

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

Cub Tracks, 1943-1946

University of Montana Publications

---

Fall 1943

### Cub Tracks, Autumn 1943

Students of the Montana State University (Missoula, Mont.)

Harold G. Merriam

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cubtracks>

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

#### Recommended Citation

Students of the Montana State University (Missoula, Mont.) and Merriam, Harold G., "Cub Tracks, Autumn 1943" (1943). *Cub Tracks, 1943-1946*. 1.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cubtracks/1>

This Journal is brought to you for free and open access by the University of Montana Publications at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cub Tracks, 1943-1946 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

v. 1, no. 1  
Autumn qtr., 1943

ARCHIVES

LIBRARY  
Montana State University



Autumn Quarter

# Wild Tracks



Volume one, No. one . . .



# CUB TRACKS

## Freshman-Sophomore Literary Magazine

Leah Ferris, Marjorie Powell. . . . . Co-editors  
Betty Jean Green. . . . . Manuscript Manager  
Frances Fenell. . . . . Make-up Manager  
Bill Slager. . . . . Circulation Manager  
Flora Sagen. . . . . Verse editor  
Pat Templeton. . . . . Cover designer

Board of Editors: Nova Robinson, Bill Slager, Elizabeth Mosser, Leah Ferris, Robert Colville, Janice Smith, Flora Sagen, Betty Jean Green, Helen Dipple, Marjorie Powell, Helen Robbins, Frances Fenell.

Faculty Adviser: Dr. H. G. Merriam

### Sectional Editors

11A....Section 1	Bonnie Blenea Katherine Spacht Bob Seitz	12A....Sect. 1	Alice Drum Nancy Brechbill Marilyn Wentz
Section 2	Jean George Audrey Miles Harold Frazer Flora Bellefleur	Sect. 2	Gwendolyn Evans Dorothy Stricklin Lois Marie Peterson
Section 3	Frank McCarty June Bohm Lee Atkinson	Sect. 3	Sue Fraser Jane Kinkade Pat. Petterson Lorraine Mannix
Section 4	Mary Johnson Babs Bradner Lillian Wedum		Sara Mannix Barbara Hall
Section 5	Ethel Riegen Mary Bromo	Sect. 4	Joan Engleking Tannisse Brown Marigold Jones
Section 6	Florence Brackett Betty Gaston Anna Jo Kelly		
Section 7	William Free Elma Fay Cross Phyllis Isham Wilma Oksendahl Edythe Keig Ted Greeley Isabelle Kennedy		

### EDITORIAL

CUB TRACKS, freshman and sophomore publication, attempts to provide an outlet for the work done in the various composition classes. Because of the limited amount of space, much fine work has been left out. We hope that the rejection of one piece of work will not prevent a student's trying again. English instructors handed the best of each classes' work to sectional editors for consideration. The work selected by them was given to the board.

## SCHOOL STARTS AT SIX

Camas Prairie, Sept. 7 I am six. I started to school today. Seven white boys, one Indian boy and one white girl are the first graders. I have a barber shop hair-cut and a store shirt with button cuffs.

We chose our own seats. Indian Joo took the back seat in the first grade row. During the morning he made many trips down the middle aisle to the front of the room, elbowing each boy he passed. He was so quick in doing it that the teacher didn't catch him.

First, we just sat and watched the teacher. Then she wrote down our full names. When I slipped out of my seat and began to walk around the room, she said "Jimmie". I just kept going. I was "Phil" at home and "Jimmie" didn't mean anything to me.

She has quite a roomful of pupils and is busy. I don't pay much attention to her. When the other grades recite, the first graders scramble out of their seats and do a lot of things.

Sept. 10 Trouble today; Miss B. took my pencil and put it in my "wrong"(right) hand. She said that she would take a string and tie the fingers of my left hand if I kept on using my left hand. I left school at recess and went home. Mother took me back at noon.

I sat in my seat all afternoon and watched Miss B. I didn't touch my pencil. Sept. 11 I used my pencil in my left hand when Miss B. was hearing her other classes and did not see me. I will try to hold it in the other hand when she is looking.

Joe brought red ink to school yesterday. Today, Bill and Sid have red ink. I wish I had some.

Sept. 14 I had fried chicken in my lunch today. Sid had too. All of us boys had apples and Joe ate candy in school-time while Miss B. heard the third grade arithmetic. Sid had gum in his desk, but didn't chew it.

I just can't think Miss B. means me when she says "Jimmie". I wish that she would call me by my other name.

