

MY ODY'SSEY

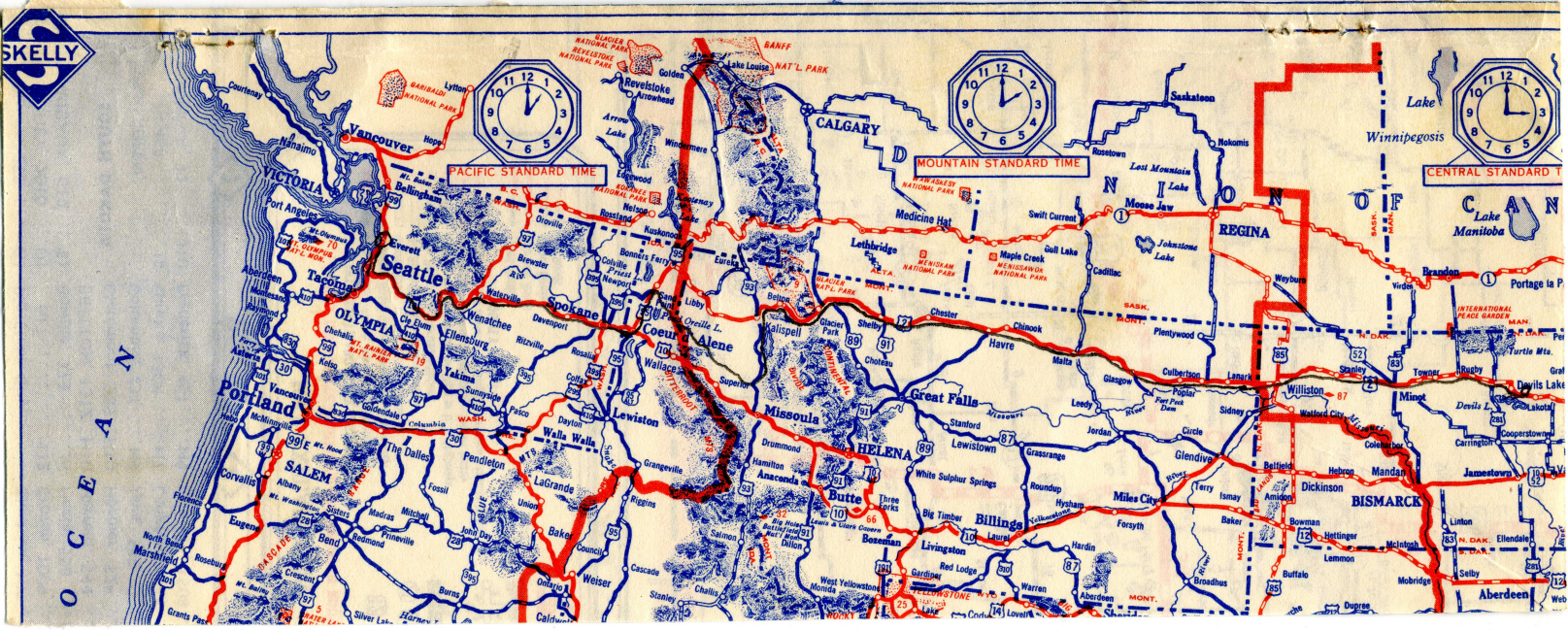
1020 Mt. Cannon, Lake McDonald, Glacier National Park, Mont.



CRAZY NORTH DAKOTA to SEATTLE WASH.
1500 miles - 45 hops - 5 days - 4 states - on \$3.92

MY THANKS TO THE COURTESY OF AMERICAN
MOTORISTS

Thorold Dahl



October 2 Crary to Bainville, Mont.

