

Trip To Mountains Adds To Appreciation of Nature

My long-cherished dream suddenly became a reality one morning in early October when I was given the opportunity to take a trip to the mountains. In order that we might reach Mt. Airy before bedtime, we left a few hours later.

The next morning upon our rounding a curve there loomed before us my first mountain. A gasp of delight escaped with my first breath-taking view. Most of the day we drove along the Parkway, feasting on the color splashed trees, unable to decide which look-out presented the most beautiful view. As we looked up the side of a hillock or ridge or sometimes towering peaks, the resemblance of the landscape to rich oriental rugs was remarkably noticeable. Then as we ascended to higher levels the colors increased until we were completely enclosed in walls of red, gold, orange, green, and brown, seemingly covered in a gossamer veil of delicate blue with a sometimes purplish cast.

Again and again during the day phrases from Edna St. Vincent Millay's poem, "God's World," flashed through my mind as so descriptive of what I was feeling and seeing:

Thy woods, this autumn day,  
 that ache and sag  
 And all but cry with colour!  
 .....  
 World, World, I cannot  
 get thee close enough!  
 Long have I known a  
 glory in it all,  
 But never knew I this;  
 .....Lord, I do

fear  
 Thou'st made the world  
 too beautiful this year.

Even the ground was blanketed with the golden tinged grass and brush. The valleys were streaked with winding roads and creeks. From the upper heights, farm houses surrounded by golden green pasture land, brown shocks of corn, and apple orchards appeared as if they had been plotted and set to a pattern.

Cascade Falls

One of the most interesting stops that we made was at Cascade Falls. At our feet tumbled the foaming milky falls; in the distance was the illusion of a painter having splashed his canvas with gold and crimson hues—a scene more picturesque than real. Going back by another path, we walked alongside the merry little stream that eventually became the roaring foaming falls.

We ate lunch in Boone, a bustling little town with mountains rising on all sides. Then we continued our drive south toward Asheville. We saw numerous spectacular views but none quite so striking as the one of Mt. Mitchell, nine miles away. Across the valleys and through the blue haze we caught the stateliness with which Mt. Mitchell proudly displayed the American flag.

Grandfather Mountain

Instead of going to the top of Grandfather Mountain, we visited the famous ground where the "singing on the mountain" is

held. Since this is near Grandfather and almost as high, we viewed the surrounding countryside while we pitched a tune in remembrance of the occasion.

The Parkway's upkeep impressed me. The clean well-constructed roads were graded for driving ease. Seen along the dangerous curves are attractive rustic rock walls made from the rocks blasted out when the road bed was laid. As water trickles continually from the jagged rock, paved drains were inserted to prevent wash-outs. Numerous look-outs afford one the opportunity to pause for a longer look at the more scenic views.

In mid-afternoon we started our downward drive from Buck Creek Gap. Round and round we circled, apparently pushing our way through layers of brilliant and gorgeous colors that would hold us back. Finally, the mountains proper gave way to rolling hills, the warm, bright hues to more somber coloring. The most impressive day of my life was coming to an end.

Katherine Bates best described the America that I saw in the song, "America, The Beautiful": "For purple mountains majesties, above the fruited plain," and, "God shed His grace on Thee," were in complete accordance with my thoughts. To gaze into a distance of several miles and to sense the spiritual as well as behold the visible beauty is an experience that I shall long remember. Anne Bunn