



Surprise Valley

By
Zane Grey.

The same Surprise Valley made famous by Zane Grey's world known novel, "Riders of the Purple Sage."

FROM Kayenta, the last outpost of civilization in northern Arizona, and incidentally the most remote settlement from a railroad in the southwest, to Surprise Valley, Utah, it is four days of very hard horseback riding, over the wonderful upland country of the Painted Desert.

Upland in this case really means up and down land, for the Navajo and Piute trails veritably stand on end. It takes half a day to cross Piute canyon. Standing on the eastern rim one looks across with wonder and awe at the tremendous red and yellow walls below the western rim; and down at the ghastly denuded depths with something of fear and doubt. "We do not go down there?" is the thought that presents itself. But that was exactly what we did, down the Piute trail, never traveled before by a white man!

My guide, John Wetherill, was the discoverer of Nonnezoshe, the great Rainbow Bridge of southern Utah. And I was the first fortunate man, not scientific or archeological, to accompany Wetherill to see this magnificent phenomenon of nature. That was ten years ago. Upon that trip Wetherill gave me the privilege of naming some of the places that so surprised and delighted me, among which were the Rainbow Trail, Marching Rocks, and Surprise Valley.

On my latest trip, in the spring of 1922, I importuned Wetherill to take me over some country known only to Indians. That was how I came to travel the roughest, wildest and most beautiful trail I ever rode. The danger of traversing the Glass Mountains, the tremendous exertions needful in crossing the canyons, the exquisite coloring and fragrance of the purple sage uplands, the grandeur of the Rainbow Bridge, the stunning surprise of Surprise Valley—these are facts which will always keep that remote and inaccessible section of the Painted Desert the most difficult and beautiful goal for nature-loving Americans.

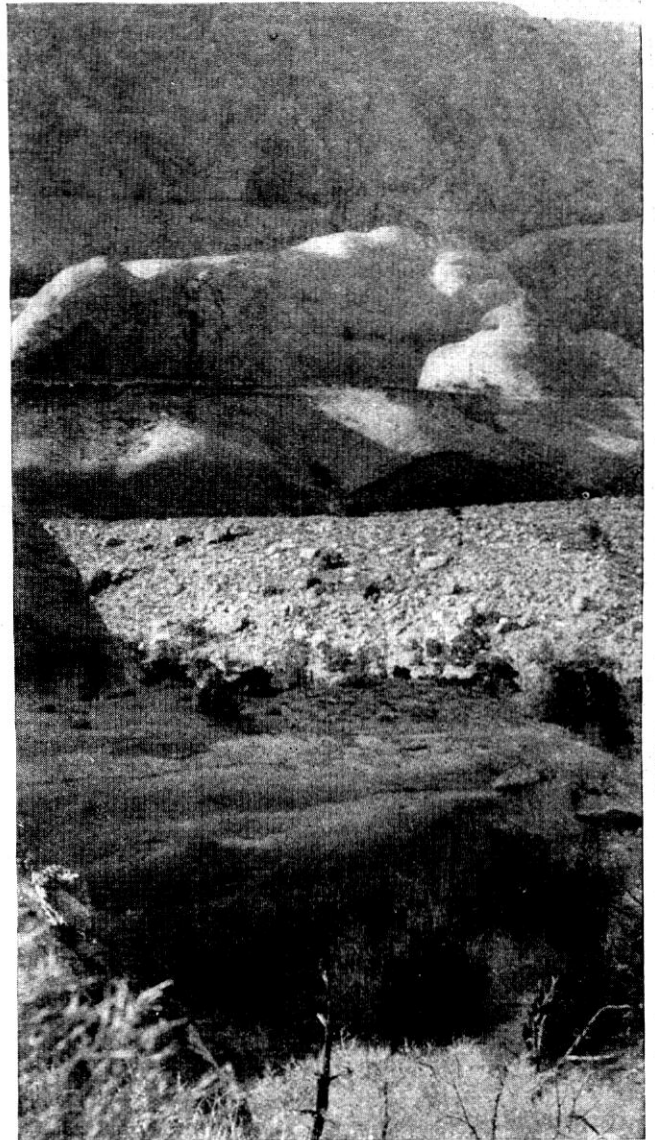
Not even aeroplanes will ever make it easy to see this wonderland of sage and stone!

The third day out we camped on the brow of an upland of cedar that sloped in league-long benches, green and purple, with outcroppings of yellow and red rocks, up to the grand looming bulk of Navajo Mountain.

And after supper I climbed to the very summit of a lofty rock dome upon which stood one of the mysterious Indian monuments. I learned this time what I had never before known—that these monuments, so striking to the keen eye, marked noble and difficult heights where Indians climbed to pray. If it were needed, that alone would have made them inspiring. But every height I ever attained in that enchanted land left me richer for the splendid spectacle.