Stamps \$.12
Hotel --- Bainville 1.00

October 3 Bainville to Inverness

Candy --- Glasgow05
Candy --- (for crippled boy) --- .05
Pop ---05
Room --- Inverness50

October 4 Inverness to Kalispell

Confectionery :15
Room --- Kalispell 1.00
Cards ,15

October 5 Kalispell to Clark Fork

Stamps --- Plains05
Eats --- Trout Creek --- .10
Ice Cream05

October 6 Clark Fork to Everett

Breakfast --- Trout Creek --- .20
Lunch --- Spokane --- .20
Lunch --- Waterville --- .10
Supper --- Everett --- .15

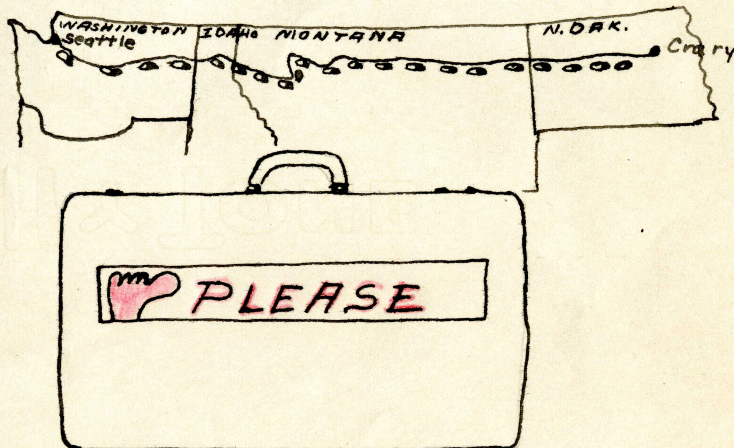
Total \$3.92

Total miles travelled 1497

Total number of rides 45

Longest ride (Sandpoint to Seattle) 4 1/2 miles

Shortest ride (Minot) 1 mile



A young man and his girl
High school students
A farmer

North Dakota state
fire inspector

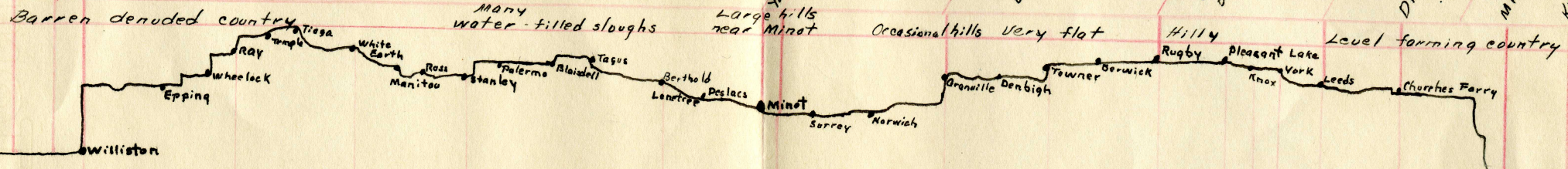
Young boy in an old Model T
Rancher in International
truck hauling sheep to Minot

Truck driver in Chev. truck
bound for Velva to gauge coal.

Old bowshanked farmer
bound for Brandon/Manitoba

Drummer in Les Ferleys
Orchestra

Mrs. Ryall & husband
kids to school



Rain 5:20 4:45 4:15 3:45 Began to rain 3:00 2:20 Clear 12:30 12:30 1:15 Rain east wind 12:00 11:00 11:20 10:50 10:45 10:30 10:30 Cleared up. Very cool 9:50 Cloudy looked like rain 9:30 Devils Lake 9:00 8:10

It was getting dark and misting when I came to Williston. However, I walked on the highway anyway, being determined to make Montana the first night. I rode with a farmer about 3 miles. I was next picked up by a group of high school students who took me twelve miles. They dropped me off in the wide open spaces. This was after dark and it surely was cold. After thumbing cars for about one half hour a young man and his girlfriend picked me up. They took me to Bainville, Montana over a hilly road at a mighty fast clip. I was somewhat frightened at the daring speed the drove over the wet pavement esp. since both were drinking beer. I reached Bainville at 6:45 - 300 miles from home!!

While waiting for a ride west of Minot two girls, hitchhikers walked past me on the road. After a half-hour wait I was picked up by a N. Dak. Fire inspector bound for Williston. He was at the present time inspecting school houses for possible fire hazards. Soon after leaving Minot it began to rain and continued to "pour down" all day. At Lonetree, N. Dak. not a solitary tree was visible. I looked for the "lone" one but it must have died! East of Stanley many coulees and sloughs were water-filled indicating a heavy rainfall during the summer. At Ray we passed the site of some oil well diggings. The wells had now been abandoned. Western N. Dak. looked extremely barren and God-forsaken that cold rainy afternoon I passed through. Farm homes were very few and far between. The land was barren, rocky and fields of stunted corn had been left untouched as mute evidence of a severe drought. Here and there I noticed some farmsteads that had been deserted and forsaken. My generous host was very talkative and we talked and chatted while driving through the rain over the prairies. He was especially peeved at this time though because he had just divorced his wife (a Catholic) because of religious complications that entered into their married life. He gave me one of the most forceful and best lectures against Catholicism I've ever heard.