Sept. 20 Miss B. holds up cards with letters on them and we say words like horse and hon, hen and horse. I am learning some of the words. My aunt who teaches school wanted to teach me to read before school started. I wanted to learn in school along with the other boys.

I have listened to Stevenson, Riby, and the "Eugene Field Reader" read at home. I like "John Gilipen's Ride" best of all. Sometimes Miss B. reads to us. I like to hear her read animal stories. Sid chewed gum in school-time today. Nov. 1 We are learning to count. Miss B. writes figures on the board.

Miss B. says that I can't sing at all. We are practicing Christmas songs. Joe can sing a song all by himself. She says that I can't keep a tune. I can count to eight and write the numbers too.

Dec. 15 Miss B. says that when we sing the Christmas songs, I shall stand in the second row and just open and shut my mouth and not make a sound as the sounds are not in tune. I don't like to sing that way. I don't think Santa will like it. Christmas I opened and shut my mouth in Christmas songs just as Miss B. wished.

I got an erector set for Christmas. I wish I could take it to school. Mother took me to the doctor's office to have my eyes tested. When I wear glasses, I will see reading words better. Mother talked to the doctor alone in his office and then he called me into his office and examined my ears. He struck some forks against his table and asked me to listen. I heard their sounds. The doctor said "This boy has perfect hearing." Mother said that she was going to tell Miss B. as Miss B. had told mother that I never heard a thing she said. I'll have to think now when Miss B. says "Jimmie". I now have glasses. The words all look alike. I have a new reader. All of us boys ate jaw breakers in school today. I am seven now. I have boots and glasses. I can read and count, chew gum and eat candy. P.S. Miss B. thinks that I will pass my grade this year.



## ENOCH

He was a tall, fair lad, in a sailor uniform, waiting on the corner for the traffic light to change. I thought I had seen him somewhere and, as I neared the curb, I recognized him as a former school friend. I was very glad to see him as it had been three years since we sat next to each other in history class. He seemed quite pleased at my remembering him.

We talked for a few minutes about school days and generalities. I noticed particularly his navy-blue uniform; the blue cap with U. S. Navy upon it. He stood straighter and prouder than I had ever seen him stand before. His cap covered most of his hair but what could be seen was blonde with a slight curl. He had a straight nose with freckles covering part of it. I remembered how it used to wrinkle when he smiled, but the wrinkles weren't so noticeable now. Perhaps it was because he didn't smile very often. His lips were thin and colorless. When he talked he moved his mouth very little; enough, however, to reveal straight white teeth.

His blues fitted him very well. The bow was tied in the right spot on the V neck of his unwrinkled blouse and he wore the insignia of a machinist's mate, second class, on his right sleeve. Above the pocket of his blouse were three color-bars showing overseas service. One of these bars bore three gold metal stars.

He talked to me as if he had never known me. I believe I did most of the talking. I tried to tell him of the happenings of the town and of what had occurred since we had giggled together over test questions, the answers to which neither of us knew. He nodded and watched every movement my lips made. When he answered a question or made a remark he was slow and very deliberate. I could see that he was seriously thinking over what he was going to say. Not once did he spontaneously proffer a remark or reply.

I found it difficult to keep my conversation flowing and smooth. There were awkward silences during which he made no attempt to encourage me. I tried to avoid his eyes by looking down the street. I could see that things had changed, so much that we had nothing in common.

Several people passing us stopped to welcome him home. "Why, Enoch, sure am glad to see you! Come over! Hear you did a great job! Must hear about it!"

He would smile bashfully, and a slight blush would bring color to his pale cheeks.

Cheerful words are hard to find as one searches a somewhat dead face for old warmth and enthusiasm, but I did my best by exclaiming how tall he was and what fine food the Navy must feed the boys. He only smiled.

"It's so good to be home. So good. The town's so quiet and peaceful. The Coast? It's terrible; too crowded. Yes, it's good to be home."

I thought I saw tears in the lifeless eyes. When I asked him where he had been, he changed the subject to other topics. Finally, when again I imperatively asked him, he replied:

"Oh, just about everywhere--Kula, Midway, the Solomons." Not realizing that perhaps he disliked talking about his experiences, I continued my questioning, forcing him to answer. Finally, under my persistent prodding, he became so engrossed with battle occurrences that he kept pounding one fist into the palm of his other hand. He spoke slowly but with accentuated hatred in his words.

(--Enoch continued.)

"You know, Mary, I thought about you when the Japs came over Midway. I could see you in Mr. Werthem's class. I could see you a lot of times-- when the Japs came over."

He spoke of bombing, fighting, killing,-- -- all the time with chilling deliberation and morbid coldness. As I listened, I knew I was facing the realities of war in the appearance, the face, the voice of a fighting man.

