



(Photo by Jim Burton)

# Peace Pilgrim's Progress

**NUMBER SIXTEEN**

**Peace Pilgrim, Cologne, N. J.**

## **IN THE EAST**

I began my walk in Indiana among the scenic sand dunes along Lake Michigan. The trees were bare and the pussy willows were just beginning to shed their winter coats and the first crocuses were blooming. I had the pleasure of seeing spring come with a rush. Temperatures in the eighties inspired all the spring flowers to burst into bloom at once. I met many people in Indiana who were interested in peace and spoke at some good peace meetings. I found Kentucky a beautifully green state, with daisies in the fields and big southern magnolias in the gardens. I did a lot of walking at night to avoid the heat, and the Kentucky nights were filled with the scent of honeysuckle and the sight of fire-flies and the sound of whippoorwills. I saw Kentucky blue grass - which is really green - and I saw some of the beautiful horses that Kentucky is known for. Both Civil War Presidents were born in Kentucky. I passed the monument at the birthplace of Jefferson Davis, and most people know that the log cabin where Abraham Lincoln was born stood in Kentucky. I also walked through the town where Stephen Foster wrote "My Old Kentucky". West Virginia is almost solid scenic beauty with its steep hillsides and narrow valleys. When I first visited West Virginia I felt that it was the most isolated state of all, but this time it seemed somewhat less isolated, so perhaps the turnpikes are opening it up a little. I was told there is a deposit of coal underlying West Virginia which is so rich that only ten percent of it has been taken out in 80 years of mining. There are stories about terrible mine disasters, but now mechanization has replaced miners. West Virginia has an interesting history, for it broke away from Virginia during the Civil War and joined the North - and President Lincoln signed its Statehood Proclamation. When I walked in Michigan the fruit in the orchards was ready for the pickers and the crops in the fields were ready for the harvesters. It was a warm friendly September, with late flowers blooming in profusion. In peace interest I found the State of Michigan second to none - also in hospitality and speaking opportunities. When I walked from Detroit to Ann Arbor to end my Michigan pilgrimage it was early October - with a touch of fall in the air and splashes of fall color in the woodlands. In Ohio I spent some lovely signs of autumn like heaps of yellow pumpkins at roadside markets, admiring autumn contrasts like purple asters against bright leaves or radiant sunset clouds against blue skies, enjoying the autumn harvest of luscious pears and apples dropped by the generous hand of Mother Nature into the grass at my feet. Then suddenly it turned cold and snow fell on Ohio, and when I walked into Cincinnati to end my Ohio walk the leaves were crisp and brown underfoot. Tennessee is in some ways a southern state, but I think of it as a mountain state. I loved the independent - but often very poor - mountain people that I met. I suppose they are the original Hill Billys, with their mountain music and their barn dances - and there are stories of stills. I also loved the beautiful mountains of Tennessee, and the spring flowers that were blooming. The speaking opportunities in Tennessee were excellent, as was the hospitality. I spoke in so many colleges there that I got the impression that Tennessee had more than its share of colleges. North Carolina also seemed to have more than its share of colleges, and speaking opportunities there were also excellent. North Carolina is a southern state with touches of New England. I wondered how the report of the President's Commission on Smoking would affect this tobacco state. It does have another large industry, which is furniture making. I ended my North Carolina walk in the Smoky Mountains - the highest mountains in the east. History is very noticeable in Virginia. People are very friendly in Virginia. Scenery is very beautiful in Virginia. How lovely are the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia - whether clad in serene blue haze or wind-swept rain clouds. How lovely are the spring flowers in Virginia - and how abundant. In the Tidewater area of Virginia,