I wanted to watch the sun set over the Marching Rocks; and if possible get a glimpse down into Surprise Valley, which we expected to descend late the next afternoon.

The sun was hidden by clouds, and nowhere in the sky or over that vast rock waste shone yet any of the golds or reds characteristic of sunset. The immense dome of the sky dominated both cloud and earth with its intense blue. And standing there, with my hand on the monument, and the cold dry sweet wind in my face, I found myself trying to repeat a Navajo prayer.



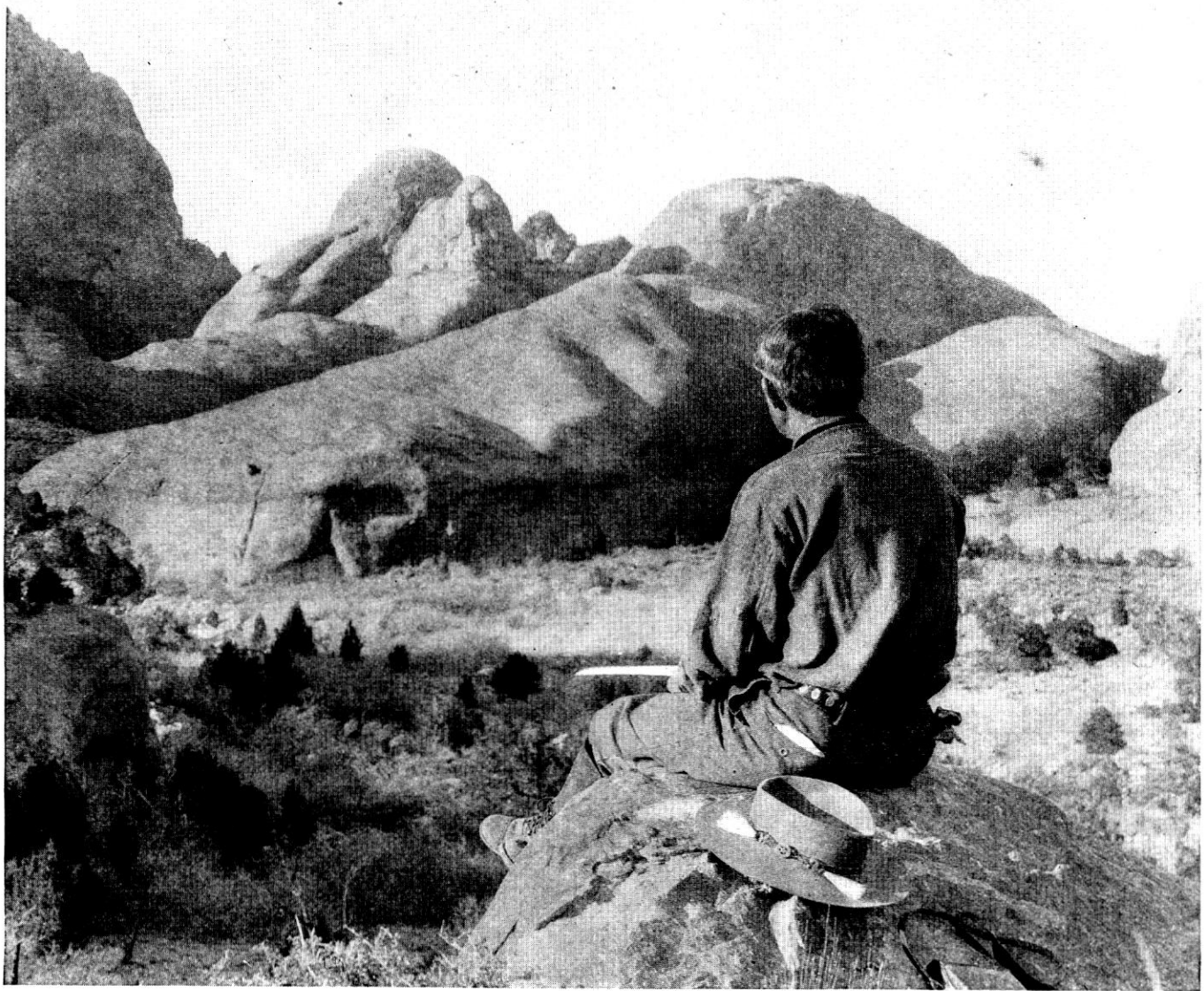
"Far below and away,

Blue wind, beautiful chieftess,
Send out a rainbow by which let me walk,
Blue clouds, blue clouds,
With your shoes let me walk,
Blue clouds, with your leggings make we walk,
Blue clouds, with your shirt let me walk,
Blue clouds, with your hat let me walk,
Blue clouds, make it dark behind me,
Blue wind, make it light before me,
Earth Woman, let it rain much for me,
By which let the green corn ripen.
Make all peaceful with me.

