they came up to her father's home in East Dorset, Vt., to see the autumn foliage. As they had never been in my family's old house in Manchester, I promised to show them through the dwelling on Wednesday, the day we were leaving. It so delayed us that we were unable to reach Aunt Lilian's camp in northern Vermont that night.

About thirty miles south of Keysville, we tried out our new "Pullman" sleeping arrangements in the Dodge, which all worked well. The next day we had a good visit with Aunt Lilian and Shirley, who insisted we stay for lunch at their attractively located camp.

Thrilled at crossing the border into Canada, we spent the next night at a real French tavern in the small town of La Prairie, just this side of Montreal. Traveling in Quebec is terribly expensive; gas is anywhere from 34¢ to 39¢ a gallon, oil 45¢ a quart, cigarettes 55¢ to 90¢ a pack; every few miles there is a toll bridge or an expensive ferry to cross. Montreal is on an island and you can't leave without spending at least 60¢.

At first, from the border to La Prairie, it was like traveling in the south again. The weather was warm; the farmers lived in log cabins and used mules instead of horses; pigs and sheep, roaming wild, ran across the roads. But the St. Lawrence Valley is more prosperous, with its well-kept farms, painted houses and long, whitewashed barns with red doors and window frames. Many of the houses are charming, but there are a number of hideous, square pillboxes with flat roofs, cheap tin sheathing over all and "fancy" filigree trimming at the cornices. And the churches! Even the smallest town supports a most impressive edifice and church spires beckon the traveler from one town to the next. Wayside crosses and shrines appear every few miles and priests and monks are seen everywhere.

As we crossed the St. Lawrence River from Sorel to Berthier, a real old-world monk with a most kindly, lovable face was aboard the steamer, barefooted except for sandals, and wearing a long brown coarse cloth gown with a hood and

a rope girdle, his head shaved except for a crown of hair around the rim of his scalp. He constantly said his beads and read from his prayer book. We have since seen several others like him. Perhaps because it is so unfamiliar, it all seems quaint and interesting.

On the train to Chicoutimi, Que.
Thurs., Oct. 14, 1926

On our way to Quebec City we stopped at Shawinigan in bitter cold to look through the plant of the Aluminum Company of America. Bill had secured permission first by a wire to Pittsburgh headquarters. He found the location stunning and the plant most impressive.

Armed with letters of introduction from Frank and Bill's Montreal friend, Johnson, we arrived in Quebec on Saturday evening and parked in the tourist camp. Looking around the town on Sunday, we discovered that a big convention of bankers was in progress at the Hotel Frontenac. Because of the confusion, hubbub and postponement of business caused by the convention, accomplishing Bill's business here has been greatly delayed.

On Monday, Bill had expected to see a man who would give him letters of introduction to officials at the aluminum development on the Saguenay River. He learned the man would not be in his office, but might be found in such and such a room in the Hotel Frontenac. Most of Bill's day was wasted phoning the room and having the man paged, while I wandered about the city.

The next day wasn't much better. Although the man was at his office, he was so much the worse for wear that Bill could get nothing out of him--he was, he said, "in a hurry to lunch with Lady so-and-so." But he did promise Bill to have the letters the next day, which meant putting off our leaving for still another day. On Wednesday the gentleman was in better shape and gave Bill several helpful letters. He apologized for his former condition, saying that "a banker's convention didn't happen every day."

Quebec is a most charming city, and our lengthened stay was certainly no punishment. The Frontenac is situated on a high bluff overlooking Murray Bay, formed by the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Charles Rivers. Mountains with little villages snuggled at their feet rise sharply from the Bay. On the same bluff as the hotel and not very far is the Citadel, an old fort built by the English in 1759, after Wolfe had taken the city from Montcalm. Quebec was a walled town before that, however, and the walls and gates are still standing. The old walled part is built on a side hill, with narrow, twisting alleys, running hither and yon, making the area picturesque and intriguing.

Although sleeping in our car in the tourist camp, we soon felt very much at home at the elegant Frontenac, making it our headquarters, and parking the Dodge in front near the statue of Champlain.

