

CAREFREE YOUTH &

by DOROTHY M. JOHNSON

A FUNNY STORY about Glacier National Park concerns the visit of the famous author, Mary Roberts Rinehart, in 1917, when the Park was in its infancy. (It was established in 1910). The mountains and glaciers had been there a long time, but the national park hadn't. The Rinehart party traveled in style, with the famous Eaton guides, packers and horses. There was champagne, too, and what is more, the famous lady wrote a book about the trip. It was entitled *Tenting Tonight*, and it brought the area to the attention of a lot of people who hadn't heard about it before.

One night, while getting ready for bed in her tent, the celebrated lady author punctured her air mattress with a hatpin. That's all there is to the story, but it gets funnier with the passage of time. A hat pin? What on earth was she doing with a hatpin on a camping trip? Did she plan to use it to defend herself from bears? No, in those days ladies always wore hats and did their hair high, and it took a couple of hatpins to keep the hat anchored. At the time it happened, a lot of slightly jealous people who weren't rich enough to travel with an air mattress laughed merrily and figured that small accident served an Eastern dude just about right.

My first experiences with social strata, rich people and Eastern dudes, were all in Glacier Park. We unrich Westerners were suspicious of the whole lot of them. We looked down on them because we thought they looked down on us. But they didn't even see us, which made the situation even more irritating. Years later, when I lived in a big Eastern city, I learned not to see strangers; it is a necessary protective device where there are too many people. But in the uncrowded West, in my country, it's bad manners, and on the trail it's proper to acknowledge the existence of other human beings by saying hello.

My early memories of Glacier National Park, whose western entrance is some twenty-six miles from Whitefish, Montana, where I grew up, are less about the breathtaking mountain scenery than about the vast social chasm between Eastern dudes and us who lived around there. We were especially doubtful of famous people. For outdoor wear, rich Easterners were costumed by Abercrombie and Fitch or the equivalent.



photo by T. J. Hileman, Kalispell, MT

Once, trudging along a trail, some of us met Irvin S. Cobb. We loved his stories in the *Saturday Evening Post*, but that was his world; what was he doing in ours? (There was no mistaking him; he was the homeliest man I ever saw, with a face like a frog).

Mr. Cobb was carrying fishing equipment, and his shirt and pants had well-pressed creases instead of wrinkles. He wore high laced boots of off-white leather. Those boots endeared him to us. They were scratched and worn and water-stained. They had taken him through rough country and into mountain streams. We knew right away that this was no dude. We judged that even though he was an Easterner and world-famous, Irvin S. Cobb was acceptable in our world. In Western slang, he'd do to ride the river with.

DUDES IN GLACIER



ALL THIS was long before you could drive casually through Glacier Park on your way to somewhere else. You couldn't drive casually *anywhere* in western Montana then; the roads were too bad, where they existed at all.

So Park visitors, including us locals, went by train, and since the journey was expensive, those from far away tended to settle down and stay for several weeks at one or more of the hotels, which the Great Northern Railway owned. This was a sensible arrangement. The railroad generated a lot of summer passenger traffic by promoting Glacier as an unspoiled playground full of scenic wonders and, having got the dudes out there, provided food and lodging on which, presumably, it also made a profit. The temporary hotel help was re-

cruited from the University of Minnesota.

By 1960, most people no longer came by train, so in December of that year the Great Northern sold its hosteleries to Donald Hummel, a businessman of Tucson, Arizona. He operates them now under the name of Glacier Park, Inc. (A couple of years after that I got into an argument with a feisty lady about who owned those hotels. I couldn't convince her that they had changed hands. What she knew, she knew, and she couldn't bear contradiction. The funny thing about this argument was that it took place in Tangiers, Morocco, while we were eating cous-cous in the elegant Rif Hotel. This just goes to show that some tourists will fight about anything anywhere. She wouldn't speak to me for the rest of the tour, all the way back to Madrid).



Mary Roberts Rinehart shares a box lunch, put up in individual containers by the Glacier Hotel, with Robert Mills, left, advertising manager for the Great Northern Railway. The famous woman author, whose adventures with a hatpin and an air mattress are recounted in this article, was on a tour of Glacier, guided by the Howard Eaton Company. In the picture below, Irvin S. Cobb, who passed muster with westerners even though he was an eastern "dude," shares an afternoon with his close friend, Charles M. Russell (left) at the artist's summer home, Bull Head Lodge, on Lake McDonald. The man at the right is David Hilger, Montana pioneer and long-time librarian of the Montana Historical Society.