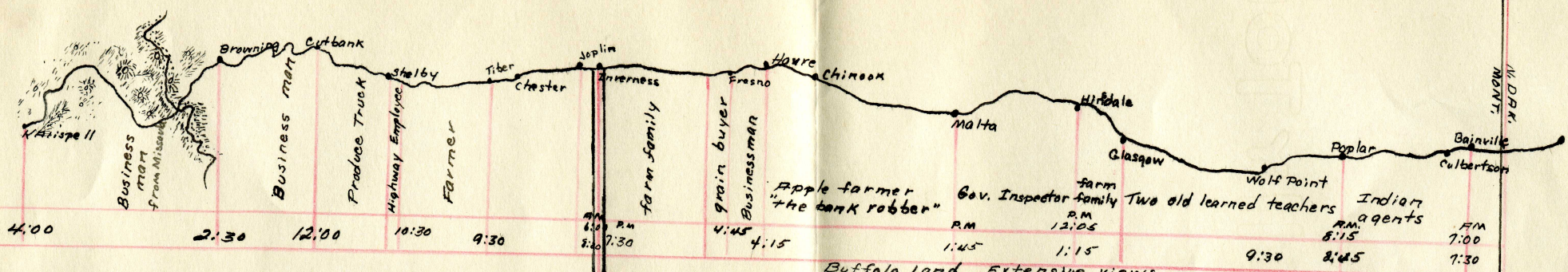
When we came to Grenville the school children and business men were coming back from their dinners. I waited on the highway 45 minutes for my next ride. In the meantime I topped off my dinner with some more sandwiches. A rancher next picked me up in an International pickup truck with three sheep in back that he was hauling to Minot. He took me to the east edge of Minot. I started to walk into town stopping once to "josh" with an old man who was digging potatoes nearby. A young boy in an old Model T gave me my next hop into town. I mailed a card that I had written at Branville.

I stopped on the highway south of Rugby and waited for 20 minutes for the next ride. In the interim I "dug out" some cheese sandwiches and munched them. Here I was picked up by a coal truck driver. He was bound for Velva where he purchased coal for \$1.50 #TON. The highway was strewn here and there with many places with coal chunks that had fallen off the trucks. We met as many as 20 coal trucks on this short hop. Occasionally large hills could be seen. South of Denbigh are some large hills and weird land formations called the Denbigh Dunes. There were lots of snakes on the highway in this vicinity. The sun had now come out nice and warm.

I had a very fast and very pleasant ride to Leeds. When I got there the clouds were breaking up and the sun coming out. I waited on the highway west of Leeds for 1/2 hr. talking to people who walked by in the meantime. Suddenly after growing somewhat impatient a big ancient sedan came along driven by an old man whose size and age were in proportion. He was headed for Brandon, Manitoba to look after farming interests there. Harvest work up there had been delayed by a very early snowfall. Land appeared to be getting hillier. Considerable road construction. Near Pleasant Lake about 4 spots - dead

On Monday October 2, 1939 (8:00 a.m.) I started out on this hectic adventuresome goosechase my destination being Seattle (1600 miles away) my only ticket being my thumb! Rain clouds were in the sky that October morning. After eating a hearty breakfast and doing my last minute packing I said goodbye! I rode with the school kids (Clarence, Everett D, Raymond, Edgar Brein, and Lyle Dahl) to the highway 1 mile south of Crary. No sooner had they turned around when an old former school teacher (Mrs. Ryall) and her new husband picked me up taking me to Devils Lake. They were headed for Bismarck before returning to their home in Hayward Wisconsin. Visited with Steve Valborg and Norman in D.L. While walking out to the highway I met Morris Peters.

