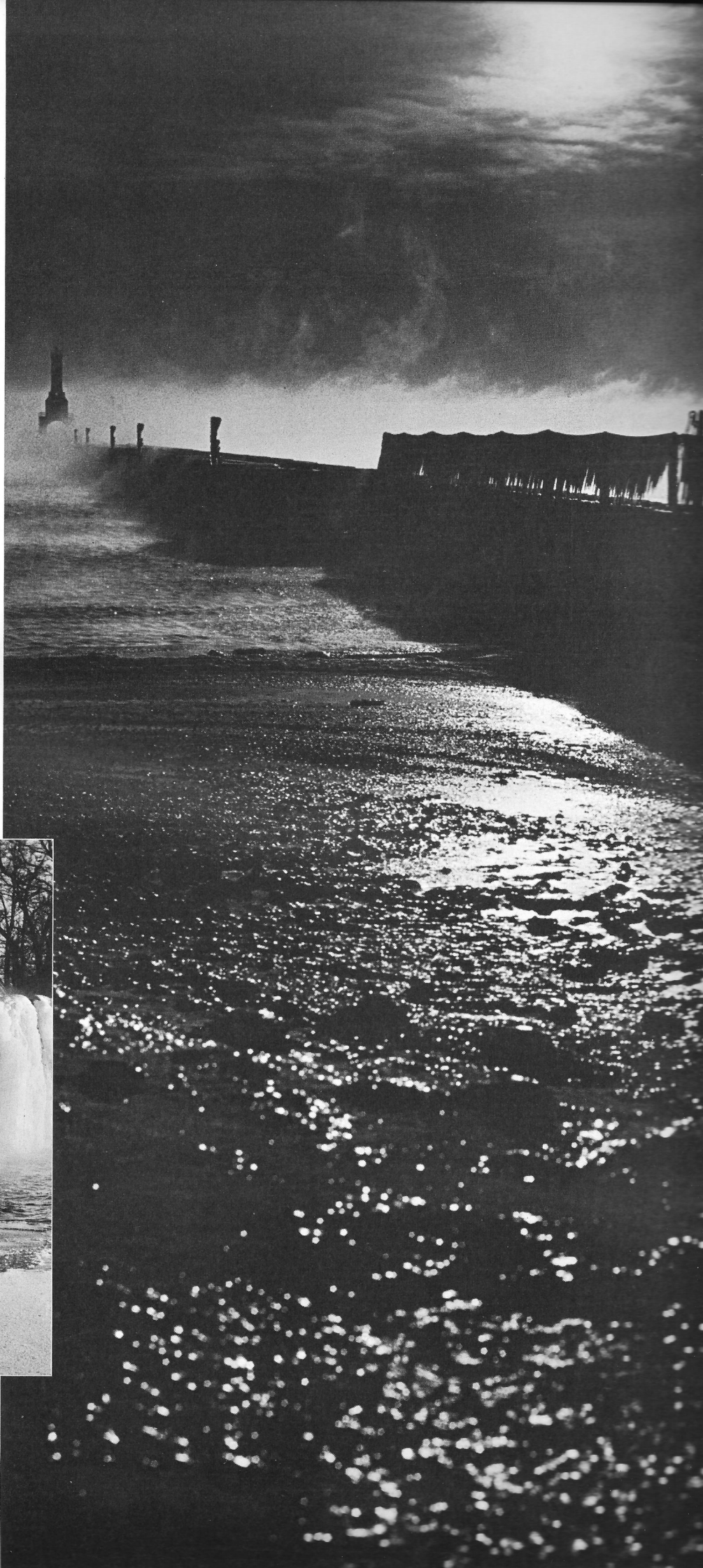


*This is the season of sheath upon sheath,
locking in the waters beneath
crystal and silver and diamond
frozen in every Wisconsin pond.
In the bitter of Wisconsin cold,
the glitter of our north-country gold.
The ice-blue beauty of rocklike gems,
tinkling, glass-brittle frozen stems.
Delicate, translucent, transparent, opaque —
And one lone man-track on the winter lake.*

*The frozen falls
are solid walls;
the icy rocks
are chiselled blocks.
What once was fluid now is not.
What once was free now is caught —
in mid-air, mid-wave, mid-breath.
It looks to be a living death
and yet — is not.
From the long, long pier, a man can see
into the mind
of this mystery.*





Washington County — Ted Laatsch

*This is the season of crust upon crust;
the land lies buried in powder dust.
Wisconsin's back forties are sculptured in stone;
the land lies buried like a whitening bone.
Every last tree is a filigree —
a needlepoint lace now covers this place.
Some call this a shroud, a winding sheet,
and there is some agreement in my numbed feet.
But this is also the time of Robert Frost's crow,
beating his wings and shaking down snow.
There are cryings in this wilderness.
Voices in this stillness.
There is yet movement and life at this time of year.
I feel only sorry for those voices not here.*



Montreal River — Dr. John Pierpont