

TWO DAY TRIP TO CROWN KING AMONG BRADSHAW MOUNTAINS.

This is one of Don Parke's recent letters,
written May 21, 1938, at Phoenix, Ariz.

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Hello Folks:

How to begin-- How to begin-- I guess the best plan is just to start at the moment it all came up and go on from there. Don't know whether or not this will beat my cards to you but even if it does I've just got to write while it is fresh in my mind. I imagine I am getting "Hail Columbia" from every one for not having written before but hope that I will be forgiven after this is completed.

Wednesday afternoon I was sitting here just starting a letter when some one hellowed from the foot of the stairs to see if I was in. He came up and I found it was Bill Boyle, a young fellow living about one mile from here. His father is a doctor, but they can't make the proceeds of a 20 acre citrus grove pay much more than expenses so have given it over to the management of Bill and his parents come out here for the winter months. They have built a beautiful home on the property and Bill batches most of the time. I have not been very intimate with him but we stop to talk once in a while.

He sat down and rolled a smoke then said "How would you like to go up to Crown King for a couple of days" Says I "Fine - where is it and when do we start"? Says he, "About 90 miles and we start right now - get some heavy clothes and let's get going" Says me, "OK" Just like that and within 20 minutes we were on the way. Talk about a couple of hair brained kids - we certainly made a fine example. But as I've always said before, "A quick party is a happy party".

Here is the set-up as Bill explained it to me on the way. Some short time ago one of his friends gave him a 4 room house but he was unable to get a deed to the land since it was claimed and patented by the Big Bee Mining CO. Bill finally made a deal for a little lot about 50 yards away across the gulch and it was his plan to tear down the house, cart it across, rebuilding it there. He had been up there two days previously and had it about half torn down; so we were to finish it this time. I offered to stand my share of the expenses but Bill said he would work it out of me and anyway it was his idea and headache, if any. That was plenty OK with me and that is just what it amounted to. Spent just 24cent on the whole trip for postcards home that I might have proof of my visit via postmark.

Bill has a light Dodge pick-up in which we piled our duffle and grub - laid a set of double bed springs over the box and wired it on for the trip, then when we got there we just laid about one half inch of newspapers on the springs, two rugs over that and four blankets over that. The addition of 4 more blankets for cover made our bed and we strung the (unreadable text) tent to four conveniently located Juniper trees right over the bed so we didn't have to worry about kicking rattlesnakes or lizards out before we crawled in. It sure made a grand bed and we slept like the proverbial logs. Plenty of storage space in the truck box right under us and everything completely under control. - But I am getting a heck of a long ways ahead of myself - Let's go back.

It was nearly 4 o'clock by the time we were loaded up and Bill was afraid we would not get there before dark. Only 90 miles but 3 ½ hours of daylight were not too many for the roads we had to follow, so he said. So started out Route No. 69 and followed it past Bumble Bee to the first snake track wiggling off to the left. Saw a new rock formation on the first part of the ride not more than 15 miles out of Phoenix. The desert is perfectly level and quite free from stones any larger than your fist but occasionally we would pass a huge pile of boulders from 60 to 100 feet high and extending about a quarter mile, each pile composed of dull purple rocks about the size of the car – just seemed to be piled up there for no good reason at all. I have got to find out how come. The stones seem to be entirely alien to anything else in the surrounding country.

An occasional house appeared from time to time – usually under a couple of Palo Verdes in brilliant yellow bloom, but these were so scattered as to be practically nonexistent after the first five or six miles. It is amazing to see how quickly homes dwindle out upon leaving the irrigation system. Reminds more than a little of the “Valley of Shang-Ro La” in Lost Horizon. The valley itself is very thickly populated but the surrounding country is entirely arid insofar as human sustenance is concerned. An eagle nursing a pair of sore feet was spotted on top of a Saguaro and more than a few scrawny buzzards circled in dejection overhead. Outside of that we were alone with our floating trail of dust. We passed one car, one passed us and we met not more than 10 on the whole trip going up. The road used to be the main highway to Prescott but since the improvement of Route 89 very few use it at present.