Montana Historical Society photos



BACK IN THE DAYS when East was East and West was West and the twain met briefly and suspiciously in Glacier Park, we went from Whitefish to Belton (now West Glacier) on the train, in hiking clothes and carrying our possessions in back packs. Lots of people back-pack there now; it is the “in” thing to do. But in my time it wasn’t fashionable — it just showed that we couldn’t afford to stay or eat at the Lewis Hotel, now called Lake McDonald Lodge.

From Belton we walked to Apgar and there boarded a big motorboat that took us to the hotel at the head of Lake McDonald. If we were really economizing, we hiked all the way — about ten miles. There was a road that far.

Then we roughed it, and most of what we did was probably illegal, but the statute of limitations must have expired since then, so it’s all right to confess it now. There may have been some campgrounds; I don’t remember them. I do remember that one rainy night five of us, including my mother, crawled into a barn that had a loose board on the back and slept on the hay. We all slid during the night, and the roof leaked, so we woke up in the morning at the bottom of the hay pile with our feet in a puddle.

Another night we managed to get into a dance pavilion and slept on the hard floor. I had contracted a bad sunburn three or four days before by floating around on a raft on Whitefish Lake all one lovely afternoon. The bum was beginning to peel, the straps of my pack had rubbed some skin off my shoulders, and when I complained about having the equivalent of stand-up fish scales on my back, some wag in the party suggested that I was no doubt sprouting wings and a little discomfort was only to be expected, as when a baby gets a new tooth.

We weren’t supposed to sleep where we slept or to cook where we cooked, but we were fairly experienced woodsmen and we didn’t get caught. We used wood that was already down and dead, and we were experts at completely extinguishing our little cooking fires. (Some thirty years later, using a modern portable gasoline stove at a modern, legal campground, I came close to setting Glacier National Park afire, but that’s a later story). Once we found a huge edible mushroom of the puffball type, sliced it and fried it like steak — it made a fine meal for the whole bunch of us.

Being curious about how the rich dudes from the East fared at the hotel, a couple of us peered through a dining room window one night. Some of those ladies wore low-topped, long-skirted *sat*in evening dresses! Out in the wilderness, mind you, roughing it in the Rocky Mountains! Ah, the hardships suffered by the daring

adventurers who spent the summer in Glacier National Park, instead of back in Newport where things were civilized.

Some of them did have great adventures and were out-going enough to admit it. One day, a middle-aged woman in an elegant hiking costume came running out to the boat dock at the hotel calling, “Cahl! Cahl!”

A young man who was about to go swimming answered, “Yes, Mothah?” (Translating this cleverly from Eastern to Western dialect, I figured out that his name was Carl and hers was Mother. We treat the letter R with more respect). Mothah was simply ecstatic — she had picked half a pint of huckleberries growing wild in the woods. Cahl was polite about it.

Meanwhile I watched to see how Cahl would react when he hit that water; I had just got out of it, regretting having got in, and was trying (while my teeth chattered) to understand how water that cold could remain fluid. It was liquid glaciers.

I rather expected that Cahl, being a dude, would collapse when he hit that cold water and would probably never come up. But he emerged in a thrashing crawl and swam clear around the dock to prove he could do it — and maybe because people were watching. I began to suspect that “Easterner” was not synonymous with “softy.” He didn’t go in again, though. Neither did I.

NEXT DAY (after sleeping on that dance pavilion floor) our hardy little band set out for Sperry Chalets. The rich went on horses, with a guide. We went on foot, six miles that seemed straight up. We grew thirstier and thirstier, and nobody had had the wits to bring a canteen. Most of the way we were tormented by the sound of rushing water — nice cold water in vast quantities, gushing through a narrow stream bed down below at our right, not far away but totally inaccessible. Between us and it there was a vertical drop down a cliff. We chose to go thirsty rather than court disaster by trying to get a drink. And somewhere along the way I got mad.

“I don’t want to see Sperry Glacier,” I announced bitterly. “I don’t give a hang about *any* glacier. I am going to stay right here and enjoy my sunburn and listen to the creek and be thirsty, and you can pick me up on your way back. Good-bye.”

And there I stayed, and on they went after some argument. They were gone for some hours. They didn’t reach the glacier, 9.9 miles from the Lewis Hotel, but they did get to Sperry Chalets and brought back pictures to prove it.

I lay there propped against a log, stubborn as Achilles before the walls of Troy, and after a while the branches in a tree above me began to look mighty like a bobcat or perhaps a small mountain lion. I didn't move. I was the prototype of the petulant teen-ager. Let him leap, I thought. And will they be sorry when they find my blood and bones scattered all over the trail! The big cat dissolved into tree branches.

After an endless time, my companions returned, limping, but acting as if they had enjoyed the trip, which only made me madder. They had had a lovely drink of water up at the chalets — but they had also contracted some blisters in their boots. They had not tried to reach Sperry Glacier.

