

PART TWO: BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

1940

Chapter 2

THE WIND SHE BLEW A LIVING GALE

I decided not to sail a ketch around the world. Instead I'd make the first ascent of Mt. Everest. Actually I hoped Mallory had got to the top and I'd find the proof up there. But if he hadn't it might as well be me.

Lincoln High was exciting, a genuine city school with ²⁵⁰⁰ ~~more than 2000~~ students, ²⁵ ~~20~~ times the size of hayseed Ronald. I began making good friends. It was sort of a shock discovering I wasn't the smartest kid that ever lived but having guys like Bill and Bob and Hal and Al to horse around with was worth it. Also, riding the school bus 7 miles in from the sticks every morning, and home at night, kids I'd never really known at Ronald became friends, especially Arild.

Seattle was exciting, too. Once a week I didn't go home on the school bus but took a streetcar 3 miles to the middle of the city and wandered around all afternoon. Dad picked me up on his way home from work. I'd never been downtown without my folks and had a great time. I explored buildings and learned if you prowled top floors trying unmarked doors there almost always was a stairway to the roof. I climbed a lot of the highest buildings in Seattle and looked down at tiny people on the street and west across Elliott Bay to the Olympics and south to Mt. Rainier.

I always stopped at Scout Headquarters to pick up Troop 324 mail.

That really was just an excuse. Usually some of the Parsons leaders were hanging around the office and we'd talk about camp.

At the Seattle Public Library I'd check out a week's worth of books. I traveled all over Tibet with Sven Hedin and the Arctic with Vilhjalmur Stefansson. Odell made me feel I was with him watching Mallory and Irvine disappear forever in the cloud on the Northeast Ridge that day in 1924.

I read every book in the library on mountains. I wanted to go to McKinley and the Andes and Tierra del Fuego and the Alps and the Mountains of the Moon and the Himalaya and the South Pole.

Until I was old enough for that, Parsons was the place to live. Summer was too far away so I signed up for Winter Camp, which only cost \$3, an unbelievable bargain. The reason was we did the dishwashing and other work. After Christmas about 30 of us from everywhere in the Seattle Area Council rode the Tyee Scout through a wonderful ~~xxx~~ storm, the water so rough we had a heck of a time tying up at the Pier. There was plenty of fun, like climbing Mt. Walker, actually just a foothill but with a great view of Hood Canal, and running down to the Swimming Cove on a dare and tearing off your clothes and jumping in the breakers and turning blue. Mainly, though, Winter Camp was for leadership training. I took the Patrol Leader Course and the Song Leader Course.

Headquarters issued my Patrol Leader Warrant in January and the scoutmaster appointed me Leader of the Flying Eagle Patrol. I recruited new members and in no time they were Second Class. Kids who'd been Second Class for a couple years got in the ~~#~~ spirit and made First. I earned my

fifth merit badge (I had First Aid, Personal Health, Public Health, Civics, and Stamp Collecting) and at the April Court of Honor was promoted to Star Scout. Us Flying Eagles took day hikes, sometimes 2 miles ^{along back roads and then a} through the ^{mile} woods to Richmond Beach, where we went skiing down the gravel pit on barrel staves, and once, on bikes, 10 miles ~~along back roads~~ to Brown's Bay. The troop began going out more, still only to beaches or ~~to~~ the Tolt River, in the foothills of the Cascades, but better than nothing.

In July I was off to Parsons again, this time to climb Mt. Anderson, 7312 feet high and with one of the biggest ^{mess} ~~patches~~ of glaciers in the ^{Olympics} ~~range~~. I'd never been on a glacier. The first day we hiked 12 miles from the road-end at Constance Creek up the West Fork Dosewallips River to Camp Siberia, at Anderson Pass. After supper we went in the woods and found strong poles for alpenstocks, which we'd need on the mountain. Next morning we ~~started~~ ^{foggy} ~~in the dark and~~ switchbacked out of trees into alpine meadows. The sun ^{broke through} ~~came up~~ as we reached the Anderson Glacier. We put on dark glasses and rolled down our pajama pants. That's one of the famous Parsons tricks, wearing pajamas under your shorts to keep your legs from getting horribly sunburned on snow.

