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Two Thousand Miles from Home

George L. Hoffman

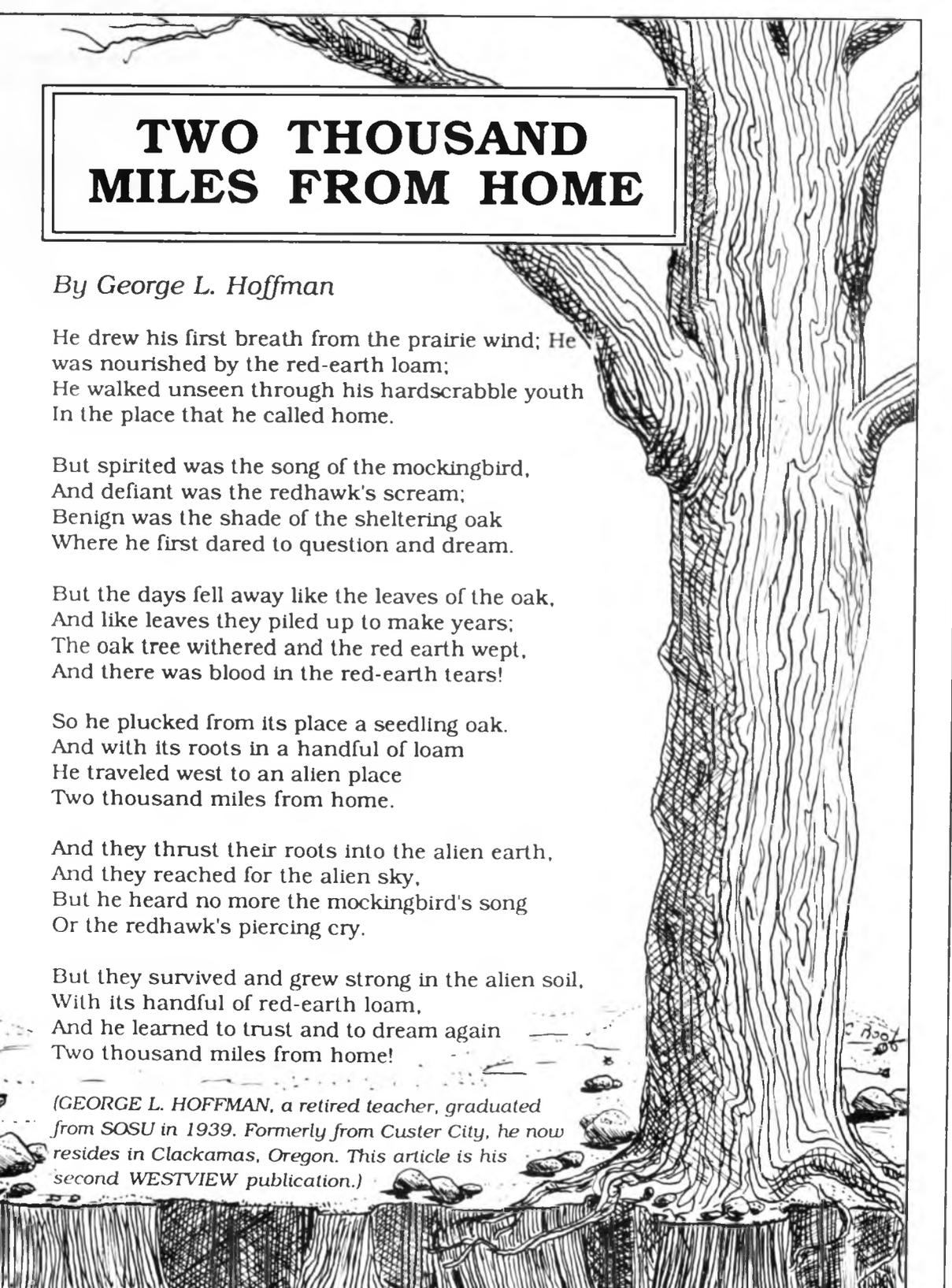
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TWO THOUSAND MILES FROM HOME

By George L. Hoffman

He drew his first breath from the prairie wind; He
was nourished by the red-earth loam;
He walked unseen through his hardscabble youth
In the place that he called home.

But spirited was the song of the mockingbird,
And defiant was the redhawk's scream;
Benign was the shade of the sheltering oak
Where he first dared to question and dream.

But the days fell away like the leaves of the oak,
And like leaves they piled up to make years;
The oak tree withered and the red earth wept,
And there was blood in the red-earth tears!

So he plucked from its place a seedling oak.
And with its roots in a handful of loam
He traveled west to an alien place
Two thousand miles from home.

And they thrust their roots into the alien earth,
And they reached for the alien sky,
But he heard no more the mockingbird's song
Or the redhawk's piercing cry.

But they survived and grew strong in the alien soil,
With its handful of red-earth loam,
And he learned to trust and to dream again
Two thousand miles from home!

*(GEORGE L. HOFFMAN, a retired teacher, graduated
from SOSU in 1939. Formerly from Custer City, he now
resides in Clackamas, Oregon. This article is his
second WESTVIEW publication.)*

ART BY CYNDE ROOF