We had made Rock Springs in just an hour, so stopped at the one and only store and habitation which comprised the town for some butter bread a few cans of soup and vegetables. The building itself is of cement bricks which is quite unusual in this section as they are mostly adobe corrugated iron or scrap lumber, and it is placed just off the road to the left beside a spring of clear cool water. From the rafters inside hung everything from pots and pans, thru fan belts to cow boy chaps of split leather. The post office was cuddled down in a latticed partition against the huge meat refrigerator, and the rest of the store stock was scattered around wherever it happened to land. Among other things we asked for a can opener, and after 5 minutes of rummaging he appeared from under a pile of junk in one corner with the desired utensil held triumphantly overhead. The poor kid who waited on us hadn't had such a long column of figures to add since he had been there I guess and after making the total three times with three different results he tossed Bill the pencil, wiped the perspiration off his upper lip and said, “ Here, you tote and pay, I have to pump some gas” backing away from the list of figures with positive horror in his eyes. Honest to gosh.

After losing a half hour here we again got under motion. Immediately we begin circling thru dry washes and crossing cattle guards. Kept steadily climbing and crossed the dry bed of the Agua Fria river, past Joe's hill - a high comical mound of red limestone – into Bumble Bee.

This little town was just sprinkled over the sands, and they even neglected to leave an occasional Saguaro to break the roof angles and glare of the white paint. A group of 6 white cottages, three on a side, faced a community front lawn at the left of

the highway. Another group of 5 facing the (unreadable text) road lined the other side. That is Bumble Bee. But it is still the nicest and cleanest of any of these places. All that supports it is the mining in the hills but the claims are rich and don't go feeling sorry for them stuck away out here alone. Present day isolation doesn't amount to much with Phoenix only 80 minutes away by road and 20 by air. An electric power line has been put thru this whole route within the past six months and even in Crown King they have nice glittering refrigerators and smooth sounding radios. The West may be losing its romance but there is still plenty here if you know where to look for it. Wait a while you will find out –

Six miles out of Bumble Bee we left our nice 30 ft graded road and hit the 12 footer we were to follow into Crown King. Still nicely graded and smooth but, WOO – just like that we wallowed thru the hairpins and steep grades into the mountains proper. From some time we had been watching the approach of the huge range to the Northwest and when Bill told me that Crown King was snuggled down into a little basin right in the top of that range I wondered if Chrysler Inc. Motor Stock was going to make the grade. If Wall Street had no more trouble than that little Dodge did we would know nothing of depressions – but low gear is still a very handy thing to have at times.

We had been skidding around hairpin turns at the bottom of gulches, around the sides of cliffs, hanging on by the quiver of a breath over thousand foot drops, and gulping away the sudden changes in atmosphere for quite some time, when Bill mentioned the casual fact that we were following the old road bed of the Santa Fe Railroad. I very quickly poo-hooed such an idea – it just is not possible that a train ever made some of those grades, but he showed me switch-backs made into the sides of the mountains where the engine would come to a sudden hairpin so sharp that a railroad car could not possibly make the bend but would continue up a spur until the caboose had passed the elbow then they would reverse the engine, switch the caboose to the upper side, back up the grade into another switchback then go into (unreadable text) forward speed to the one following, and so on to the top of that particular range. Then reverse the process down the other side only to repeat it going up the next. Whatalife Whatalife. I think I have a couple of pictures of it but you can't get an idea of the grade of the road bed. All you will be able to see will be the angle of the turn I imagine.

By the time we got to Cleator we had come up out of the Saguaros and into the scrub oak. Much Cholla, prickly pear and Palo Verde in bloom and the purple of the sage brush clustered against the sides of many rocks and boulders. Huge rolling mountains on all sides of us and more beyond in view. Cleator, by the way, is mentioned in the Bible, did you know? It is at least, a city with streets of gold. As with all those mountain towns the only "raison d'etre" is mining, and this particular town's main and only street is graded with very high content gold bearing ore. One of the inhabitants for quite a while would go out into the road and dig up a couple of wheel barrows of the road, fill it in with some of the surrounding desert and take the pavement home where he would roll it out in a little hand operated ball-mill. He averaged a little over \$3 a day for a little over three hours work but the citizens put a stop to it when others started doing the same.