Moments spent on such a height fly imperceptibly; and by the time I had fixed in my mind some faint image of the range and immensity of the scene the cold clouds and rocks began to warm with the sunset. These next few moments were to be the end, the glory, the fulfillment of the Indian's day. What a pity white people seldom rise to see the breaking of the morning light! How infinitely much they lose by missing the last steps of dying day, the splendor of the declining sun!

To the west, over the Marching Rocks, where my gaze at last concentrated, the scale seemed the supreme manifestation of nature's sculpturing. Far below and far away, as far as eye could see—two hundred miles—waved the wind and rain-worn ridges of bare stone. And between them, dark lines of cleavage, lay the gorges and valleys, choked with cedar and sage. Soon the purple shadows began to define the canyons and lift the wavy knolls of red rock. Piute Canyon meandered down into that maze, and Escalante Canyon, and San Juan Canyon, and

"Fish and Game Cannot Vote"—J. M. Dickinson



waved the wind and rain worn ridges of bare stone."

the Grand Canyon, all ragged purple lines, strangely illusive and inconceivable, growing dim in the distance. Standing alone, grandly isolated, shrouded in thick sunset haze, loomed Wild Horse Mesa, with its seventy-five mile front of red wall and black-fringed level. It reminded me of my longing to climb where no white man had ever trod; and would now haunt me until that hope was fulfilled. From this mesa, lower down, swept majestic escarpments, level and dark, running out to the world of carved and graven Marching Rocks. Farther around, beyond the blazing center of the west, began the black jagged uplift of the Navajo's Mountain of Light. It sheered up to a round white-patched, black-fringed dome, where pure snow and lofty pine held dominion.

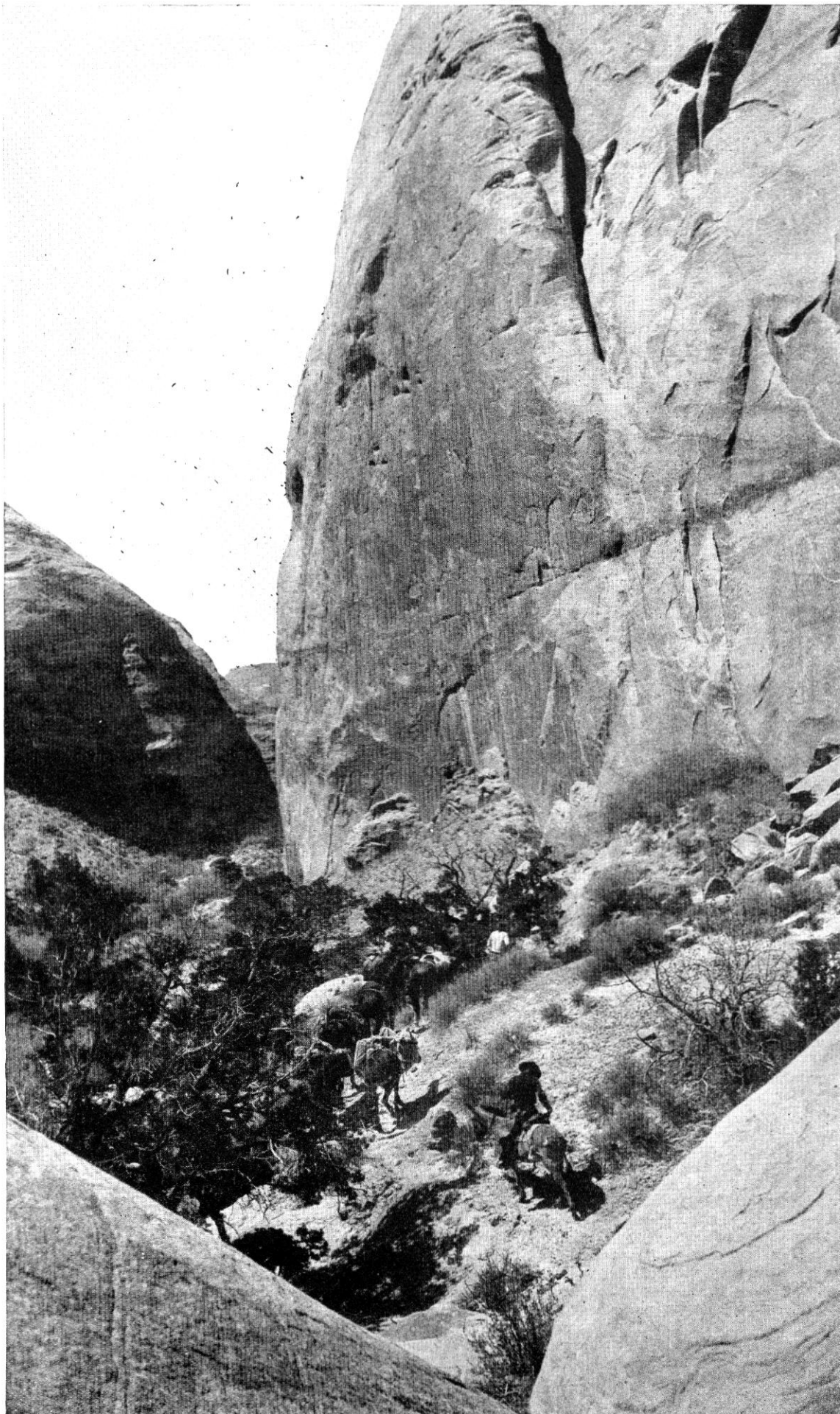
Every moment the spectacle changed, and out over the wasteland there was chaos of light and color. The purple shadows turned to black; the reds and yellows grew less intense. Vast rays of light slanted down from the broken sunset clouds. Before my eyes stretched a belt of naked earth, two hundred miles long and one hundred wide, curving from east to west. No human sight was adequate to grasp its tremendousness and its meaning. Eye of eagle or condor, most delicate and powerful of all organs of vision, must be limited here. There was no movement of anything—only the illusion of the Marching Rocks—no sound, nothing but the stark upflung nakedness of the earth, beyond comprehension to the human mind, exalting to the soul. A world of naked rock, and cedar and sage for the Indian! My heart cried out in pity for the Indians that eventually must be driven from this world, so still, so solemn, so awful, yet a refuge and an abode of life.