In those days, all respectable travelers going on a journey of any length took along a trunk as well as several pieces of hand luggage. It was in the Belton depot, while we waited for our train to return to Whitefish, that I first saw an example of that elegant contraption known as a wardrobe trunk. It had big and little drawers in it, very nice.

The pretty, well-dressed young lady who was fussing over it was weeping quietly, and to this day I wonder why. Had she had bad news from home — a death in the family, perhaps — that called her away from the splendors of lakes and mountain peaks? But surely in that case someone from among her friends at the hotel would have come this far with her for comfort. A girl in her early twenties wouldn't normally be at a resort hotel all alone. Had she impulsively and angrily left her husband back at the Lewis Hotel? She cried quietly as she tidied the lacy things in the drawers of her wardrobe trunk, waiting for the train. She was heartbreak, she was tragedy. Perhaps she was even disgrace. And I will never, never know either the beginning or the end of her story. I glimpsed only the middle of it, more than fifty years ago.

DIDNT SEE Glacier Park for a long time after graduating from the University of Montana in 1928. I worked in Okanogan, Washington, in Menasha, Wisconsin, in New York City. The cliff-hanger road along the Garden Wall, from the west side of the Park to the top, at Logan Pass, was finished in 1929. The whole of Going-to-the-Sun Highway, clear through to the east side, was opened in 1933.

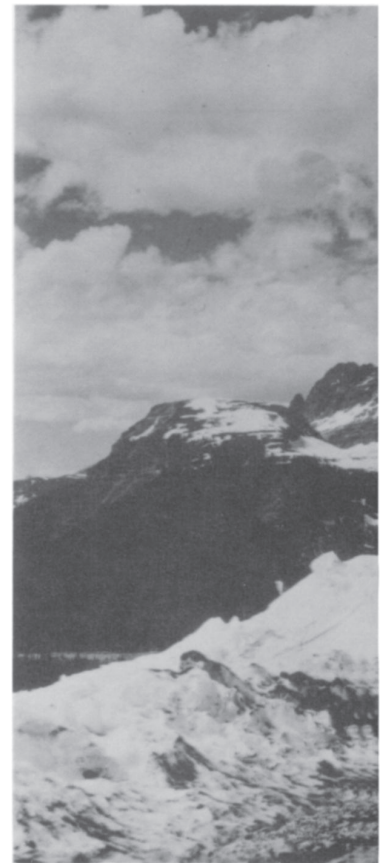
I got a quick look at part of it in 1942, thanks to friends in Whitefish where I visited briefly, but I didn't really believe it. You could go all the way through in a car! Quite a lot of people were doing that, in spite of a war being on. And the most remarkable thing was that Easterners didn't look any different from Westerners any more, or act any different, either. You couldn't tell

the difference until you heard them talk. (By that time I was accustomed to New-York accents, from the Bronx to Park Avenue, and had met some New Yorkers who actually thought *I* talked funny. I still think that the counter-man in a Manhattan hamburger stand was fooling when he let on that he couldn't understand my order for milk. How many ways *can* you pronounce *milk* in English, no matter where you're from?)

In the summer of 1952, my mother and I were living in Whitefish again. I had a longer look at the Park, in comfort, by car, for a whole week. My companion was Catharine A. Bumham (hereinafter known as Kay), a long-time friend and former neighbor in New York. I had visited her girlhood haunts in Massachusetts (no, no, haunts is not the right word — she is not a witch) where, no matter which way you look from the farm where she grew up, what you see belongs on a picture postcard. Now I was going to show her *our* picture postcard scenery.

She arrived in Whitefish by train. A couple of weeks earlier she had received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from New York University. The title of her dissertation was "Reliability and Validity of Psychologists'

