

## Chapter II

### Living on Hawkeye

When the pack train left us ~~to go~~ <sup>down</sup> back down the mountain, we were truly alone in the wilderness with no ~~communication~~ <sup>communication</sup> with anyone.

We finished our sandwiches, and that was supper. It would soon be dark and the first order of business was to get the tent put up. Charlie went up to the station and got 4 pieces of flooring, and nailed each two pieces together to make A-frames, one for the back and one for the front. He found a piece of heavy steel cable left over from the lightning rods and used it for a ridge-pole over the A-frames, and anchored it, front and back with piles of boulders. <sup>as we would</sup> The tent fly was protection in the front, but there was a hole in the back where mosquitoes had free access. <sup>(puller)</sup> Charlie hung his cruiser jacket over it, and there it hung all summer. We piled boulders and all our cases of canned goods around the edges of the tent to hold it down - we were far above the timber line and there was nothing to use for tent stakes - he put down the single-cot mattress and a quilt that extended out onto the sard, a blanket and a tarp, and home was furnished. There was a 2-burner kerosene stove that was left outside.

There were no candles nor lantern, and when the sun went down, we took off our boots and crawled into our 4-foot high tent and went to bed <sup>fully dressed</sup> with our clothes on.

The wind blew with a terrific force in the night, that night and every night, and it would not have been surprising if we had found ourselves blown off the flat into the next canyon.

The trip up there made a long and arduous day for me, and I wanted to sleep in the next morning. I reckoned without Charlie. He was up, had snow melted for water to make breakfast, and he told me to get up and get to work. He couldn't stand lazy people. So it was up-and-at-em for us both from then on.

Coming out of the tent that first morning, I walked into the most beautiful scene. The clouds were all below us, <sup>right</sup> nearly even with our flat. We were up where the clouds have silver linings, also gold, pink and lavender, like a fleecy floor. It looked like one could walk right out on it. From then on, I rushed out of the tent every morning to see what the clouds were doing. There was not a cloud above until the sun rose higher and the clouds poured out of the valleys, <sup>the water falls in reverse</sup> the peak beyond us to the east was Old Snowy, about our same elevation at 8,000 feet. <sup>The canyon between is that hole.</sup>

Our first morning on Hawkeye started a regime of flap-jacks, canned butter or peanut butter and jam. That was our staple all summer. For dishes we had the government-issue all purpose kind, mixing bowl, serving dish or plate, probably left over from the Spanish-American War. The snow bank, <sup>at the top of Goat Hill</sup> close to the tent until it melted away, was our water supply for a few weeks. It was full of mosquitoes, sand, and patches of goat hair. We made the tea or coffee so strong that it did not matter.

The first priority was to set up the fire-finder. This was a sizeable clock-like metal disk, with degrees of longitude and latitude on it. It was to go into the tower of the station when the tower was finished, but for the time being it was set up on the ground near the tent. It had to be perfectly level, and oriented with other look-out points. Charlie and the look-out man on Anvil Rock above Paradise Valley flashed signals back and forth with mirrors, for the orientation. Charlie's tools were a jack-knife and a pair of pliers and an instruction book. It took hours of work and sweat in the sand and hot sun with clouds of mosquitoes. I never even heard him swear.

*Just had the arm metal mirror at that.*

Next was the telephone. It was hooked up inside the station with the ground wire extending down the hill and we could get messages in and out. The main message we got was that we had to have a better ground. We both peeled a lot of copper wire and made a big bundle of it and buried it near the snow bank close to the tent. They still screeched at us, "You have to have a better ground." Charlie in desperation took a whole roll of telephone wire, I think a quarter-mile of it, it was not less, and holding one end of it, slid over the side into Goat Hole, an almost perpendicular drop towards the Blue Lake, leaving me with the roll of wire at the top of the bank, paying it out as he went down. He went down fast and I was busy keeping my thumbs out of the bight of the wire, meanwhile trying to cook some beans.

While we were still working on the ground-wire for the phone, Bill Estes, the carpenter came up to finish the station. When the tower was useable, the fire-finder had to be moved up there, and all the orienting done again. We moved the oil stove up to the station and spent the days there, but Charlie and I continued to sleep in the tent.

*He buried the end of it under a permanent water for the had a good ground*

One day when the clouds were below us in Lily Basin, we could hear the bleating of sheep. The clouds carried the sound. When the day cleared up, we looked down to see what was there. Heart Lake was at the bottom of Lily Basin, but even with glasses we could not see the sheep.

A few days later the shepherders came up to visit, and brought a hind-quarter of spring lamb. One of the herders was big and tall - he was the one who fell down the snow bank later - and the other was heavy set. They said they were Montague and McHugh, and Charlie said, "I'm Brady, 3 good Jews" and they all laughed heartily and were glad to see each other. They came up two other times, each time bringing a hindquarter of spring lamb and it was the best meat we ever had, better than any we could afford in town.

*a several miles back*

Charlie had left his rifle with Curly at the Berry Patch, and Curly got a deer and brought us a quarter. The meat went into the deep-freeze which was the pack-sack buried in a snow bank.

