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A Trip Up Mount Lowe

Will Robertson, an Old Chatham Boy, Writes a Very Interesting Letter from Los Angeles, California.

Will Robertson, an old Chatham boy, writes home the following interesting letter to his sister here. Will is now in Los Angeles, California, where he went some time ago.

It is not very pleasant outside, and not having any place in particular to go—in fact I usually prefer Sunday as quietly as possible to make up for the strenuous work of the week—I may as well give you my promised account of our trip up Mt. Lowe.

We left Los Angeles at one o'clock, taking the electric car directly to Mt. Lowe, about 35 miles away. Our route led through the pretty little town of Pasadena, where the beautiful flower tournament was held, which, by the way, I have never described to you because I did not see it, having slept too long that morning to get a car in time for the parade.

Our outward trip being of a gradual slope up to the base of the mountains was somewhat slow, occupying about two hours, but well repaid the time by the magnificent view of the mountains at close range, revealing the wonderful variety of formation and strata, which could be seen in the varied colors that so impressed me on my first view of the mountains, and which you may recall by those very artistic pictures we used to have in our geography.

Well, after a circuitous climb of about 1,000 feet, through shaded avenues and scattered cedars, bordered on her side by the cosy little estates surrounding cozier little mansions of our wealthy winter residents, we reached the base of scenic Mt. Lowe.

Here we entered a peculiarly shaped open car, all out on the bias, and attached to a sturdy cable running up between two tiny tracks which were almost buried in the sides of the mountain.

With the "all aboard!" of the conductor we began a slow but steady rise, up and away from the humbler walks of life, up and into the unimpeded clearness and fragrance of the pathways of the sublimities.

Higher and higher we rose, with only the ceaseless rambling of the car wheels to remind us that we were still the fond creatures of mother earth, for in the awful incline of our steep ascent, we were wholly unable to view with any comfort the path we had already trod. Upward and upward we went, till the gigantic m of the forest-clad monster as the canyon, which below had red so high above us, now diminished into insignificance as we neared the summit and gazed down upon its tiny form.

Even minutes of this steep, light incline, and we halted at the top of Echo Mountain, one thousand above the little station of Rabbits, had just left, and having ridden distance of only thirteen hundred feet, you may imagine the steepness of the incline. It is, in fact, only extended by one inclined railway in the whole world, and that one is only built as long, but makes a more easily perpendicular journey.

At this point we visited the small

observatory and immense search-light brought here from St. Louis Exposition, and took a few minutes' rest before starting on our trolley trip up to the Alpine Tavern; and here, I might say, that before starting, Mr. Kirkland, our president, gave us a letter to Mr. Harvey, the conductor of the trolley line, with whom he was well acquainted, and afterwards telephoned him that we were coming up, and to be sure and give us a good time.

Harvey is a Canadian himself, although he has been in California for about fifteen years. Last year he spent about six months in Canada, mainly in Ridgeway, Ont. Well, of course it did not take us long to get acquainted, and Harvey being a very pleasant chap we certainly enjoyed our trip, and although it is his business to entertain his visitors and describe the trip up the mountain, yet, coming as we did under his special care, we were given the lion's share of the entertainment.

Again boarding a tiny trolley car we commenced our hazardous journey up to the Alpine Tavern, three thousand feet higher.

This trolley line was built by a Canadian from London, Ont., whose name I cannot recall, and is certainly an engineering feat to be proud of.

With nothing but the steep sides of the mountain for a foundation, the original architect of the line was undoubtedly the mule-driver, for the present circuitous trail of the trolley seems nothing more than an augmented and mechanically equipped mule path.

So you may have some idea of its chief feature, the line itself.

The start is made around a quick sharp curve, giving you your first glimpse of discomfort at the thought of diving off into the infinite depths of the canyon beyond, then you are safe for fully half a minute, while you regain your breath for the next whirl, which in place of clinging close to the mountain seems to scorn its aid and dashing off over a treacherous canyon hurls you against a towering rock on the further side.

Round and round and in and out, till having overcome the timidity of the start by the attractiveness of the scenery and by the knowledge of your security, you begin to look forward to startling disclosures and perilous points as you speed from place to place.

Half an hour is necessary for this trolley trip, and as we traverse about about five miles of track and rise for three thousand feet, you can realize that it is not a slow or tedious journey. At times you reach a long stretch of line fully fifty yards, then for fully a mile scarcely ten feet of straight track, our tiny car whirling and careening in its upward lofty flight.

Now we pass through the crumbly, storm-beaten rocky slopes, then with a single turn dash into the cool shady recesses of the mountain forest, under the leafy branches of mighty oaks, which below had seemed to us but tiny shrubbery, then out again into the clear bright sunshine.