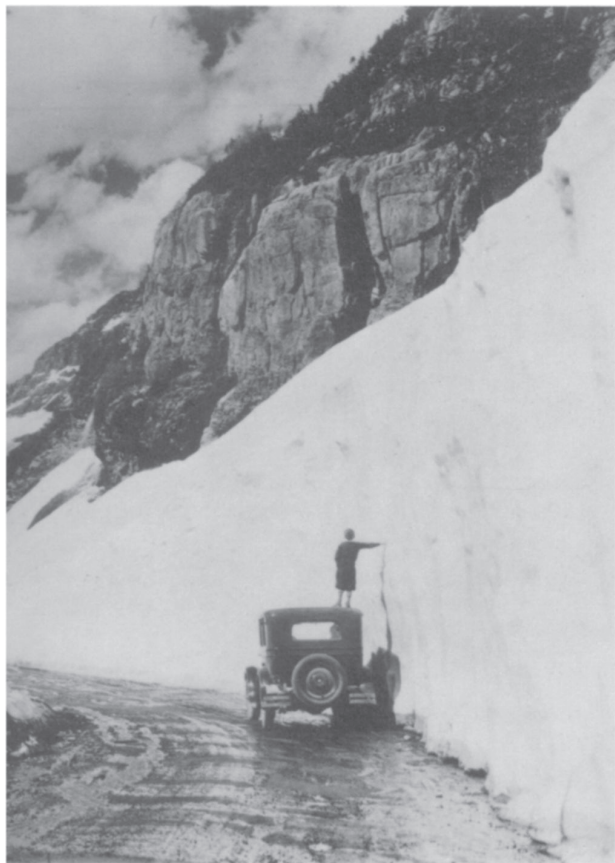
A tourist of the 1930's pauses to inspect first-hand a snow bank in July along the west side of the spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Highway. The road, which traces a fifty mile course from West Glacier over Logan Pass to St. Marys, clings to the Garden Wall from which it is hewn and offers the visitor many magnificent views of trickling waterfalls, snow-covered mountain peaks, and timbered valleys. The name for the highway was suggested to the Secretary of the Interior in 1931 to replace prosaic term, Logan Pass Road.



Evaluation of Therapy Readiness,” and for a few minutes, while she was explaining it, I almost understood what she was talking about. I didn’t really *need* to understand, which was a good thing. Most of the time we communicate pretty well.

THIS WAS MY very first experience in vacationing by car. For the fifteen years I had worked in New York I didn’t have or need one. We could take anything we might possibly want — how nice! How different from the miseries of back-packing years before! And I was pretty naive about the facilities available, in spite of having studied *Guide to Glacier National Park* by George C. Ruhle.

What I borrowed and packed would have taken us on an expedition into the Gobi Desert — bedding (never needed at the cabins and hotels we used), five gallons of gas (totally unnecessary), knapsacks, flannel shirts, winter pajamas (we did need them at Sperry), food, dishes, cooking equipment, a thermos bottle and a library: Mr. Ruhle’s *Guide*, *Immortal Poems of the English Language*, and *How to Know the American Mammals*. The American mammals we met, mostly small



Montana Historical Society photo

rodents, seldom stood still long enough for us to find the right page in the book. A week before we reached Many Glacier, a ranger had shot a grizzly there, but it had been removed, and anyway if I meet a bear I won’t need to look in a book to figure out that it’s not a chipmunk.


The fact was that I didn’t know any more about seeing Glacier Park by car than Kay did. But I drove, which made me captain, and Kay, who was a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve, was the crew. She dropped the anchor — every time we stopped on a grade, she leaped out and put a chunk of rock where it would keep the car from rolling.

Glacier Park with roads and a car was a lot different from the way I remembered it way back when. And we were prosperous enough to buy our way under a roof every night — none of this sneaking into places where we weren’t supposed to be. We traversed the cliff-hanging Going-to-the-Sun Highway along the Garden Wall, where Kay enjoyed the spectacular scenery — tall trees are so far below that they look like grass. (The only time I ever see the scenery up there is when someone else is driving). We made a short stop at Logan Pass, where there were facilities that a friend of mine called Going-to-the-John Chalet, enjoyed snowbanks and wild flowers, and rented a cabin at Rising Sun cabin camp, which was not so grand as it is now.

We had no cooking facilities, so we unpacked our groceries at a public campground and undertook, with unwarranted self-confidence, to build a cooking fire. Wood was provided — in such big heavy chunks that we agreed a receding glacier must have left it there.

Our axe was ineffective, but we haggled off some bits, which Kay arranged hopefully in a stone fireplace while I unlimbered a one-burner gasoline stove as a back-up device. The people who lent it to me had given me two lessons in operating it, but I flunked my final. I pumped the stove with great determination, held a match to it, and almost burned up Glacier National Park. The flame, which should have been short and blue, was tall and yellow. If anyone up in Alberta noticed northern lights to the south that evening, it was that flame they saw. After I knocked the stove off the log, the flame blazed horizontally. One thing I must say for that stove: even enveloped in fire, it didn’t explode.

I went shrieking off to the nearest occupied campsite and encountered a heroic fellow who raced back with me and tamed the stove. He even made Kay’s wood fire burn — our frying pan of pork chops wasn’t even warm. He was an awfully nice man, our rescuer. If I were a hot-shot reporter I would have found out more about him, but all I knew when the emergency was over was that he wore a red shirt and came from California.



READING OUR little bunch of booklets about Glacier Park, I came upon the interesting fact that the mountains constituting its eastern edge had been folded up long ago and pushed some fifteen miles eastward out onto the prairie. The surface over which all this geology was pushed is known as the Lewis Overthrust. And this base, two booklets said, is "weak Cretaceous shale."

