

Poems of Winter

BY WINSTON F. UYTENBOGAART

WOOD LOT COLOUR

How stark the bare branches stand; against
the blue, autumn sky.
In late afternoon, the sun's rays flit, between sentinels of towering ash,
knocking at autumn's door.
As days grow short, the emerald canopies turn lemon yellow.
Then, their leaves once green, are soon a discarded brown refuse,
now dumped to form a carpet, on the forest floor.
Walking midst the brown salvage, announces the coming
cold white blanket, of winter's fury.
!
The sturdy Rock maples, within the aging bush,
hold out longer with colour as brilliant as a Van Gogh palette; in so many ways.
Some leaves, still bright green, others tinted yellow orange,
begin to show as scarlet fire; they hang on defiantly.
North to northwest winds, will thrash them hour after hour; for days.
Only after several killing frosts do they drop away.
To join the brown remnants of
the ash, so early gone.

Here and there vagrant wild flowers bob,
from between dead and dying ferns or grasses.
Looking close under dead falls or rotting stumps, wet with dew,
fungi and puff balls punch forth;
as part of nature's medicinal,
cleaning crew.

Alas, woodland bird songs no longer
stimulate, the pleasant feelings, of nature's cathedral.
Lost to travelling days, we miss their rant, of sweet songs.
The sun may shine, but it lacks the strength, of a summer's day.
One can no longer bask in warming breezes.
Elation for the autumn showcase,
quickly flows away; awaiting winters ermine blanket.
Now, till March winds and long sunny days awaken nature's paint box,
we shall sustain; with memories of the woodlot cathedral.

THE GREAT WHITE OWL

I am a great white owl.

Flying the winds of northern places,
when snow is hammered against the
rocky shores and ice encrusts the tender twigs;
of recent summer green.

On a day, frost snaps the barren forests as I search
the grey white ground.

My quarry, as my prey, scuttles between the
hillocks and lichen covered rocks.

Infrequent chance rewards my sortie for sustenance.

It leaves me with a worrisome mood.

If when the winds prevail, a blanket of white may
harbour the little ones from my sight.

Then too, my uncharted flight can
wing me too far south.

The time spent,
to return to home and familiar ground,
is, and may mean my demise.

But, I am alone and fearsome in the storm.

I am a great white owl .

I fly the winds of northern spaces.

WINTER'S TEMPEST BLANKET

The snow comes in nightly flurries;
to leave a carpet white.

Upon the ground white pillows slumber, rounded smooth,
lying cross the meadow's breast.

The cedars, heavy laden, maples naked;
wrapped with ermine bright.

No track of beast, no human tread, breaks
the silver shadows; cast in moonlit glow.

Each bough above, by ghostly hand,
bends and cracks the silence.

Each cloud of frozen mist drifts down, to add
in silver measure, a further frosting white;
on Autumn's splendour.

Then as the morn arises, a blue sky mixed
with blinding strobes, glances off each hillock's rise.

The sun then ends another winter's night.

Another tempest tamed.

WFU 2019

ON A FROSTY MORNING

On a cold, cold, frost cracking morn,
there is nothing more that can warm,
the human form, than a hot, hot, cup
of a favoured brew.

There is no place to go, nor more the desirable,
than a cozy room, to let the sun shine
freely upon open arms.

To open arms, as waiting for a lover.

To spend the days; entwined in
fields of nature's clover.

WU 2020

AT FIRST LIGHT: David's Song

Arising at first light, on this cold, January morn,
my daily walk was preceded by a wondrous view;
framed within, our rural kitchen window.

A crimson sunrise awakened my senses; taking me beyond the norm!
The wonder and beauty of nature's palette, provides a show
of ever increasing light, in a special form;
a sun fostered spectacle.

From first glimpse, morning light illuminates
the open fields, in well timed steps;
as if peeling back a window blind.

Dressed for the season, I step away from the doorstep,
to navigate my walk, through the lingering cushions of aging snow,
separated randomly by patches of barren ground.

These conditions lead me to think, in cautionary terms, of
an early turn to spring and warming themes!

A January thaw, encourages trickles of open water,
passing through icy channels, to beget yet larger streams.

Passing barren arms of bush and tree,
wintering birds are seen flitting and chipping for their treasured seeds.
Moving forward in a leisurely stride, aside the travelled track in quiet solitude,
I am encouraged the more, by the rising sun and the pleasure I am seeing.
Looking up, I wonder in this quiet time, if passing drivers, who with courteous
response to my wave, share the beauty of the moment: the absolute sense of being!
Arising at first light, on a cold January morn!

WFU Jan 18, 2021

AT THE LAKE

Walking the rutted, gravel beach, with north wind fresh down the bay, it leaves the chilled evening light with little more than a smile; on the day's passing hours.

The lake is blue green, with wind driven tides, above a mark seldom seen in many years.

Along the far shore, smoke curls from chimney flues, where in cabins, the fires below were started early. To delay the chill; at sun's last glow.

These images help provide a feeling, reminding us of all the ageless good times; spent at the cabin.

Few geese or fowl show their colours; this early spring day, still dank with cloud. Only a few shafts of sun break through; the season now held at bay.

Still, it leaves one secure; that there may be good times yet to come.

Soon, the summer's joy will again erase; all of winter's bitter bite.

Leading to lazy times of future days and the refreshing, sweet smell; of a summer's night.

Growing up in Peel County, schooled in Brampton and Streetsville, followed by study at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute and Kent State University ('72), Winston F. Uytendogaart worked for 40 years as a Land Use Planner and Construction Project Manager in Canada and the USA. Returning to Canada in 1992, Winston and his wife Linda settled in the Hills of Headwaters where in 2006 he retired to a career as a volunteer, wood carver, graphic artist and writer of poetry. As a technical writer for his day

job, he wrote poetry for fun. Winston looks to nature, people met and places for inspiration. Humorous ditties keep things real! Exploring the Bruce has also been a major contributor to his work. At the request of family and friends he published a small book of poems which met with some success and led to book readings and appearances. To date he has published three books of poetry and a children's book which are for sale at independent book stores across Ontario. Winston can be reached at wfu.mybooks@execulink.com **NEV**



Walk the edge of the Niagara Escarpment and hike through our diverse ecosystem and various trails! Observe and listen to the beauty of nature around the pond, and throughout the meadows.



Manitoulin Eco Park

... naturally reconnecting

Bunkies | Teepees | Camping | Trails | Nature Center | Dark Sky Preserve | 18777 ON-6, Tehkummah, ON POP 2C0, Canada | manitoulinecopark.com | (705) 859-2470

ORDER FORM:

Enjoy the **Best Views & Vistas** of the whole Niagara Escarpment in Canada!

NAME

ADDRESS

TOWN

PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

Copy of *Views & Vistas*
\$60 + \$3GST + \$21 shipping = **\$84**

More than **150 full-page photographs** from Niagara Falls to Manitoulin Island in one softcover volume.

Photographs by Mike Davis, writing by Gloria Hildebrandt, co-publishers of *Niagara Escarpment Views* magazine.

Details at NEViews.ca. Order online through our General Store or pay now by cheque, e-transfer or credit card

Niagara Escarpment VIEWS

Niagara Escarpment Views
50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2
905.866.7888 ads@NEViews.ca