We wonder when and if the convention ever convened, for most of the time

it seemed to be a grand Hurrah-boys-let's-have-another-drink, interspersed with a few visits of local points of interest, a dinner at the Governor General's mansion and numerous trips to the golf course. Henry Holt, a perennial beau of many Brooklyn girls of my acquaintance, was present for some undetermined reason. "Henery," as Bill calls him, was rigged out in the very latest cut British clothes, spats and cane. Although he had just made a flying trip up the Saguenay to the aluminum development, he was too busy having luncheon and going riding with Sir William Price, a director of the Aluminum Company of America, to give us information about his findings. It was constantly Sir William this and Sir William that. We ran into several other Brooklyn friends, also.

One evening at a restaurant Bill and I had an amusing close-up of some of the convention crowd, as we watched a few bankers banqueting. One Jewish banker, who drank only one small bottle of beer, was host. His non-Jewish wife, fat, southern and talkative, was champagne drinkative. A man from Nevada with feet three sizes bigger than Bill's twelves had the coarsest, grossest manners; and an elegant, prim little woman from Philadelphia, patronizing only ice water, was terribly shocked by the whole proceedings. A funny mixture, but lots of fun to watch.

At last we are on our way, by train. The boat up the Saguenay to Lake St. John runs only on Tuesdays and Fridays, also it's more expensive, and takes a day longer. There is no auto road, so we have left our car and duds in charge of the caretaker of the tourist camp. The train runs through the wildest, woolliest country, all forests, rocks, lakes, rivers and mountains. I never saw so many heavenly lakes. The gorgeous autumn foliage lent its glamor to the scenery.

Quebec City, Que.
Tues., Oct. 19, 1926

Arriving back in Quebec on the sleeper this morning, we were glad to find letters from home awaiting us. At the Price Paper Co. Colony at River Bend, we met the fiery-tempered housekeeper in the King Edward boarding house where we had lunch. A more British Britisher never lived. After all the other boarders had left, she came to our table and simply railed against the French-Canadians, or rather French-Indians, as she called them, and particularly against the priests, although she was a Catholic herself, citing incident after gory incident.

This morning we had taken the train from Chicoutimi to Isle Maligne, where there is a huge power plant. Bill had a letter to one of the men in charge, but thought we'd see the plant before contacting him. It was lucky we did, for the man turned out to be a prude and a clam and Bill never would have learned the things he did if we had relied on his taking us through the outfit.

Then, after walking the three miles to River Bend, we went through the Price Paper Mill which, barely a year old, is the last word in modernity. It was only 2

o'clock after all this and our train wasn't to leave the junction nine miles away until 9:24 P.M., so there was heaps of time to get some real exercise. We walked the whole nine miles, arriving before 6, hungry and no place to eat in sight. When a freight train hove in view, the station agent said we could ride on that to Herbertsville where there was a hotel. So into the caboose we climbed, having a novel, though unsociable, five-mile ride, for the trainmen could not speak English or understand Bill's overseas French. Bill gets on easily with the city Frenchmen, but not so with those in the wilds.

Herbertsville is a little prairie village of shacks, like Bret Harte's "Mud Flats" I imagine. Anyway, we managed to get a good meal in its one hotel. In the narrow dining room, red ribbons held back the long lace window curtains; bright chromes of fruits and flowers hung on the walls; and a statue of a nymph bathing in a pool stood on the mantel. There was no bill-of-fare, and not being able to understand one single word the little French waitress said, the neighbors kindly helped us out. During the meal there was charming singing in the kitchen--a mother humming a lullaby to her baby. We noticed the son stopped at the appearance of our waitress. Sometimes one or two other voices chimed in and once someone struck up a gay tune on an accordion, so the baby, no doubt, had to be rocked to sleep again.

Massena, N.Y.
Sat., Oct. 30, 1926

After an uneventful drive down from Quebec City, we arrived in Montreal and heard that Queen Marie of Rumania was in town. While sitting in the car on Wednesday, waiting for Bill, the queen, her two children, the mayor and various hangers-on came streaming by, with great blowing of horns and buzzing of motorcycle cops. I read in the papers that she was going to attend the opera that night, Chaliapin in the Barber of Seville. So Bill and I blew ourselves to $1.65 standing room and sat on benches in the top balcony. The opera was fine, but the aging Chaliapin had such a small part you hardly had a chance to learn what his voice was like; the orchestra was thin, the soprano splendid except when she flatted her high notes; the queen was gorgeous, but poor little Princess Ileana, drab and tired-looking. But we felt very gay!