Skyward we went, passing and re-passing, now whirled over a mighty horse-shoe curve till we crossed our former path about fifty feet above it. Gazing far below us we can see sharp turns in the trails we have just traversed, one, two, three, four, five, we count, down, down, down, into the valley, then in an upward look, we see two circling bridges one up and beyond the other, which we are yet to cross. Truly it is marvellous. But we move quickly upward and the panorama with its ceaseless changing gives flight to time, and before our eyes are half-faded upon the luxury of such scenes, we dive headlong into the shady groves of a mountain pleasure park and our car draws up at the open welcoming door of the Alpine Tavern.

Very reluctantly we leave the fascinating influences of our little car, and yet eagerly look forward

cloud denoted the presence of the busy city in the distance, while far beyond, fully a half score leagues away, glistened the sunlit waters of the calm Pacific. But description cannot but defeat the purpose of one who would describe such scenes, for when we reach the sublimity of nature, poets alone may grasp and re-interpret such revelations, and even then imperfectly.

So with but a few short minutes in which to make our perilous return, we tore away, and for a greater part of the journey we literally tore away with a vengeance. Time was limited, so Mr. Harvey proposed to take the lead, and zealously urged his little pony to do his best.

Well, we travelled fast and faster, often taking the steep slopes with one long slip, instead of the usual slow halting descent, almost tumbling at times, mule and all, down an incline of ten and twelve feet.



Handsome gown for afternoon wear is of taffeta applique, under which is a chiffon interlining with a soft silk lining beneath. The broad girde of chiffon velvet and the real Irish Crochet stock and tabs are features of the season's mode.

to our view from the mountain top, still a thousand feet above us.

Happy with the pleasure already passed, we mounted the tavern balcony for a few minutes' rest, and my first greeting was the broad homelike grin of our old friend Dan Gormie, aforetime baker in Chatham, Ont., now baker at Alpine Tavern.

Well, you bet it felt good to talk home again, and we were not at a loss for conversation. Dan has only been here about three months and although he's not struck on the job he's looking well and feeling fine.

Well, with this addition to our party, the four of us, Harvie, Miller, Dan and myself mounted each a donkey for the ride to the summit. This being my very first experience in a saddle of any kind, you may imagine the rather perturbed state of my feelings, as I looked about me along that trail as it appeared in places and contemplated the novelities of that trip.

I was given the distinction of leading—at least I was put on the leading mule—and as there was nothing to do but hold on it might appear as though my task were easy.

I had often heard and read about mountain climbing on mules, but you never know the real thing till you've done it.

In most places our path was from twelve to sixteen inches wide, merely an indentation in the side of the mountain, so we rode with one leg grazing the slope on one side, and the other with only the stirrup between it and an infinitude of space below.

But I made a fine lead and my good old "Signo" was a wonder. He could climb some spots almost straight up and dig his way over rocks and stones in a way that was marvellous.

About forty-five minutes brought us up to Sunset Point, with the revelation of wondrous beauties below and about us.

The view of the mountain itself was indescribable, taking one out of the prosaic tangibility of earthly things, into the sublimity of poetical imaginations, as one lady of the party said, "If heaven revealed no grander sight, she would be happily satisfied."

Below us the verdant valley, stretched away in a limitless expanse of green, nothing but a smoky

But such was mere child's play, for as long as Mr. Donkey's back side up, we could keep fairly well in the saddle.

One exceptionally long and perilous slide widened at the base into a fine smooth roadway, about six feet wide but narrowing in places to about two feet. A nice, gentle downward slope, gave the mules a little inclination to "hurry," and soon they were taking us along on an easy canter, which quickenized with the downward slope, soon became a run, and before our seats were well secured we were taking in the terra firma in gallop, only occasionally feeling the dull thuds as we struck the hard earth seemingly once every fifty feet.

Picture me, astride, at least I think I was astride whenever I touched, my mule, glancing before me with eyes fairly wild, gripping with the clutch of a drowning man, the palfrey rein by which I was "supposed" to guide my mule, grasping my hat, the saddle and mane of the donkey all at once with my hands, and digging my toes fairly in between the ribs of the poor beast. Madly we rushed, onward and down, with never a moment to think of even the past or future, in the terribly dreadful reality and uncertainty of the present, swerving by a jutting rock, whirling at a sudden angle, and then a long mad, downward flash, in the open, when often at a narrow place, only a few short inches separated us from an eternity of space.

Only a five minutes dash, and yet an eternity to me. My heart beat wildly as I again my eyes in an effort to free myself before the final capitulation, while a whole naval engagement was in full operation, and down my spinal column, tingling in my toes and fairly deafening in my ears.

And even as it started with a rush, so it stopped, for as we made one final dash along the stretch for the wire, with good safe distances between us, but for the fact that I prepared myself for the sudden halt, I fear my old knot would scarcely be in proper condition now to tell the tale. And so we came down, with hearts filled up with gladness.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne

Interesting Events of Ye Olden Times Gathered from The Planet's Issues of Half a Century Ago.

