

UPPER LEFT EDGE

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Reason, Memory & Imagination.

TRAVELS IN A CHEVY VAN

A trip across America



With Roger Hayes and Sally Lackaff

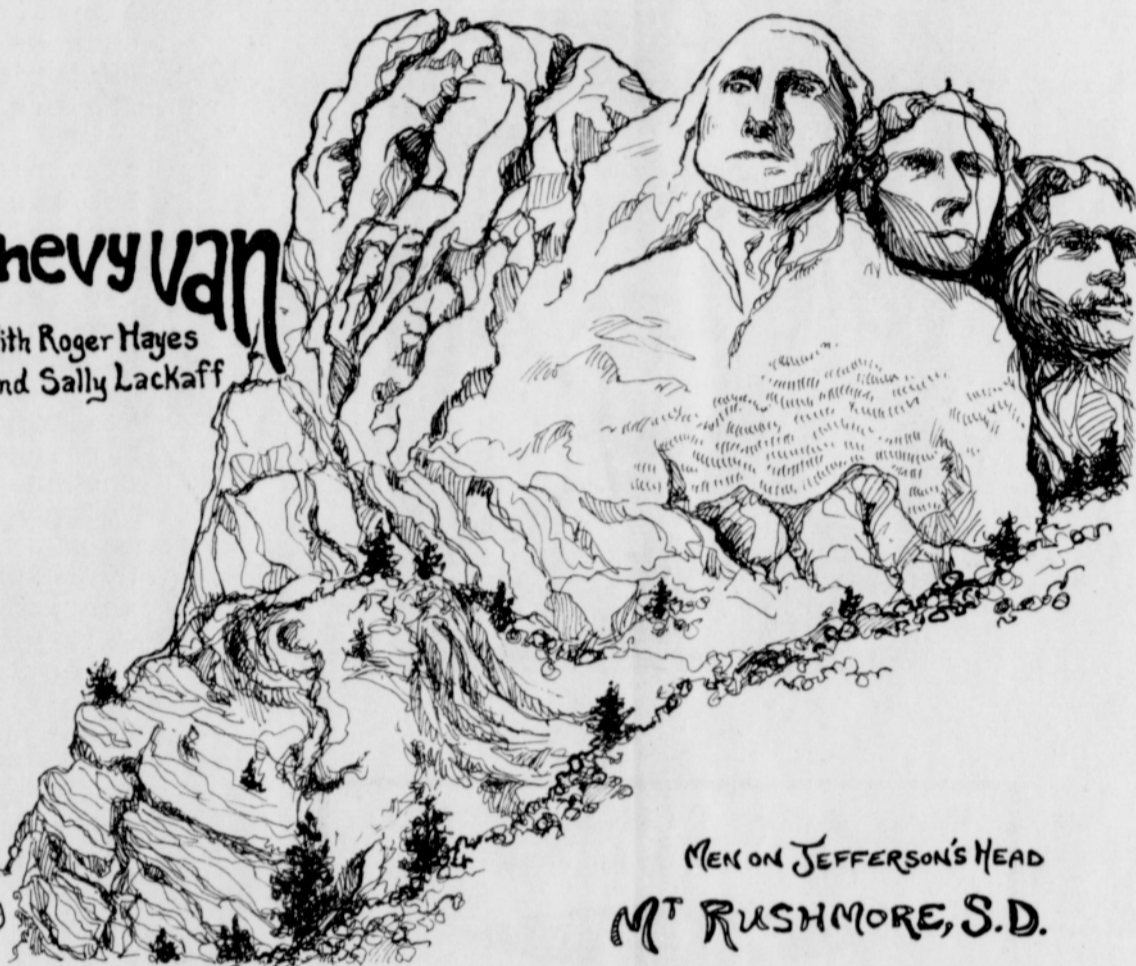
Written and illustrated by Sally Lackaff ©2000

For the past month and more, we have been on a trip across the continent, with goals of Michigan and Maine. Along, our objective was to visit our respective parents, and take in as much as humanly and vehicularly possible on our vaguely straight course. As on any journey, plans warp and weave, priorities shift and flex, and along with accomplishing our primary aims, seeing new sights has opened our minds to new possibilities.

LOOKOUTS

The journey in some manner began and ended with lookout towers. The day after leaving home, we reached La Grande and were neatly whisked, crammed in a truck with a sleeping baby, up to my much-missed Point Prominence fire lookout in order to exact a switch ~ receiving my sister in exchange for her husband. The truck rattled up the long treacherous rocky road, rounded the final curve to the tower, and deposited us into the pines and firs. Up the seven flights, windchill growing, and the head finally pops above the level of the east-walk. The little room (much tidier than in my day) welcomed me home ~ though only for an hour; I watched a wall of fog advance from the west, stomping rapidly and inexorably through forest and valleys; and by the time it started to flow ghost-like around the corners of the tower it was time to leave. But even an hour ~ and certainly an unanticipated one ~ on Point Prominence is a happy one for me.

