

Stieglitz's offer to exhibit my photographs took me very much by surprise, and it was some time before I understood its potential significance. But what I did immediately realize was that I was being offered recognition for my contribution to photography, an avocation in which I had been engaged for several years. Success had come here before I had made any significant progress in scientific research. I could now unpretentiously regard myself as a serious photographer of recognized achievement, something I had never been able to consider before. But achievement and recognition were not the most important benefits to be derived from this showing of my work; what really counted was the effect it had on me--a vindication of the time I had spent, sometimes guiltily, making pictures with a camera on an island in Maine, while my conscience told me, according to expectations, that I should have been pursuing a career in science in a laboratory. I knew now that photography was legitimate for me; that in photography I had more aptitude than in a search for truth in the phenomenal world; and that truth in the arts has a different dimension. Here for the first time was something I could do with complete self-confidence. I felt released from self-imposed commitments to a specialized education and to the expectations of family and close associates, and at the same time relieved of the burden of uncertainty about my dedication

to a life of fading accomplishments. I could now turn in the direction in which I felt most confident. <sup>This</sup> revelation developed slowly. The Stieglitz exhibition at An American Place was scheduled for three weeks in December 1938 and January 1939. During the weeks that followed, I decided not to seek renewal of my appointment as a tutor in biochemistry and to terminate all research work at the end of the academic year in June. Giving up my job was not too much of a financial sacrifice, because I received a modest income from a family trust. I went to Maine for the summer with my wife, Aline, and our baby son, Jonathan, and, since there was no compelling reason for living in Cambridge now that I was an independent agent, I felt free to practice photography anywhere. My wife's brother, Peter, had recently moved to Santa Fe and urged us to go there for the winter. Santa Fe, an attractive small town, the oldest European settlement in the United States and the capital of New Mexico, was favored with a very pleasant climate. Since I had become romantically oriented towards the west, first as a child on camping trips with my family and later on adventures with college classmates, I was especially eager to try living in the west. Aline, with a more New England conditioning and European orientation, was less enthusiastic but willing to try it for a winter.

In the fall of \_\_\_\_\_ Aline and I drove west and, after we were settled in a small apartment in Santa Fe, Jonathan was brought out on the train by a dear elderly Maine woman, who had previously worked for other members of the family and was willing to spend the winter with us to help with domestic



responsibilities. New Mexico proved to be a very stimulating place for me as a photographer with its Spanish-Indian culture, surviving here in a less diluted form than anywhere else in the United States, characterized by adobe architecture, Indian pueblos, fiestas and Indian dances to celebrate the passage of the seasons or propitiate adversities of weather, and a devout Catholic society, unified by many unique adobe churches (each with its bell tower or cupola), which are found in every community, large or small, no matter how remote. Here there is semi-arid landscape, dominated by the valley of the Rio Grande and mountain ranges to the east and west that rise to over 10,000 feet and generate towering thunderheads in summer. The most famous mountains are the Sangre de Cristos, rising directly east of Santa Fe and named for the red light in which the last rays of the setting sun envelop them. But it was the Mexican-Spanish churches in the mountain villages that attracted me most by their exquisite proportions, as they did other photographers who had come to northern New Mexico before me.

For two years before I decided to give up science for photography, I had been photographing passerine birds in Maine in black and white using artificial light--a special technique I had adopted in order to obtain much higher quality photographs than was possible with natural light. The bird photographs I had seen in publications, such as Audubon Magazine, were mostly of such poor quality that I was determined to raise the standards by which bird photographs are judged to those applicable to other fields of photography. I was so encouraged by the results

obtained with artificial light, that I began to think about the possibility of a book of my bird photographs and showed them to a publisher. He complimented me on them but rejected the idea on the grounds that the birds could not be identified in black and white and, for publication, would have to be in color. Eastman Kodak Company had recently developed Kodachrome film, which I immediately adopted for photographing birds in Maine in the summer of 1939. The following spring in Santa Fe I applied for a Guggenheim Fellowship to photograph birds in color. Most of my friends were very pessimistic about a fellowship being granted for such a specialized project, so when in February the next winter I received a letter informing me that my application had been favorably acted on with a stipend of \$2500, I was very surprised. We were then living in Hubbard Woods in the house of my grandmother, who had died at the age of ninety-six. Aline had not been as enchanted with New Mexico as I was and preferred to try a more urban life style than was available in Santa Fe. For her the west began at the Hudson and the environment of Chicago was enough of an adventurous change from the security of New England to attempt at first.

On the chance that I might receive a Guggenheim fellowship, I had planned to begin photographing birds as early as possible, which meant traveling to the far south to take advantage of the first spring breeding season; for this I chose southern Arizona. So early in April I drove alone to Tucson to photograph the first desert nesting birds; I returned to Illinois in June and then we went east together to Maine for the summer. The war in



Europe had started in the fall of '39 but had not yet greatly disturbed the routine of life in America. I continued photographing birds during the summers of 1941 and 1942, in Illinois and Maine. Then the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1942, changed everything. <sup>It</sup> I tried to enlist in the Air Force as a photographer but was rejected, and eventually obtained a war job scheduling work in the machine shops at the Radiation Laboratory at M.I.T., where military radar was being developed--a secret project described to the inquisitive as the development of radiatats. We moved back to Cambridge for the duration.

