

The oldest mountains in the United States ~~are~~ ^{found} along the eastern seaboard in the extensive Appalachian chain, and of the mountains related to this range the oldest of all are the Adirondacks in upper New York State. They are the roots and underpinnings of ancient peaks that in long past ages towered thousands of feet higher than the peaks of today. ~~But~~ Their history has been a complicated one of ^{intrusion} uplift of erosion and deposition volcanic, of ~~erosion~~ and subsidence. During ~~these~~ vast periods of time, measured in hundreds of millions of years, tectonic and thermal forces ~~have~~ worked to alter the original structure of ~~the~~ ^{these} rocks. What sediments were at onetime included in this mountain mass have either been largely washed away or altered by heat and pressure. The basement complex ~~is now exposed~~ ^{igneous} to proterozoic times of archaic/rock ~~dating back~~ ^{to} ~~probably 800 million years~~ is now exposed on the bare ~~peaks~~ ^{dark} peaks and gray fractured cliffs of the present mountains. ~~Its~~ ^{coarsely} crystalline and mineralized ~~and in places~~ ^{formations are} shot full of larger crystals of garnet, ~~black~~ ^{black} tourmaline, and black hornblende. The metamorphic limestones, granites, and gneisses with which these igneous intrusions are associated are also of ancient origin, ^{the product of} whose structures ~~were the result of~~ ^{were produced by} eons of compression and heating and annealing deep within the earth's crust, ^{until slowly} the over-lying layers ^{were} of which ~~have~~ ^{weathered} at last been stripped away. ^{and} by the grain by grain, ⁱⁿ micron by micron ~~by the imperceptible degrees~~ through the inexorable forces of erosion. ^{until they strike} ~~are now exposed~~ ^{deeper}.

In these now time-softened hills there still remain ~~the~~ features of their ancient craginess. The snow-clad peaks of the Paleozoic and again of the Mesozoic eras have been cut down~~x~~, and in more recent geological times the grinding and polishing weight of mile-thick ~~sheets~~^{narrow} of ice ~~has~~ has rounded and smoothed them; but ~~deep~~ rifts/~~and~~/~~chasms~~/~~chasms~~//~~holding~~/still divide the higher peaks and hold between their iron-gray sides deep blue lakes left behind by melting glaciers. ^{And} ~~Of~~ rushing torrents to this day carve sunless chasms into the adamantine rock. ^{These} These are the more severe aspects of the Adirondacks where in winter the most inhospitable ^{roaring} conditions prevail, where sudden storms ~~sweeping~~ through the windy gaps pile huge drifts and sweep clean the frozen lakes exposing a ~~filagreed~~/~~surface~~/~~of~~ cobalt-blue ~~ice~~ surface filagreed ^{with} ~~in~~/~~lines~~/~~of~~ white. The brooks become cascades of ^{yellow tinted} ~~sea~~ soup ice, frozen infusions of forest litter; the larger streams are choked with jumbles of congealed snow and ~~ice~~ blocks o f ice; and ~~everywhere~~ ^{wherever} on the ~~faces~~/~~of~~ cliffs ~~wherever~~ water seeps ~~like~~/~~like~~/~~like~~ a ^{curtain} tasseled fringed of icicles hang from glazed rocks.

In spring-time all changes: the ice-filled gorges become cool shaded ravines whose rocky sides reveal their shaggy coats of purple lichens and emerald mosses, and, when the first fresh-green leaves ^{unfold} ~~appear~~ ~~amongst~~ the air is filled with ~~the~~/~~song~~/~~of~~ birds songs. ~~And~~ Though the brooks have moderated, cascades and waterfalls persist providing the forested slopes with ^{a kind of movement} variety and richness that only flowing water can give. The frail white flowers of the woodlands ~~and~~ the ^{velvet} ~~uncurl~~ ~~spring~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~flowers~~

