

Tow Hill: At the back of the beach, a high-shanked spruce forest seemed to have its green skirt up, daintily ready to come wading.

(cut from p. 97 of ms; use later?)

Tow Hill, 31 July '80--

cliff abt 200 yds long, perhaps 300' sheer up

the top domes--arcs--over you as you stand looking up: something like mosque domeline in middle with walls out either end ( see sketch on original card)

abt 15 big trees along clifftop, at very brink as if poised to dive

the cliff is remarkably sheer--beneath if you have to throw your head back as far as possible to see the top--of long sectioned material like ~~xxx~~ columnar basalt, but bigger. Cliff face is not smooth as say Half Dome'S, but indent in these column-like ways

when it does, and from a little distance looks like a half-dome: a minor mountain sliced in half. ~~xxx~~ Clumps of green grass, long like thickly clustered dune grass, spot the entire cliff; also some moss growth, particularly at eastern end.

Perhaps say it looks like one of the Sitka round mtns whacked in half



At the cliff base is tumble of black boulders big as ox carts. Then a narrow stand of fir trees, then the sharp upshot of the cliff.

The point extending out and around Tow, beginning at its western base and continuing rocky all the way around to the mouth of the Hiellen River, is black rock, knobbed and pitted and riven (gouged, some rectangular trenches cut by waves). One blowhole at western base of cliff, surf shattering up from a concavity in the rocky tideline into beads of white. Much bigger blowhole ~~near~~ eastern farthest-extending (that is, reaching north into Dixon EN<sup>ance</sup>) finger of the point: concavity angles in smooth curve down beneath the rock of the point, wave strikes in, rebounds out ~~xxx~~ along the confining curve of the top in great spray, yards long. Blowhole explosions are something like instant fan-shapes, dissolving as instantly as they happen.

The rock ledges of the point, esp. along the eastern farthest-out portion, are black horny parapets, pitted with fist-size holes as if they've been under seige from small cannon. Several thrusts of them, like some crazy fortress extensions (enfilades?).

### Tow Hill/3

Beach west of big blowhole, between it and western end of cliff, is hummocked with two rock formations like ship hulls resting upside down--even striated as the ship boards would be. Hummocks are the same blackish color as the rest of the point rocks.

At eastern forest edge of cliff, sawgrass along the treeline and in a little ways (on the walk from parking lot 400 yds in from river mouth) and then moss over forest floor, rocks, stumps, everything, like a green rust.

It is dark country along there: the Hiellen a river of black lacquer, very slow and beautiful, 60' wide at the bridge by the parking lot; the mud of the trail very dark too, and then the black rock of the point rimming around.



## Tow Hill/4

The beach east of Tow Hill and Hiellen river mouth: very broad, tan sand, arcing northeastward (?) in its sweep to the tip at

Rose Point. Wall of trees, likely spruce, with branches mostly at their tops (a bit like cattails); Visitors Bureau lady said the salt spray costs trees in Tow Hill area their lower branches), making another horizon arc above the beach; at tideline are ~~first~~ clots of spume coming and going with the surf, beaded all along the tideline like floats of endless fishing net. From distance they look like gulls ceaselessly pacing back and forth; closer, they look like sponges scrubbing the beach.

## Tow Hill/5

Plot development: they land (are washed in) on broad sand beach just east of mouth of Hiellen River after Dixon E trance storm. Next morning, M sees the very high tops of trees across the river mouth, decides to investigate. He either swims the river--would have to go 400 yds in from river mouth to find it narrow enough, about 60' wide there--or he and others take canoe and go round point to western edge of cliff, where shallow beachline runs west.

Either way, the half-dome cliff begins to reveal itself to him as he comes around the point from the river mouth: the sharpness like a Sitka mtn bisected, then the expanse of the cliff face and its beauty of structure and decoration of grass as he comes farther around. Two Bald eagles float across the face of the cliff as he looks up at it.

Finding his way to the top--by coming back across base of cliff to eastern edge--he climbs and can see to Dall(?), Prince of Wales...



Tow Hill / 6

Tow Hill pt of rock like pumice

Rose Spit - sign at Tow Hill:

Along east coast of island, sand & gravel cliffs, dep'd thousands of yrs ago by melting glaciers, are attacked & eroded by waves. Strong north-flowing currents have carried sand up coast & dropped it in a series of beach ridges at end of land. Gradually, all land n to e of Tow Hill & Argonaut Hill has been built up.

- in area: sandhill crane, white winged scoter



clots of foam like sponges washing beach - back & forth on tide

- tan (-gray) beach

- wall of trees, branches fly at tops  
→ dark green

from beach across Hiller R., lkg back at Tow Hill Pt:

fog hung in top  $\frac{1}{2}$ s of trees, as if trees were being formed

from bottom up.



Tow H -  $\frac{1}{2}$  dome, clumps of moss & grass all over it

beach: 2 hummocks of rock, a boardlike  
striations; like  
ships on back

black  
dark rock shelf

sawgrass along tree line, then  
moss like grass mat

dark mud.

H'n R dk bln, alt black

water had turned to green

columnar rock - basalt-like

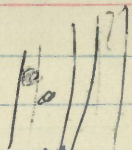
lk one of. 5th mtrs sliced in  $\frac{1}{2}$

blowhole at w. edge of base; explosion of white; fanlike (<sup>cavity in</sup> ~~tree~~ <sup>causes</sup>)  
bigger of bigger  
beach is black, pitted & pitted + uneven (gouged)

now to lk start up to see top of trees atop cliff



cliff 200 yds long - <sup>300</sup>~~350~~' high



4 top domes -- arcs -- over you -- with walls out of either end

blowhole breaks into heads of ~~water~~ water  
shatters

alt 15

large big trees along cliff top

at cliff base, tumble of black rocks big as carts  
" " " narrow stand of trees, then upshot of cliff

beach east of H'n: spume in line like floats on fish net

treeline & surf as far east as cd be seen  
making an arc

they had landed in bottom 7a veg

spume like gulls

river mch 200 yds wide

belled kg/ps

400 yds up r mch to narrowing  
s pebbled & ~~poor~~ from



M: puzzled o tremble ht of trees (as he lks across my beach 2 of  
H'n). Roundg. point (rocks all way; canoe wd have to land  
west of blowhole) he begins to see boom of cliff, 1st in  
profile & then up beneath.

- 2 bald eagles go past face of mouth, e to w

rock ledges are horny <sup>parapets</sup> feet/cm, full of pitted & fist-size holes  
- several thrusts of them on point, like crazy fortresses (emfilades?)

at eastern pt of rock, bigger blowhole: concavity going back  
under pt of rock

skunk cat male

♂ still; 60' wide at br; black lagged



Trees at Tow Hill vastly bigger than arnd Sitka;  
big enough you can watch waterdrops fall like beads &  
have time to step up under them.

- Skunk cabbage smaller than arnd Sitka.

stately trees along Q.C. shoreline, n & e sides



Spidegate museum: pic of carved pole at Tow Hill, early this century.  
Pole had smaller carved figures, & more of them, than usual.

considered that  
Melander, who ~~thought~~ he had seen a lot in his seafaring, ~~and had,~~ could

recall

~~remember~~ nothing as odd as this black whorled ~~in~~ shore, with its

~~ballooning~~  
dome of cliff ~~shooting~~ up from nowhere.