Walking onto a glacier was a tremendous thrill. Everywhere you looked, white white white! And gray-brown cliffs shooting up to peaks as sharp as saw teeth. We headed for Flypaper Pass, a narrow ^{notch} ~~gap~~ between two peaks. On the other side was the Eel Glacier which we'd climb to the summit of Anderson. The leader showed us how to kick steps by swinging our boots into the snow hard and how to use our alpenstocks to stand up straight, not leaning into the slope, which made you slip out of your steps.

The snow got steeper and steeper, way steeper than any hill I'd ever sledded. That's why they call it Flypaper Pass, because ^{you feel} ~~Scouts~~ look like a ^{fly} ~~flies~~ on a dangling strip of flypaper. Kids were slipping. Some were scared half to death. I was a little nervous myself. The leader decided we'd better switch to the rock. That sounded like a good idea. Only it was steeper than it looked and you had to hang on with both hands. This was the first time I'd done real rock climbing. Kids began throwing away their alpenstocks and finally I did too.

Suddenly there was yelling up above and I heard rocks smashing down the cliff and a kid next to me screamed. He'd got conked in the head. You never saw so much blood! Some guys almost puked. We stood on ledges ~~waiting~~ while the leader wiped off the blood and bandaged him up. ~~Everybody~~ ~~knows~~ ~~was~~ ~~shaking~~ ~~and~~ ~~nobody~~ ~~was~~ ~~talking~~. The leader decided it was too dangerous to go on. Well, I was just as glad.

We turned around to go down and my heart jumped up in my throat. Holy cow! All this time I'd been looking up to Flypaper Pass. Now I was looking down. Gosh-a-mighty! The glacier was miles below!

The leader said it's always harder to climb down rock than up, we'd have to go back to the snow. He said, "Watch me and do what I do." He kicked steps out on the snow, which was practically vertical. He sat down. He was off like ^{he was shot out of a cannon.} ~~a rocket~~. You couldn't even see him. There was just this white cloud going like crazy. Finally it stopped and there he was on the glacier, so far away he looked like an ant. You could barely hear him yell, "Come on! It's safe!"

Oh yeah? This wasn't his first glissade, which is what they call sliding down steep snow on your bottom. Also he still had his alpenstock to dig in the slope and slow himself down. What about us?

I'd done some pretty good sledding but this was a hundred times longer than any run I'd made. ^{And no sled!} If there'd been a chance to think I'd have been paralyzed. There wasn't. Before I knew it I was going ^{like 60} ~~a mile a minute~~, wind ^{rearing} ~~blasting~~ by my ears, a cloud of snow flying in my face. It took an hour to climb up there. It took a second to slide down. When I realized I hadn't been killed I stood up and hollered and laughed. Kids were shooting down and some had their feet in front, the right way, and some were sliding headfirst and some were doing somersaults. It was a miracle nobody was killed.

So we didn't make Mt. Adderson. Mt. LaCrosse, either. The next day was a scorcher and up on the bone-dry ridge I thought I was going to faint. Kids were dropping like flies and we had to quit.

But it was a great hike anyway and when I got home from camp, terrific news! Troop 324 had held a raffle to raise money and the prize for the Scout who sold the most tickets was a week at Parsons. Dad had sold so many of my tickets where he worked that I won! What luck! Two Olympic hikes in one summer!

I signed up for Royal Basin. Mr. Walsh said it was one of the most beautiful spots in the Olympics, right under Mt. Deception and Mt. Mystery and The Needles, which I'd seen from Marmot Pass last year. Also there was no trail and only Scouts knew about it.

The first day we hiked 10 miles up the East Fork Dosewallips River to Camp Marion. Next morning we left our packs in camp and followed a creek up forests into meadows way above the valley. It was pure cross-country, the second time I'd been off a trail. Finally we scrambled over boulders through a ravine where the creek was one loud waterfall. A couple feet

to our left the cliffs of Mt. Deception, 7772 feet, second-highest peak in the range, shot straight up, and a couple feet to our right started the cliffs of Mt. Mystery. The creek leveled out and got less noisy and suddenly we ~~were in~~ ^{walked out of the ravine into} Deception Basin.

