

Cub Reveals Carefully Hidden Secret Concerning Arbutus Hill

It's Not a Hill After All, He Finds; It Is a Succession of Cliffs
and Precipices Covered With Dead Leaves and Moss
—Flowers Hard to Discover.

Arbutus Hill is a fake. It isn't a hill at all. It is "hills."

Each spring as soon as the dandelions begin to lift their saffron faces up from green lawns, students (when it isn't raining) line the Third Street pike on their way to Arbutus Hill. The place is far more important to Bloomington than Dead Man's Hill is to France. There is more talk about Arbutus Hill than any other piece of nature's architecture hereabouts. And all of the talk is misleading. People who have been to the place where our school flower grows have never been known to tell exactly what they found. They show interested persons a bunch of arbutus and that is the end of it. The impression is left on one's mind that the place is a steep, mountain-like hill.

The writer, after hearing talk about the "Hill" for three years, determined to investigate for himself. Having been there and seen the sights, he will now attempt to show that the place is not at all what it is cracked up to be.

To go to the "Hill" one takes the Third Street pike and travels exactly five miles eastward. Guy Davis has lined the road with wall paper and mile posts and one knows to the inch when he has gone the allotted five miles. After the four-mile post has been passed the walker should begin to get nervous and inquire of every one where the "Hill" is. They will always tell one just where to stop.

No Hill in Sight.

About three-fourths of a mile past the four-mile post one comes to a big horseshoe bend. Before beginning to make the bend one always wonders if he should or should not go around the turn. No hill which looks a bit like the imagined Arbutus Hill stands out on either side of the road. Finally one decides to go around the turn and when he has traversed the entire horseshoe, which is a half mile long, he has advanced one hundred yards toward the hill of desire. At the other end of the bend there stands a house. From this house will usually come two little barefoot boys who will volunteer to conduct the traveler to the "Hill." They will act as guides and expect to be treated as such. All kids like candy, you know, and money buys candy.

At last you are at the "Hill." And here is where the writer was keenly disappointed.

He had always pictured the "Hill" as standing alone, skirted by trees and wrapped with trailing arbutus. A place ideal for picnics he had hoped to find something beautiful and mysterious. He found a place mysterious and ugly.

In the first place, Arbutus Hill, as has been stated, is not one single hill. It is a convulsion. Nature must have been suddenly petrified while in the act of "doing" a Hungarian Rhapsody. The country out there is just one series of ups and downs—mostly ups. Deep ravines greet one at every turn and insurmountable precipices make themselves evident on all sides. About the only place that such topography could be called beautiful would be on a prairie. There it would at least be very unusual.

Briars, Moss and Snakes.

Thick underbrush composed of briars and brambles impedes progress, and slippery moss makes one's equilibrium very unstable. Snakes and lizards play around in the dead leaves and moss, and now and then a supposedly mad dog chases around in the woods.

Of course the flowers are there. It is the only place in this part of the country where one may find the trailing flowers of fame. It is probably the only place in Indiana where they wouldn't grow if they wanted to be real popular. The plants, true to their name, trail along the ground and cover practically over all the ground where they grow. The leaves are great, large things—elephant ears—in comparison with the flowers, which are very hard to find. The ground is not painted a delicate pink and white with the flowers—don't imagine that for a minute. One has to get down on hands and knees and scratch around in the ground to uncover the little blooms. They attempt to conceal themselves and seem much averse to publicity.

However, do not let this discourage you from hiking to the "Hill." Rather let it be an incentive to you to go to see the worst chopped up land in Indiana. By all means don't look for any one, definite hill. And furthermore, when you have found your share of flowers, take them to town and talk about the flowers, never about the "Hill." It's a tradition not to breathe a word about the "Hill" as every one believes that every one else should see for oneself.