*We would have a big deer again, it is a lamb or venison.*

We were still living and cooking down at the tent when Charlie's one pair of pants wore out. He phoned Packwood to see if there were any work pants available at the Packwood store. All they<sup>had</sup> were bib overalls, and Charlie was scandalized at the thought.

I said, "What is the matter with bib overalls?"

He said, "You can't go into the woods with bib overalls. They would call you a farmer. They'd say, 'Here comes a farmer.'"

The present and only pair of pants had 2 big slits completely across the seat. I cut pieces of the bed-tarp for patches, using the tin-snips for scissors and appliqued them on with harness thread and a sack needle. I blanket-stitched around the edges of the slits with black thread and it gave the effect of eye lashes on a Chinaman's eyes.

The bed roll was the only furnishing in the tent. It was also the table and the chairs. One morning the ubiquitous pancake batter was on the tarp-covered bed, table or chairs and Charlie sat down right in the batter. I was a little provoked that he wasted that much food. Most of it dried on, and he wore pancake batter on the Chinaman's eyes all summer. After we moved everything up to the station, one of my fun games was trying to kick the Chinaman's eyes before they got out of range when Charlie went up the ladder to the tower.

Fun And Games

We had two decks of cards and sometimes played double solitaire. Usually just one of us played and the other read out loud, and made bets that were all lost and never paid, like some harrow teeth, a quart of carnation perfume, or a single-tree. For literature there was the Bible and a few magazines. We read all of the Pentateuch out loud with very unspiritual interpretations. The old Jews intrigued us with their wave offerings and heave offerings. Charlie could flap flapjacks, and they were the heave offerings. The bread toasted over the oil heater was the wave offering. We had bread sometimes but not as a regular thing.

Someone sent us some Adventure Magazines that were very well written. Those were the days of the Chicago gang killings, and some of the stories were quite harrowing. I read them out loud while Charlie surveyed the landscape that had to be done every daylight hour.

(The poem about the look-out man )

Once Charlie had to go out on the ridge that extended south from Hawkeye to check on the telephone wire, and I went along. The ridge was slippery shale that went up to a sharp peak like the ridge-pole of a house. It fell off

steeply on both sides into deep canyons below. Charlie went out on it as though it were a sidewalk, and expected me to follow. I inched along timidly for a few feet. Charlie said, "Lean forward like you are riding a bicycle and run. You will keep your balance that way." Who? ? Me?? He had to take me by the hand and get me back on the flat.

So much for fun and games.

Nights were cold, and we took off our boots and crawled under our one blanket and tarp with our clothes on. When we moved up to the station to sleep, and had more room, we got dressed at night in the same weight clothing we had for daytime, the same long underwear, but I had another work shirt for nights. There was not much padding between us and the rope springs. I don't remember that it bothered us at all or kept anyone awake.

Thinking back on it later, there was not one thing for first aid or any kind of an emergency, nor any toilet articles, not even vaseline. We had a bar of soap and a comb. Cresolis was the government-issue antiseptic - disinfectant, and more for the pack string than for people. It never once occurred to either of us that one of us could get hurt or sick or have an accident.

Somewhere along the line Charlie had the phone in the tower and was using it to report a lightning strike and fire. Just then a bolt of lightning hit the phone wire and hit him in the ear. He came down the ladder very fast. I wondered since if that had anything to do with his growing deafness throughout the years. We never talked about it, or even mentioned it. So many things happened that were near misses that it would take a file-clerk to record them.

The garbage disposal was over the cliff above Lily Basin. When we were first up there it was fun to throw cans over and listen to how far they went on the first bounce. Throwing water down was trickier. The wind hit the cliff with a strong updraft and blew it back up at us. The timing had to be between the gusts of wind.

We never threw out any water that could be used for anything else. Left-over coffee was used for something.

We had two turkish towels, one for people and one for dishes. We used one side of our bath towel until it got pretty dirty, and then used the other side until the first side was clean in comparison, and started over on it. We did not waste water doing any scrubbing. The station was new and clean anyway. For a broom I had a branch of scrub juniper that worked fairly well.

The last 15 feet or so of the approach to the station was a field of boulders around the door. There was room for one foot at a time in the spaces between the rocks, and it took careful stepping. I wore moccasins all the time and was pretty sure-footed in the daylight. Night was something different.

After we got the lantern sometimes we stayed at the station until after dark, but I could not walk through the rocks in the dark, so Charlie carried me piggy-back, carefully through the rocks, but when he got down on the sandy slope, he started galloping, bucking and cavorting generally. It was a rough ride and I had to hang on tight to keep from falling off. And so to the tent, and to bed.

<sup>The low down when</sup>  
Eventually I had to wash some clothes. For a tub, Charlie cut out the side of an oil can and I scooped up snow by hand to fill it and built a little fire under it with scraps of wood from the building. This was down by the snow-bank near the tent. I climbed down to a little foot-hold below the bank so I could wash without bending over so far. It looked like an easy step down. Not so, the distances in the altitude are so deceiving. It was farther and more difficult than it looked to go down, and getting back up was still harder. I had <sup>an</sup> nueritis in one arm and could not climb very well. I felt like calling for help, but didn't. Charlie didn't like sissies either <sup>any more than he did</sup> as well as lazy people. If there had been real trouble, he would have been there. It was a steep spot and I had to be careful not to go over backwards.