I don't know how to describe the country around here. Zane Greys stories have the reputation of over the emphasis in this line but I am telling you, they are

wrong, it can't be done. Can you imagine a country with such sudden changes in temperatures and altitude that during the winter months you can leave one section in a glare of summer sun and in three hours drive to an average daily snow fall of two feet? That is what Crown King gets, and only 90 miles by road, about 45 by air, from Phoenix, the heart of the Valley of the Sun.

Out of Cleator and up more grades, around more switch backs, across more divides, until we hit the opening of (unreadable text) the abandoned tunnel which leads into Crown King. Bill said when we came around the point of rock which this tunnel bored we would see the first of the timber in Prescott National Forest. It almost seemed that a line had been drawn thru the point of that cut straight down into the abysmal depths of Hells Hole and up the side of the facing mountain cutting off the desert growth and the Pines and Junipers. Hells Hole, by the way, drops almost straight from the edge of the road over one thousand feet down into the bottom of the canyon which isn't over half a mile across. They say there is a spring and pool down there but it is a good two hours ride by horse to get to it and the abandoned town is all that remains to show a past habitation. When the ore gave out the company just packed up their men and what they could carry under their arms, said "O NUTS" and walked out. Left machinery barber chairs and canned goods right where they were. It has been gradually cleaned out by the people living at Crown King. I saw the barber chair that was salvaged by Tom Anderson – more about him later.

Finally came around another drunken curve and topped a small rise to find a sign stating that the Crown King Mercantile Company, biggest little store in town was just a quarter of a mile ahead. So was the rest of the town – and it was the only store. A two story frame hotel and bar and four houses, one of which was the converted saloon and still bore the sign "Mothers Place" above the false front, comprised the community. Old Tom had very enterprisingly taken the ties from the old railroad bed and constructed one of the most substantial carpenter shops I ever saw, up against the sides of the two huge 20,000 gallon steel tanks abandoned when the big mines shut down. The R.R. station had fallen in and been carted off piece by piece for mine timbers and patching up the houses still inhabited. And that's Crown King. It is right at the hollow of a group of mountains about 400 feet below the crest and completely surrounded on all sides. The gap thru which you enter overlaps the side of another so that when you stand in the middle of the open space before the store you can see an opening anywhere around. Don't believe that the basin is more than a mile across from rim to rim in any direction. Does that give you a picture? Hope so but have my doubts.

We pulled around the corner of the abandoned railroad trestle, jerked thru the dry gulch around another jog in the rock to see the little white school house on our left. Bills lot is just west of the school yard so we rolled across the play ground and parked the truck between four very conveniently placed Junipers. Then followed the camp pitching after which we built a fire place and cooked our supper of a can of pork and beans mixed with another of spaghetti to which was added half a stick of bologna sausage. Right here is where I found out one of the many uses for the big hats worn in the West. I used mine for fanning the fire and bringing water from the creek to wash dishes. (We boiled the water mother so I guess it was all right) We had forgotten a pail in our rush and all our pans were busy at the time. Next day we managed to borrow a pail for the remainder of our stay.

As we sat there eating Bill was telling me some of the history of the place and above all warning me to treat these people as equals. If you only knew how superior they are to us in some ways I would not have to warn you, he said. But just remember that they are not ignorant by any means. They are quite sensitive to anything approaching a sneer or giggle and if you want to get to know them and be liked by them you have got to let them lead the way. Very good advice, altho I think I might have acted that way without the coaching. But I was darned careful and let Bill do most of the talking until they got used to me. Think that within the next ten years or so, if I get up there once or twice a month, I may be able to do about as I please; but at the present I am still an outsider to most of them. A very reticent group to say the least. But why should they hurry and answer your every question anyway? If they dont say it today there is always tomorrow and there is no use rushing things.