CANADA
MONTANA



Cloudy clear After sunrise (Dark) Bright sunshine Beginning to clear Rain Very Foggy

Buffalo Land Extensive views Rolling range land Extensive dry wheat section

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4

I checked out of the hotel at Anverness at 6:00 a.m. and went promptly down to the highway 1/2 mile south of town. It was a most beautiful morning - the sun was just peering over the eastern horizon and a gorgeous and colorful aurora brightened the eastern sky. A cool Chinook breeze was blowing. All that marred a perfectly flat landscape was a range of Blue Grass hills towards the north. Roosters were crowing, cow bells ringing and across the prairies I could hear farmers calling their cows. One farmer could plainly be heard swearing vociferously at some troublesome bull that had gone astray. While waiting on the highway two very charming high school girls came by on their way to school.

At 8:20 I caught a ride to Joplin. Caught ride to Chester and thence to Tiber - the latter ride with an old farmer in an old Durant car.

A farmer with a truck full of empty oil barrels next picked up and would have taken me to Shelby had not we run out of gasoline within 1 mile of Shelby. I shouldered my heavy suitcase and the farmer and I started to walk into town (10:30) we thumbed a highway employee who took us north of town to an oil refinery.

A young boy in a produce truck gave me my next ride to Cutbank - the center of Montana's oil fields. Derricks and pumping jacks could be seen at work everywhere. I leaned against a lamp post talking to a young boy while waiting for my next ride which took me to Browning. Browning is a great Indian town in the Flathead Indian Res. The high mts. of Glacier Park are plainly visible from here although it was somewhat hazy that afternoon. I hunted up Russ Boyd in Browning. While waiting for my next ride John Lost Sun and also two of his fellow Indians, all of them thoroughly illuminated offered me a ride and a swig of Indian whisky. I refused. I was next picked up and taken to Kalispell through Glacier Park the fast clip - 70 m.p.h.

The country west of Glasgow is rich in history and fairly breathes with the color, drama and romance that characterized Montana in the early late 30's. Here is the center of the now extinct Bison ranges. Life here though still is typically "western" with silver dollars, 10 gallon hats and lots of colorful ranch talk.

When I reached Hinsdale the sun came out beautifully - the first sunshine I had seen since I left Missoula - 300 miles back along the way! Hinsdale is a pleasant little hamlet with the Milk River to the north and a range of high hills to the south. It was especially pleasant to me because the sun had now come out nice & warm and every thing smelled fresh and fragrant after the rain. Then again there were at least some trees in this town. The trees along the Milk River were just turning color and presented a picture in sharp contrast to the barren bleak prairies I had just travelled across.

I received a very fast ride to Malta, a lively cow town in the past, with a government inspector of reclamation projects.

North of Malta I stood on a bridge over the Milk River in the shade of some very large trees that were part of the picnic grounds. I was picked up by an uncouth man in a truck. He stopped north of Malta next to Kid Curry's saloon to transfer a sack of money from the cab into the rear of the truck. He acted very suspicious about it and I was very puzzled and somewhat concerned over what could possibly be in store for me now. As we drove through the irrigated sugar beet country to Havre it so developed that he was an apple farmer in the Bitter Root valley and had just sold a truck load of apples.

A heavy mist was falling while we were stranded out on the broad prairies north of Poplar. One of the truck drivers went back to Poplar while the other set out flares to protect the disabled truck. In the meantime I thumbed the oncoming cars.

It was not long however, before two erudite old school teachers came along in a Chev. coupe and gave me a lift. One of the men was especially well versed in the classics while driving across the dreary prairies through the rain, he entertained us with the recitation of excerpts of the Vision of Sir Launfal and the poems of the late Paul Dunbar. We stopped at Wolf Point for gasoline.

We came to Glasgow at 10:45. While walking up a main street people surely did "gawk" at my sign (PLEASE). A heavy rain had fallen during the night; water was standing everywhere. It was beginning to clear up in the west now.

A farm family next picked me up. I sat in the back seat next to an old Indian. A wheel rolled off!

TUESDAY OCTOBER 3

After eating a light lunch I checked out of the hotel and ventured forth into the murky darkness at 7:00 o'clock. The fog was thick as mush that morning. It had rained a lot during the night. I walked one-half mile out to the highway and it began to rain after which I sought shelter under a sign board. It was but a short time when two Indian agents came along in two trucks. They were being transferred from the Ft. Belknap reservation near Havre. The first of these trucks stopped and picked me up.