Now if there is one thing we need, it's a good solid foundation under great big mountains. Weak Cretaceous shale, indeed! We taxpayers have a right to expect something better than that. It was no use complaining to the Park rangers; they keep busy but they are not expected to build mountains. This looked like bureaucratic bumbling on a high level. To get the facts straight before writing to my Congressman, I read further.

The Cretaceous period was part of the Mesozoic era, which began about 127,000,000 B.C., give or take a few million years. The Lewis Overthrust probably came early in the Eocene period of the Cenozoic era, maybe 58,000,000 B.C. So there was no use complaining to Washington. Criticizing the Power that was responsible might get me a chiding letter from the local Ministerial Association; the Vatican would ignore me. Anyway, if weak Cretaceous shale has held up those huge, handsome mountains all this time, they're probably safe to walk on.

From Rising Sun Cabin Camp we drove, mostly through a hard rainstorm, to Waterton Lakes in Canada. Goodness, a foreign country! Both of us have been to a lot of foreign countries since then, but in 1952 we hadn't. We had an idea that crossing the border would be a pompous, official performance in which we would be required to spread all our belongings, from tooth brushes to coffee pot, in the road while customs officers looked severe. No such thing. All they wanted to know was whether we carried anything expensive, like cameras, and when we were coming back. They seemed glad to see us and hoped we'd have a nice time.

We didn't even have to show our identification. Kay was prepared to prove that she was an officer in the U.S. Navy, and I had an old New York pistol permit with a picture on it that made me look like an unrepentant multiple murderer.

We found a dandy cabin at Waterton with two bedrooms, excellent cooking and heating facilities, and lots of hot water. The only thing wrong with it was that every time we left it we lost it. I have a knack for forgetting names. (I once beamingly introduced as Mr. Nichols a man whose name was Rosenberg). Trying to get back to our cabin camp, I assured Kay that the name of our landlord was either Kennedy or Seely. It was Reeves. We

wrote that down in our log so we wouldn't go looking for McGillicuddy or Robertson next time.

Every time we ventured downtown, we lost our happy home. Trying to find it by using a large mud puddle as a landmark didn't work; other puddles appeared as the rain continued. So we agreed that I would just drive the car and that Kay would decide which way to go. Thus she was promoted from crew to navigator, more in keeping with her Navy rank, and we had no more trouble because she used a large fence as a landmark. It was more dependable than mud puddles.

Next day the rain stopped, so we took a boat ride, which was what we were there for. During part of the ride, we were back in Montana, having crossed the invisible border by boat.

We enjoyed the scenery and were impressed by the virulent camera fever from which some of our fellow passengers were suffering. The only way they ever saw anything was through a view finder.* One man was loaded down with three cameras and his wife had two. They spoke to nobody but each other, and then only to discuss which filter to use. Another man had been traveling for six weeks, had used thirty rolls of movie film, and couldn't remember which states he took them in.

Getting out of Canada was as easy as getting in. We dutifully reported that we had bought two neckties, a bone china cup and saucer, two lace doilies and four candy bars but had eaten the candy bars. The nice young man said that was just fine.

Next stop was at Many Glacier, where — like dozens of other awe-struck visitors — we sat in the hotel lobby and stared across a lake at a most spectacular mountain. How convenient, to have such a view where you can gaze at it in comfort! One man seemed to be defying that mountain silently to take one step toward the hotel, just one, and he'd fix it. We suspected that the view was the reason for putting the hotel there.

From there we went on a hike to Grinnell Lake, conducted by a Park naturalist. The hike was easy — most of it was by boat. One ride took us to the end of Swiftcurrent Lake and another along Josephine Lake. We were relieved to find that passengers didn't have to portage the launch. Someone had thoughtfully provided a boat for each lake.

*Camera fever is endemic all over the world. Once on an island in the South Pacific a lady in my tour group fell over everybody's feet to reach the plane door with her camera. I couldn't see why; one airport looks about like any other airport, except that down there they have palm trees around them. A man behind me remarked with awe, "My God, she's taking a picture of a fuel truck!" They look the same all over the world, too.



Hileman photo—Mont. Hist. Soc.

Many Glacier Hotel (above) was opened on the eastern slope of the Park in 1915 as the center of Louis W. Hill's investment in tourism. During the years when most tourists came to the park on his Great Northern Railroad, Many Glacier was the center of activity. Although most tourists now come to the Park via automobile, the area is still popular because of the proximity of a wide variety of scenic and recreational opportunities. Seven miles from Many Glacier is Grinnell Glacier (right), which is easily reached by hikers on a number of trails. It is a pleasant and popular destination for tourists seeking experience on high country trails.



