

D. Adams 7/27/55

### Chapter III

#### Geography & Wild Life

Hawkeye Lookout was built on the highest point in the Goat Rocks on the south-east side of Mt. Rainier in the National Forest's permanent wilderness area. Hawkeye peak itself had to be blasted off in order to have a 12 x 12' building on it. The building was babbitted into the rock and wrapped around with cables for lightning protection. There were lightning rods on each corner and the top of the cupola, sticking up like bouquets. On the west side of the station there was room to walk on the ground, on a path about 3 feet wide on top of a rock wall. On the other 3 sides there were single-plank cat-walks over a lot of space. It was possible to get all around the station to do necessary work or put up and remove shutters. All 4 sides were windows as were all sides of the cupola-type tower. The door faced south directly in line with a view of Mt. Adams. The 6' x 6' tower was reached by a ladder through a trap door in the suspended platform which was the floor of the tower. The fire-finder was up there and a little stool with glass insulators.

Underneath the ladder was the bunk, built of 2' x 4's with ropes woven back and forth in place of springs. I did this part. There could be no metal. The table was a built-in shelf type on the north side of the room. There was a narrow shelf on the west side for the wash basin. Chairs were dynamite boxes. We had a 2-burner oil cook stove and a portable oil heater, the kind with a handle. The phone hung on the south wall next to the door, with a cord long enough to reach into the tower.

From Hawkeye there were 360 degrees of scenery under systematic inspection every daylight hour. From our bird's eye view the ridges extended like fingers on an outstretched hand, with valleys and lakes in between. Southwest was the ridge that separated Lily Basin from Jordan Basin. It was topped by a rock that I named Chimney Rock. The rangers called it Lunatic Camp. No one but a lunatic would camp there. This is where the shepherd fell down the snow bank.

Directly south from the door was Mt. Adams. Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens were always visible. <sup>South and east was Wallupt Lake, too low to be within our view.</sup> a nearby mountain was called Potato Hill where there were frequent fires to be reported. East, across Goat Hole and the Blue Lake was Old Snowy. It was a perpetual snowfield and looked like it did not have a flat spot on it. Bands of sheep were driven across it, but I don't know how. Charlie went over there one day to help someone get a band of sheep across it.

Looking north-east the Tatoosh Range was visible far below like a series of low green hills. It was often under the clouds. This was the high country that others have written about. <sup>Low K W.</sup>

<sup>Cornelius is</sup> Going counterclockwise, the ridge across from us <sup>to the north</sup> was Johnson Rock, a saddle-shaped rock with patches of snow that made it look more like a saddle. <sup>(pit)</sup> On its east side were the mountain goats. The ridge continued west to the horizon. Somewhere in the distance to the west was a pass where the trail came up from Packwood into Lily Basin. Not the trail we took. In back of this ridge was the great mountain itself. It was so huge, massive and overwhelming and so close. It glittered with the sunlight on it against the clear blue sky. Small wonder that the Indians thought it was supernatural. It dominated everything. After the sun had set behind it, it was a great black presence.

On the ridge to the west-north-west, there was a rock wall where whistling marmots lived. With the glasses we could see their burrows, and <sup>we could</sup> hear their whistling, but they were too far away to be seen.

The only bird life was the ptarmigan that Curly Griffin killed on the first day for which I never forgave him. Once there was a bird flying over the tower. I thought it was an eagle, it seemed so huge, but Charlie said it was a hawk.

The ground squirrels' pouchers, that is, were the only things we came close to taming. A couple of them were brave enough to come in and eat on the floor. We named them Cornelius and Roland Otis, so that is what we probably fed them.

When the shepherders came up for a visit they brought their black sheep dog with them. He was a beautiful silky coal black dog, and while the men were talking, I took him down off the rocks and petted him. It was evidently the first time in his life that he had been petted. He was very much in favor of it. He broke away and ran to his master as though he had something important to communicate. The shepherd did not glance at him but made a slight motion with a finger, and the dog lay down in a sleeping position and never moved again until it was time to leave. He was for working, not for playing or being petted.

(put in proper place)

The day we arrived on Desolation Flat there was a ptarmigan just the color of the rocks and hardly visible. Curly Griffin who had just come along for the trip hit it with a rock and killed it and stuffed it in his pocket with a smart aleck attitude. I started fussing, telling him to leave the bird alone, and Charlie said, "it's too late, it's dead." I continued stewing about it after the others had left, thinking it was dumb to kill a rare bird and pack it 7 miles to cook it. Charlie said, "He wanted to do that. You will be in a lot of trouble if you interfere with what people want to do." That was part of his philosophy.

## Social Amenities on Hawkeye

With all the isolation and the difficulty of getting there, we had 13 visits or visitors in the ten weeks. That is the only record I kept, and checked it off on the door. I am the only woman up there to my knowledge.