My job was to expedite the production of experimental apparatus requested by physicists and engineers in the various departments, which involved assigning the work to those shops with the lowest work load. Also at times I was forced to make decisions as to the urgency of the request, which did not always please the person making it, but on the whole there were few complaints and the work got done satisfactorily. Sometimes when the job was small I could do it myself, since I had access to some of the machine tools. One day I discovered that in a shop with which I had a rather limited connection, several of the machinists had no work and were passing the time doing crossword puzzles. I assigned some work there, which displeased the foreman, who complained to the head supervisor of all the shops, Mr. Kohler, who, feeling that I was undermining his authority, complained in turn to Dr. Loomis, the physicist director of the Radiation Laboratory. Dr. Loomis summoned me to his office; Kohler was there. I was told that what I had been doing must not continue, and that all work had to

be scheduled through Kohler. I protested and defended my methods to no avail and then, becoming quite angry, I described the state of affairs, the waste, inefficiency and uncooperative attitude I had found in the shop from which the complaint came; nevertheless, bureaucratic rigidity prevailed and my responsibilities became much less direct.

As moral support and assurance that we were indeed making a contribution to the winning of the war, the staff, from time to time in evening meetings, was given confidential accounts of naval actions in the Pacific war in which radar was the determining factor in the engagement. An especially dramatic example was a night-time battle off Guadalcanal, when out-numbered American forces opened fire on a Japanese squadron, sinking several of their ships before they were aware of our approach. The enemy was repulsed because the American warships were equipped with radar, which the Japanese did not possess, and which was used for gun-laying--the precise determination of the bearing and range of the target.

As the war was drawing to a close in Europe with the invasion of Germany late in 1944, I resigned my position at the Radiation Laboratory, and we moved back to Illinois, where I was able to resume my photography of birds, only in a limited way, however, because of gasoline rationing. We were in Maine in the summer of 1945 at the time of the Japanese surrender. Aline had become reconciled to living in New Mexico or, perhaps more accurately, had given in to my wishes, so that fall I drove out to Santa Fe to find a house and was able to purchase one that was



owned by friends we had made in the winter of 1939-40. The house was particularly appropriate for us-- my wife being a painter and I a photographer-- because the two from whom I bought it were also a painter and a photographer. The house had three bedrooms, a large studio, a small darkroom and a workshop; but it had just been rented for a year, preventing us from occupying it until 1946.

By this time my family had increased by two and included a second son, Stephen, two years old, and Patrick, born in February, 1946. Aline and I drove with the two oldest boys out to Santa Fe in June, 1946. Patrick was brought out on the Santa Fe Railroad as soon as we were settled in the new house. Patrick, who was then only four months old, has always felt cheated out of a western birthright. This summer was the continuation of a new life style and occupation briefly attempted before the war in 1939, when my commitment to photography was unfocused and experimental. In the meantime I had been granted a Guggenheim Fellowship for photographing birds, a project interrupted by the war, but resumed this year. Not only did I have a definite goal, the pursuit of which would keep me occupied for the spring time of many years, I had a new land--the wide open Southwest--to learn to know and understand, to incorporate into subconscious acceptance--a source of inspiration; and I had a new land to share and explore with my children.

To facilitate the traveling I expected my pursuit of birds would require, at the end of the war I purchased a field ambulance with the help of a veteran friend--a four wheel drive Dodge truck with a rear entrance to a panel body. I repainted it an earth-colored brown, installed two bunks, a water tank,

sink and gas stove, so that I could live in it for an extended period. I was also able to convert it into a darkroom for changing film.

For ten years I continued to photograph birds in the spring and early summer, returning to Arizona as well as going to many other areas in search of local species. I visited south Texas, the mid-west and mid-Atlantic states, Florida, and went back to Maine many times. During other seasons I made trips with my children to the most spectacular canyon country of the Southwest, to Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon; we also went on raft trips down the Colorado River. The states of the Midwest that I visited most often were Michigan and Minnesota, states in which a greater number of species of a particular bird family are found than occur in most other parts of the country. They are the wood warblers, a group with which I had become enchanted and which attracts most ornithologists. They are small birds with colorful plumage and distinctive songs by which they are readily identified, and there are some thirty species in the United States.

Through friends in my field of interest, I was introduced to bird people in southern Michigan, who welcomed me into their fraternity, took me with them on their photographic and bird-watching excursions, and led me to the best warbler habitats. We shared all our discoveries and photographic opportunities. I was taken to the nesting area of the Kirtland's (or Jack-Pine) warbler, the rarest of all its genus, found only in one Michigan county and no where else in the world. Its common name denotes its narrow



adaptation to a habitat of young jack pines.

One of the first people I was introduced to was Edward M. Brigham of the Kingman Memorial Museum in Battle Creek. He was a director of the Michigan Audubon Society, which was independent of the national organization (a situation that many members made sure I was cognizant of) and an editor of the Society's bulletin, The Jack-Pine Warbler. Ed Brigham, a naturalist in the traditional sense and an enthusiastic wildlife photographer, insisted that I stay with him and his family, a rare example of the kind of hospitality extended to an essential stranger in recognition of shared interests, but without the assurance of more than a dilettantish commitment. I visited the Brighams again the next year, met William Dyer, another Audubon director and Superintendent of Union City Schools, and Dr. Powell Cottrille of Jackson, Michigan. They both invited me to stay with them. Powell and his wife, Betty, were superb birders, who took two months off from medical practice every year to photograph birds, both movies and stills. I became a regular guest of theirs, driving to Jackson the end of May, from where we would set off together for different warbler habitats in Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and the Connecticut Lakes area of northern New Hampshire. Betty Cottrille knew all the warbler songs, and once a bird was located, she had the patience to watch it for hours until it led her to its nest and mate. "Patience" is the wrong term for this kind of activity, one which is usually used by non-bird people. Your attention is entirely focused on the events taking place around you, whether they are related or not to the activity of the principal subject of your

search. Everything that is going on is important, because there is no way of knowing the significance of any event until you discover its connections with other events. When attention is completely occupied, patience is meaningless. We were a very good team for finding the nests of many kinds of birds, not just warblers.