National Park Service photo

AFTER A side trip to Browning, outside the Park, to see the Museum of the Plains Indian, we went back to the west side, to that haunt of my childhood, the former Lewis Hotel, by this time renamed the Lake McDonald Lodge. What a difference the years had made! Nobody wore formal clothes to dinner any more, you couldn't tell Easterner from Westerner, and we were all just travelers together, having a good time. Here, the next morning, we set out bravely for Sperry Glacier, taking our necessities in knapsacks and leaving our other baggage locked in the car.

But this time we traveled like rich people, on horseback. Our party included five horses, a guide, and a man who led a packhorse. We arranged the night before to set out at 8:45 A.M. Our guide comforted us in the bleak gray morn by saying that we didn't really have to start then. It might rain, he said. We had assumed that, once plans were established, the horses would be stamping indignantly in the lobby at precisely the time agreed upon. It turned out that those horses hadn't been indignant about anything for years and wouldn't have cared if we had called off the trip entirely. There were times, in the next few hours, when we wished they had tried to talk us out of it.

It didn't really rain on the way to Sperry Chalets but we got wet anyway, because the brush along the way was dripping. Wet clouds sagged down from the mountain peaks.

My horse developed a freak stunt when we started to ford a stream. He went into reverse. Nobody had ever told me what to do in a case like that. I know how to start and stop a horse and how to shift him into high gear if he has one, but what do you do with a horse that goes backward? For a while it looked as if I'd have to head him downhill in order to make him go up it.

How fine it would be, Kay and I kept telling ourselves, to get to the chalet. How nice to sit before a roaring open fire among jolly, athletic mountain climbers, bubbling with youthful zest as they dried their socks before the leaping flames and made the rafters ring with song as they raised glasses high. This thought cheered us upward and onward.

So did our guide. He approved of us because we were going up to a glacier. "People have got too soft," he fretted. "Used to be they hiked or rode all over — there're a thousand miles of trails in the Park. Now it's all cars, cars, cars, and they won't make no effort to go nowhere, they expect us to bring the glaciers down to them."

When, at last, we saw the chalets perched high above us on a cliff, we knew how stout Cortez felt, silent upon a peak in Darien, and how the Pilgrim Fathers welcomed

their first glimpse of Massachusetts. We felt that our triumphant arrival should be greeted with a great burst of music — something by Wagner, accompanied by the full Metropolitan Opera orchestra and the costumed chorus in full cry, waving spears.

Instead we got immediate cups of hot coffee, which was more to the point.

There were no healthy, jolly mountain climbers drying their socks by an open fire. Sperry Chalets had oil heaters — the oil was toted up on packhorses — because it wouldn't do to hack down the forest primeval for firewood. It's part of the scenery. The only potential mountain climbers were the not terribly jolly Glacier Girls, Kay and Dorothy, and we weren't feeling very healthy. My right hip was slightly dislocated, and Kay said her solar plexus squeaked.

Still, riding was better than walking.

All my life I have worried about being late. So I had carefully planned that we would get to Sperry the day the chalets opened, before they became crowded. We did arrive on opening day — July 1 — and this was an awful mistake. It was still winter up there, with lots of snow and vast sheets of ice. Some days ahead of us, four women and a boy who were going to run the place had arrived. They were all dying to make us happy. Every time they saw us, the ladies gave us a snack, and there were substantial meals as well. The boy spent his waking hours trying to make the oil heater work in our sleeping quarters. We had expected to stay two or three days, but a look at the snow and ice and rain-clouds persuaded us otherwise.

"Let's get up to that glacier and get it over with," said Kay grimly. "It's three miles, the guide book says."

We never made it. So early in the season, nobody had cleared the trail. Wading through snow with ice water running under it is different from riding a horse that does the wading. There was a broad, steep slope ahead, a talus slope where broken rocks had slid down the mountain in a great swoop. The trail across that swoop was visible in places, but the walking was worse than on the level because of snow patches with slippery bear grass underneath. We crossed two of the patches at considerable risk to life and limb and then sat down to consider the immediate future. We really needed a bulldozer, some ropes, a regiment of trained mountain troops, and more stamina. We had nothing to lose by changing our minds. Mine was changed before we crossed the first snow patch. The second one converted Kay. Feeling that we had some rights as that season's pioneers, we named the snow patches Burnham's Folly and Johnson's Doom.