I washed my underwear and shirt and a towel and sometimes my overalls, but never Charlie's pants. Logger pants are not for washing. That would be some kind of heresy. While the clothes were spread out on the rocks near the station, drying in the hot sunshine, I ran around naked on the flat to my delight and Charlie's disapproval. I am a nudist at heart, and Charlie was modest even with no eye to behold. He said he hoped the mosquitoes would chew me up. They were there by the millions, but after a while they did not bother us.

One day while the clothes were drying and I was happily parading around in the nude, I looked over the edge and saw the shepherders on the way up. They were far below and I was out of their sight and it would take another hour for them to get there. My clothes were still wet. Before the men got to the flat I went up the ladder into the tower by way of the trap door, closed the trap door and sat on a little insulated stool about four inches high. There was half a sheet of a magazine up there for reading material. This was the day when those big flying red ants got their wings, and the wind was blowing a gale. Clouds of these wind-borne flying ants sifted through the cracks in the tower window frames, all over my defenseless form. They were everywhere, inches deep,

and most uncomfortable, but they did not sting. The herders stayed a couple of hours. I could peek over the edge of the platform and see Charlie feeling my overalls now and then to see if they were dry. They were not, so I was marooned for the afternoon. Charlie thought it was real funny. His comment, "Hextry! Hextry! Lookout's wife treed by sheepherders."

Eventually the Forest Service sent us a lantern. It came by way of a sheepherder who was coming along the Lily Basin trail that went below the Hawkeye cliff. The trail was out of sight but I could hear the jingle of the horse's harness. Charlie was gone for some reason and I was there alone. I went down to the ridge that I named Chimney Rock where the Lily Basin trail crossed the ridge and continued over the Jordan Basin. The trail went up and over Chimney Rock and I was standing on a narrow spot below the snowfield that slanted down from the trail. When the sheepherder got directly above me on the trail he attempted to hand me the lantern and the Montgomery-Ward catalog. He got off his horse and took one step. The distances in that altitude are so deceptive that what looks like maybe three feet could be 20 or 30. The snow bank was maybe 20 feet wide, like the roof of a house. One step and he slipped and fell, sliding and sliding, with the most surprised expression on his face. He dropped the lantern and it broke. The Montgomery-Ward catalog went out onto a snowbank where it stayed. He was so drunk that he just crumpled in a heap near where I was standing. It was not even a ledge, just a spot wide enough to stand on, and if he had not been in that relaxed state, he very well could have kept going for a couple thousand feet. I was scared for an instant, and then it struck me funny. That look of complete surprise. He had carried that lantern on horseback for 23 miles and broke it handing it to me. We used it anyway. It was no good out doors, it was smoky but we never cleaned it.

Every daylight hour Charlie had to inspect every bit of the country in every direction, with high-powered binoculars, and report anything unusual. Smoke was the big concern. When there was a column of smoke, he telephoned the ranger in Packwood and gave the azimuth reading, degrees and minutes of longitude and latitude, and report any change. When he left the station for any reason, he had to call in when he left and when he returned.

The nearest snowfield on the trail was melting enough to give a nice little trickle of clean water, and that was our water supply. Charlie filled several canteens, about once in two days. That was for drinking and cooking.

When I wanted a bath I went along and could stagger back the several hundred yards with about a quart of water in a lard pail, with a lot of huffing and puffing. Climbing is difficult in that altitude even empty handed. The bath was not a daily or even weekly undertaking.

The bath was a cooperative affair with one basin of water. First, I washed my face and Charlie washed his face, and we dried that far. Then I washed the next section of torso, and Charlie washed a similiar section. By that time the water was getting dirty and we added cresolis disinfectant. When we got to the feet the water was black with dirt and disinfectant and we smelled to high heaven of carbolic acid. After a bath one night we went to bed in the tent, very antiseptic, and I said, "I've got a carbolated honey!" whereupon Charlie made up a poem. The first half went:

I've got a carbolated honey  
 Prophylactic but he hasn't got much money  
 Of course he doesn't look just like a movie actor  
 But his petting is just like a chiropractor——"

There was more and I made up a good tune and we sang it all that night, but there was no way to write it down and we forgot the rest of it.

Charlie seemed to be getting the best of it, sleeping on the cot mattress while I slept on the quilt out in the sand. He said I could sleep on the pad, so we tried that awhile. The mattress was not much softer than the sand, and it was just a few inches from the <sup>canvas side</sup> tent where the wind high <sup>T</sup> with mighty blasts all night. After a few nights I went back to the sand, and was glad to be close to the ground when the gales hit the tent.

At night as we lay there waiting to go to sleep, we sang all the songs we both knew. Charlie knew many gospel songs and I knew many others, so we sang, s"Shall we gather at the river " and "Beulah Land", and "I come to the garden alone", "O Promise Me" and "Where my Caravan has rested" and so on. We always went to sleep before we ran out of songs.