

[Ebook pdf] U. S. Route 2 - CANADA Too!

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Robert Mac Kinnon

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Robert Mac Kinnon : U. S. Route 2 - CANADA Too! before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised U. S. Route 2 - CANADA Too!:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pretty good readBy CustomerPretty good read. Does go off on quite a few tangents, some interesting, some a bit too long. Was looking for a motorcycle type touring tale of Rt 2 as I am planning such a trip but this is the next best thing.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is the real thing. Sans pictures, ...By Jean MitchellThis book is the real thing. Sans pictures, MacKinnon's inspired travel

companion provides interesting history, anecdotes and more for a most enhancing trek along Rte. 2. I found the following review helpful. One man's journey

By R. M. Peterson

For some time, I have been intrigued by U. S. Route 2 and have entertained the notion of some day driving it coast to coast, from Houlton, Maine to Everett, Washington (or vice versa). Route 2 dates back to the original U.S. highway system established in the 1920's, and it is the northernmost east-west U.S. highway in the country. Part of its fascination for me is that, except for a few disparate forays, I have not been to the far American north traversed by Route 2. After recently reading a book on the Lincoln Highway, I checked to see if there were any books on U. S. Route 2, and, lo and behold, I found this book by Robert Mac Kinnon. (I presume his surname at one time was "MacKinnon".) I decided to read it with the hope of gaining more information on my own inchoate notion of driving Route 2.

U. S. Route 2 actually consists of two segments, separated by the Great Lakes. Going east to west, the eastern segment terminates in Rouse's Point, New York, and the western segment begins near Sault Ste. Marie on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. But Mac Kinnon (if he actually goes by that double-barrelled surname) connected the two segments by travelling through Quebec and Ontario in Canada. Hence, the latter half of the book's title -- "Canada Too!"

Mac Kinnon made his journey east to west on Route 2 in 2006, at the age of seventy-seven, shortly after his wife had died. He integrates into his account some experiences from earlier trips that he had taken with his wife. He then wrote and self-published (in 2014) U. S. ROUTE 2 -- CANADA TOO!

It is a quirky book. There is less travelogue than I expected -- relatively few accounts, for example, of motels and restaurants along the way. There is a fair amount of geology and even more local history. There also are numerous digressions as well as a passel of assorted musings. The writing is relaxed and informal; at times, however, it is a tad clumsy. (It does not help matters that there are numerous typos and that the author does not use hyphens.) Still and all, the book has a certain measure of charm.

Here are three of the author's musings that resonated with me:

- * "New England folklore is filled with stories of harsh conditions that resulted from whole generations trying to grow crops on unproductive land. * * * [T]he best crop turned out to be the hard working people who came from these poor families."
- * On the romanticized West of yesteryear versus the West of today: "The real west is what the motorist sees. There's no point in getting too hung up on looking for the old days. They're gone."
- * "Here and everywhere else along the road, the best thing about travel is the people I meet."

Based on Mac Kinnon's book, here are places on or near Route 2 where I will make a point of spending some time if and when I make my own Route 2 journey: Houlton, Maine; Penobscot Indian Nation; Barre and Burlington, in Vermont; the Mount Washington Hotel in New Hampshire; Fort Michilmackinac, Michigan; Ashland, Wisconsin; Lake Itasca, Minnesota; Forts Totten, Union, and Buford in North Dakota; Glacier National Park; Kalispell, Montana; Bonners Ferry, Idaho; and the Grand Coulee Dam.

Another time across the New Jersey Turnpike, but, this time it's different. It's the beginning of a full cross trip, and high time - as a matter of fact, and sad to say, It's well past the time I should have gone. Way back, when we were both working, my wife and I followed this same route across the country, a section at a time. It took years. One time so far. Next time pick it up from where we left off and, again, go just so far. Section by section, vacation by vacation, trip after trip, and, after each, I would write about what we found, and research for the next trip. And, with respect, 9-11 and Katrina have virtually no part in any of this simply because they came later. The original plan was to have the two of us make this trip after retirement. Her health wasn't up to it. Last year, after fifty-one years of marriage, she died. Her name was Theresa, Terry to those of us who loved her. Our family grief is, and will remain, private. So that's the last word you will see on this sad event. Now, at age 77, I'm by myself and off to complete the whole route of the trip