

"C" HILL MEMORY: Carson City, 1948

Thomas Edward Shaw

High on "C" Mountain
above town, two boys sit,
their heads over sagebrush,
and out-of-breath, looking down.

Hearts free and hands filled
with warm sand,
they push scuffed shoes forward,
as they look and listen.

A covey of Quails cluck
somewhere in the sage.
While
even farther below...
in John Winter's pasture,
a magpie scolds a meadowlark, singing.

The boys see the Capitol Building's
silver dome rise alone
above old tree tops
and think of their mothers,
working in kitchens
under roof tops
obscured by leafy cottonwood boughs.

The loud crack of a tree limb breaks
carries through summer air while
mountain silence surrounds them.

The smell of sagebrush
is sharp in the warmth of the sun,
as the boys look
across the valley floor below
track the iron line leading into town,
as the rails run.

To where
under the expanse of
old V & T shed roof,
a hammer pounds,

a bell rings, and
the whoosh, and chug
of Steam cylinders
tattle on number twenty-six
prowling the roundhouse yard
below in the town
so quiet and absorbed
in its own dreams.

Impatient to get on with it
the boys get up,
to run down the hill,
to play out
their summer dreams.