Wow! It was a huge circle, a half-mile across, brown rockslides and cliffs all around, and the floor a tremendous flat meadow with the creek babbling through grass and flowers. The Mystery Glacier came clear down into the basin. The upper end was clean white snow but the bottom end was dirty ice chopped up with crevasses, which is what they call cracks in a glacier. The ice pushed out into a lake full of icebergs. The water was gray because it was loaded with rock milk, which is rocks ground up by ice. There was a big hill of boulders and gravel pushed up by the glacier. This is called a moraine and I climbed to the top. At the head of the basin I saw a knoll decorated with little alpine trees. A couple years ago I'd have dreamed about building my castle there. ^{It was a perfect spot for a castle.} The ravine at the basin outlet was the kind of place where a few guys could stand off an army.

We didn't have time to climb over the ridge to Royal Basin, which the leader said was even better. Next day we left our packs at Marion again and followed the valley trail 5 miles to Dose Meadows and 3 miles more to Hayden Pass. On every boulder was a marmot, a furry brown and black animal the size of a small dog. When you tried to get close they whistled like mad and dove in holes dug in the meadows. ^{There was so much whistling the valley was one big orchestra.}

Back at Marion we had dinner and then hoisted packs and hiked 7 miles out to Dose Forks. That made a 23-mile day and the last 2 hours were in

the dark. We had no flashlights and walked by feeling the trail with our boots. Twice I went to sleep on my feet but woke up before I fell off the trail and crashed in the brush, the way some kids did.

It was a terrific summer. I even had an interesting trip with 324. One of the assistant scoutmasters invited five of us older guys to explore the upper Tolt River. The troop often had hiked the 2 miles to the forks, a pretty place with the stream running through giant firs and cedars. The map showed a trail going miles past there to Red Mountain, which we planned to climb. But when we forded the North Fork and scrambled up the bank we busted out of trees into an old logging show.

What a mess! The country was clearcut as far as you could see. Not a tree left, just snags and brush. No trail, either. We hiked for hours along the bed of the old logging railroad, the sun beating down, no shade, all the creeks dried up.

It ~~began~~^{was} getting dark. We had to find water or die and climbed a hill to look around. Water! Right below us at the bottom of a ~~cliff~~^{canyon} was the South Fork! We lowered ourselves down the cliff on bushes and camped on a gravel bar just big enough for four sleeping bags. Two guys slept on a ledge in the cliff. Next morning we said the heck with the loggers and followed the ~~river~~^{canyon} down to the forks, partly on gravel bars and partly wading. ~~It wasn't~~^{The Cascades weren't} like the Olympics, where they don't log in the mountains. Seeing what had happened to the forest made me sick. But the trip was sort of fun anyway.

I went to Winter Camp for the Senior Patrol Leader Course, which Mr. Walsh taught himself. I also took the Mountaineering Course from Grant,

a regular member of the Parsons staff. He'd done quite a bit of climbing and ~~actually~~ had been almost to the top of Mt. Rainier ^{before} ~~when~~ a storm made the party turn back. The leader was Ome Daiber, the most famous climber in Seattle. He'd climbed Rainier dozens of times and once had been to the Arctic. Grant was planning to try Rainier again. (He called it The Mountain.) That sort of stuff was way past us Scouts and Grant didn't go much into genuine climbing. He did teach us plenty, though, about hiking off the trail on snow and steep rock. He showed us his boots, which had tricounis instead of slivers. A tricouni is an iron gadget consisting of a plate that nails to the sole and a big blade with three teeth to grip ice and rock. Tricounis obviously were a lot better than slivers, which ^{keep} ~~kept~~ falling out. After every Parsons hike I had to soak my boot soles in water until they were soft and ~~then~~ pound in more slivers. ~~My~~ My soles were so full of holes they leaked like a sieve.

In January the scoutmaster promoted me to Senior Patrol Leader, which meant I was in charge of all the patrols and practically ran the troop. Old ~~324~~ 324 began getting hotter than a firecracker. We didn't just play baseball at troop meetings anymore, we worked. One of my two Flying Eagle assistant leaders took over the patrol and the other got the Beaver Patrol and they both drove their kids as hard as I had. The troop had so many new members we organized the Bear Patrol, and also the Explorer Patrol for the guys 15 years old who'd graduated from the regular patrols.