By the time we had finished erecting the tent it was dark so we cooked and ate by firelight, then after watching the stars duck behind more and more cumulus clouds we decided to go to bed and pray that it didn't rain too, hard during the night. If it had I think we would have spent most of the night inside the cab of the truck because that was more of a hope than a protection – not ripped but very porous to say the least. We crawled in and ripped off our shoes but retained the rest of our clothes for the present. Anyone trying to go further that night would have frozen to a stick before getting between the quilts anyway. And I mean it was cold. We pulled the flaps shut, the covers over our heads and in about two seconds I was sound asleep. No foolin it was sumpin. Woke up about 3 o'clock and saw the moon shining thru the side so knew that the rain had gone past us but it was still plenty cold. Any bears that might have investigated our beds that night would have had to pull the blankets out of his teeth before finding much to eat; but none did.

The morning found us lying there with a nose and eye a piece sorta sizing up the prospects of getting up, and finally to the accompaniment of a bawling calf which had been unceremoniously tossed over the corral fence by a neighbors wife, we crawled out shivered into our britches and I started a fire while Bill peeled potatoes and sliced bacon. Did that grub ever have a taste. But I could hardly eat for watching the lights and shadows on the surrounding mountains as the absolutely brilliant white clouds cast their shadows in passing between them and the sun. Purples, greens, reds, greys, browns. In fact, as Bill said, "Everything but a Scotch Plaid". And the sounds of all the unfamiliar mountain birds as they shot from tree to tree (Gosh but it seemed good to see woods again) and the rustle in the leaves as the striped lizards scampered around just made that much more diversion.

Breakfast over and the dishes washed we picked up the pinch bars and hammers and crossed the gulch to the wreckage of the house. It was about 100 ft above our camp site and not over 200 yards away but to get the lumber from where it was to where he wanted it he had to truck and drag it a good half mile around by the so called road. Less road than what passes for one at the worst spots leading from the farm at Barton over the hill to Smith road.

Pretty soon old Tom Anderson came up thru the pines and showed us how to attack the flooring without spoiling the boards and from there on we were on

our own. Guess we worked until about noon, grabbed a bite to eat and back at it. By night we had it finished but both so tired that we didn't feel like cleaning it up before supper. Knocked off at about 5, cleaned up as best we could and ate. It was not dark yet so we walked up the hill along the old road to Prescott until we came to a ramblin corrugated iron roof frame house sprawled along the side of the hill almost completely surrounded by a beautiful little garden of asters, begonias roses and almost any type familiar at home. – Typically New England in architecture and landscaping; proving what? I dunno. Anyway there we found Grant and Whistle, two boys who are running cows for their father while he works in the mine. You know there has been a lot said in favor of cow punchers – romance – singing around the chuck wagon – riding at full gallop – rescuing the girl from the bold bad rustler – etc. But that is all plains punchin – you had just ought to see what they do up here – The cattle are turned out to graze on the scrub and then the boys go out and try to find them. If you dont think that's a laugh! Three duds (yeah, I know – I'm one too) came up here a couple of years ago pitched their camp then walked up on top of the mountain to watch the sun set. When they came down to go to bed they couldn't find their blankets or horses, knew they were right there when they went up but gone when they came down. They decided they had been robbed so slept the night out as best they could and started down to town the next morning to report their loss. Rounded a boulder not 30 ft from where they had spent the night and there were their bed rolls just as they had left them and the horses munching some bunch grass beside them. Now tell us how in the dickens they can find cattle after they are once turned loose.