At Culbertson we stopped and had the trucks greased. We also turned our watches back an hour here.

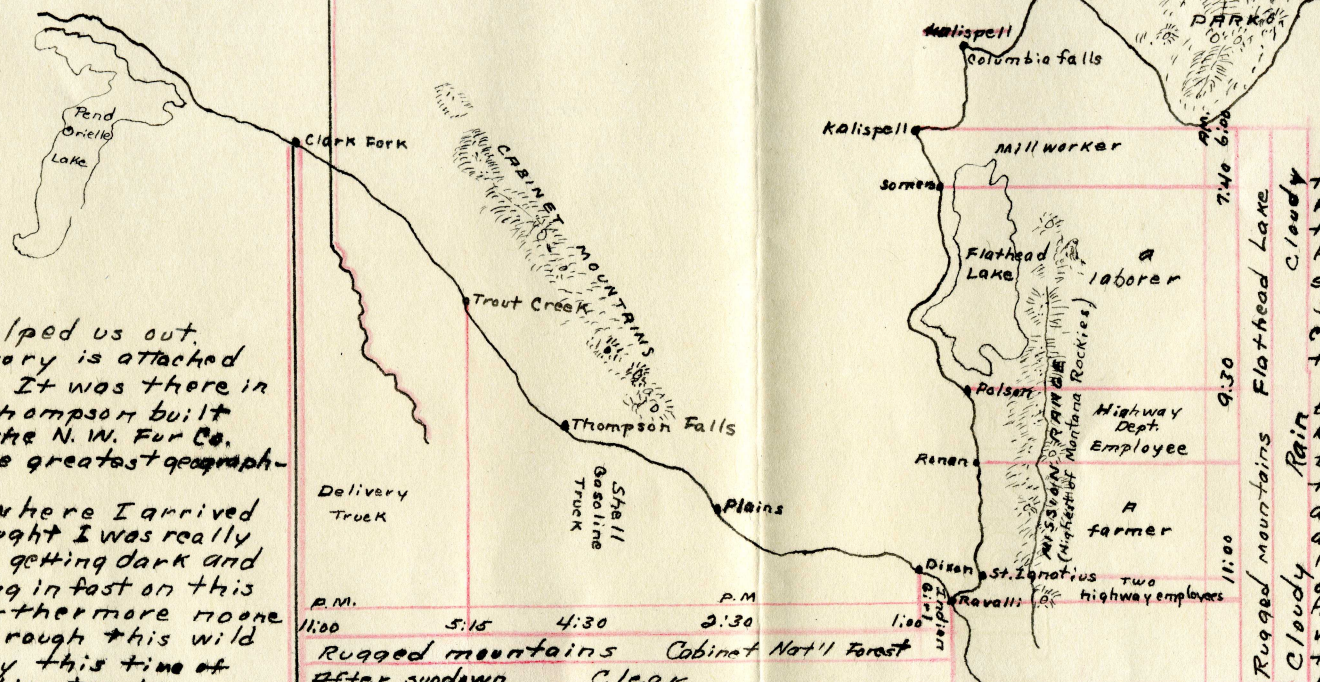
However we were soon on our way speeding over the rolling bench land at a break neck rate of speed. We passed through Poplar, an Indian town. The road here skirted the Missouri river.

While speeding along 60 m.p.h. 1 mile north of Poplar the right front axle broke and a wheel rolled off!

traveller who helped us out. Considerable history is attached to Thompson Falls. It was there in 1809 that David Thompson built Salish House for the N. W. Fur Co. He is known as the greatest geographer of his time.

At Trout Creek where I arrived at 5:15 P.M. I thought I was really stranded. It was getting dark and shadows were closing in fast on this lonely outpost. Further more no one was travelling through this wild and "wooly" country this time of night. After waiting two hours a young chap in a delivery truck came from the opposite direction from what I was headed and offered me a ride 45 miles along my way. He was an employee of a creamery in Clark Forks Idaho and delivered groceries and supplies to isolated backwoods farmers in the mountains, picking up farm produce along his route too. I helped him open gates, load cream cans, egg crates etc; one place three of us loaded a ton of feed on the truck. One place we were given turpines of delicious cake; at another stop we helped ourselves to fruit that was offered us. These people were isolated and were mighty glad to see visitors. We had to talk over the world series as latest war developments before we left. We came to Clark Fork at 11:00 & the only hotel was filled!