^{It} ~~Used~~ used to be I was the only 324 Scout who ~~even~~ went to Courts of Honor. Now at the North Shore Courts we always won the blue pannot for the most kids making rank and merit badges. At the ~~Annual~~ ^{Annual} Seattle Area Council Boy Scout Circus ^{in the University of Washington Pavilion} we used to be just ushers but this winter we

were assigned a stunt. One of the most spectacular, too, making fire by friction. In the old days when we went to the Spring Camporall of the North Shore District our patrol camps were a ~~mess~~ ^{mess} ~~diagnose~~ and the Judges gave us hardly any points. But this spring our Flying Eagles won the pennant for first place and our Beavers came in second and our Explorers took first in the senior division. We were the top troop in the ~~North~~ ~~Shore~~ District.

Times weren't as tough as they'd been and Dad could afford to take our car in the mountains now. So could other fathers. Lining up enough cars to ~~haul~~ ^a haul the whole troop wasn't ~~the~~ big problem anymore. We couldn't get to the Olympics, the ferry fare made them too expensive. But there were high mountains in the Cascades, too, and I began agitating to go someplace besides the darned old Tolt. Came summer and by golly we did, three times. On one trip we climbed Mt. Pilchuck, which is a mile high and all ^{barre} granite on top. It has a fire lookout and a trail but even so was a big event, the first mountain 324 ever climbed. Me too if you didn't count Del Monte Ridge and Mt. Walker.

This summer I'd saved \$16 for a full 2-week period at Parsons. Money ~~was~~ was getting easier to come by. Partly that was because more people had some cash to spare. I had three lawns now and each paid 50¢. Partly it was because I was getting my growth and could work faster. When I started my Shopping News route it took me 2½ hours ~~even~~ on a good day, ^{with} ~~the~~ ~~roads~~ ~~were~~ ~~hard~~ ~~and~~ ~~dry~~ and the washboard not built up, the way it does when the grades ~~are~~ ~~hard~~ ~~and~~ ~~dry~~. Gradually I got ~~it~~ ^(my time) down to 2 hours, then 1½, and finally 1¼. My record was 1 hour and 5 minutes. Boy, I was really flying! That's fast pedalling for 12 miles even without throwing out a

haven't been around
for a couple
months.

storm of 175 papers. When I went that fast I was making almost 75¢ an hour, a lot more than Dad made at work. If I could've gotten a couple more routes I'd have been rich.

The one bad thing about going for a 2-week period instead of two ~~single~~^{1-weekers} weeks was it meant only one hike, because the first week was spent in camp. Well, I was crazy about mountains but I'd never got my fill of camp, there were lots of things I wanted to do there.

I had the age and rank and experience to be a Ranger, which was ~~especially~~ great because Grant was the Ranger Scoutmaster. He was in college but never treated you like a boy, the way some leaders ~~do~~^{did}. He made you feel we were all men.

We'd gotten to know each other at Winter Camp and at Headquarters. The first afternoon, after we'd carried our packs up the hill through the fir trees and rhododendrons to the Ranger Lodge, Grant called assembly and read off our assignments. He appointed me Third Assistant Scoutmaster!

I was sitting on top of the world. But then he said, "Everybody who doesn't have Swimming and Lifesaving Merit Badges hold up your hands."

Along with some other guys I held up my hand. He wrote down our names and ~~said~~^{laughed}, "You'll get them now. You're signed up for the Course!"

I just about melted into the floor.

Last October I'd got my 10th merit badge. To the five I had already I'd added Cooking, Reading, Scholarship, Safety, and Pioneering. Pioneering was hard work. I'd been weeks cutting down trees and splitting cedar shakes

I'd bought for 50¢ and
a bunch of cornflakes
box tops.

from ~~the~~ fence posts of an old farm to build a lean-to in the woods near our house. Anyway, with the 10 I'd made Life Scout. Since then I'd got Pathfinding, Camping, Physical Development, Poultry Keeping, and Hiking. Hiking was exciting because my examiner was Ome Daiber. It was a thrill just being in the same room with such a famous guy. I was planning to get Forestry this week at camp. Next fall I'd do Interpreting and Gardening, which would be a cinch because I'd taken Spanish at Lincoln and had been raising vegetables ⁵ ~~for~~ years. I was well on my way to Bird Study. For months I'd been going out with a bird book from the library and fieldglasses ~~and a bird book~~ ~~from the library~~. I had 32 birds and was sure to get my 50 by winter.

With all those merit badges I'd only need Swimming and Lifesaving to make Eagle. But right from the start I'd faced up to the fact Life ^{Scout} was as high as I was ever going. When I was little I had a mastoid and the ^{gosh} darn ear never had completely cleared up. The doctor made me wear an ear plug for swimming and told me not to get my head under water. So I wasn't much of a swimmer.