And there is none of this rope swinging either – no room for one thing, and the darned cows would kill a horse anyway, and you cant drive them in a bunch after you do round them up so they build a succession of trap corralls around the hills, put a hunk of cattle salt in the center and hope that an occasional cow will stroll into it. When they find one there they rope it to a tree for the night and in the morning it is a very docile bovine indeed. They try to get away of course and bang their horns against the trunk of the tree, by morning those horns are pretty sore appendages and a rope passed around them makes a very good rudder. If there is a market for the animal they will take it home, if it is about to calf likewise but if it is a range calf without a brand they heat up the iron slap it down and kick her bawling out in the scrub again. No one knows just how many head of cattle he has nor where any of them are. Grant and Whistle have an area of about 40 square miles to go whenever they really want a few cattle. This ground has been fenced in for range purposes and when one of them starts out he is totally alone until he comes back in. Once before when Bill was up there he met Whistle and said, "Where is Grant" "O, out riding" came from the ruminating brother. "When will be be back" from Bill brought the laconic "three – four days probably" GOSH, did I say no romance? Maybe I'm wrong.

But when you see those two kids, about 20 years old, rugged as all get-out, dressed in levis and sweat stained hats strolling around in common heavy work shoes instead of riding boots, with an old faded blue denim shirt waving in the breeze they look and act no differently from any other young fellow making his living on a farm. There is no plowin or harvesting to do tho – that ought to be some inducement to a Western life, but anybody that thinks wrestling a yearling heifer for a living is fun may have my share of it. Especially when mamma is on the other side of the corral just blowing fire to climb on your back and show you whats who.

Anyway we sat there against the side of the barn, me doing all the listening, while they chewed over all the recent dances for 60 miles around and how many miles they could get out of the respective brands of auto tires on these roads (ten thousand is a whale of a long run, by the way) and whether the range would stay thru the summer or would burn up before long unless we had some rain, until long after dark. Bill and I were in our leather jackets but the other boys just in their shirt sleeves and seemed to mind the chill not at all. Finally we couldn't stand it any longer tho and started home. They wouldn't hear to that and asked us in the house for a while. I didn't want to go home anyway so we went in. It isn't often the boys have company their own age with exception of Saturday nights when they drive or ride any where up to 60 miles to a school house dance.

Honest, they will work all day Saturday from 4 AM until they can skim thru the chores at 4 in the afternoon, jump onto their ponies and ride to beat all skinned hades up over the mountains to Wagoner or Constelation or Briggs and get there any where from 10 to mid night, dance the rest of the night away and then ride for home and work all day Sunday to make up what they skipped Saturday. Of course if they can make it by road they will do it in their cars but it's about 12 miles to Wagoner over the mountain and more than 150 by road. I am not kidding – look it up if you dont believe me. I hate to have you always doubting my word like that. Doggone it, how do you know anyway.

About 9:30 Bill and I stumbled back down the hill by the light of the stars for our lantern and crawled into bed a couple of very tired boys. Not nearly so cold that night – we took off our pants as well as our shoes (Yeah, I know, it was the next morning we shivered into our breeches) instead of that morning as I said before) How do you expect me to keep every little detail straight anyway.

After breakfast we just loafed around for a while as we had only a little more to do on the house so didn't get up there until nearly 10. Had finished ripping it apart by noon so brought our tools back and stored them in the car. I forgot to say that for breakfast that morning we had fried potatoes and fried canned oysters. I dont know why we didn't die – must be the mountain air. For lunch the day before we had more steak than we could eat so saved the balance and made a whale of a mulligan for supper. We sure lived high for a bunch of mountaineers. I weighed 168 by the store scales when I went in and 170 when I came out two days later. We decided to come back down to the valley that afternoon, or rather I did. Bill didn't want to leave after working me all that time and thought we ought to have some fun now. However, I didn't want to be away from home too long for fear that something might come up and anyway I knew there would be a couple of letters waiting for me so we came back to town. Bill said there were two fellows I must meet before we left and see if we couldn't get a story or two out of them. One of them he casually mentioned was Walter Tewkesberry, the man about whom Zane Grey wrote his story "To the Last Man" Just casually like – he mentioned it; and I didn't dare take a picture of him for fear of offending him. Never mind, I will get up there again when we start rebuilding the cabin and maybe we will get one then. He is just a little fellow, mostly bald and his most distinctive characteristic is his age stained brown tobacco juice front shirt. Not a romantic appearance by any means but what a whale of a story his life has been. Read

that book and you will have it –I cant tell you here. The feud ended around the section which is now Mesa, just 18 miles from Phoenix.