While Bill the carpenter was still there Fred Hornquist, the district ranger at Packwood came up on his mare, Bridget. Curly Griffin came with him from the Berry Patch and the shearers were there that day. I took pictures of everyone. Bill posed for his picture on the tower. He was proud that he was brave enough to be up there, working on it. I gave the films to Fred, the ranger to take to town and have them printed, and I did not hear from them until the following season. Fred's story was that on the way down from Hawkeye, Bridget fell down and was wedged between some logs and he had a hard time getting her out and had lost the films. That was not as wild a story as most of his concoctions. He or his brother Elmer probably made up the story of the ghostly bride. In all the many years we knew him, I never knew when it was just a story.

What probably happened to my films was that he put them in his saddle bag and forgot them for six months. We got the pictures eventually, and here they are.

Jack Campbell the big boss from Portland came up once. Charlie adored Jack Campbell and it was easy to see why. He was a strong out-door type with big-town polish, and a most nice gentleman. He treated me like I was the Queen of the May, whereas I was totally ignored by everyone else, including Charlie. It was strictly a man's world and if I went along, I had to take things as they were. I was just another rock on the landscape.

Curly Griffin came up as often as he had a chance, at least five times. I remember telling him that when I saw him on the trail, I put on the frying pan and made some hotcakes. So I must have fixed lunch, although we didn't feed everybody. Seems to me I did quite a lot of cooking for Curly.

Social amenities, etc.

*start here for TWC reading*

*did not go to TWC*

One night after Charlie was asleep which was about one second after he assumed a prone position, I hurt my hand. It was painful and I felt like waking Charlie to tell him about it, but there was no point in that. There was nothing to do, or make do with. There was not a thing for first aid or any kind of personal care, not even an aspirin. It ~~did not~~ <sup>had not</sup> occurred to either of us that one of us might get sick or hurt or have an accident. I went to sleep eventually and it was all right by morning.

One incident that I carefully kept from Charlie all the years and he never did know, took place on a dark night. I was taken very ill in the middle of the night and had to get out of bed. It was a black night with no moon. I found the lantern by touch, it was scarcely more than a candle and not for outdoors. I was badly in need of a non-existent bathroom facility. My private powder room was a niche in the rocks about ten feet down below the cat walk in back of the station. Some broken rocks made useable steps down to it in the daylight, but were impossible in the dark. There was a heavy piece of cardboard in the station that would have to do for a facility. Then disposing of it was the real problem. I took it out the door to the side where there was the path about 3 feet wide on top of a couple thousand-foot cliff over Lily Bar. One step away from the station would be over the edge. The night was pitch black, no moon, and the wind was blowing a gale. <sup>holding the cliff with a pair of up boots</sup> I crouched down near the ground with one hand feeling for the station and the other hand shoving the cardboard over the edge of the cliff. I had to inch toward the cliff and wait between the strong updraft gusts of wind that nearly blew me off balance. After inching bit by bit, I succeeded in getting the cardboard over the edge, picked myself up, felt for the station wall, followed it through the door, and went back to bed. Charlie never roused. He would have had a spell if he had known I was outdoors in the night, and he would have sent me home on the next pack train.

That was the nearest we came to having the legend be a true one of the bride that went over the cliff. It would not have been hard. It was never told until now.

*History of Society (in white)  
2nd floor 1:30 - 3:30  
Every Tuesday*

phantom bride,

*dit' and 5 TUC*

Weather

It never rained on Hawkeye.

While we were up there with the blue sky, the Great Mountain and the breezes, there were many clouds, thunder and lightning storms but they were all below us. Sometimes the cloud cover was so dense that the forest itself was covered. Tatoosh Range was under the clouds. We could see many lightning strikes below and the smoke coming up from the fires. Charlie reported all of these with the azimuth reading, as did the other rangers in the forest, so the location could be pinpointed at headquarters at Packwood and the smoke chasers could know exactly where to go and get there fast. Cirly Griffin was the smoke chaser at the Berry Patch station.

Hawkeye Lookout proved to be too high to be practical, and it was used the next summer only, and possibly another season and abandoned by 1930.

One day a high thunderstorm hit Hawkeye. We could see it coming for a long way. The thunder could be heard surrounded Johnson Rock, the ridge just north of us. The lightning pelted down on it like fire hail and the thunder rolled. One half hour later we were engulfed in a big dark blanket and the lightning peppered our rock with great spears of fire all around the windows. The whole ridge shook and the thunder was tremendous. *Like an advancing army.*

~~Charlie asked me if I was scared. So I was not scared.~~ We were in the one safe place, wrapped up in lightning protection. We both stood in the middle of the room, ~~I think we held hands,~~ and enjoyed the heavenly fire-works. We were bombarded by Jove's thunderbolts and the noise was nearly deafening. It sounded like tons of lumber being thrown down on the roof. It was a most dramatic experience and we were safe even when we could feel the whole ridge vibrating. The station was lapped into the rock on all four corners, with iron rods. We not only had a front seat to the show, we were on stage with the action. *Amma's drawing*

The cloud and the lightning drifted on south down the ridge, and was gone.

*① Charlie asked "you scared?"*

*"No", I told him "I'm not scared"*

*1) He asked "you scared?"*

*2) He asked "you scared?"*

*3) He asked "you scared?"*

*Amma's drawing  
P. 10  
C. Griffin  
1930*

Going Out

The fire season was to end with the first snow-fall. On September the 12th in the middle of the morning a snowflake came drifting past the window. Charlie looked very concerned and serious.