The Lifesaving Course at Parsons was famous for being really rough. You ~~was~~ hardly ever got your head above water. They did everything but actually drown you. But how could I tell Grant I couldn't take the Course? Everybody would think I was chicken. How would that look for the Third Assistant Scoutmaster?

Boy, what a grim week! Oh, there was fun, too. We didn't go down to Campfire Point at night to sing songs with the young kids. We'd build our own fire in the Lodge fireplace and sit around roasting oysters and listening to Grant tell stories about Olympic hikes. We always stayed up

an hour or ~~two~~^{50'} after Taps. One night Grant decided we needed a midnight snack and appointed me leader of the raiding party. Well, ^{actually} the cooks knew we were coming and ~~had~~^{unlocked} left the kitchen window ~~open~~ and put out some cookies and a bucket of cherry Kool Ade. Anyway we were heroes when we brought the loot back to the Lodge.

But twice a day I had to go down to the Swimming Cove. Twice a day for the whole week I nearly drowned. The tests for Swimming were bad enough. In one you had to jump off the north point of the cove with your clothes on, take them off while treading water and throw them up on the rocks, swim 50 ~~yards~~^{yards} to the south point, and without resting swim 50 ~~yards~~^{yards} back. I'd never swum more than 50 ~~yards~~^{yards} in my life. It took me so long to do 100 the tide came in and floated my clothes away.

Then we had to swim 250 yards, from the north point out around the south point and clear across the bay to the Pier. That was impossible. I'd have to go back to the Lodge and admit I was a poopout. But of course I had to try. Maybe I'd drown and wouldn't have to face the Rangers.

Before I got to the south point ~~everybody was~~^{all the others were} out of sight on the far side. When I got around it into the bay some guys were already at the Pier. When I was halfway across the bay nobody but me was still in the water. Everybody else had either made it or been pulled into a rowboat by the ~~the~~ lifeguards. Finally only one ~~was~~ rowboat was left. The guards kept trying to pull me in. I was too tired to talk but kept pushing the boat away. They were so disgusted they rowed along ~~behind~~^{beside} me making wisecracks. When I pulled myself ^{to} on the float at the Pier they rowed off to the Boathouse without even waiting to see if I could stand up. I just barely could. Every muscle in my body ached.

Those tests were for Swimming. Lifesaving was worse. We were paired off for the week and took turns being the drowner and the rescuer. The first time my buddy was the drowner he grabbed me in a bearhug, the way a drowner does, and we went down like a rock. After that he splashed water to fool the instructor for a good show but kept his hands off me. When I was the drowner he approached me from the rear just ^{perfect} ~~right~~ and cupped his hand under my chin and towed me around the cove a mile a minute. When I was doing the chin carry on him I'd be thrashing with my free arm and would look back and his head would be under water. I'd lift his face out and he'd open his eyes and go "AW-AW-AWP!" gulping in air. He'd only get one gulp because by then my head was under water. All week I halfway drowned him every morning and every afternoon but he never griped. He was a heck of a nice guy. One word from him and ~~xxx~~ I'd have been out.

I thought the instructor would wash me out anyway. I was amazed at the end of the week when he signed my M Book for both merit badges. I couldn't believe it! My folks came to camp on Visitors Day and I told them I was going to be an Eagle Scout!

So it turned out to be my best week ever at Parsons. And now ~~it~~ came the hike! Not one of the regular ~~hikes~~ hikes, either, but the 5-day Ranger Hike. Nights by the fireplace Grant described the trip he'd planned. We'd hike 15 miles to Dose Meadows, climb a steep mile to Lost Pass and ~~another one~~ ^{then} to the top of Lost Ridge. There we'd leave the trail and run the ridge crest to the Lillian Glacier, 7 miles from Lost Pass. We'd glissade down the glacier and climb Lillian Ridge and run the crest 8 miles to Obstruction ~~Peak~~ ^{Point.}

We'd sleep there one afternoon and that night run Grand Ridge by moonlight 8 miles to Deer Park, where the Big Red Truck would pick us up. We'd climb four or five mountains ^{on the way.} Since we'd be camping above timberline a couple nights, to get ready we made fire bombs. To do this you roll up newspapers very tight, ~~wrap~~ wrap the rolls with wire, ~~we~~ saw them into 4-inch lengths, and soak the bombs overnight in melted paraffine.