"A girl could get her pretty neck broke here," Kay remarked, looking down into the abyss. We teetered



Picturesque, high and rustic Sperry Chalets, located six miles from Lake McDonald, is surrounded by rocky walls and tall conifers and within walking distance of Sperry Glacier later in the season. The area is frequently visited by deer and bear, and, at least when this article was written, by the clattering hooves of mountain goats.

periously back to the chalet for hot coffee and dry socks. Then from the porch we looked down through gray clouds toward Lake McDonald, six moist miles away, and sighed.

With my elbows on the railing I recited, "The blessed damozel leaned out from the gold bar of heaven; she had three lilies in her hand, and the stars in her hair were seven."

This didn't cheer us up. I was wearing wet wool slacks and two wool shirts over winter underwear, and with that rig lilies would have been inappropriate.

Kay remarked wistfully, "Now I know how a kitten feels at the top of a telephone pole. How soon can we get out of here?"

"We can phone down and have the man with the horses up here by noon tomorrow or earlier," I suggested.

"I'd rather walk and get it over with," Kay decided, but she agreed that we'd better wait until morning.

It didn't rain *all* the time we were at Sperry. For a while it hailed instead. After a bountiful supper we were sitting by the oil stove in the sleeping chalet, moodily greasing our shoes, when a clatter on the porch made us jump. Three mountain goats were staring in at us. They ran, with Kay after them; she peered cautiously around the corner of the building to find them peering cautiously back at her. For the rest of the evening they played ring-around-the-chalet, clattering the length of the porch and peeking in the window.

Since those goats are up there anyway, with time on their hands (or hooves), why couldn't they have broken a trail for us to the glacier? But no, they waste their time playing childish games and staring through windows at startled ladies who are trying to get into their winter pajamas by the oil heater and wondering whether five Hudson's Bay blankets will be enough. (With six, you can't turn over).

Next morning, for a change, the sun was shining. Not much, but some, just to prove it could. The management offered enough breakfast for twelve people, but we prudently ate enough for only four or five.

The trip down, on foot, took four hours. Now and then we peeled off a layer of wool as we advanced into the temperate zone. I told Kay how elegantly people had dressed for dinner at that hotel back in the years when I couldn't afford to eat there but peeked in the window like a mountain goat.

When we arrived, we were going to look like a couple of tramps. Somehow we managed to work up quite a rage about a purely imaginary conversation that would take place if the management didn't like our looks at lunchtime. Our car was there, our baggage was there, we had been there two nights before; we were not going to get all slicked up for lunch, because we were hungry. No such conversation took place. Nobody cared how we looked. Aw, shucks. How times had changed in Glacier National Park!

WE WERE RELIEVED not to meet our guide again, because our failure to reach Sperry Glaciers had put us into the category of tourists he didn't like, those who expect the glaciers to come down to the road to be looked at. And why shouldn't they? Glaciers do move, although not very fast. They're big; they can just shove things out of their way. And furthermore, they know the country. We did our best. Let *them* co-operate a little.

Although I've spent most of my life within a reasonable distance of Glacier National Park, I've never yet reached one of its glaciers. The only glacier I have ever set foot on was in the Southern Alps of New Zealand, where they make it easy. You stay at an elegant hotel with the whole front made of glass so you can stare and stare at the glory of Mount Cooke, called "Cloud Piercer" by the native Maoris. You go to the Tasman Glacier, eighteen miles long, in a five-passenger plane that has skis for landing on snow. And there you are. Now *that's* the way to visit a glacier.

Through the years, Glacier Park has changed. The mountains haven't, except where forest fires, avalanches and roads have scarred them, but the glaciers have melted a little. (It says so in the guide book. You needn't think I've been measuring them from year to year). The facilities have been improved, the requirements of the people who go there have changed, and the number of visitors has vastly increased. The weak Cretaceous shale is still holding up the mountains. I drive up there every couple of years to make sure.

MORE AND MORE people and vehicles require more and more restrictive rules to protect the wild beauty of the Park, and pressure of numbers of visitors had become a serious problem when I visited Glacier in the summer of 1974. There were three of us, and we didn't even try to stay overnight. We had read in the newspapers that hotels, cabin camps and campgrounds were full up. We drove through, had lunch out of paper bags beside a lovely lake, and drove back to stay at Desert Mountain Lodge, a few miles outside the western entrance. There we met a professor of genetics and his wife who were spending their nights at the lodge and driving every day into the Park to hike for miles and miles among its scenic wonders. They had the right idea.

In the Park there were just too many vehicles and people. Vehicles more than thirty feet long were forbidden on Going-to-the-Sun Highway. That kept the big camper-trailers off a narrow road that was built before they were invented. Smaller vehicles were a problem, too. The *Hungry Horse News*, my favorite newspaper,

commented in an editorial, "One way to punish park visitors is to have them follow a Winnebago up or down the Garden Wall. That narrow mountain road lacks passing zones and was never designed for mobile homes."