IDaho MONTANA



11:00 P.M. Rugged mountains After sundown
 5:15 Cabinet Nat'l Forest Clear
 4:30
 2:30 P.M.
 1:00
 After an hour wait at Ravalli a very charming Indian girl picked me up taking me to Dixon. A driver of a Shell gasoline truck picked me up next. At Plains my host stopped to fill up his tanks. I mailed a card and walked up the road trying to hook a ride. I didn't have any luck, however, and was again picked up by the gasoline truck and given a ride to Trout Creek. At Thompson Falls I helped the driver unload a barrel of kerosene. A snappy high school band in full regalia was rehearsing on the park green when we went through.
 At 4:30, 10 miles north of Thompson Falls in the isolated mountain wilds a freeze plug blew out and we lost all the water in the radiator. We were only about 200 feet from water but that was directly below us in the Clark Fork River. We failed passing

GLACIER

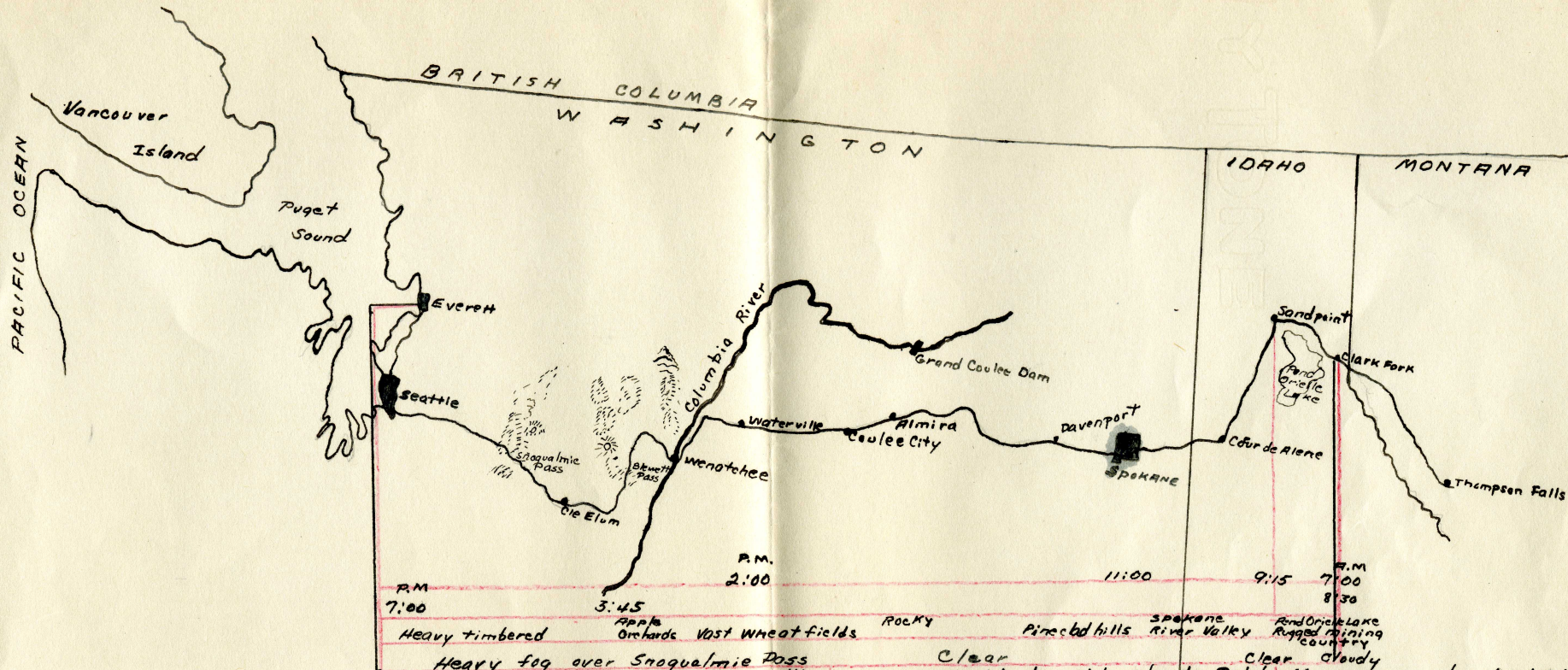
NATIONAL PARK

THURSDAY OCTOBER 5

Kalispell, Montana is a beautiful town hemmed in on all sides by high mountain ranges. It is in the heart of the fertile Flathead river valley. The soil here seems to be of a purplish hue, straw stacks, hundreds of them could be seen in the shadow of tall pines and lofty mountains. A cool south wind was blowing that morning I left Kalispell. I left without any breakfast but caught a ride to Somers where I parked beside a berry bush by the roadside and fared fine. Somers is a lumber town on the north end of beautiful Flathead lake. Flathead lake is the largest fresh water inland lake in the U.S. To the east of the lake is the lofty Mission Range - the

Flathead Lake
Rugged mountains
Rain
Cloudy

highest in Montana. I caught a short ride to Lakeside (8:20) School children were on their way to classes as I waited on the highway nearby. A laborer next picked me up taking me to Polson. The mountains to the east were snow-covered. This part of the country comprises the Flathead Indian Reservation. Many Indians are living in old skin tepees. A highway department employee picked me up taking me to Renan where it began to rain. However high up in the mountains to the east snow could be seen falling. A farmer next took me along the straight road through the level Flathead valley to St. Ignatius. A catholic mission was established here in 1853. Two highway employees next took me to Ravalli. I rode in the back of their pick-up truck



Heavy fog over Snoqualmie Pass