Then we went over and sat on the porch of Tom Andersons hotel (two guests a season is a rushing business) and listened to him spin a yarn or two. He had gotten used to me while helping us on the flooring of the cabin so I loosened up a bit. I wish I had time to tell you all the things he said but it is now 2:45 and with exception of lunch i have been at this since 10:30 this morning. I am still a long way from home too.

Tom is a stocky built Dutchman with long handlebar mustaches; work knarled hands and a shock of iron grey hair. He sat on the bench along the front of the store with his hound dog's head resting on his thick soled steel calked brogans; and whittled his way thru several yarns of this country 40 years ago.

It seems that when he came up here liquor was two shots for two bits in the "Mothers Place" next door. He was working in the mine then and after a hard days labor he always stopped in for his two bits worth on the way down to his cabin. One night he stopped in, had his drinks, and when he started out laid on the counter the two worn out star drills he had been using that day. That's two bits, he replied to the barkeeps question. The barkeep slowly nodded his head, placed them under the bar and said nothing more. A few nights later Tom laid a half dollar on the counter for his regular two shot night cap and when he started to leave the bar keep solemnly pulled out the same two star drills and said, "Your change, Tom, two bits, right". "Right," said Tom and walked out. We finally managed to pull out of town and instead of starting right down the road towards home Bill turned to the right and pulled up to the top of the rim to the South of town into a saddle of the peaks. This was on the road to Horse Thief Basin, which is quite a story in itself. It seems that this basin got its name from the presence of two brothers who used to steal all the horses they could lay their hands on up in Prescott, drive them down that far and hide out with them until the noise blew over then take them on to Phoenix and sell them in town. Upon leaving they would steal all they could down there and drive back to the basin where they would repeat the process of lying low until it was safe to take them to Prescott dispose of them and start all over again. They finally caught up with themselves tho and were granted the customary 20 feet of good rope. The buzzards took the load off the rope. Hence the name.

Well to continue, Bill drove off the side of the road and we walked a matter of 100 feet to the brink of the precipice. From here on I absolutely dont know what to say. You cant describe a thing like that with words – at least not in this amateurish fashion. Would it suffice to say that this is the spot which legend has it that Maxfield Parrish visited, sat down and mixed his daylight blue and then waited for nightfall to get his evening scenes. I can believe it but I cant describe it.

From this gap you could look down thru a mile away gap into a veritable fairyland of color. Range after range blending together until you had to stare at them for some time to pick out the different groups. The sky isn't the nice calm Arizona blue that you find in the valley. It is so brilliant that you have to squint even when looking in the ex act opposite direction from the quarter in which the sun is shining. The clouds, what there are of them, are shrieking white and so near that they seem more

solid than the land itself. (The elevation here is over a mile and a half) The distant ranges are not green or brown at all – they look like nothing that you ever saw before, but so help me I am going to see them again, and so are you all I hope. Delicate pastels pinks and tans blended into oranges and yellows. Doggone, I am getting poetical on you, but you will just have to excuse it for this time. You cant say a thing – you dont hear anything said to you – why you cant even move. Bill says that he still wants a cabin right up on the edge of that saddle and I have made him a faithful promise that I will wait until he has built it then I'll dose him with good old Colts remedy and jump his claim. If I enjoy it for only a day and a night before I have the same medicine handed out to me I will be happy and pass it on with my blessings. Without a doubt this is the most striking view I have yet seen in the past four months. I finally got my breath back took a couple of very ineffective and unexpressive pictures and got out of there. You cant stand a thing like that very long – even makes me reel a little as I sit here writing about it. Just wait, that's all I can say. Just wait until you too see that spot.

