

the painted box



By Wendy Thomson

I've been home from my three week vacation long enough that I should be back to normal, but I'm now beginning to think that, after all the different things I've seen and all the different things I've done, I'll never be quite the same again.

It was hard adjusting to life "down on the ground" after just that one week trail riding in the Rockies. The first thing I missed was the companionship. Up there, in the mountains, I had three constant squires, (and a couple of inconstants, but they don't count the same,) Bill Rice of Waltham, Mass., Mr. R. Linke and Charlie Whittaker, both of Edmonton, three characters all older enough than me that I knew they wouldn't be companions a husband would frown upon.

Charlie told me stories of times past, and tales of other rides he'd been on; Bill had an endless supply of little ditties and limericks which kept us in constant chuckles; and Mr. Linke, well, Mr. Linke was the kind of gentleman you could ride with or sit beside for an hour or so without saying a word, who would smile back if you felt like smiling at him for no reason at all.

Secondly, I found myself constantly comparing "up there" with "down here", and "down here" kept coming out second best. The first night in the Rockies everything was so new, different, and exciting, that I lay awake half the night just trying to take it all in.

First night
My first night "back down" was terrible. My husband, his niece, and her husband drove to Banff to pick me up, and we spent the whole night whizzing back to Craik in Saskatchewan. Somewhere along the line, a rainstorm had dropped an inch and a half of

rain in 20 minutes, along our route, — a highway under construction. After slogging, sloshing, and sliding along a gooey part of it, the car finally got stuck, (this was about 1 or 3 in the morning) and had to be towed the last mile or so by one of the big "cats" sitting waiting for people to start sinking in the mud.

Six days of sitting on an un-padded saddle, a log, or an empty air mattress left me relatively sore-less, but those 9 hours in the padded seat of a Mustang finished me off completely. I couldn't sit right for a couple of days.

Then there was the water. Every time I took a mouthful of chlorinated, fluoridated water, I thought longingly of Bill, who hopped off his horse once when I'd mentioned I was thirsty, whipped a collapsible cup out of his shirt pocket, and dipped me a drink out of a mountain stream. There's nothing at all like it, that cold, cold, clear, fresh water.

The almost constant cool breeze was another thing I was partial to, and the only thing I've found anything like it here was in the McLaughlin Planetarium's Theatre of the Stars, so beautifully air-conditioned. As we leaned back in the reclining seats, the speaker said "Imagine yourself away out in the country, watching the stars come out."

The air seemed to get cooler, and the "stars" began to appear gradually on the domed ceiling as the room darkened. With my usual thirst for knowledge I thought "To heck with the country, I'm in the mountains!" and promptly fell asleep. So much for education.

Each time a film I've sent away comes back, Alice-from-in-town (who was with me on the ride) rushes out and we sit and laugh then weep quietly over them. They're so beautiful!

It sounds as though I'm constantly sitting moaning about the Rockies, but I'm not really. While we were in Saskatchewan I began making a real effort to look and find the small joys in my usual life, again. I started the morning after Gord told me that twice, the previous night, I had woken him up saying "I have to go back. I HAVE to go back."

The first small joy, was appropriately enough for me, a cat. I was stuck in the house in Craik with a bad eye infection and couldn't write or read or anything, — just sit with dark glasses on and feel miserable. Then the cat came in and was whipped up on the bed with me so fast that it sat and blinked for a minute, then snuggled down. She lay flat against me with her head just about under my chin, pushing it into my hand with every stroke, her ears so flattened so far back that she looked like some sort of large ugly snake. She lay and purred and pushed and dribbled down my neck for a long time, then curled up beside me and we both slept. When I woke, I'd stopped fighting the "normal" and was willing to come back down out of the clouds if I could.

Gord and I went for a drive that evening, and stretched out on a blanket at the top of a coulee, watching the cattle on the slopes and a string of ducks putting up and down the river in the valley. Then I realized one thing the mountains lacked (other than Gord, that is). The wind up there was cool, clean and virtually scentless. Blowing to us across the prairies were the scents of sage, new-mown hay, and yellow clover. And in place of the harsh call of the Whiskey-Jack were the soft night-time noises of Meadowlarks and other songbirds.