My second lookout was discovered in Maine, nearly 6,000' tower. This tower sits atop Blue Hill Mt on the coast, a 20 minute hike only from a nicely paved road. (Views of currently viciously autumned rolling lands stretch around the horizon; small islands float on the network of bays leading to the presumable ocean. The tower is a fragile metal structure, roughly the same height as P. Prom's 90' feet, but narrower and with only a tiny observatory on top. The living quarters sit on the rough ground in a small rudimentary hut. The tower felt more rickety, probably psychologically because of the lack of guy wires pinning it to the ground. But the climb up through the reddened blueberry bushes, the oak and maple forest, and the glorious views made up for any inferiorities to our spoiled eyes in the tower. My mother and I both veteran lookouts, were photographed clinging feet clenched in the swaying wind high up the steep staircase. We wrote our names and significant comments in the visitors' book, noting an entry a few days earlier from Cannon Beach! (Well, not a complete surprise to us.) Descending the easy hill to the meadowed parking lot, we reflected that, unlike on wilderness-edged Point Prominence, at least as a Blue Hill Mountain Lookout, you would never be short of visitors.



MEN ON JEFFERSON'S HEAD
MT RUSHMORE, S.D.

We got a fill of crowds, as well as propoganda when, after driving through arson-black silent forest at the edge of the Black Hills, we reached the tourist mecca of Mt Rushmore. A full half day was spent exploring the curving roads and bulbous rock formations, sketching and observing. Our luck led us to the Nat'l Monument the same fortuous day as a special convention, held in the amphitheater below the massive heads. "Kids (oting South Dakota" brought together area grade schools to learn about democracy through speeches and corny songs. We watched as a man pretended to be Theodore Roosevelt, giving a cliched synopsis of his life, interspersed with musical snippets set to popular show stoppers. After the event had wrapped up with "Hello, Kid Voters" to the tune of a song about Dolly, and few tuneless, blandly rendered patriotic ballads squeezed from embarrassed children, we wandered through the warm mountain air down the Presidential Trail. Soon we found ourselves trailing a group of silver haired Republicans, whose conversation ran along these lines: "There's sure a lot of space up there by Lincoln... sure hope they don't put... who is it?" "Clinton." "No, if they put anyone up, it'll be... who is it? Bush... no, I mean Reagan." "Yes, because he's so loved." "The Democrats must be mad, those are all Republicans up there." I thought of our beloved editor the rev. Hults, and how proud he is to belong to the party of Lincoln.

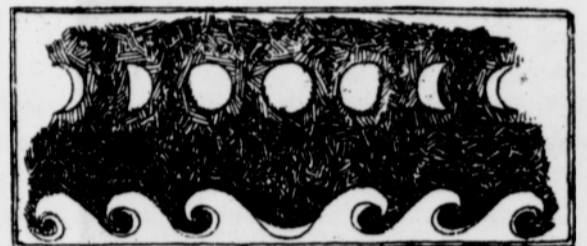
WILDLIFE

Along the roads, with their exotic reddish and white coats, clerical collars and sharp ebony horns, herds of Pronghorn Antelope spanned our route from the Rockies to Minnesota.

And in Michigan, I met a Toad.

THIS COLUMN WILL BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH.
FOR MORE TRAVELS IN A CHEVY VAN, READ THIS MONTH'S HIPFISH.

The three sections of Jefferson's Library



MOONS & TIDES

WASHINGTON & OREGON COASTS
2000 Corrected for PACIFIC BEACHES

DATE	DAYS	HIGH NOVEMBER		LOW NOVEMBER	
		TIME	FT.	TIME	FT.
1 Wed		3:56	6.8	2:44	7.8
2 Thur		4:49	6.6	3:27	7.4
3 Fri		5:48	6.5	4:25	6.9
4 Sat		6:48	6.6	5:41	6.5
5 SUN		7:43	6.9	7:03	6.5
6 Mon		8:30	7.3	8:15	6.6
7 Tues		9:11	7.8	9:15	7.0
8 Wed		9:47	8.2	10:09	7.3
9 Thur		10:21	8.7	10:59	7.5
10 Fri		10:54	9.1	11:47	7.7
11 Sat		11:27	9.4	5:28
12 SUN		0:34	7.8	12:02	9.6
13 Mon		1:23	7.8	12:39	9.7
14 Tues		2:13	7.7	1:20	9.6
15 Wed		3:05	7.5	2:06	9.3
16 Thur		4:02	7.4	2:59	8.8
17 Fri		5:03	7.3	4:02	8.2
18 Sat		6:07	7.5	5:21	7.6
19 SUN		7:08	7.8	6:47	7.2
20 Mon		8:04	8.3	8:06	7.2
21 Tues		8:54	8.7	9:14	7.4
22 Wed		9:37	9.2	10:13	7.6
23 Thur		10:17	9.4	11:06	7.7
24 Fri		10:54	9.5	11:54	7.8
25 Sat		11:28	9.5	5:32
26 SUN		0:40	7.8	12:01	9.3
27 Mon		1:24	7.7	12:33	9.1
28 Tues		2:07	7.6	1:05	8.9
29 Wed		2:49	7.5	1:38	8.6
30 Thur		3:31	7.3	2:14	8.2

BASEBALL

New York, New York! Damned Yankees! Oh, the misery. It's hard for a Cub's fan to take the World Series seriously, or the world seriously for that matter. The World Series is something no living Cubs fan can remember watching in Wrigley Field. Will we live to see one? Will it be next year? This is the time of year when Cubs fans curl up in a ball, stare at their navels and chant, "Wait til next year." "Wait til next year" "Go Cubbies!"



Anybody who says he's been eaten by a wolf is a liar.
J.B. Theberge