The dark walls of granite grew dusky red; the Marching Rocks moved like mammoths, mystic evidences of the ages.

Distance was made clear by the lifting of haze, the canyoned shadows, the last piercing light of the sun. It seemed that a million facets of chiselled rock caught this dying glow of sunset and reflected it, throwing the marvel of light upon the clouds. The shadows lengthened and widened and deepened. My sense of color and proportion grew magnified or dwarfed, I could not tell which. Thousands of rock ridges, facing the sun, marched down to meet it.

The air grew chill. Farthest away across the riven rock a grayness blotted out the horizon. The splendid landmarks seemed to be retrenching themselves, receding, dying with the sunset. Every moment grew more solemn. The great light was fading. Over most of the rocky area the strange gray shadow encroached while I gazed; only to the eastward did the bright gleams of sunlight fall upon the highest faces of the Marching Rocks. Again these rays shot slanting from out the rifts in the clouds, growing strong and glorious, vividly lighting for the moment the horizon peaks of white. Then all that far east, as had the north, paled and darkened. It was a blight. It spread towards the sunset. Low down ruddy gleams suddenly caught the van of the Marching Rocks. But that beauty of radiance was ephemeral. It was going—going—gone. The ball of half-clouded fire tipped the slope of the Mountain of Light, and the chasms became veiled in haze of rose. The Navajo's Mountain grew dark and clear against the steel blue sky. All the upland in its shadow seemed bathed in ethereal light. Then the desert darkened. The radiant disc of white fire vanished. The sun had set, leaving a golden glow on cloud and sky. The earth of naked stone seemed to gather power, to rise, to come out clear and cold, to reach for the encroaching twilight.

"A better America for Americans and better Americans for America!"—George E. Scott



"Not even aeroplanes will ever make it easy to see this wonderland of sage and stone."

Somewhere down there in that purple haze hid Surprise Valley.

The next morning the Piute trail led round under the brow of Navajo Mountain, and before noon ended in the Rainbow Trail, which I remembered. Not little was the thrill of recognizing landmarks of ten years past!

Down and down we rode, and out across a rolling green barren to the Glass Mountains. Three long trying hours must herein receive only slight mention. These smooth wind-worn hills of stone were formidable in any aspect; but the descent on the far side, where your horse followed in your footsteps, encouraged by your example, was a nerve-racking experience. Wetherill often lost horses here. We had only one accident—a pack mule slipped off the narrow granite, and rolled over twice, to lodge on the rim of a precipice. His escape was miraculous and his rescue difficult.