Ever since I had been told by Paul Brooks, editor-in-chief of Houghton-Mifflin, that photographs of birds must be in color to be publishable, I had been working with that goal in mind. Unfortunately, I had not been able to enlist the interest of any publisher, largely on account of cost. I had, however, taken close-up color photographs of other nature subjects, which my wife considered original, and to help alleviate my frustration with my bird photographs, she suggested that I concentrate on a different theme. "Your other pictures remind me of Thoreau," she said, "Why don't you do a book on him?" The idea was so remote from my involvement with photography that I was taken by surprise, but it did appeal to me. I started reading Thoreau, first Walden, which at first I found dull, followed by his other books, Meremac and Concord Rivers, Cape Cod, The Maine Woods, and eventually his journals. I carried some of Thoreau's works with me wherever I went on my birding trips, much to the amusement of my associates. I marked passages that appealed to me and with which I felt I could associate a photograph of comparable sensibility; and I took photographs of subjects for which I hoped to find a compatible description by Thoreau. Thus I pursued birds and Thoreau simultaneously for several years, and in the end Thoreau won



over the birds, but it was not an easy victory without many disappointments.

A dummy of the Thoreau book I produced with photographs and Thoreau's words was rejected by every publisher I approached on the grounds that it would attract only parochial interest in Concord, Massachusetts. While I was thus engaged, I had organized an exhibition of many of the same photographs for the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York. When, at a cocktail party given by Beaumont and Nancy Newhall for the opening of the show, I told Nancy that no publisher was interested in my Thoreau book, she said she knew someone who might be interested--David Brower, the Executive Director of the Sierra Club; "let's call him up," she said. So she telephoned him in San Francisco, described the kind of book I had in mind, and he expressed immediate interest, urging me to send him the dummy, which I promptly did. After considerable delay that I interpreted as a probable indication of rejection, he wrote me that the Sierra Club wanted to publish the book provided they could raise \$40,000. It was 1961; Aline and I had gone to a wedding celebration for our son, Stephen, and his bride, Katherine, given by the bride's parents at \_\_\_\_\_ hotel in Colorado Springs. They had married unceremoniously and this reception was a concession to parental convention. We had assembled in an outdoor court, and I had returned to our room to get a sweater for Aline when the telephone rang. It was David Brower on the line, having tracked me down, with the news that the Sierra Club had received a gift of \$20,000 and a loan of an

equal amount for the publication of the Thoreau book. The loan, from \_\_\_\_\_, was to be repaid, provided the book was a financial success. The book was published in 1962 and printed by the Barnes Press on Spring Street in New York, where I spent many hours, mostly at night, observing and offering criticism during the press run.

My first book, In Wildness is The Preservation of The World (a name taken from Thoreau's essay on walking), with an introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch, was an immediate best-seller in San Francisco, contrary to what all other publishers had foreseen. My first encounter with Krutch was through his first book on nature, The Twelve Seasons, written when he was living in Connecticut. He was a literary critic and contributor to The Nation and other national magazines, whose reputation was based on his critical biographies of Poe, Johnson and Thoreau. Shortly after The Twelve Seasons was published he moved to Tucson, Arizona to devote himself almost exclusively to describing the phenomena and ecological <sup>dynamics</sup> structure of the natural environment. On one of my bird photography expeditions to southern Arizona I went to see Krutch for his advice and opinion on my Thoreau book. I showed him examples of my photography, and I may have shown him the dummy for the book. He was interested and very helpful, suggesting several passages from Thoreau that I had not discovered, and when I asked him if he would write an introduction for the book, he agreed. In addition, we collaborated on an appeal to a Congressional committee concerning an environmental issue, he writing the statement and I supplying color prints to go



with it. He was also interested in my bird project and spent a day with me in the field looking for the nest of a rufous-winged sparrow. One of Joseph Wood Krutch's books, The Forgotten Peninsula, about Baja California, along with the advice of a school boy friend, inspired one of my adventures. After making two trips into that austere desert with the prospect of a book, I persuaded Krutch to write the introduction.

In the late summer of 1960 I was invited to join a group from Taos--including a very good friend, Spud Johnson, with whom we had toured Mexico by car in 1951--on a raft float down the Colorado River through Glen Canyon. I had hardly heard of Glen Canyon and knew nothing of its scenic wonders, but was eager to see this geological feature of the west which was new to me. I did not anticipate that this trip would lead to anything of special significance to my photographic career. We started off in two rubber rafts from Lee's Ferry, the only possible crossing of the Colorado between Moab and Navajo Bridge. This was an experience unlike any I had ever enjoyed before; here I was at the bottom of a narrow canyon looking up at vertical walls, rather than looking down from above--a more intimate perspective than a view from the top. I was part of the scenery, part of the convoluted sandstone cliffs and the brown river that had been undercutting and eroding them grain by grain for thousands of years. I had visited Canyon de Chelly, but there the dynamic forces at work were less apparent and less impressive, despite its magnificence. The flow of water in Canyon de Chelly is intermittent after rain; one can drive into Canyon de Chelly at the

risk of getting stuck in quicksand--a blind trap unlike the thoroughfare of Glen Canyon. On one visit to Canyon de Chelly in my ambulance with my two children, Jonathan and Steve, we did get stuck in quicksand, but extricated ourselves by cutting willows to place under the wheels. Glen Canyon was difficult to comprehend on that first trip; it was so monumental and so complex that I could not focus on any of its features without experiencing a confusing sensation of losing contact with the whole canyon. On subsequent visits I learned that its unique features were what characterized Glen Canyon.