The first day was a breeze. We were all 14 or older (I was just a week short of 15) and had been on ~~us~~ at least two Parsons hikes. No poopouts in this bunch. We practically flew to Dose Meadows, 4500 feet, and had so much poop left we ran around the meadows after supper chasing a tame deer we named Cynthia. Two guys said they were going to ride her like a bucking bronco but of course they never caught her.

I went birdwatching. During the week at camp I'd ^{got} ~~seen~~ a bush tit, russet-backed thrush, Oregon chickadee, chestnut-backed chickadee, Northwest blue heron, Pacific nighthawk, and western tanager, which brought me up to 39. On the trail I'd seen a winter wren and a pine grosbeak. Now, down by the river, I got number 42, the water ouzel. It was a funny bird, flying along an inch from the water and when it stop^{ped} on a rock always ~~it~~ dipping up and down at the knees, which is why it's also called the ~~the~~ dipper.

The second morning we switchbacked up to Lost Pass, 5500 feet, and swung through headwaters of the Lost River to meadows under Lost Peak. We rested at Three Sons Camp, in a clump of alpine trees. Grant said the creek there was our last sure water until the end of the day but we weren't thirsty enough to drink much.

A hen grouse (number 43) kept cluck-cluck-clucking around, trying to decoy us away from her chicks hidden in the grass. We were laughing at the grouse and at how the chicks wouldn't stay hidden but kept dashing out, practically giving her a heart attack, ^{Then} ~~when~~ a guy yelled "Hey! Look!" He was pointing up on the side of Lost Ridge at a herd of elk! We counted about 70. There was another yell and above the elk we saw a bear! Another yell and clear on top of the ridge we saw two wolves! Or maybe coyotes. We couldn't tell for sure. This was really wilderness. Sitting in one place I saw more wild animals than in my whole life.

We climbed ~~meadows and~~ rockslides to the top of Lost Ridge, 6500 feet up, way above any trees and with only a few flowers growing in the bare shale. There hadn't been any trail to speak of since Lost Pass. Hardly anybody ever hiked here. Finally a sign pointed off the ridge down into headwaters of Cameron Creek and from then on there was no trail at all. We were on our own.

Grant was wrong, a pool melted from a snowbank gave us a good drink. We stopped for lunch. What a spot! ~~We were on top of the ridge and~~ In every direction ~~was~~ nothing but mountains, mountains, mountains! Off west was Mt. Olympus, 7954 feet, highest peak in the Olympics and so white with glaciers it looked like pictures of Alaska. Some clouds were keeping it in shadows and we laughed at how our First Assistant Scoutmaster must be freezing. He hadn't come with us, he'd gone on the Olympus Climb, the greatest adventure there is at Parsons. The guys were given ice axes and had to tie into a rope to make the summit. It was only scheduled once a

summer and you had to be 15 to sign up and have plenty of experience. Next year that was the trip for me.

In the middle of the afternoon we came to where the Lillian Glacier drops off the ridge. Grant showed us the famous Parsons technique of Trapper Nelson glissading. You take off your pack and ride it ~~headfirst~~ like a sled, ^{headfirst, steering by dragging your feet.} If you get going too fast you dig in the Trapper horns for brakes. Some guys hit bumps and lost their packs and went flying through the air, which gave us a laugh. In nothing flat we were in the meadows.

This was my best camp ever. We were 23 miles and two passes and a glacier from the road and 5 miles from any trail. We hadn't seen another soul except a couple fishermen on the lower Dose. We were at 5800 feet, down in shadows, but it didn't seem cold because the sun was still on the peaks. Little icewater creeks ^{splashed} ~~bubbled~~ out from under the glacier, meandered around the green meadows, and ran together to make the start of the Lillian River, which fell off below us into forests. On one side of the basin was McCartney Peak. We'd climb that first thing in the morning. On the other side was Lillian Ridge. We'd climb that afterwards ^x and run it to ^{Obstruction Point.}

At dark I crawled in my sleeping bag ^{on} ~~in~~ a patch of soft grass and looked up at the stars and realized this was the happiest day of my life. We'd made a lot of hard miles so I dropped right off to sleep and slept so deep I never even shivered.