where there is said to be the greatest military concentration in the world, I was simply overwhelmed with hospitality and speaking opportunities. New Jersey is the only state which has no television station - and it has very few radio stations. North Jersey is overshadowed by New York and South Jersey is overshadowed by Philadelphia. I walked through the part of South Jersey which is a quiet farming area, and I walked through the part of North Jersey which is solid mass of large cities. I walked down New Jersey's east coast - walking on the boardwalk or the beach most of the time - through its well-known summer resort, Atlantic City, and to Cape May at its tip. I found much peace interest in New Jersey, and spoke to a number of peace groups there. Little Delaware has more than its share of friendliness, and walking was pleasant on the earth shoulders along the Delaware highways. Delaware is a farming state. The crops were ready for the harvest, and there were patches of bright-colored morning glories in the fields. In some places forest bordered the roads, with trees big enough for lumber. I ended my Delaware walk in the industrial area to the north, where Wilmington - Delaware's only large city - is located. The autumn colors were just beginning to show when I started from Maryland's eastern border, walked across Conowingo Dam, and after much zigzagging crossed the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and walked into Annapolis. The autumn colors were in full splendor when I started from Maryland's western border and walked through Maryland's lovely mountains - through Cumberland and Hagerstown and on into the huge city of Baltimore.

## **IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL**

At Washington, D.C., I finished 25,000 counted miles of walking. This walking has taken me two or three times into 48 states (all but the two new ones) and into Mexico and into all ten Canadian provinces. Henceforth I shall walk without counting. Whenever I enter Washington I feel anew that it is a very beautiful city as well as a very interesting city. Not only are the public buildings impressive, but all the wires are underground - as I hope they will be in every city of the future. I liked the openness of the public buildings, and the fact that you really can talk to your representatives if you wish. I talked to one of the President's assistants about the establishment of a Peace Department in the President's Cabinet.

## **ROADS THAT CLIMB THE MOUNTAINS**

Throughout the country I saw much super-highway construction, and I noticed that these super-roads tended to run in the valleys, tunneling through the mountains and under the rivers. I'm glad that on my pilgrimage I followed the old roads that climbed the mountains. What wonderful vistas there were to reward those who attained the summit - sometimes views of distant peaks and wooded slopes, sometimes views of buildings or roads where I had walked or would walk, sometimes views of valleys covered with fields and orchards. I know that this is an age of efficiency and that super-highways are much more efficient - but I hope there will always be some scenic roads, too - some roads that climb the mountains.

## **THOUGHTS TO PONDER ON**

Life is a mixture of successes and failures. May you be encouraged by the successes and strengthened by the failures.

Concealed in every new situation we face is a spiritual lesson to be learned - and a spiritual blessing for us if we learn that lesson.

If you realized how powerful your thoughts are, you would never think a negative thought. If you think you can't, you can't. But if you think you can, you may be surprised to discover that you can.

I have read very little about things spiritual, because my way is the inner way rather than the outer way, and for light I look directly to the source of light rather than to some reflection. I recommend that way to all who can take it - but if you must read books, read many books, so you will contact many conflicting opinions, and will therefore have to form your own opinion after all.

Great blessings lie store for the one who is wise enough to quickly put into practice the highest light that comes to him.

Because of our preoccupation with materialism we often miss the best things in life - which are free.

We must remain open to God's guidance, which is unique for every human soul, but God never guides us to break divine law - and if such negative guidance comes to us we can be sure it is not God. It is up to us to keep our lives steadfastly in harmony with divine law, which is the same for all of us, and only insofar as we remain in harmony with divine law do good things come to us.

The animal nature thinks in terms of using the jungle law of tooth and claw to eliminate all opposition - but the law of tooth and claw solves no problems; it can only postpone solutions, and in the long run it always worsens things. Therefore we have learned not to use it in our family circles and in our communities and even in our nations - and now it looks as though the wish to survive may stop us from using it in our world.

Looking through the eyes of the divine nature you see the essence within the manifestation - the creator within the creation - and it's a wonderful, wonderful world.

It is true that few find inner peace, but this is not because they try and fail - it is because they do not try.

## **CLOSING THOUGHT**

In this world you are given as you give  
And you are forgiven as you forgive -  
While you go your way  
Through each lovely day  
You create your future as you live!