Every year until 1965, sometimes twice, I went back to Glen Canyon. A group of my early pictures were exhibited in the Sierra Club headquarters in San Francisco, where they attracted a good deal of attention and led to the realization that this was a place which should have been high on the Sierra Club's list for preservation. The construction of Glen Canyon dam, which had begun at the time of my first visit, would, when completed in ten years, flood one hundred miles of the canyon under several hundred feet of water, burying for all time a unique geological wonderland and scenic treasure. From the time of my first introduction to Glen Canyon, I realized that the dam would be a scenic and aesthetic disaster for everyone who had ever floated the Colorado through Glen Canyon, as well as for all those uncountable numbers of people who unknowingly would be deprived of that experience. I was especially affected by the circumstance that the Commissioner of Reclamation who was largely instrumental in obtaining the



Congressional appropriation for the dam was my brother-in-law. He was a dam enthusiast, committed to a vast program of hydro-electric power development that would harness most of the rivers of America. He admitted, however, that even if all the rivers were maximally developed for power production, they would deliver only five percent of the foreseeable electric power needs. Why are you so concerned, he asked me, about a mere 200 feet of water, when above that level there will still be a lot of natural scenery and besides it will make a very pretty lake. He didn't appreciate the natural beauty that was to be lost, because to preserve it would have prevented a development to which he attached greater value. He believed that the usefulness to man of natural resources is determined by a measure of their material and economic value; for him, aesthetic considerations were of minor importance. Without any knowledge of what would be sacrificed, the Sierra Club had proposed to the Bureau of Reclamation in the Department of the Interior that in place of the dam it was considering in Dinosaur Monument at the confluence of the Green and Yampa Rivers, it dam Glen Canyon, a suggestion which may have influenced its decision to do so. Despite this unfortunate turn of events, David Brower decided to publish a book of my Glen Canyon photographs, which he named The Place No One Knew--Glen Canyon on the Colorado, indicating a more universal ignorance than he wished to admit and thus, perhaps, deflecting criticism for a bad policy decision.

This was my second book in two years with a conservation message, and the bird book, which did not have such an ancillary

purpose, was still not even on the horizon. The only success I had had with my bird project was the publication of a few pictures in Life Magazine, a contribution to Land Birds of America, published by McGraw-Hill, and some badly reproduced photographs in a National Geographic publication entitled Song and Garden Birds.

I was still going to Maine for at least part of each summer, so to educate Californians about the beauty of another part of the country, I invited David and his family to visit me on Great Spruce Head Island. Aline had decided to stay in Santa Fe that summer. The Browsers came for a two-week vacation of ease and relaxation, leaving the housekeeping and cooking largely to me. Brower's sons went off rowing and swimming every day, while I showed Dave and \_\_\_\_\_ around the island. Brower was obviously very much impressed by the beauty of the landscape and by the way we had adapted to living on a Maine island for more than a half century. He asked if I had ever thought of writing about it, and I said I had long ago, before I became involved with bird photography, but that nothing ever came of it. You must write about your life in Maine, he said, and the Sierra Club will publish it with your early black and white and color photographs. And so I set about it right away enthusiastically, discovering how much I remembered once I got started, and how varied and active my childhood had been. The book was published with the title, Summer Island--Penobscot Country.

Stieglitz's wife, Georgia O'Keeffe, had moved to New Mexico in the late forties, taking up residence first in Taos, but settling permanently soon thereafter in a house on the Ghost Ranch near



Abiquiu, which she purchased from Arthur Pack. The artist's colony in Taos, under the aegis of Mable Dodge Luhan, was not congenial to an individual with such a dominant personality as that of O'Keeffe, who needed complete control of her social relationships. She was attracted to New Mexico by its agreeable climate, adobe architecture, and the warm pastel colors of the desert landscapes that inspired so much of her painting. She became a friend of Spud Johnson, whom my wife and I had gotten to know during our first winter in New Mexico. Of the four of us, only Spud had been to Mexico, and on hearing him describe his trip there with D. H. Lawrence, we cooked up a plan to drive together to Oaxaca in February of 1951. We decided to go in two cars, Spud with Georgia and Aline with me. The route we chose was the Pan American Highway from Texas to Mexico City and on to Oaxaca, our southern destination. We had expected to depart from Santa Fe early in the morning, but as so often happens on group expeditions, delays caused by procrastination and inexperience occurred. Georgia had failed to provide herself with the required Mexican tourist papers. Eventually in the afternoon we departed, heading south towards Texas. The first mishap occurred the next day before we crossed the Rio Grande at Laredo. I slammed the car door on Aline's finger, severely bruising it and causing her much pain, but fortunately breaking no bones. South of Laredo our pace was more leisurely; we had picnics at noon on the excellent food that Georgia had brought, made frequent stops for photography, and stopped early at the best hotels for the night. Aline and I wanted to stop early at night so that we could have drinks before supper, but Georgia always wanted to eat immediately,

complicating the routine, because Spud, who would have preferred a later supper, felt obliged to accommodate Georgia's wishes. The result was that we seldom dined together. In Mexico City we became separated in our search for hotel accommodations and only got together again briefly in Oaxaca at the Marquese del Vaille Hotel. Our room looked out onto the plaza, where we were awakened at night by the haunting, dulcet music of a marimba band--a serenade for those from far away.

In Oaxaca I photographed the famous ceiling of the Santa Domingo church and several aspects of the cloister and convent. We drove to Mitla and Monte Alban to see and photograph the Zapotec ruins, and in Mitla I was particularly intrigued by the juxtaposition of sixteenth-century Christian churches with pre-Columbian temples. We visited several villages in the neighborhood of Oaxaca and in an earthquake-damaged church in Maguile Xotchitle, I took several photographs of the interior. I was discovering the fascination of church art, from the point of view of exterior architecture as well as that of interior structure and decoration, especially the latter, which expressed a more sympathetic human acceptance of the teachings of Christianity than the formal sixteenth-century architecture of the building that enclosed it. Much of the decoration was the work of peasant Indians, a simple, often naive, expression of reverence for the saints and holy icons on display.