Why need I feel pity, sadness, overwhelming dependency? Surely this boy was one to deserve more than tears. I could say nothing. My tongue was thick, my throat dry, and only the blurred contour of the boy's changed face remained visible.

Ultimately I uttered a few words of consolation and made an excuse for leaving. He said he would drop me a card from port. But before we parted I asked one more question,-- the name of his ship.

"My ship, Mary?? My ship was the Helena!"

I can remember the first time I ever saw Enoch. Our history teacher had seated us alphabetically. Enoch and I were the first two in the front row. He was a short tow-headed boy with a superb sense of humor. Having the habit of coming to school late, he would enter the room puffing as though he had been running through the halls with the speed of a March hare. I doubt if he had, though. The puffing was merely an act for the benefit of the teacher.

Enoch had difficulty in getting his assignments but always managed to have an alibi. "Well, you see, I worked last night and when I got home I started right in but since it was so late I fell asleep. Fatigue from my work, you know."

If caught in a little white lie, he would become crimson from the beginning of his very blond hairline to the tip of his ears.

Enoch was the cause of many of the class's lighter moments. Well liked by all the students, he would bring many anecdotes to entertain us.

If in a quandary as to an oral answer, he would lean over on my chair and putting his hand over his mouth would whisper: "Quick! What's the answer? Remember I helped you yesterday."

Often he would become involved in a discussion on the subject matter of which he was absolutely ignorant. Somehow he would mutter and stammer something that would give his colleagues a lead, which usually ended in his being chosen as committee head of the forum.

During examinations we would move our chairs as close as we dared. He never prepared his lessons and often knew no answers on the test. On the promise that he would not mark all of my answers wrong if he corrected them, I would let him cast side glances on my paper. He would do so by covering his eyes, as though blinded by the light from a nearby window, and looking out of the corner of his eyes, depending on me to warn him of approaching danger.

When our instructor reseated us the next semester he moved me into the back row and kept Enoch in front. Many looks of despair were exchanged between us during the next two quarters. At the end of the year Enoch told me he was enrolling in United States History again next year.

The war broke out while school was in session. Many boys were withdrawing to enter various branches of the Service. Enoch mentioned going into the Navy but I don't think he had planned on entering as soon as he did. In the summer after school was out I saw Enoch quite often waiting on the public at a local grocery store. He grew considerably but did not change otherwise. He remained the same happy youngster. Upon one occasion he told me he had enlisted in the Navy and was leaving soon. The news came to me as a surprise.



(--Enoch, continued.)

After exchanging a few words of encouragement and wishing him the best of luck, we parted for two and one-half years.

I never heard from Enoch. Now and then I would see his name in the paper.

"Christiansen at Farragut."

"Local boy training at San Diego."

"Overseas mail brings news of Missoula lad."

I thought of him at intervals and wondered how he was; if he were having a wonderful time away from home among his buddies. I imagined him blushing at inspection, laughing at mess, alibiing his way out of trouble in port. I could not picture him in anything but some ridiculous personal predicament. Certainly the thought of his facing the cannon fire and machine guns did not enter my mind. The fact that he might have moments of homesickness and loneliness never occurred to me. Not Enoch!

I had never seen the effects of war. Today I picked up the paper and on the front page the story of the Helena was told to America--a story of which I read every word.

"The Helena escaped from Midway badly damaged."

"The Helena at Guadalcanal."

"The sinking of the Helena."

I cannot express my feeling. It isn't easy to put into writing what your heart is saying. The course of events in three years became kaleidoscopic,--a little red-faced boy, laughing at an inopportune moment; an awkward teen-age lad carrying packages to parked cars; a whistler on a bicycle; a young boot camp youth; a dirty, scantily clad, weary-eyed suffering sailor, crawling belly-deep in mud and mire through stifling jungle to avoid Jap snipers, after jumping from a burning deck; a reserved, undemonstrative stranger on a curb. A hero! This was Enoch.

---Mary E. Brome. 11a Section 5.

## SUMMER AFTERNOON

The sun, shining through the leaves, made lacy patterns on the quiet surface of the pool. It was a tiny pool, hung over with lime-green willows. Its tranquil depths reflected every shadow and every gleam of light. Fine strands of moss quivered slightly as the water trembled under the passage of some vagrant breeze or parted for the darting trout. A splash! Tiny drops arched, glistening like crystals. A ring of ripples widened and widened until the entire surface was in motion. The shadows, distorted, shuddered and quivered, and slowly subsided into a cool intricate design. A water-spider skipped over the surface. Occasional breezes swayed the willows, bending them toward the water until they trailed across the surface. Slowly they waved to and fro as if beckoning to the skies. The air was filled with their wet rustle.