~~XXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

"Pit!"

What was that?

"Pat!"

Some noise on my bag.

"Pitterpat!"

I poked my head out. No stars. The blackest night I ever saw. A raindrop went "splat!" in my face.

I pulled my head in and tried to sleep. It never rains on Parsons hikes. ~~Not hard, anyway.~~ ^{everybody said the Olympics are} It was July 10 and ~~the weather was supposed to~~ ^{sunny in July.}

Naturally we had no tents. Tents are no good. Troop 324 had spent a winter making tents, following the instruction sheets from Headquarters. They looked spiffy at Camporalls but in the mountains did nothing but break raindrops into a spray. You didn't get soaked quite as fast but you still got soaked. ^{and they don't,} Anyway, even if tents worked they weigh a ton. At Parsons we traveled light.

I couldn't sleep. The rain was too loud, a regular rattle, and I felt cold water on my skin. I poked my head out and it was dawn. The worst darn dawn I ever saw. The whole world was dark gray. I could barely see the glacier a couple hundred yards away.

Everybody was getting up. I crawled out and put on my boots and stuffed my ^{soaked} sleeping bag in my packbag, which I'd bought for the Trapper last winter.

~~Smoke was drifting from~~ ^{was smoky,} A clump of alpine firs at the edge of the meadow. Grant had a smoldering fire going. It didn't keep us warm, there were 20 of us, too many to get close, but the smoke was sort of cheerful. Compared to everything else, anyway.

We stood under branches trying to dodge drips. I kept thinking the rain was bound to stop pretty soon. Every once in a while somebody would say, "It's getting brighter!" But it wasn't. ^{Smoke just makes fog look bright.} Finally Grant said, "Well guys, I guess those clouds over Olympus yesterday weren't kidding. This looks like an honest-to-gosh 3-day blow. ~~We're in for it.~~"

It was no morning to ^{mess around} ~~stand by a fire~~ stirring oatmeal, or even boiling cocoa. Grant dumped out the prunes he'd been soaking overnight in a Ten Can. Then he had us get all the food from our packs and pile it on the ground. He picked out enough stuff for one lunch and one supper and one breakfast and said, "Dig in, guys! Eat anything you want for breakfast and as much as you want. What ~~you~~ ^{we} don't eat the squirrels and bears will."

That was when I knew we were in real trouble. We must be if he'd throw away a fortune in food to lighten our packs. Boy, I wished I had it all at home. Oatmeal and farina and cocoa and sugar and powdered milk and dried apricots. Rice and macaroni and pudding and tea and salt and cans of salmon and tuna. Even pilot bread and cheese and chocolate and raisins. We were always starving to death on Parsons hikes and any other time would have had a feast. Not this morning. Nobody was hungry.

We hoisted packs and left the trees. It was like walking ~~out~~ into a showerbath. The meadows sure weren't pretty now. Grant decided the glacier would be too grim so we headed up rockslides we could hardly see in the fog. The slope got steeper and steeper until we were doing real rock climbing. Suddenly we were on top of something. It turned out to be McCartney Peak, ~~at~~ 6722 feet. ~~Waxx~~ We'd climbed it just like we planned. Well, not exactly like we planned. Actually only Grant went to the very top. He disappeared

in the fog and when he came back he yelled, "We're hung up! Can't get off the peak onto the ridge!"

We had to drop clear back to the basin we'd left an hour ago and climb the ~~glac~~ glacier after all. What a slog! I had my windbreaker zipped up and my watch cap pulled over my ears and even had my pajama pants rolled down. I was soaked to the skin and my feet were sloshing in my boots, so cold I couldn't feel my toes.

I could see dim rocks up above. I said to myself, "The worst is over. No more glacier freezing my feet. No more climbing, just ridge-running."

Hah! So I thought the glacier was bad? There the rain was falling straight down. On top of the ridge it was partly ^{SNOW} ~~sleet~~ and was blasting sideways a mile a minute. You could hardly stand up in the gale and couldn't hear yourself think.

Nobody stopped even a second. You had to keep moving or die. But you couldn't walk fast enough to get warm. I was shivering so hard I thought I'd fly ^{into pieces.} ~~apart~~. My teeth were chattering so bad I was afraid they'd ~~bust.~~ ~~bust.~~

Yesterday we'd seen mountains everywhere ~~from this ridge~~. Now there was nothing but clouds racing ^{over the ridge} ~~by~~ so fast they made you dizzy. I couldn't even see the guys at the front end of the line or the back end.