Getting home again, we kept discovering one thing after another to exclaim over — two new batches of kittens waiting for us, Sue the pup, grown almost as big as her pappy, and the twin foals almost unrecognizable! They're all slim and leggy and real little horses! My filly-foal is just beautiful!

One last change I've found. After years of sleeping with the covers loose, I now find I can't sleep unless they're tucked in. An amateur psychologist would immediately pounce. — "Aha!"



(Photo by Jim Jennings)

Mr. and Mrs. Gibson

Vivian Smith marries student minister Saturday

In a double-ring ceremony in Trinity United Church, Acton, on August 15, Vivian Mary Smith and William Cawthorne Nicholson were married.

The groom's father performed the ceremony assisted by the Rev. Gordon Turner.

Continues studies
The bride, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Elmer Smith, R. R. 3, Acton, has received a transfer from the University of Guelph to the University of Toronto where she will complete her B.Sc. degree.

Flowers in church
Baskets of white gladioli and

Something happened in those mountains! You now feel insecure and unsure of yourself and hence the tucking in! That could be.

A continuously deflating air mattress is enough to make anyone insecure. Maybe I've gained just enough confidence after this jaunt on my own, that I feel I can assert myself and ensure my share of the bedcovers by arching them.

Or maybe it's just that I've rediscovered the joy of having that lovely little cold air pocket when I stick my foot over the edge of the mattress.

mums with pink carnations decorated the church with blue tinted carnations and bows marking the pews.

Dr. George Elliott played the organ.

Carries Bible
The bride wore a floor length gown of organza over taffeta trimmed with lace and a lace-trimmed full-length veil.

Four attendants
Maid of honor was Miss Julie Smith, sister of the bride, and the bridesmaids were Mrs. Anne Smith, Galt, sister-in-law of the bride; Mrs. Dorothy Smith, Acton, sister-in-law of the bride and Mrs. Helen Agnew, Guelph, sister of the groom.

Given in marriage
Elmer Smith, principal of the M. Z. Bennett school gave his daughter in marriage.

Welcome guests
After the ceremony a reception was held at Acton Music Centre. Guests were welcomed from Acton, Guelph, Pembroke, Belleville, Alton, Orangeville,

Frances Higgins, Jack Gibson married at St. Alban's

Baskets of yellow gladi and white mums created the setting for a lovely summer wedding at St. Alban's Anglican Church, on July 18, 1970. Frances Mary, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James F. Higgins and Jack Kenneth, son

of Mrs. Mary Gibson and the late James A. Gibson, were united in marriage at a double ring ceremony, by Rev. R. W. Foster of Grace Anglican Church, Milton, at 4 o'clock. Mrs. Betty Oakes played the

organ for Ave Maria and O Perfect Love.

Seven in marriage by her father, the bride wore a floor length gown of white, Lagoda satin, with the bodice, short sleeves and stand-up collar, covered in clusters of daisy appliques. A large satin bow completed the string of tiny buttons which started at the neck. Daisy appliques also trimmed the long train and the edge of the gown. Her veil was shoulder length and held by three, satin roses. She carried a colonial bouquet of yellow roses and white stephanotis.

Matron-of-honor was Mrs. Cathy Tocher, sister of the bride; the bridesmaid was Miss Charlene Higgins; and junior bridesmaid was Miss Jane Higgins, both sisters of the bride. The flower girl was Miss Holly Tocher, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kent Tocher, and the bride's niece.

Mini green gowns
The attendants wore similar gowns of mint green, polyester crepe and in their hair, wore bows of the same material. They also wore cultured pearl, drop necklaces, a gift from the bride and carried colonial bouquets of yellow carnations, trimmed with pale green lace.

The best man was Rae Nellis, a friend of the groom. Ushers were David Gibson, the groom's brother, and Rae Wilson, a friend of the groom. Ringbearer was the

groom's nephew, Master Danny Gibson, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Gibson.