He said, "We have to get out, fast!"

I said, "What will happen if we don't?" He replied, "In another hour the snow will be so deep they will have to send a mule train to pack <sup>snow</sup> us out."

It was God's providence that the snow had not started some other time of day or night.

Charlie phoned Curly at the Berry Patch that we were coming out. We packed the camera and the Bible and very little else in the cruiser shirt. I had a big lamb steak sandwich I couldn't bear to leave, so that went in the back of the shirt also. Any clothes we had, we put on, one thing on top of another, and I wore the red hunting hat and boots. We were leaving a whole big ham and quite a lot of canned fruit that I have begrudged ever since.

In the few minutes that it took to phone and put on all our clothes, and Charlie must have put up some shutters at the windows, but in much less than half an hour, there was a full scale blizzard hitting the door, horizontally from the south. We went out and shut the door behind us and took off into the storm. Everything was blanketed with white, the snow was already a foot deep. There was not a familiar feature on the landscape that we had lived with all those weeks. The air was white with wind-blown flakes and visibility was maybe one foot, but Charlie knew the way. He was never lost in the wilderness. I kept close behind him and stepped into his last track. We got off the ridge and onto the trail below Desolation Flat. We were at the top of the steep mountain above Jordan Basin, with all the switch-backs through the shale that we had struggled up for hours in the hot sun in July. I was non-plussed, seeing what we had to go down. It was now a steep-sided enormous white bowl for 2,000 feet. Charlie said, "I'm going to slide." We both sat down in the deep snow and slid across the switch-backs. There was nothing to stop us and nothing to hit clear down to the timber line. It was the most fun I ever had in my life, a real thrill.

Curly met us at the timberline with a horse. I could have ridden, but I was going along pretty well and didn't want to get chilled by sitting still on a horse, so we all hiked the 3 or 4 miles to the Berry Patch cabin. The snow was sifting into the timber for a few yards, and then it was clear, a little damp but not raining.

Curly got us a good supper, and loaned me some ~~squaw~~ moccasins to wear while my boots were drying. These moccasins are of suede-like leather, and lace up with one string. We slept there that night, Charlie and I in ~~the~~ cabin bunk and Curly in a bed roll outside. The weather was moderate so it was no hardship.

The next morning, Sept. 13th, Charlie and I started out for Packwood, ~~Charlie~~ <sup>at</sup> on foot and I on a horse. We were in fine fettle and took off down the trail in high spirits, for the 20 mile trip to Packwood. We were going HOME. In one more day we would be in town. We sang and yelled back and forth to keep in touch. Charlie was always ahead and around the next bend. He would have made it much faster without me and the horse. We came out at the trail's end on State Highway 5 about 3 miles below Packwood, and down the highway from Hall Creek and the Hall homestead. This homestead had been our very first home after we were married the previous fall, and the Hall family were our friends. I dismounted and walked the last half mile to the Hall place and Charlie rode the horse. He did not like horses, did not trust them and looked ridiculous trying to ride one.

We stopped and visited with Mrs. Mary Hall, the matriarch of the family. She was a sweet little old gal of about 70, which seemed old to me then. When we had lived in that house the previous fall there was a nearly wild cat that lived in the woods and went with the place. I had tamed her and we named her Mrs. Brin and Charlie wrote poems about her. She wasn't a house cat and I had been gone for 6 months, but she heard my voice and came running into the house and jumped on my lap. I was glad to see her, too.

We went up to Packwood and stopped at the ranger station to leave the horse and to pick up a cardboard suitcase we had left there. We sat on the station porch and visited ~~for a few minutes~~ with whoever was there. *and brought up on the grass*

A few weeks before we left Hawkeye, we had heard over the phone that Scott Mullins, one of the pioneers of Packwood, had been in a fight and had been knocked unconscious and was <sup>still in that state</sup> in that state a week later. I expected to hear that old Scott had died; but he had gotten sobered up, fed up, and was on the other side of the mountain fighting forest fires.

We checked in at ~~the~~ hotel, with great anticipation of a hot bath in a tub, but wouldn't you know? Something had gone wrong with the heating system and there was no hot water. We would stay dirty for one more night. Charlie had to shave his stubble in cold water. I don't remember that he had a razor on Hawkeye.

That night at dinner at the hotel, looking out and seeing the ground and everything else at our same level, it felt like going down in an elevator. The ground seemed to be rising all around us. That distinct sensation lasted for quite a while.

We took an early bus to Tacoma the following day, and went up to Mrs. Cory's house on 6th and Oakes, where we had boarded while in college, <sup>where we had the...</sup> and which was my usual headquarters when I was in Tacoma. No one was home, but the doors were left unlocked in those days. We went in and turned knobs and opened doors and shut them, turned on the water faucets and watched the water run and turned them off again with many witty remarks about the inventions to be found in cities. We chortled and joked like little kids with some new space age toys.

This was September 14, our first anniversary.

end

*finished reading to LG class  
4/17/85*