We descended into the canyons, where the Indian paintbrush and Sago lily bloomed in the sunlight. Many a labyrinthine ravine we wound through, riding along the edge of cliffs, under the great rust-stained walls, over the slopes of weathered rocks. It was hot down there. We had left the keen cold uplands behind. Here we could no longer see the cool sparkling white dome of Navajo Mountain. This canyon was one of the dim lines of cleavage we had sighted from the heights above, and

[CONTINUED]
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Reconstruction at Antler's

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sently. "This was purty good cattle range in here once. Used to be some livelier than it is now, what with brandin' season once a year, an' maybe a rustler ever so often. Then a man was a whoopin', shootin', ridin' fool because he had to be." Terry nodded understandingly. There was an almost wistful expression in the old man's face as he continued.

"Cotton fields are not open range an' neither is a National Bank; but cotton seed makes fine feed for milk cows an' a bank helps the country. Some of 'em couldn't see it that way though. Now I reckon Cliff could go in that field there an' pick two hundred an' fifty pounds a day. Hate to lose a good hand like Cliff."

We rode on. I asked a question.

"Is Howard really a bad man?"

Cal considered the question before answering.

"Well, yes, Son, away down deep I reckon Cliff's just mean enough to slip up behind a preacher an' cut the buttons off his Sunday breeches."

Then I knew I could go back to work. I had gotten what I had come for.

From the Tribune's Columns

50 Years Ago Today

(FACSIMILE)

The Dubuque Herald has the following: "Fishermen say there is at present the finest fishing ever known in the Mississippi in this vicinity. Salmon, pickarel, bass, and other game are very plentiful, and are easily taken with the hook. Sunday afternoon a sportsman hooked seventy-five salmon from the river, posite Eagle Point."

Reprint from the Chicago Tribune, June 20, 1924.

Surprise Valley

(Continued from page 8)

we were apparently lost in a red-walled winding lane that had no outlet.

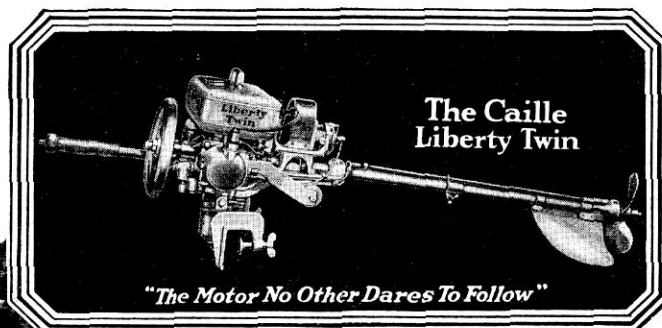
At length we descended into a narrow defile, and rode round under a stupendous looming yellow wall that struck me as staggeringly as it had ten years before. I remembered that the magnificent frowning cliff was near the portal of Surprise Valley. And soon after we rode through a still narrower defile, a mere split in the rock wall, into the valley.

As if by magic our horses had led us down into the open, out of the shut-in narrow lanes of stone, into what seemed a strange beautiful colorful garden somehow dominated by the encompassing walls.

White grass waved in the soft summer breeze; purple sage lent its exquisite hue and fragrance to the sweetness of that scene; dark green pinons and light green cedars stood out sharply against the background of red and yellow stone.

Surprise Valley might well be compared in shape to that of an octopus. It has a main area, which may be likened to the body, and many long winding canyons

(Continued on page 63)



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secretary, Mr. Perham, has been unable to assume his duties at once, and this has resulted in a neglected membership. The death of Mr. Lawrie has aggravated matters still further, so that the Bulletins have not appeared on time. We beg your kind indulgence in this, as you fully understand that our efforts are a labor of love, given from the spare moments of men heavily burdened with responsibilities of business and homes. The writer, through this overwork, has been under the doctor's care for over six months.

Mr. Hillman, our publisher, promises to release the first one of these Bulletins at once, to be followed by others from time to time. Those who have not received their membership cards may kindly write me at 301 Shaw Street, Rockford, Ill., that this may be taken care of without further delay.

The membership is growing gratifyingly, but we must have many more. Mr. W. R. Lawrie, son of James A., has been asked to accept the unanimous appointment as treasurer of our Association.

Surprise Valley

(Continued from page 51)

that resemble the arms. Only a small part of Surprise Valley can be seen at one time.

Through the body of the valley runs a clear stream of cold water, that for man and horse is not the least of reasons to tarry there.

That night after supper I climbed to one of the more accessible domes and tried to see and realize Surprise Valley. I saw some of it and only partly realized it.

Under the glamour cast by those wind-sculptured and sun-painted walls it was almost impossible for me to grasp the place intelligently. It was not what it looked or seemed. Distance could not be judged, and it was as enchanting as it was deceiving. Sunset lent it a strangeness and beauty seemingly not of the earth.