The reception was held in Acton legion hall and catered to by the Steelworker's Hall, Guelph. Guests attended from Acton, Georgetown, Guelph, Galt, Toronto, Mount Forest, Ballinacraig, Erin, Hillsburg, Cooksville, Ottawa, Kenilworth, Rockwood and Burlington.

The wedding cake was made by Mrs. W. Coles and Miss Jessie Coles, Acton, and decorated by Mrs. G. Young, Acton.

Mothers receive
The bride's mother received wearing a beige coat and dress ensemble, with dark brown accessories and a corsage of mauve carnations. The groom's mother assisted wearing a purple lace dress, with white accessories and a corsage of yellow carnations.

The couple left on a wedding trip to northern and western Ontario, the bride wearing a pale blue, long sleeved dress, with matching three-quarter length vest, white accessories and a white gardenia.

The bride was guest of honor at several showers, prior to the wedding.

The bride's sister, Mrs. Cathy Tocher, held a personal shower at her home. A linen shower was held by a neighbor, Mrs. Pearl Lazenby, at her home on Arthur Street. Another personal shower was given by her friends and co-workers at Rockwell. A miscellaneous shower was given by a friend, Mrs. Pat Nellis, at her home in Acton.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gibson have made their new home at 25 Main Street, Acton.

Free Press Personals

Mr. and Mrs. William Middleton recently returned from a month-long vacation in Newfoundland and the Maritime provinces.

Mrs. Charles Watson spent last week at the cottage with her daughter, Mrs. B. Wallace and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Severino Braida and Nino Braida returned home Monday from a month's trip to Italy. They visited Mr. Braida's home town, Gravere, and stayed with his niece and nephew there. They report a wonderful trip.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Duval Sr., Main Street S. celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary on Tuesday. A family gathering was held Sunday to mark the occasion.

Clerk-administrator Joe Hurst and his wife, high school teacher Nan Hurst, returned last week from a very interesting holiday trip to Europe. They visited son Peter, his wife and their grandson in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where Peter is with the Canadian embassy, and have vivid im-

pressions of life there. They toured through several countries and met relatives and friends. As well as the expected meetings, they were surprised to see R. L. principal G. W. McKenzie and Mrs. McKenzie in St. James' park, London, purely by chance. "I could write a book!" exclaims Mr. Hurst.

Mr. Chester Anderson, manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, is convalescing after an operation.

Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Leatherland returned recently from a holiday in the western provinces.

Mr. and Mrs. William Knight, Wade and Linda, have returned from a three-week camping trip in the Bruce Peninsula, and later in the Peterborough district.

Mrs. Alex Near visited relatives in Kitchener and Waterloo for a few days last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Collin McNie, of Detroit, Mich. spent a few days last week with the latter's sister, Mrs. E. J. Hassard.

Mr. and Mrs. Bob Bruce, Gordon and Susan, and Mr. and Mrs. D. F. Wilds have returned from a very enjoyable month's holiday to the Pacific coast.

Mrs. A. Dennis and Miss Marilyn Dennis, of Fergus, Mr. and Mrs. John Fraser, of London, and Mr. W. H. Macdonald, of Chicago, Ill. visited with the latter's sister, Mrs. J. C. Dennis, last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Turner have returned from a delightful trip to the Western Provinces. They visited in Vancouver and Victoria. Their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Burns, of Alliston, accompanied them.

Mrs. Grace Dalrymple, of Beamsville, and Miss Margaret MacDonald, of Glasgow, Scotland, and Mr. and Mrs. Dean Follis, of Toronto, visited with their friend, Miss Robina Clark, last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Norton and family spent holidays at Wasaga Beach and Shelburne.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim James and family, Churchill Road, holidayed near Huntsville.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Davis returned to Rutland, England, Saturday after a six week visit with their son Mick Davis and his family. Their visit included a one week cottage holiday at Paradise Lake near Haliburton. Other trips included Tobermory, Muskoka and Algonquin Park. They wish to say thank you and cheerio to the Ockendens and Lowes of Churchill Road, who made them so welcome during their visit.

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