Our two groups drove home separately, and on the way Aline and I stopped at Yanhuitlan on the Pan American Highway, a cathedral lonely and mysterious by virtue of its isolation.



The nave was a huge, elongated cavern roofed by a high, vaulted ceiling which, due to dim light and its height, was beyond reach for close inspection. Beside the Stations of the Cross, figures of the saints were realistically displayed in their historic roles, and on both sides of the altar crucifixes, which were larger than life, hung in deep blue alcoves flanked by gilded, filigreed columns. The rich, brown figures of Christ bore golden crowns and were modestly clothed in white, embroidered aprons. The general lavish magnificence was tempered by tender reverence for the symbols of the Christian faith. I was greatly impressed and moved by this manifestation of inspired creative ingenuity.

Following the war years, Santa Fe remained isolated from the influences and innovations that were producing a revolution in the art world. New Mexico art remained static and tradition-bound. In 1955 Aline, realizing that she required closer association with these ferments for change as inspiration for her own painting, decided to go and live in New York for a few months. This was an opportunity for me to return to Mexico to fulfill a desire I had had since 1951--to do a major photographic study of Mexican churches. I persuaded Ellen Auerbach, a photographer I had known for many years, to join me on this project. (Aline took our youngest child with her to New York; the two older boys were away at school, and I rented our house in Santa Fe.) I purchased a Chevrolet van, and in that we drove into Mexico at Nogales, south of Tucson, on December 12. First we followed the west coast highway south to Tepic, where we turned inland to Guadalajara, and after visiting many of the towns and cities of central Mexico, north of Mexico City, we headed east through Puebla

Coatzacoalcos  
to Vera Cruz. We left the car in Minatitlan and flew to Campeche and on to Merida in Yucatan. On the return trip by train we visited the Palenque ruins, and drove south from Minatitlan across the narrow neck of Mexico to Tehuantepec and east into Chiapas and San Cristobal Las Casas. On our way north we explored the area around Oaxaca for a month, visiting many of the village churches between Oaxaca and \_\_\_\_\_. The final weeks of our expedition were spent in the region south and west of Mexico City, before returning to the United States the end of April. We had photographed many aspects of Mexico other than churches, including the Mexicans themselves, their markets and celebrations, and the remnants of pre-Columbian civilization.

Our photographs were exhibited by the \_\_\_\_\_ gallery in New York, in Aspen, Colorado and in Santa Fe, but all our attempts to interest a publisher were fruitless until 1986.

Through my connection with the Sierra Club, after its decision to publish my Thoreau book, I met Ansel Adams for the second time. Aline and I had gone to San Francisco to celebrate this event; we were invited to Ansel's house to meet David Brower and other members of the Sierra Club, and to reach a final agreement about various features of the book, including the dust-jacket photograph. I had brought a group of color photographs with me, which I was asked to show to the assembled group, and when I unpacked them, Ansel Adams wouldn't look at them and left the room. He had a strong aversion to color photography, maintaining that color had no legitimate place in the art of photography, and that it degraded the medium. Amplifying his views later,



he explained that color photography was too literal to be an art form, that it was not possible to practice it interpretively, and therefore it was not creative, whereas the interpretive possibilities of black and white were unlimited. Many years later he was to disclaim color photography--closely connected with my vision--for its falsification of reality.

Ansel Adams was very good company socially and on photographic outings. He started life as a pianist and became a photographer, the story goes, after seeing his father-in-law's photographs of Yosemite, certain he could do better. Certainly there were, however, more fundamental reasons for his change of career. We became good friends inspite of our differences, which never affected my admiration for his photography that had such a profound influence on my own. I visited him several times in California, and he and his wife stayed with us more than once in Santa Fe. He was a great showman and entertainer, and more often than not the life of the party. I remember one hilarious evening at our house when he played the piano with a grapefruit. Ansel was impetuous, always on the go and at times painfully thoughtless, but when asked for help or advice in photography, he was unsparingly generous. One time when he dropped in to see me unannounced, he stormed into my studio with scarcely a word of greeting, hastily inspected some cloud pictures that I had recently hung on the wall and said, "You don't get good whites,"--and dashed out again. I was very much taken aback and left speechless by such abrupt, though probably perceptive, criticism.

It was hard to pin ulterior motives on Ansel. His remarks, which may have seemed at times to conceal devious motives, were

but frank expressions of considered judgements. Ansel was a dedicated conservationist, who never hesitated to express his opinions on the environment to any official involved with the issues, including the President of the United States, so it was difficult to find fault with him when his remarks carried a painful bite. On the publication of my third book, Summer Island, by the Sierra Club, Ansel was quoted as having remarked that my exposure was becoming too much, to which Imogene Cunningham said with characteristic asperity, when I reported this remark to her: "Too much for him." My use of "characteristic" is quite appropriate, since Imogene, who came to my first exhibition in New York of Mexican church photographs, asked me rather pointedly what determined my choice of subjects; and when I explained that we photographed everything we could inside the churches, she said, scathingly: "It looks that way."

I am frequently asked by interviewers and critics to describe how I felt, what emotions I experienced while taking a particular picture--or what inspired me in the first place. Since one's past emotions can seldom be recalled after a lapse of many years, I try to evade the question by pointing out that the photograph speaks for itself. The kind of response sought by the interviewer would most likely be a contrived fantasy, not an inspirational revelation. I think questions of this sort reveal a lack of imagination, or simply inexperience, on the part of the interviewer, who needs help from the artist to understand the work in question and what motivated it. After all, the perceptions and emotions that inspire an artist are so personal that to



translate them into words may be impossible, with the consequence that attempts to do so result so often in incomprehensible language.