I gazed long enough to perceive that the valley was a maze, a labyrinthine canyon of many branches, enclosed by denuded rock, wind and water-worn into walls of every contour and height. The lower slopes and slants were but steps to higher ones, until the yellow and white crags pierced the sky. Talus inclines, jumbles of weathered rock, marching mounds of stone and earth, relic of an avalanche, trees and brush and grass were not absent in this strange valley, but they were scarce. This was a many-armed canyon, clean-cut and smooth, with walls, slopes, summits, corners, domes, crags, all sculptured into contour. Nature here did not tolerate sharpness.

From where I sat the width of the valley was merely a mile, though it seemed scarcely a hundred yards. Its arms wound away out of sight, and as most of them were unexplored, there was little use to conjecture dimensions. Geologically this valley must have been of comparatively recent formation, despite the ages taken by the forces of erosion to cut it. Therefore its physical properties were nearly enough like those of other valleys and canyons to make it similar to hundreds all over the southwest. Yet Surprise Valley, to live up to its name had to be, and was singularly different.

To be continued.

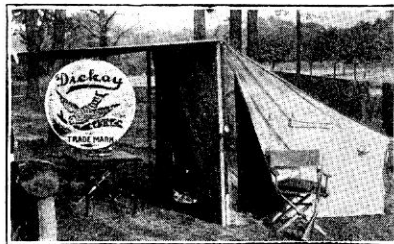
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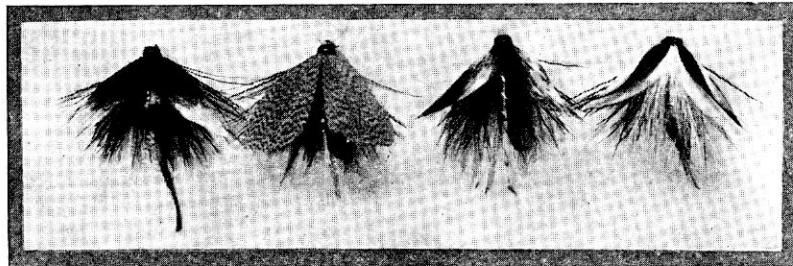
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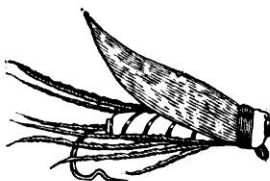
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Surprise Valley

By

Zane Grey

The same Surprise Valley made famous by Zane Grey's world known novel, "Riders of the Purple Sage."

SECOND PART

ONLY a very limited number of white people have had the rare fortune to see Surprise Valley; and none of them with the exception of myself have had the amazing temerity to attempt its description. I appreciated this fact while I gazed around me, unable to ward off the spell of the place. I felt helpless. This was scarcely the helplessness engendered in me while gazing down into the Grand Canyon. That came from the great chasm's overpowering stupendousness. Surprise Valley was comparatively intimate. At the close of my keen brief survey I decided that its wonderful fascination lay in the lights and shades on colored rounded surfaces; and in its poignant wildness, silence, mystery.

The hour happened to be sunset, naturally magnifying my impressions. I was sitting up high on the center knoll of the west wing of the valley—so high that I realized if I remained there until dark I would have a hazardous time making the descent. An intense gold light was fading off the round butte before me. Such a vivid deep rich gold I had never seen before. It seemed to shed a luminous glow which affected the near surroundings, yet was not tangible. Its fading seemed a matter of death. Something exquisite was dying tragically. Too beautiful, too glorious for any but evanescent life! My gaze shifted to the dome, higher on the left, where a red-gold lingered. The lights on the crags seemed rose, faint, soft, dying. Away down the canyon notch stood up a brow of Wild Horse Mesa, shrouded in a lilac haze as vivid as a rainbow. Above the western ramparts floated a few fleecy clouds, silver feathers and scattered pearls on a sea of penetrating blue.

Twilight descended swiftly. Surprise Valley became a place of austere beauty, cold lights, gray shades, naked, lonely, a valley of sepulchre walls. I descended from my lofty rounded slope, and, in spite of long practised eye and muscle and nailed boot and gloved hand, I slipped often, and suffered some little alarm and considerable burning pain.

Down on a level all was in shadow. I walked to the shallow gorge where the tinkling of water came faintly on the still air. Bees hummed by. It was a relief to realize that Surprise Valley supported some kind of life. I wandered between the huge boulders and climbed over the lesser ones, and finally found a seat above a gleaming pool of water. It trickled from the shadows. It mirrored the one pale star in the sky. Then strange sounds beset my ears, low, hoarse, rattling and twanging, and a deep bellow, all as faint and weird as if they came from under the water. These were made by frogs. Canyon frogs they were, flat and gray and uncanny creatures, such as I

had often seen in the sunlight, but never before heard. I listened, and the strangeness of their croaking lent immeasurably to the loneliness, and to my imagination. I was an Indian lost in the canyons.