We plugged along with nobody saying a word, just staring at the ground. I'd never seen such unhappy faces. Everybody had their pajama pants rolled down, soaking wet and sticking to their legs. The bright colors and fancy designs looked weird.

Finally I ^{decided} ~~realized~~ I was as miserable as a person can get. And I hadn't died from it. The pajamas began striking me funny. I couldn't help it, I started singing at the top of my voice.

I want to wake up in the mountains,
Where the mountain breezes blow,
Smell the flapjacks fryin' and the socks a'dryin'
'Round the campfire's ruddy glow.

The guy ahead yelled, "Shut up, Manning!"

I laughed like mad. "Remember the Ninth Law, 'A Scout is cheerful!'"

A guy behind me laughed and I started another song and he joined in.

I'm forever climbing mountains,
Shaggy mountains one by one,
They go so high, almost touch the sky,
I'll always climb them 'til I die.

Oh, mountain lakes and ridges
All appeal to me,
And so I'm going back to Parsons,
More Olympics I must see.

Lots of guys were cussing and calling us names and I yelled, "The Fourth Law is 'A Scout is friendly!' The Fifth Law is 'A Scout is courteous!'"

The madder they got the funnier it was. A third guy saw the joke and the three of us fell to the rear of the line and hiked together, thinking up ways to make everybody sore.

There's a Parsons chant-type song where the leader recites verses of a story about a terrible storm at sea and all sorts of disasters. He finishes each verse with a line ^{that} ~~which~~ cues the audience to come in with the ^{response} ~~chorus~~. Whenever a specially ^{terrible} ~~brutal~~ gust hit the ridge one of the three of us would yell out the leader's cue line:

"And the wind she blew a LIVING GALE!"

And all three of us would yell the ^{response} chorus, "WOO-OO-OO-OO!"

We must've done our "WOO-OO!" a hundred or a thousand times. Hours went by and the ridge seemed like it would never end. The three of us were so pooped ^{from singing} we ~~could~~ ^{had breath to} hardly walk but the glummer everybody else looked the louder we sang.

Then up spoke the captain of our gallant ship,
And a right good captain was he,
"I left me a wife in Boston town
And tonight a widow she'll be."

Oh the ocean waves they roll,
And the stormy winds they blow,
And the three jolly sailors go tripping to the top
While the landlubbers lie down below, below, below,
While the landlubbers lie down below.

At Lost Pass we dropped out of the wind and clouds and stopped for our first rest of the day. ^{Us} ~~The~~ three jolly Rangers quit singing. There was no way we could make the gang mad now. Dose Meadows was minutes below and in 6 miles ^{of easy downhill trail} we'd be building bonfires in the woods at Camp Marion. Tomorrow night, Parsons and the famous hike-end ^{turkey} ~~big chicken~~ dinner ^{with} and pie for dessert.

It's funny, but sitting there at Lost Pass, my mouth shut for the first time in hours, suddenly I felt a lot like I had at Marmot Pass. I realized the storm had been as beautiful as that sunset. Oh, not the same way. Marmot Pass, Deception Basin, places like that are so pretty and nice ^{heat} you almost feel like crying. The storm wasn't pretty or ^{heat} nice, you didn't want to cry, you wanted to blubber, it was mean and cruel and nasty, ^{a real bully.} But they were both part of the same thing. I wouldn't have missed the storm for a million dollars.

and trying
to out-yell
the wind

Actually, even Marmot Pass had been no tea party. It was the sweating on the Poopout Drag that made the sunset colors ^{so pretty.} ~~brilliantly beautiful.~~ And it was being deathly scared on Flypaper Pass that made it so much fun to have a snowball war on the Anderson Glacier afterwards. But nothing could touch the 3-day blow on Lost Ridge. That was real suffering, real adventuring, the ^{kind} ~~sort of thing~~ that separates the men from the boys.

All the Rangers were great guys, really tough guys, and I liked them all a lot. But only three of us had been laughing. Actually you could say we were part of what made the 17 others miserable, we were ^{part of} ~~as bad as~~ the storm, ~~and part of it!~~

It wasn't so ridiculous to think about Rainier and the Mountains of the Moon and Everest.