About the time of the publication of The Place No One Knew, I obtained a small book on the Galapagos Islands entitled Galapagos--The Noah's Ark of the Pacific by Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, an Austrian biologist. The book is an account of two expeditions to the islands. During the first, as a member of the Xarifa expedition, the author saw the ruthless slaughter of the unique fauna perpetrated by the crews of visiting ships, despite Ecuadorian laws protecting the wildlife. On returning to Europe he appealed to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Brussels for the establishment of a biological station with a permanent warden to enforce the laws. He was asked by the International Union and UNESCO, in connection with his proposal, to lead an expedition to the Galapagos, to conduct a survey on the wildlife, and to select a site for the station. The second expedition was a much more thorough study of the indigenous fauna and flora of the islands, resulting in his book, in which he told that seventy percent of the animal species and fifty percent(?) of the plant types were found nowhere else in the world. It was a dramatic appeal to the conscience of civilized countries to mount a program to assure the survival of this unique biological treasure being threatened by wanton and mindless destruction at the hands of increasing numbers of ignorant adventurers. The response to his appeal was immediate and favorable. With the cooperation of the Ecuadorian government, the Darwin Research Station, a permanent institution in the service of science and with a full-time director, was es-

tablished on Santa Cruz Island. A sailing research ship, the Beagle, manned by a professional crew, was also provided.

After becoming associated with the Sierra Club, I began to understand how my photographs could be used to support conservation causes, without having been made specifically for that purpose. Eibl-Eibesfeldt's book made a tremendous impression on me. The Galapagos Islands were in danger of losing their unique value as a natural museum and laboratory of evolution to thoughtless exploitation; such a fate for this wonderful place must not be allowed to happen and should be made a major conservation issue of the Sierra Club. A large format photographic book about the Galapagos Islands, similar to This is the American Land by Adams or my book on Glen Canyon, could have great influence for their preservation, so I proposed the idea to David Brower, who was immediately interested and took the suggestion up with the publication committee. There was a great deal of opposition to the proposal within the Board of Directors on the grounds that the islands were outside the continental United States which, it was felt, circumscribed the legitimate conservation concerns of the club; consequently, the idea was rejected. However, David Brower was not about to give up and was determined to propose it again.

In the meantime, having no project in mind for the winter of 1964, I remembered an account by a boyhood friend, Willoughby Walling, who now lived in Santa Fe, of a trip he had made down the desert peninsula of Baja California. For the whole one thousand mile length of the peninsula, few facilities were available; you had to be self-reliant, he told me, be prepared



to make your own repairs and fix your tires, and you had to carry a plentiful supply of oil, water and gasoline with you. He had taken 55 gallon drums of water and gasoline in his pickup truck. It seemed to me that Baja California would be a good introduction to the similar desert environment of the Galapagos Islands, so I asked my son, Stephen, and his wife, Kathy, who had just graduated from Colorado College, to join me, along with two young men from Santa Fe, one of whom agreed to go on the condition that he would leave the expedition at La Paz on the end of the peninsula and return through mainland Mexico. We set out in February, 1964, with three vehicles--two Jeeps and a Jeep truck with a camper body equipped with two bunks, a gas stove and an icebox without ice that served as a storage space for provisions. We carried a surplus of gasoline and water in military jerry cans, and a redundancy of tires and tools for every conceivable mechanical emergency. In fact, we did a valve job on one vehicle during the trip. A winch on the front bumper of the truck was a handy machine for extricating us from a difficult situation on several occasions. Tire repair was a frequent necessity, not caused especially by the rough tracks (called roads) that we followed, but by cactus spines that could penetrate the toughest treads and work their way through to the inner tube.

For camping we all had sleeping bags, and tents were brought along as insurance against weather that never--hardly ever--penetrates this desiccated environment. Steve and Kathy were given sole use of the bunks in the truck, in case they preferred to sleep under cover. Meals were very simple affairs;

any cooking required was done by Kathy without complaint and enhanced by Mexican beer, several cases of which we had purchased in Mexicali, where we crossed the border from California. Our progress was very slow, since we had purposely decided against a time schedule, and because I insisted on stopping frequently to photograph. Some days we made only twenty miles, and then there were places in which we wished to linger to observe special features, as at Scammons Lagoon to see the gray whales, or in San Ignacio to enjoy the comfort of a bed, the luxury of a shower, clean clothes and good Mexican food. However, we were warned by a party of horsemen we met in San Ignacio to beware of uncooked food served at the little restaurant they had christened "Tomain Tilly's," where we and all travelers ate. Some of their group had been stricken with the virulent internal disturbance that so often attacks travelers in distant lands.

We all got along reasonably well, inspite of occasional disagreements, such as might be expected in a situation where there are close personal relationships. But in La Paz, where one of our two companions was leaving us as had been agreed to, an episode threatened to disrupt the expedition. Tom, the other young man, also wanted to leave, having been invited to sail back to California on a yacht. Without him, Steven and I would have been short of drivers for our three vehicles. I tried to sell the older of the two Jeeps, but could find no purchaser because of Mexican import restrictions. Tom offered to hire a driver, an arrangement I refused on the grounds that I wanted to drive home slowly by a different route and didn't want to have to cope with a stranger of unknown character. There were some



pretty frank exchanges of opinions on what constituted obligations based on tacit commitments, which persuaded Tom that he could not desert us, and we drove home amicably, returning to the United States at the end of April.

The year before I had been approached by Harold Hochschild, president of \_\_\_\_\_, a corporation with extensive world-wide mining interests, to take photographs for a book he planned to publish on the Adirondacks, the wooded mountains west of Lake Champlain; the book would be a selection from the work of several photographers. He lived in Princeton during the winter and, in summer, on his large estate near Blue Mountain Lake in the Adirondacks. Mary, his wife, was a Markwand, who had lived for much of her early life in Keen, New York, on the east side of the Adirondack Park, which she loved and intimately identified with. It was probably her influence that was largely responsible for determining Harold Hochschild's decision to finance the Adirondack book. The proposal appealed to me, since the Adirondacks were a part of the eastern Appalachian mountains I had only superficially visited and this was an opportunity to know them better.