Night fell shortly, like an invisible blanket, cool and black and awesome. There was not the slightest reason for fear, yet I felt that I should hurry to the camp-

fire and the presence of my comrades. The rounded walls loomed black and weird against the dark blue of sky.

The frogs ceased their croaking, and uttered a few long trills, not sweetly high-pitched, like those of the eastern frog on a warm June night, but sonorous with a wildness fitting this canyon. Then they soon ceased trilling. After that there remained only the tinkle and babble and murmur of running water, which now served to accentuate the silence and solitude.

An hour spent in such environment seemed incalculable in its effect on my mind. Myriads of thoughts flashed by, and faded. Only a few remained, the least, and they were not of the primitive self that always dominated such hours.

Surprise Valley was no place for white men. Human beings were not necessary to its greatness. Life meant little to those impondering walls. Shadows as black as ebony, deep star-sown sky, round mountains of rock, domed and pinnacled, a soft cool breeze, the murmuring of running water—these spoke eloquently of the littleness of all men, and the brevity of all living creatures.

How oppressive these wonderful overhanging rocks. And this seemed so because of the tremendous sense of the mastery and tragedy of nature. Human nature thrown against any background is a sorrowful study: here it seemed stark and naked. In the marts of the world people retrenched themselves, and hid most of the truth. Here in Surprise Valley that did not seem possible.

Next day Wetherill took me down the main artery of this canyon system of the valley. We entered the huge beetling walls of yellow rock where the stream flowed through a crack. He had never been any farther than where this stream left the valley. But always he had intended to explore it, because an old Piute Indian had made him curious. Wetherill believed this narrow lane eventually opened into the Grand Canyon: he knew the stream must run into the Colorado River.

A hunt for buried treasure or for a dangerous and fierce species of big game could not have been more thrilling than this exploration.

But much to our amaze the travel down this canyon was remarkably easy. The greatest strain to which I was subjected

"A better America for Americans and better Americans for America!"—George E. Scott



came from bending my head far back, so that I could see the marvelous stream of blue sky above. It flowed between the lofty walls like a blue ribbon. At times I imagined I was looking down into the bottom of a deep canyon where ran a blue brook.

Flowers, cottonwood trees, grass, all grew profusely in the wider spaces where the sun could penetrate. Here nodded the pale golden Sago lily, most frail, exquisite and beautiful of all canyon flowers. Long bars of sand, and gravelly beds, and aisles of stepping-stones made easy travel for us.

Presently we emerged into a wide sunny open canyon, and were surprised to see a long wavy gradual slope that appeared surmountable even to the very summit. My guide and I were evidently of like minds, for we both immediately expressed a strong desire to climb this slope to the highest point, in the hope of seeing down into Surprise Valley from the heights. But we did not expect to undertake it that day, for we anticipated a long exploring trip down this canyon.

We were, however, almost at once confronted with an obstacle that surely would doom us to disappointment. The canyon suddenly closed, like the jaws of a colossal trap, with no sign of an outlet. At first we imagined the stream must disappear underground. But we found a V-shaped vent in the wall, so narrow and dark that we had almost to enter it before

we could see it. The walls were nearly perpendicular, and ran sheer to the summit.

Presently they spread wide enough to permit the use of a camera; and farther down began to close again until there was again no light by which to photograph. In many places we could reach both walls with outstretched hands. The floor consisted of rock, sand and water. Our difficulties increased. We had to leap from rock to rock, and cling along ledges, and wade deep pools. The canyon turned and meandered after the manner of all canyons, so that we could see but a little way ahead. But at length, in the darkest and narrowest part, we were halted by a long lane of green water, twenty feet deep. There was no possibility of going round it. If we went any farther we would have to swim. Besides there was no telling what we might encounter round the next turn. Both of us imagined we heard a low faint roar of waterfall. Reluctantly we had to give up, having explored only about three miles of this strange canyon.

Then we returned. Singularly enough I was relieved to get back into the wide sunny enlargement of the canyon. Those overhanging walls were sinister and oppressive. When once again we saw the wonderful wavy slope that had appeared scalable we were both keen to attempt it.