From The Planet files from July 16, 1861, to July 23, 1861.

Gold is found in Halifax.

Dr. E. B. Donnelly is coroner for Chatham.

Small-pox sweeps across the State of New York.

Henry Rattle was a pound-keeper in Harwich Township.

The body of Edward Lord was discovered in the River Thames.

The residents of Montreal received the shock from an earthquake.

The steamer Canadian runs a moonlight excursion to Lake St. Clair.

Birth—At Rose Cottage, the 13th inst., Mrs. Arthur L. Hill of a daughter.

Julius Boushey, of the Township of Howard, advertises his farm for sale.

Mr. Albert Prince was given a great dinner in the Chatham Arms Hotel.

An account of the terrible battle of Bull Run appears in the columns of The Planet.

Henry F. Duck, solicitor, has his offices in Barfoot and Miller's building, King street.

Birth—At Chatham, on Monday, the 15th inst., the wife of Frederick Andrews, Esq., of a daughter.

E. F. and J. Mahie's menagerie and J. J. Nathan's American circus showed at Chatham and also at Mor'eth.

The World says that the city of New York has suffered by the Southern Rebellion and repudiation little (if any) short of \$150,000,000.

Died, on Sunday evening, the 21st inst., in the city of Detroit, Augusta Louisa, youngest daughter of James Beatty, Esq., aged one year and 11 months.

A meeting of the municipal council of the Township of Harwich was held at Houston's Block, Bull Tavern, W. R. Fellows was the township clerk.

Mr. John Barclay, a farmer just in the limits of the town, drove his team down to the river for the purpose of leaving his wagon in the water over night. Both animals were drowned. Mr. Barclay had a narrow escape from drowning.

At a meeting of the County of Kent Agricultural Society held at Chatham on the 16th of July, the President, Geo. Young, Esq., in the chair, a resolution was passed tendering a vote of thanks to the County Council for their liberality in granting the society \$200, which money was voted to the Provincial

Agricultural Society. Prizes were voted to Mr. John Adam and Mr. John Dickson, the one for the best fanning mill, the latter for a bee hive.

A. D. McLean, Albert Prince, R. S. Woods, H. Wittrock, Walter McCrea, Atkinson & Pegley, Henry F. Duck, barristers, have professional cards in The Planet, as also have doctors C. J. S. Askin, J. M. Smith, and land surveyors Arthur Jones and Salter & Johnson.

The following were the market prices for family produce:

Mutton, per lb., 7c to 8c.
Beef, per lb., 5c to 7c.
Veal, per lb., 4c to 5c.
Rhubarb, per bunch, 3c to 4c.
Onions, per bunch, 2c to 2c.
Cabbage plants, per 100, 20c.
Asparagus, 4c to 5c.
Potatoes, old, per bush, 25c to 30c.
Butter, per lb., 8c to 9c.
Eggs, per doz., 8c to 10c.
Fish, each, 6c to 8c.
Wool, per lb., 20c to 25c.

We see by a late Detroit paper that a certain couple having become tired of each other, they mutually agreed to exchange "articles of separation" after a five years trial of the bonds of wedlock. They, therefore, released each other from all their duties as husband and wife respectively and engaged that neither should ever make or attempt to make any objection to any subsequent marriage on the part of the other, but both should have full liberty to act in this respect as they please.

This was considered quite a sensational occurrence by Chathamites.

We are glad to be informed that it is the intention and desire of a number of our musical townsmen to organize a brass band in Chatham. This is a thing long desired here and we have no doubt, judging from the persons who are at the head of the movement, that it will be decided success. One great thing which has held against these organizations in the past was that most of the members were not permanent residents of the town. This fault is being guarded against in the present company. All the members are long residents here and may be looked upon as fixtures. We are told that Messrs. Cleeve, Tilt, Craddock, Good-year, Smith and others have already joined. It is supposed to raise money by subscription to pay for the instruments. We have no doubt our townsmen will subscribe liberally.

In view of the movement which is now on foot to complete the early closing of local stores, it might be interesting to know that such a movement was on foot in 1855, according to the following document, which is the property of Alex. Barr, of this city:

To the merchants and store keepers of the town of Chatham. The petition of the undersigned clerks and salesmen humbly sheweth:

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Very small indeed is this design for general wear. The flannel is figured with a dainty figure of blue and old rose. The bishop sleeves are gathered into fancy cuffs trimmed with buttons. The silk stock is trimmed with pendants of embroidery.



Where the simple lines are followed in the negligee robes, usually laborious ornamentation in the way of lacing and lace insertion is employed to break the length of the garment. The sleeves and collar portion of this gown are worthy of careful attention.

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