In the fall of 1963, I put up at an inn at Blue Mountain Lake and devoted the next several weeks to photographing around that area, both in the park and on private estates, where, through Hochschild, I had received permission to photograph. The Adirondack Park had been established under a provision of the New York State constitution, which stated that these lands "shall be forever kept as wild forest lands"; the provision had, however, re-

cently come under attack by private interest groups seeking to amend the constitution to permit commercial developments. The Hochschilts had expected me to give them not more than a dozen photographs, but I found such an inexhaustable wealth of subjects that when I gave them more than one hundred, they were hard pressed to make a small selection. I had been invited to their Princeton house for a review of the pictures, and it was then that Mary Hochschild told me they couldn't decide which ones to use; instead, they asked me if I would be willing to take all the pictures for the book. I was delighted to accept, of course, and explained that that would require many trips back to the Adirondacks in all seasons. I returned in the spring of 1964, in the winter of 1965 and again in the spring and fall of that year.

I described the enterprise to David Brower, who immediately attempted to capture publication of the book for the Sierra Club; "capture" is the correct description for his action, which offended Harold Hochschild's sense of propriety and resulted in his angry rejection of Sierra Club participation. Hochschild selected Harper & Row, a fortunate choice for me, because it led to a long, happy, and productive association with the executive editor, John Macrae. The writings of William Chapman White, a lover of the Adirondacks, had been chosen by his widow, Ruth White, to accompany the photographs. I became fascinated by what I read about the origin and geological history of the Adirondacks, that began 1000 million years ago as towering snow-capped peaks, which were then reduced by the inexorable force of erosion until only their roots remained; and in more recent times the grinding and polishing weight of mile-thick ice had rounded and smoothed them.



And what I found here in these relics of a dynamic past was equally enchanting.

In the fall of the year the Adirondacks reach their time of greatest glory. Then the autumnal color-changes reveal the great variety of vegetation; where before all was green, and one leaf was scarcely distinguishable in the mass from another, now this uniformity is replaced by all shades of browns and russets, yellows and reds. The hillsides become patterns of contrasting vivid colors, which thousands of city people travel hundreds of miles to view. The undistinguished, bushy pastures change their character completely. In the tangles of weed and coarse grasses, the leaves of blueberry bushes glow in the slanting rays of the sun, like the coals of burned-out subterranean fires, and the sharp spears of paling grass are the flames above the surface. Lichens seem to be richer in hue at this time of year. When the fall of the leaf begins, the forest floor is strewn with discarded needles of the pines, scattered like jack straws among the red and yellow maple leaves and browning ferns--all except the ever-green ferns that retain their green under the snow. The quiet, flowing brooks are at their best now, littered with still-unfaded leaves revolving 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--kaleidoscopes of shifting hues. Along the marshy borders of the flows, cattails turn to russet-brown, and their full, ripe coffee-colored heads lose their plushy firmness as they begin to disintegrate and disperse their seeds.

Second to the mountains themselves, the rivers, streams, and lakes of the Adirondacks are the wildest areas. The Hudson

River rises at the foot of Mt. Marcy, and to the north the Ausable flows into Lake Champlain. Water is everywhere abundant. In the southern part, an intricate network of inter-connecting lakes and ponds offers some of the best canoe country in the United States. Ponds dot the country-side; every hollow in the hills holds one; some are the sources of brooks, whereas others are intermediate between the flow from high drainage basins and large streams. The hiker often comes upon them shimmering through the yellow birches on an October day, as he follows the course of a brook to its origin.

There are few places on this continent where the land retains such an intimate relationship with its water system. The areas between the streams are small or steep and rocky. This is not farming country, although there have been farms there, and still are. It is a land of wildness, a land where the forests belong, a land of the beaver and bear, of the deer and fox, a land where one can still see what the land once was, a land to go to and return from, a land where one can escape from his neighbor and enjoy the peace of solitude, which those who live in cities need. It is a land where the human spirit can yet be free.

In the meantime, pressured by Brower's persistent persuasion, the publication committee of the Sierra Club had at last agreed to finance an expedition to the Galapagos Islands. I invited Loren Eiseley, whom I had met, to join the expedition and to write an introduction to the proposed book. He agreed to do the introduction but declined the invitation to go to the islands,



pleasing poor health. And, as my assistant, I requested that my son, Stephen, with his wife, Kathy (with whom I had gone to Baja California), be included in the group. David Brower, who was making arrangements with the Ecuadorian government for our visit to the islands, was in correspondence with Cristobal Bonifaz Jijon, an Ecuadorian conservationist, whose advice he sought on the expedition. He also invited John Milton of the Conservation Foundation to come along as an expert on conservation policy. Then it was suggested that there ought to be a movie man included, to assure comprehensive coverage of Galapagos wildlife behavior. While photographing birds in Tucson before the war, I had gotten to know Ted Nichols, who made wildlife movies and was famous for his extraordinary film of the eruption of the Mexican volcano, Paricutin. I suggested that he and his wife, Mary Jane, an excellent amateur birder, be included in the roster. Then Brower, as a parallel factotum to my son, Steve, added his son, Kenneth. The party was approaching an unmanageable size. We had no idea where we would stay when we got there. The Darwin Station on Santa Cruz, which provided accommodations for scientists and those with legitimate purposes for visiting the islands, could not put us all up; but fortunately Mary Jane, who in addition to being a wildlife \_\_\_\_\_ was a ham radio fan, had made contact with Forrest Nelson (a ham operator in the Galapagos Islands) before leaving Tucson. He had built a lodge for tourists, recently completed, near the Darwin Station and would be able to put us all up and feed us for the duration of our stay.