 Driving west across the rolling plains of eastern Washington we saw several farmers seeding winter wheat. Davenport the trade center for an extensive dairy, livestock and wheat country. Coulee city is the gate way to the scenic Grand Coulee region, one of the outstanding geological wonders of the U.S. Grand Coulee dam 20 miles north is being built across a tremendous chasm 4 1/2 mile across. We saw Moses Coulee and both of us marvelled at the tremendous gorges and deep chasms. It was especially beautiful that bright autumn afternoon. At Waterville we stopped for lunch. Near Wenatchee we reached out of the car windows and plucked ripe apples from trees along the road. The drive over Blewett was especially thrilling.

As we crossed Snoqualmie Pass it began to get dark. We reached Seattle at 7:00 and after bidding my gracious host farewell I ran 9 blocks to the bus depot and got there in time to catch a 7:30 Vancouver bus to Everett. I reached Everett at about 8:00 - the end of my dramatic odyssey.

Plains were wreathed with clouds. Patches of snow could be seen here and there. I refused a ride to Wenatchee by two drunken men. At 8:30 however I caught a ride to Sandpoint with some S. Dak. people. The road skirting the Pend Oreille lake was especially scenic. When I came to Sandpoint the sun had come out beautifully. The leaves and grass glistened in the sunshine that followed an early morning rain storm.

I stood on a bridge south of Sandpoint for a while and at 9:15 was picked up by a Chicago banker bound for Seattle!! I surely was thrilled when I heard that. He had a brand new V-8 and was very talkative and accommodating. I knew I was in for a very interesting trip. It was also a most perfect day.

At Spokane we stopped to get gasoline; I also treated my host to a lunch. I reached the Evergreen State crossing the Washington-Idaho line at exactly 10:30 A.M. (AST.)

My generous host at Clark's Fork, Sig Nelson took me in for the night. Before calling it a day he took me into Fred's tavern where we had lunch. Here we got a glimpse of night life in an old time frontier saloon. People here, some of them at least, seemed to be 50 years behind time in cultural development and social grace. The wild carryings on of some of the uncouthed men and women crazed with drink was amusing to say the least.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 5
 I got up at 6:30, said good bye to Sig Nelson who was still sleeping. I thanked Mrs. Nelson and went out on the road. I hoped to reach Wenatchee that day.

The cool pine scented mountain air did my nostrils good that cloudy morning I walked west of town to a vantage point on a bridge. This is silver mining country. Mountains were all around. Those to the north