The driver of a big vehicle tends to be slightly apologetic in traffic anyway, like a well-behaved St. Bernard trying to stay out of the way in a kitchenette. And they can go around the south end of the Park on Highway 2. But even bicycles had to be regulated — they were supposed to stay off that high road between 10:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. — and bicycle riders are anything but apologetic about getting in the way. They feel virtuous to begin with, because they're not polluting the air with gasoline fumes. They're something like miniature poodles, feeling abused because the bigger dogs may step on them.

Last year, hikers with back packs were more numerous than ever and they felt even more virtuous than the bicycle riders because they were going the hard way, on trails where bicycles couldn't go. The back-packers were *really* having trouble. There were too many of them for the high-mountain chalets and the official campgrounds, although Glacier has seventy camps in the back country, the largest accommodating forty campers. At Glacier and other national parks, a reservation system had been set up; it didn't work and people didn't like it. When you're coming from far away, it's hard to tell what day you'll get to a campground, and to find it full when you arrive raises hackles.

Motorboats (and therefore water skiing) are forbidden in Glacier, which seems sensible to me but arouses the tempers of people who have motorboats and want to water ski. The use of that old frontier faithful, the plain ordinary horse, has had to be limited, because horses mess up a trail for hikers. Last time I was in the vicinity of Glacier, there were raging arguments between people who signed petitions to keep snowmobiles out and people who want them in. I signed a petition.

Skiing is permitted in some parts of the Park; so is snowmobiling. But skiers and snowmobilers sometimes prefer to go where they shouldn't. Both federal and state laws prohibit snowmobiles on U.S. Highway 2 in the Park — or on any plowed road in Montana with few exceptions. And so an exciting event occurred just after Christmas, in 1974.

At about 11:00 P.M. on December 27, Arthur W. Sedlack, a ranger technician, was at Walton Ranger Station when he heard the deafening roar of snowmobiles coming into the Park. An hour before, he had pursued four of them in a government truck, caught up with one, warned the driver about the law and advised him to pass the word to the others. Here they were back, traveling at a high rate of speed on Highway 2.



HOW MANY PEOPLE VISITED GLACIER

1911	First year the Park was open	4,000
1917	Mary Roberts Rinehart punctured her air mattress	15,050
1921	First time I didn't see Sperry Glacier	19,736
1942	East and West had mingled at last	63,080
	(First year of World War II; down from 179,082 in 1941)	
1952	Second time I didn't see Sperry Glacier	630,949
1974	The year the snowmobile was shot	1,406,643

SEDLACK LEAPED into his four-by-four patrol vehicle, turned on the emergency red and blinker lights, and set out in grim pursuit. The road was icy and he couldn't catch up until two of them stopped to let their engines cool. To stop his pursuit vehicle on the ice, he turned it so it ran into a snowbank.

The two drivers had dismounted and were some distance from their machines when Sedlack approached on foot. To prevent them from taking off again, he tried to disconnect one engine. That didn't work. So Arthur W. Sedlack did something that, it turned out, a lot of people have wanted to do: he pulled out his trusty 38 caliber pistol and shot that snowmobile right in the gizzard.

The two drivers paid \$25 fines. The owner of the shot machine started legal action when he got home. A solemn Board of Review of National Park officials met, decided that Sedlack had over-reacted, suspended him

without pay for nine working days, and assigned him to attend a law-enforcement school in Washington, D.C.

Glacier Park officials got a lot of letters from aroused citizens about this affair. The last report I had was that every single letter favored Sedlack. The *Whitefish Pilot* ran a laudatory editorial that ended, "Go Sedlack, shoot 'em up, baby." The editor lives by Whitefish Lake, which freezes over in winter and attracts snowmobilers whose infernal racket makes his nights hideous after 2:00 A.M. when the bars close.

In brief, conscientious Arthur W. Sedlack, by firing one shot that got him into quite a lot of trouble, became the hero of countless people — people who not only may have been yearning to shoot a snowmobile ever since they were invented, but who believe that a backpack, an air mattress, and perhaps a campstove are still enough equipment with which to invade the pristine beauty of Glacier National Park.



We are pleased to present here another of Dorothy Johnson's delightful recollections of her youth in Whitefish, Montana, along with our hope that many more such articles will be forthcoming. While not history in the pure sense, her humorous articles present a real slice of life in a Montana town a number of decades ago. Earlier segments have dealt with such important but unrecorded aspects of social history as how children made money and how they entertained themselves when they were without money. Although Dorothy is much too modest to talk about her own important literary career, she has also provided us with glimpses of her life from a stint as a part-time switchboard operator in Whitefish to her editorial work in New York City.