As the puffs of air strengthened, tiny waves curled and slapped lightly on the smooth pebbles of the shore. A little higher they crept, lapping at the grassy bank. The white pebbles darkened and gleamed wetly in the sun. Tufts of grass bent to let the glistening drops slide off and plop into the pool. A frog slithered into the water, leaving a trail of crushed grass. The tangy odor of peppermint rose from the broken leaves, and mingled with that of the wild rose bushes tangled in the willows.

A grasshopper made his bobbing way over the grass. A fantastic green bug waved his feelers and stared at nothing with tiny, bulging eyes. Ants wandered aimlessly by. The quiet of a hot summer afternoon grew deeper and peace settled over the small pool.

---Neva Armour 12a Section 2

## RAIN CLOUDS

The silent clouds tried desperately all day to keep their heavy burden from the earth. Toward evening they became exhausted and wept quietly.

---Bill Slager 25a



## INTERLUDE

Bleak marble floors, forbidding iron gates, wilted wreaths, torpid air, the inhuman quality of Mother's voice--these all characterized the mausoleum. Death was the sovereign power. Dead humans, dead flowers, dead air. Even the sunlight was changed to a lifeless hue passing through the stained windows. The only marks of once-significant lives were square marble placques, bearing the name, birth date, and death date of an individual. All the joys, sorrows, triumphs and defeats of a human being were forever locked in one small space.

As I stood there watching Mother place fresh flowers in front of grandmother's vault, I automatically began reading the inscriptions on the nearby slabs. Born in 1850----died in 1925. I began to live the year that person died. Born in 1835---died in 1886. That person lived through the Civil War. Born in 1891---died in 1917. World War I must have claimed that life. Born in 1921---died in 1922. That person didn't have a fleeting glimpse of the world. So it went---row after row of names and dates.

Surveying the crypts, I slowly wandered down the corridor. Some didn't have any flowers adorning them; the others supported gilded wreaths; many were almost covered by huge garden bouquets; a few boasted of only an empty vase. Wanting to be outside, I walked toward the door and leaned against the radiator to wait for Mother. The sudden contact of the cold metal against my legs was almost like a burn. Finally the welcome sound of her foot-steps echoed down the long hall. I stood waiting at the door. Fashioned of metal, it required all my strength to hold it open for her. Then, letting it swing behind me, I stepped out into the realm of life. I filled my lungs with fresh, warm air, and stood on the steps silently watching a blue bird soar into the clouds.

-----Tannisse Brown 12 a Section 4

## REQUISTS

Dear God, you didn't send exactly what I asked you for; He might be somewhat taller, and perhaps a little more of seriousness would make him just a small bit more ideal---Or a trifle more good-looking-----but then, here is how I feel: He wasn't as I'd dreamed him, but you know, when he got here, I found he suited better than the image, year by year. I wouldn't have you change him for a million other men..... Dear God, He's perfect as he is---just send him back again.

----Flora Sagen 25a

## "IT JUST ISN'T DONE"

She looked at them with bewilderment. "But why should I vote for Jane? I know she's our sorority sister, but I honestly believe that she hasn't what it takes to be a leader. I don't think she can accept the responsibility. Now I think that Alice-----yes. I know she's an A O Fi, but" Her voice trailed off weakly as a stunned hush came over the group and her sorority sisters looked at each other in amazement.

Had she said something so terribly wrong? She had heard about politics in college but certainly had not realized that everyone took them so seriously. Always in high school she had voted for the person who she believed could do the job best. Now did she have to subordinate her own personal convictions and vote for an inferior person just because she was a member of her sorority? Wasn't it her duty to vote for the one who could accomplish most for the school? What if she did belong to another sorority? Shouldn't college girls work together for the good of their school rather than separately for their own group?

This problem of personal integrity confronts many college girls. If they have enough courage to stand up for their convictions, they will do what they believe is right regardless of their sorority sisters' opinions. If they can't afford the luxury of integrity, they will fail in life and lose some of their self-respect.

---Anonymous

## FLANDERS FIELD--1943

Still grow the poppies in Flanders Field,  
 Still stand the crosses row on row,  
 But the graves are empty, the bugle still;  
 Though the flag still flies on the green hill.  
 We cannot rest, we cannot sleep----  
 Our sacred trust you failed to keep,  
 We hear the echo of marching feet  
 Treading toward our judgment seat.