It really seems a lot warmer here in the states, and the leaves are not off the trees as they are in Montreal. However, as chilly as it was in Canada, we never slept cold because we had taken so many blankets and warm clothes. It is the dressing, undressing, bathing and cooking that are cold. It has rained or snowed a lot, making camping very inconvenient, so several times we have rented a room in an inn or guest house. This, together with the higher costs in Canada, has made the trip expensive. It seems a joy to get 18¢ gas and 30¢ oil this morning. No wonder there are so many horses and bicycles in Canada. We

passed the customs all right without having to unpack all our duffle, as we were afraid we might.

All day we tried in vain to go through the Aluminum Plant here in Massena, because, as in Shawinigan, a wire had to be sent to Pittsburgh to get permission from President Davis.

It is half raining and half snowing tonight, we are again being extravagant and have taken a room in the Gouverneur Hotel.

Niagara Falls, N.Y.
Thurs., Nov. 11, 1926

The weather has been too horrid to camp. After spending three nights in Massena and going through the Aluminum Plant there, we traveled about 180 miles and stopped at a wayside guest house, where the oddest people were assembled. We cried half the evening and laughed the rest.

The man of the house, after unfortunately breaking his leg in June, had developed gangrene and diabetes. Hospital, doctor and insulin bills were eating up whatever small capital they had. Luckily, his wife, who had been a nurse, was strong and capable. But my, she was funny looking! A huge head of moth-eaten, close cropped, hennaed hair was getting gray at the roots. Like a clown, her moon face was plastered white with powder, except her large pug nose, worn red and shiny by a cold.

Her brother and a cousin kept us in stitches the entire time, joking and kidding each other, sometimes being really clever. Many of their jokes were about homely people, and I never saw a homelier bunch. The short fat cousin's skin was drawn tightly across his face and neck, and when he laughed the blood rushed to his head in such a great surge I was afraid it would burst.

The brother who lives with them was quite traveled and told many, probably imaginative, stories of his adventures out west. The only help he seemed to give was to make them laugh. Perhaps that was enough. "Oh, the people!" as Bill says, how interesting we are!

Bill wants to get a really reliable picture of the water power situation here in Niagara Falls. Upon reaching Buffalo yesterday afternoon we unsuccessfully called Ruth Shattock several times before driving to her home. The man downstairs told us Mr. Shattock had just died and Ruth had taken the body to Manchester. Poor Ruth, both her parents died so young.

As the rain had let up, we parked in the tourist camp for the night. Pools of water still remained on the ground, which otherwise looked firm. But upon stopping the car we immediately had our doubts, and tried to move to a more solid location, but the back wheels just spun, digging deeper and deeper into the mud. As it was getting dark we decided to stay put until the morning, when we could see what we were doing, and have the benefit of the night's freeze to

harden the surface.

In the morning, however, although the ground was covered with hoarfrost, it did not seem any firmer, and the wheels again spun and dug. We put brush and sticks under them but it was really Bill's pushing that did the trick. When he pushed and I put on the power, the car crawled ahead just perceptibly, but without his mighty brawn, it did not budge.

This tourist camp was supposed to be closed for the season, but we were given permission to use its splendid facilities--washrooms, showers and lavatories, as fine as those in any club.

We found Buffalo dingy and overrun with factories, because of the cheap water power. Last night the falls were perfectly gorgeous, lit up by colored lights. After the supper we enjoyed the movie, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

1973 NOTE

We spent the winter of 1926-27 at Clinton St., in Brooklyn. Bill, however, took several trips of investigation by train without me. But as soon as the weather became springlike, we hit the road again, as Bill wanted to inspect the Cyanamid Plant at Niagara Falls.

En route to Buffalo, N.Y.
Sun., April 4, 1927

It was clear and cold yesterday when we found a fine place to camp near Monticello, N.Y., so we built a big bonfire to warm us while we ate supper and read. In spite of the ice on the pail this morning, it was simply great--the sun shining and the birds singing, bluebirds, robins, red-winged blackbirds and chickadees, the old familiar friends. I looked for pussy willows, but they have already turned into catkins. The weeping willows wear their marvelous soft spring green and the maples their bright new red.

