God's Obelisk

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inquiry. He wrote that the Danish Creamery had long since been dismantled, and that the cream separator set up there in 1883 was the first ever brought to the United States. This was a bit of startling information for the ordinary aids to study, such as annuals and encyclopedias contained practically nothing about this matter. But subsequent thorough and prolonged study of the subject has made it clear that he was right.

The cream separator which Jeppe Slifsgaard brought to the United States in 1882 had a 24-inch bowl, a speed of 250 revolutions per second, and was capable of skimming 2,000 pounds of milk per hour.


God’s Obelisk*

A joking soldier named me “Devil’s Tower”;  
But God created me, a tapered spire  
To raise all searching eyes above the earth,  
To lift their vision upward to the stars.  
The Red Men gave to me a fabulous birth  
That saved three maidens from an angry bear;  
While men of science patiently explain  
Me as a monolith, volcanic-born.  
In homage, Roosevelt proclaimed this site  
The first of many Monuments, so pines  
And native flowers could thrive around my base.  
A thousand tapered pentagons of stone  
Compose my whole. Each fluted shaft alone  
Would crumble, fall, disintegrate to dust;  
Together as a triumphant whole they have  
Endured. The blasts of hail, bombastic winds  
Of fifty million years proved trivial  
As dew on blades of grass. God’s Obelisk  
Upon a mountain top, I symbolize  
The permanence and peace of unity.

—Mae Urbanek

*This poem won first place in a state poetry contest sponsored by the Wyoming Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1956.