----Robert Colvill 25a



## LIVING WITH WAR

Now and again it comes to me as a shock that life was ever without war. Although we have been at war not quite two years, its pattern has come to be an accepted part of life. My mind does not constantly yearn for the past. I seldom remember the peace-time world. The future is uncertain, like a picture sometimes bright, sometimes dark, depending on the mood. Often I try to think of it but it only seems to grow more confused, so I concentrate on the present, which has become the important thing. Bright or dark, there is no escaping it and no questioning it.

Maybe this acceptance of unnormal conditions of life came about because of the slowness of war to have a definite effect on my life. True, after Pearl Harbor, there was a period of disturbance. I knew a terrible thing over which I had no control was happening. Yet I was more stirred than depressed. Few reports of Americans killed had come in--and certainly of no one I knew. Then death, or threat and danger of death to people I knew, was a mysterious tragedy, not a common, everyday occurrence.

I was only sixteen and none of the boys I knew were old enough to go to war. The following spring my brothers left for different camps. True, the house was lonely without them, empty without the clutter of masculine clothes and silent without the teasing voices. Yet, it was scarcely different from having the boys away at college, comparatively safe and in comfortable circumstances.

The summer after Pearl Harbor many older boys I knew left for camps all over the country. News was not good. The U.S. war machine, caught unaware, was not working at its smooth, ironic sureness and speed. From Russia, the news was disheartening as from North Africa and the Southern Pacific. Sad to say, I, with many Americans, "put my head in the sand" like an ostrich. The war was still far away, an unpleasant thought I had trained my mind to shun. Then, the bill drafting eighteen year olds was passed, and suddenly my own world was involved. Boys began to talk of enlisting before the draft got them. In school they took special courses to prepare themselves for different branches of the service, yet, everyday life went on the same. Gas-rationing and food-and-shoe-rationing came into effect gradually. I still had more than plenty of the necessities of life, and cars still lined the streets of Missoula. I bought a war bond and felt a glow of pride. In Victory Corps gym I learned to march and to chin myself. But the change in my way of life was not drastic. The school was not bombed. There were no sandbags in the streets, or air-raid shelters in back yards.

(Living with War continued)

But I do remember one jolt. A boy who lived down the street from us was killed in a plane crash. I had known him just by sight, but one day I saw his mother. Her face was a picture of grief. I quickly turned my head away, but I could still remember her eyes, sorrowing, a little dazed, and touched with bitterness. For days I could think of nothing else, yet life soon rolled over it and my own personal joys and cares took the upper hand again.

And then boys of my own age began to go. Some were "rarin to go", others with a certain reluctance at leaving their plans and dreams unfinished. Yet none would have stayed home. I said goodbye to many, taking a certain pride in having them ask me to write them. It was good to know I could help even that much.

Then in the spring, my brothers came home at the same time on furlough. Ray told us he would be sent overseas within a month. At first my mind would not accept the fact that here was danger for someone I loved. His furlough was short, and in three days he left by plane. I remember standing on the bleak runway at the airport that windy day in April. He said goodbye, laughing and kidding my mother as usual. Then he strode to the plane, turning to wave before he disappeared into the interior. When I saw the plane circle slowly and become a tiny speck above the blue mountains, and saw the tears on my mother's cheeks, I realized with slow dread that it might be the last time I should see him. War moved in under the same roof with me.

Yesterday, a half-year later, we received a letter from the mother of one of the pilots in my brother's crew on the bomber "The Shaft." She said that she had word from an anonymous pilot from another ship that had participated in the raid over Regensburg, Germany, on August the seventeenth-- the raid in which "The Shaft" went down. He said he had seen the plane "shot to hell" and had counted ten 'chutes opening. This woman's son has not yet been accounted for. The words of the unknown pilot are her only hope. But much to our joy, my brother, Ray, has been reported a German prisoner of war.

And yet, two years ago, the thought of my brother parachuting from a blazing bomber over enemy territory in the midst of a great air battle would have left me cold with terror. It would have out-done my most horrible nightmare. Now I accept it not only as the truth, but as a blessing, the only means of his escape. I am overjoyed at the thought of a loved one in a German prison camp just because I know he is alive after being missing in action for a month.

I accept as everyday stuff stories of horror at Guadalcanal and death and destruction. I accept it as millions of Americans, not with complacency and a deaf ear, but as something that must be faced, taken in, and believed, until it seems as though life were never without it.

Yet, now and again, I do stop and realize, with surprise, that there once was, and maybe someday again will be, a world with a security and a future. A world without constant death and fear of death. Until the promise of this new world comes true, I shall live with war.