Before we broke camp the owner of the property paid us a visit. He seemed irritated at first that we had camped on his land, but we took the wind out of his sails by our apologies. I don't know why we had not sought his permission; we almost always do. But I guess we were so excited by our first trip of the year that we forgot. A good-natured man, he became interested in our fixings.

We have been following the Delaware River through the mountains, on the north and west sides of which the snow still clings. In one pass, beside the road, it was six feet high. This is a Jewish recreational area, and we passed one sanitarium-like hotel after another, each with white iron bedsteads to be seen through the windows. The Hebrew name on each sign post was usually supplemented by "Strictly Kosher" or "For Jews Only."

After driving through a coal district with kilns along the road, we stopped in the town of Liberty to buy a better light for our tent. A lavender Ford with flowers painted on the doors and gray silk curtains draped back from the windows with gold cord and tassels was slowly driven past by a flashy Italian gentleman with long flowing mustachios outlining his rosy cheeks, and wearing a black fedora canted rakishly--quite unique!

The first of April must have opened the fishing season, for the brooks are lined with fishermen. Sap buckets hang on many maples. Spring is here!

The Central Hotel, Bainbridge, N.Y.
Mon., April 5, 1927

Spring has flown! Today, sitting in the best bedroom of this little hotel, I hear a man shoveling snow in front of the town hall across the street. But to lead up to this great eminence:

Yesterday Bill thought he'd like to camp early so we could get in a good walk before dark. Not far from a place called Hancock, we found a splendid camping location, out of the briskly blowing wind. Keeping the day-before's experience in mind, we punctiliously got permission from the owner before setting up camp. Then we took a fine walk up a wood road beside a brook into the hills. As well as raising one partridge, we got our feet nice and wet. This night was even colder than the one before, with a lovely moon in a clear sky. We built a big fire and made careful preparations for keeping warm, viz: hot water bottles, heavy underwear, sweaters, shelter-halves placed under the bedroll as well as over it. Then, cozy as could be, I read "Lone Winter" out loud to Bill; but we found this story about Vermont rather sentimental and tiresome.

Very early in the morning it began to hail, raising the question whether to pack up immediately before it got worse, without washing or eating, or take a chance, get a leisurely bath and a nice warm breakfast. We chose the latter, as Bainbridge, where Bill wanted to look into the Casine Co., was only fifty miles distant. We knew we could make that in most any weather.

The hail soon changed to snow and then to rain, and now has almost drizzled away. Warming up the car before leaving camp, we were comfortable all the way here.

When Bill inquired at this inn for a room with a bath, the manager, looking at his camping clothes, contemptuously said, "We have a room beside a bath." As much as to say, "You don't look as if you could pay for that, let alone a room with a bath." He did not even help him with the bags, until he saw he had a "lady" with him, then he became most solicitous. Dinner was past, he said, but he could bring us something to eat in our room.

Bill is downstairs now, pumping the gossips about the Casine Co. Above the steaming radiator I can hear music from a radio, probably from Schenectady, and

reception is pretty good. We have both been interested in radio since Bill made several superheterodynes for the family, as well as selling a few in 1922. Although it is only 4 P.M., the day is so dark I have the light on, one dim, naked bulb. I wish we had brought in our new tent light.

Hotel Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y.
Mon., April 12, 1927

Bill had to make an emergency trip to New York by train Friday morning, and I am expecting him back any minute now. It has been lonely without him, but I have seen a lot of Ruth Shattock, which has been nice.

Ruth teaches in a public kindergarten, where I visited her. In the afternoon I drove her along the shore of Lake Erie. After dinner we went to a lecture on Psychology; rather pathetic, I thought. A lot of disappointed, disillusioned people, trying to find something to which to cling. Of course that may not have been it at all, but it seems so to me. A number of faddists were present, vibrationists, spookists and thought-healing-ists. The boy who talked was most interesting, enthusiastic and likable, but seemed a bit hazy on the logic of what he was trying to put over, so tried to give the impression that it was all very abstruse, and above the heads of his audience.

The weather Sunday afternoon was wonderful and I drove out to the falls by myself and met Ruth at the Hotel Niagara. The mounds of ice below the falls were nearly as high as the falls themselves. The sun, shimmering on the icicles dripping decoratively from the spray-wet trees, was dazzling. We drove along the river, past the lower rapids and whirlpool, to Youngstown, where the river empties into Lake Ontario. After going through old Fort Niagara, we had dinner here at the hotel.