From the start I became the person responsible for organizing

the expedition, but with the cooperation and advice of all the members. One of the first things that had to be done when we arrived in Quito was to get permission from the Ecuadorian navy to visit the Galapagos Islands; second, and more difficult due to government red tape, was to obtain release of our shipment of equipment from customs in Guayaquil. Eventually, we boarded the Cristobal Carrier, a converted wartime L.S.T., and sailed west out into the Pacific Ocean. Our first port of call was Wreck Bay on San Cristobal, the administrative center for the islands. From San Cristobal the Cristobal Carrier sailed for Academy Bay on Santa Cruz, which was to be our base of operation in the Galapagos. We were met by Forrest Nelson and taken ashore to his spacious lodge. One of the first matters that had to be settled was to arrange for inter-island transportation. Our request to the Darwin Station for use of the Beagle, the station's research vessel, had arrived with us, and the Beagle had already been assigned to other groups. Forrest Nelson suggested that we make a deal with the Angermeyer brothers, who lived across the bay and had sail-boats for charter. Carl Angermeyer had recently concluded a purchase agreement with the owner of the ketch, Carybdis, who from St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands had set out to sail around the world, reached the Galapagos Islands suffering from uncontrollable mal de mer and decided to sail no further. The Carybdis was an auxilliary vessel that slept six, including a crew of two. Fritz, the younger brother, owned a fishing sloop, the Nixe, a beautiful vessel that he had built himself from local wood and hand-made nails, and which could accommodate



three of us, as well as himself, his wife, Carmen, the cook and his young son, Fiddi. Below decks the accommodations were quite a squeeze, but then we often slept on deck.

With these two sailboats, which we had chartered for the duration of our stay, we set out to explore the islands, which were all volcanic. Two of the large islands were active volcanoes, the others all silent and still with many dead or flooded craters projecting above the sea. We planned to land on many to probe their secret recesses and to observe their unique living inhabitants. We would be living off the resources of land and sea: fruits and vegetables from the small interior farms, fish from the sea, and the meat of feral goats. They were escapees from domestic stocks or had been intentionally introduced by misguided individuals as a store for future cropping; but they were a menace to the indigenous vegetation on the smaller islands. Attempts had been made by Galapagos conservation groups to eliminate the goats from a few of the islands where they had become especially numerous, and hunting them was encouraged everywhere. Often, when we were off exploring and photographing, Fritz would go hunting with Fiddi and return with the quarters of a cabrito, which he hung in the rigging of the Nixe to age, and the next day Carmen would produce a delicious goat stew for supper. Fritz was also an expert fisherman and caught groopers when we were at anchor, a delicate fish that became a frequent element of our diet. But the greatest delicacy from the sea that we caught under sail on a troll was a dolphin. If one had never seen a dolphin, its edibility would be considered its greatest attribute, and its food quality

its greatest gift to piscine culinary art. The flesh of a dolphin is light and sweet, equal in delicacy to Lake Superior whitefish. A dolphin makes a dish worthy to set before the most fastidious gourmet. But compared with the living creature, the uses of a dead one are but dross from smelted gold. A dolphin is a fish at home in the surface of tropical seas, a fish of speed, grace and iridescent beauty. To catch a dolphin is to commit an <sup>Tense?</sup> act of ultimate disdain for the miracle of creation, and to ingest a dolphin is to perpetrate an ultimate indignity to the species, just as eating lark's tongues is the ultimate indignity to larks. And yet we caught and ate dolphins without suffering more than a moment of shame. Our dolphin was hauled on board, fighting desperately against the irresistible steel barb in his lips. His high, blunt forehead would plow the waves no more; his dark green, azure-spangled back had glided unseen for the last time through the blue watery empyrean. His great yellow eyes stared hopelessly, as if with a final desperate effort he sought, by convulsive flopping, to regain his native element. He soon was clubbed into insensibility, and as he poured his scarlet blood upon the deck, his vibrant, living colors faded to the gray of death. The azure light along his sides became mere palish, lifeless streaks. His green and yellow belly, which was the color of a fresh lemon, and which served to make him invisible in the shining surface of the sea to the eyes of his enemies below, changed to dirty slime, slipping from his scales in stringy masses. No longer a dolphin, he had become merely a dead fish. ✓

I had never had an experience that came close to the kind



of life we had been transported to in these mysterious islands, where all creatures were unafraid of men and expected not to be molested--a paradise in which one sensed a harmony in nature and could feel secure from the surprise of danger. We wore a minimum of clothing, only shorts and sneakers, and we sailed the smooth, tropical sea in quiet when the motor was turned off, interrupted only by the faint sloshing of the bow wave. I liked to lie way out on the bow whenever a pod of porpoises came by to investigate ; they would coast along in front close to the stem of the vessel, as though pushed by an invisible wave, and from time to time they would turn on their sides and look up at me to be sure I was still watching. On the few occasions when we sailed at night, a wonderful phenomenon of the sea was displayed; the bow waves sparkled with incandescent points of light from the plankton, which had been violently disturbed, and flowed away in our wake in a milky stream of greenish light, spinning and pulsing, spread out for fifty yards astern.

For four months we cruised among these "enchanted" islands, exploring them--from cool lagoons to hot, parched interiors. We snorkled in quiet bays, where young sea lions swam beside us, and on a moonlight night we attempted the ascent of Fernandina, one of the active volcanoes, but were driven back by tropical heat and dehydration. And when we flew home, I experienced mixed feelings--of regret at leaving this Eden, so isolated from all the responsibilities of civilization, and of eager anticipation to return to my family and society.