push through ~~the~~ soggy ~~banks~~ banks of mahogany-colored pools,
made gold by a shaft of sun, ^{where} ~~and bubbles / then with the~~
~~uncurling spirals of velvety fern fronds,~~ ^{they to} border them with
a fringe of green. From each small cascade ~~a foam of bubbles~~
~~spreads out in concentric arcs of persistent bubbles,~~ ^{glistening} pearly
by the organic ~~content~~ tincture of the soil. ^P In the less rugged
southern part of the Adirondack Park the ~~land is~~ terrain is
more open and flatter ^{and here the low lands afford the}
streams, ~~flow at~~ ^{to flow at} a more liesurly pace ~~where bogs and marshes~~
~~to permit the flow in wider channels~~ and ~~to~~ back up into marshy
basins. In these boggy places ^{blooming} In the spring / Labrador Tea
whitens these boggy places ^{while} at the same time that the tamaracks
~~are a tender green~~ ^{plush} is enveloping the tamaracks. In the
margins of the bogs, among the ~~of~~ ^{murdered by last years etc.} sedges, close to the mat of / wet
decaying leaves ^{of last year} of the year before, violets grow in a purple / ~~profusion~~
later in the spring
profusion. And / ~~in the~~ second growth woods on higher ground, ^{over}
~~on the stumps and fallen logs~~ ^{rotting} the trailing vines of Linnea
^{most unusual} forgotten
covers the rotting stumps and ~~fallen~~ logs with trailing vines
perfuming
and ~~perfumes~~ the air for yards about with its tiny pink flowers.
^{Before} ~~Before~~ the violets appear, ^{when} ~~while~~ the ^{trees} woods are still ~~open and bare~~
^{ghost} like the last
leafless, the ~~ash~~ ^{ghost} ~~it~~ blooms - white ghosts looming ~~through~~
unmelted drifts of snow ^{showing} ~~between~~ the bare gray trunks.

reach their
time of In the fall of the year the Adirondacks ~~reveal~~
~~their~~ greatest glory. Then the autumnal color-changes
reveal the ~~great~~ variety of the vegetation; ~~green is replaced by~~
~~browns and russets and yellows and reds~~ where before all was
green, and one leaf ^{now} scarcely distinguishable ^{in the mass} from another,
~~in the mass~~ except ^{on} by close examination, now this uniformity
is replaced by all shades of browns and russets, yellows and reds.
The hill-sides become patterns of contrasting vivid colors
~~for which to view~~ which thousands of city people travel hundreds
of miles to view. The undistinguished bushy pastures change
^{In} their character completely. The tangles of weeds, ~~and~~ creeping
vines and coarse grasses the leaves of ~~hidden~~ blueberry bushes
in the slanting rays of the sun *
glow ~~red~~ like hidden fires in the earth, and sharp blades of
~~paling grass become golden spears of light are the flames like~~
~~burned-out~~
the coals of ~~the~~ subterranean fires, ~~and~~ the sharp spears of
paling grass ~~flame up~~ are the flames above the surface. The
lichens seem to be richer in hue at this time of year, and the
forest floor when the fall of leaf begins is strewn with ~~the~~
~~discarded~~
~~fallen~~ ~~leaves~~ needles of the pines, scattered like jack straws
~~hit or miss~~ among the red and yellow maple leaves and ~~and~~
browning ferns - all except the evergreen ferns that retain
their green under the snow. The quiet flowing brooks are at
their best now littered with still unfaded leaves ^{revolving} ~~swirling~~ in
the eddies and plastered on the wet rocks, at each little cascade
The clear water reflects in blurred and swirling patterns all
the colors of the fall mixed with the blue of the sky. They
become nature's kaleidoscopes of ever shifting hues.

Second to the mountains themselves ~~the most striking~~

~~The/des~~ characteristic of the Adirondack Park is the abundance of water. The Adirondacks are a wild area of rivers and streams and lakes. The Hudson River rises at the foot of Mt. Marcy and ^{to the north} ~~northward~~ the Ausable flows into Lake Champlain. Water is everywhere abundant. In the southern part ^{an} ~~part the lakes and ponds~~ ~~the~~ intricate network of inter-connecting

lakes and ponds offers some of the best canoe-trip country in the United States. Ponds dot the country-side, every hollow in the hills holds one, some are the sources of ~~the~~ ^{intermediate} brooks and others are ^{often} stepping stones in their flow from higher drainage basins ^{al} ~~into~~ the larger streams. The hiker comes upon them/shimmering through the yellow birches on an

October day as he follows the course of a brook to its origin. ^{turn to} Along the marshy borders of the flows cattails ~~are~~

plushy firmness

russet-brown and their full ripe ~~heads/are~~ coffee-colored heads begin to loose their ~~firm~~ plushness as they begin to ~~are~~ firm as plush before they disintegrate and disperse their

~~wild~~ seeds to the winds. In few places does the land retain ^{water} such an intimate relationship with its ~~drainage~~ system. 2

The areas between the streams are small or steep and rocky. This is not a farming country although farms there ~~are~~ have been and still are. It is a land of wildness, a land where the forests belong; a land ~~of~~ of the beaver and bear, of the deer and fox; a land to go to and return from; a land where one can see what the land once was; a land ~~where one can~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ to escape from his neighbor/for a while and enjoy ~~the~~ peace of solitude which those who live in cities still need. It is a land where the human spirit can yet be free.

ELIOT PORTER

Route 1 • Box 5B • Santa Fe • New Mexico

Wildlife Photography • Color Prints of Birds

GROUP PHOTO OF THE MOUNTAIN BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS

THE MOUNTAIN BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MOUNTAINS

TO THE MOUNTAIN BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MOUNTAINS

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