Although I had occasionally driven the motorcycle alone, up to this week I had never driven a car alone and it gave me a great feeling of independence.

POSTSCRIPT * 1973

Bill returned to Buffalo the night of the last entry in my Diary, and we stayed several days while he resumed his investigation of the Cyanamid Co. at Niagara Falls. Not many months later, when he had enough money, he bought stock in this company.

Bill continued the strategy of thoroughly looking into many angles of company management and future worth of stocks in which he was interested, either from the market's standpoint or from analysis in Moody's Manuals, seeking those stocks which were low priced in relation to their potential.

For several years he made these investigations for Frank Shaw, who often carried him for stock, but as Bill became able, he made investments for himself.

Most of the stocks he recommended increased in value, and our financial status kept pace.

By 1927 we lived in a nice three-room apartment in a good residential district. Bill was feeling his oats so, when our neighbor moved out of the apartment next door, he rented it and had the wall between pulled down, thus giving us two bedrooms, two baths, two kitchens, and one tremendous living room--the point of it all. Bill always loved large living rooms. A grand piano, of course, was needed to fill the expanded space. (I recently came across the old bill--$1,600, for a Mason and Hamlin piano.) We had to take a three-year lease and promise to pay for the re-erection of the wall upon leaving.

Bill had dabbled a little in the stock market before our motorcycle trip. By selling eight Liberty Bonds he bought during World War I out of his army pay, he opened an account with Bayliss and Co. In 1922. Among the first stocks he bought were two shares of General Electric and three of International Nickel. But the stocks that really gained in value, and gained quickly, were among those he bought because of his investigations.

After the stock market crash in 1929 Bill lost a lot of money, for like everyone else at that time, he had bought on margin. However, he had made some very good business connections in Canada where the crash did not hit as hard as in the States. When Greenshields and Co. invited him to join their staff, we moved to Montreal. There we rented another expensive apartment, in a new building on Mt. Royal, overlooking the city, paying for the Brooklyn one as well.

On the day we first went to look at the apartment, I remember I lost my engagement ring. Pulling off my gloves as we walked on boards laid down across rubble to reach the apartment, I must unknowingly have pulled off my ring at the same time, and it dropped in the rubble.

Besides the fun, the trip was a partial success from my standpoint, too, because it slowed down Bill's drinking temporarily, there being only three or four episodes that I remember. One was in Egypt, the rainy day "the boarder" spent with us in our tent. Bill kept him company, drink for drink, and then went to town for a bottle after the boarder left.

At another time we were camping off by ourselves, I don't remember where, Bill provided himself with a supply of liquor for the weekend. As there was no one to see me "get potted," I thought it was a splendid opportunity to hold a mirror up to him and to show him what a fool a person appears when drunk.

However, the moment was not auspicious after all, for Bill thought it a great game, and encouraged me to drink more and more, until I was so sick I couldn't hold up my head. In the morning he had only a little hangover--mine was excruciating, and all for nothing.

Once, as we were about to cross the international border from Canada to the United States, we stopped at the entrance, because Bill said he wanted to get

some cigarettes. This was nonsense, as cigarettes were more expensive in Canada--but liquor was cheaper. I could do nothing but wait and wait, hour after hour, parked on the bridge plaza, with no car keys or money, since Bill, who had been sober for sometime, had them with him. I had no idea where he had gone, but finally started out on foot to find him. It was getting dark and the area was full of saloons. I searched every one of them until, at last I found him, hardly able to navigate--and the money practically gone!

Diary of Two Motorcycle Hobos

I am grateful to have a copy of Lois' Motorcycle Diary. This diary allows all of us the opportunity to see the loving relationship that Bill and Lois Wilson had. Bill Wilson is the Co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous and Lois the Co-founder of Al-Anon. I am sure everyone in the A.A. and Al-Anon community--and all who are interested in these Programs' history, will enjoy this enchanting story.

Lois' text has remained "verbatim". Only some noticeable spelling errors and word omissions have been altered. It has been typeset to closely resemble the original typed manuscript.

All who read this may take great pleasure in following Bill W., and his wife Lois, on their motorcycle adventures in Eastern America in the late 1920's.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to recreate this journey!

Sincerely,
Ellie van V.

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