We drifted back down the hill, me changing the roll in my camera for all I was worth, and stopped about half way down where we had a clear view of what remains of the town of Crown King and the mine from which it gets its name, clinging to the slope of the opposite mountain. I thought I could see the makings of a good shot thru a couple of Junipers so clambered down over the boulders with shouted admonitions from Bill to watch out for snattlerakes (no I didn't get all mixed up – that's what they call rattlesnakes some times). Other times they call them - - - - never mind. I didn't see one tho – got my pictures and climbed back, then back down the slope past little one room shacks which come under the name of the out skirts of Crown King, and past the entrance to the villiage. Saw Grant and Whistle working on a new stone wall being built for some valley dweller who has built himself a very nice summer home there. So stopped for another few words before leaving. I knew there was lots of ore around there yet altho none of the big mines are operating right now. However I didn't realize how rich it was until Whistle broke off a piece of the wall and said "Look, this is the kind of material we work with up here" That darned piece of rock was almost solid silver ore. No wonder they don't worry too much about where their cattle wander to – what's a few head of cattle worth \$3 each when they are calves, when you can pick up stuff like that – some times. Eventually we did get away but it seemed that every hundred yards or so we would have to stop while I got out grabbed a couple of shots with the camera and jumped back in. Bill jokingly remarked that I would have the door worn off before we got to Bumble Bee so I said all right I'll ride the front fender and when I see something you slow down a bit and we will take it on the fly. From there on to Cleator I rode said fender and wore my thumb back to the first joint on the shutter trigger. Had to stoptwice to change the roll and I have made over 100 shots. They are in the cans so far but will take them to town tonight when I mail this. I only hope they come out in fair shape but if they dont the beauty of the whole thing is that I can get back up there in a couple of hours if I want to and take them all over again. I would have taken more time with them but we wouldn't have been home yet if the film had held out. Just shot everything almost indiscriminately.

It would almost seem that the return trip would be an anti climax after all we had already seen but such just isn't the case. The road always looks different from the other direction anyway and here we were coming down those gulches and gulleys that we had climed before. Once Bill leaned out the window and hollowed at me as we

swung around a steep turn. I had been leaning away over off the fender trying to catch a shot up the side of the cliff and then straight down to show just where we were when he hellowed "for gosh sakes hang on". I turned around and said "If I live thru this Bill I can spend the rest of my life hanging on" " right now I am busy taking pictures and dont bother me" I was pretty well anchored tho and there wasn't any danger. The only real thrill I got out of it was kicking a range steer on the nose to make him get out of the way. He brought us to a dead stop and then just stood there staring at us – no room to get around and "My, what big horns you have grandmother" but they are very docile on the range. The only place where you have to watch out for them is in the corralls or if you are on foot. They are the most curious beasts I have seen and once their curiosity is satisfied they soon lose interest. Anyway I got some pictures.

I dont know as there is much to say about the return trip other than I am sure glad I had my first lesson in driving mountain grades from the other side of the seat. Plenty of places where a misjudgment of a couple of feet would mean a long messy haul back up for the undertaker. But if you behave yourself and drive as a sensible person should you will have no trouble. Fortunately we didn't have to travel any of this road in the dark either way. It is really tricky at night Of course you can see the lights of any approaching car but the trouble is that you will be coming to a spur of rock your lights will shine past it and onto the road right ahead and you wont make the curve too discover the road you saw was 20 feet across a gulch whereas you should have made a cut back into the canyon. Very un-nice I imagine. Think I will travel them by day light or not at all.

We came a tootin back down the road from Bumble Bee tho and even tho it took us over an hour to make the first 20 miles out of Crown King we made the final 70 in a little over an hour and fifty minutes. Just goes to show you how quickly traveling conditions can change. Home in time for supper and I hadn't shaved since Monday noon. If any of these pictures show up at all you will think that young Donald has fallen into a pretty tough company but withhold all judgment until you see young Donald. Maybe you will feel sorry for Bill's folks. I don't know.

What do you think? Is this a country or is it? And I've still been not more than a hundred miles from Phoenix. What will we do when we get up into the canyon country and East into the Indian reservations. Just wait – you'll see.