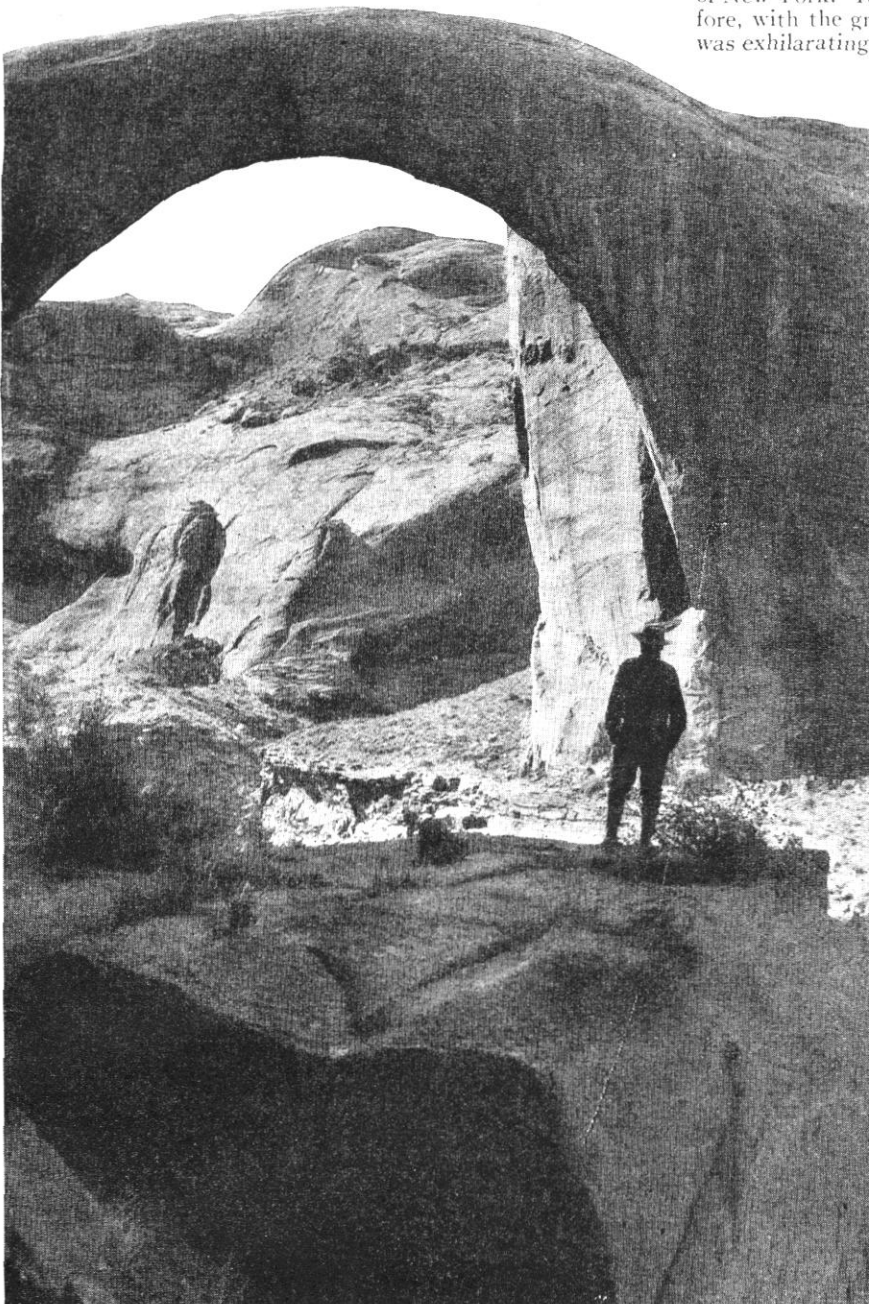
The rock was soft brown sandstone, very like in color and substance to that used on the old-fashioned brownstone houses of New York. It crumbled under the nails of our boots. Therefore, with the gradual slope, climbing was easy. Moreover, it was exhilarating. We played a game of picking out directions, safe ascents, easy inclines, detours.

As we ascended, however, we found that difficulties increased. It grew to be perilous and strenuous work, and therefore the more thrilling. We climbed to and fro much farther than straight up. The red stone gave place to a zone of yellow, and then light green, almost as soft as chalk. At our backs the west wall appeared higher than the one we were climbing, and it obstructed our view in that quarter. In other directions knobs and domes of bare stone loomed up, growing larger as we progressed. There came a time when I could look round over a remarkably large area of slopes, mounds, pits, bowls, slants and curves, as naked and bare as tombstones. Towards the end of that climb we worked away from the direction in which we wished to go and landed at the base of lofty lemon-colored crags. For a while we feared we would be compelled to retrace our steps, but at last we graded out to the west, and turning a huge abutment that upheld the crags we were astounded by the spectacle above and below us.

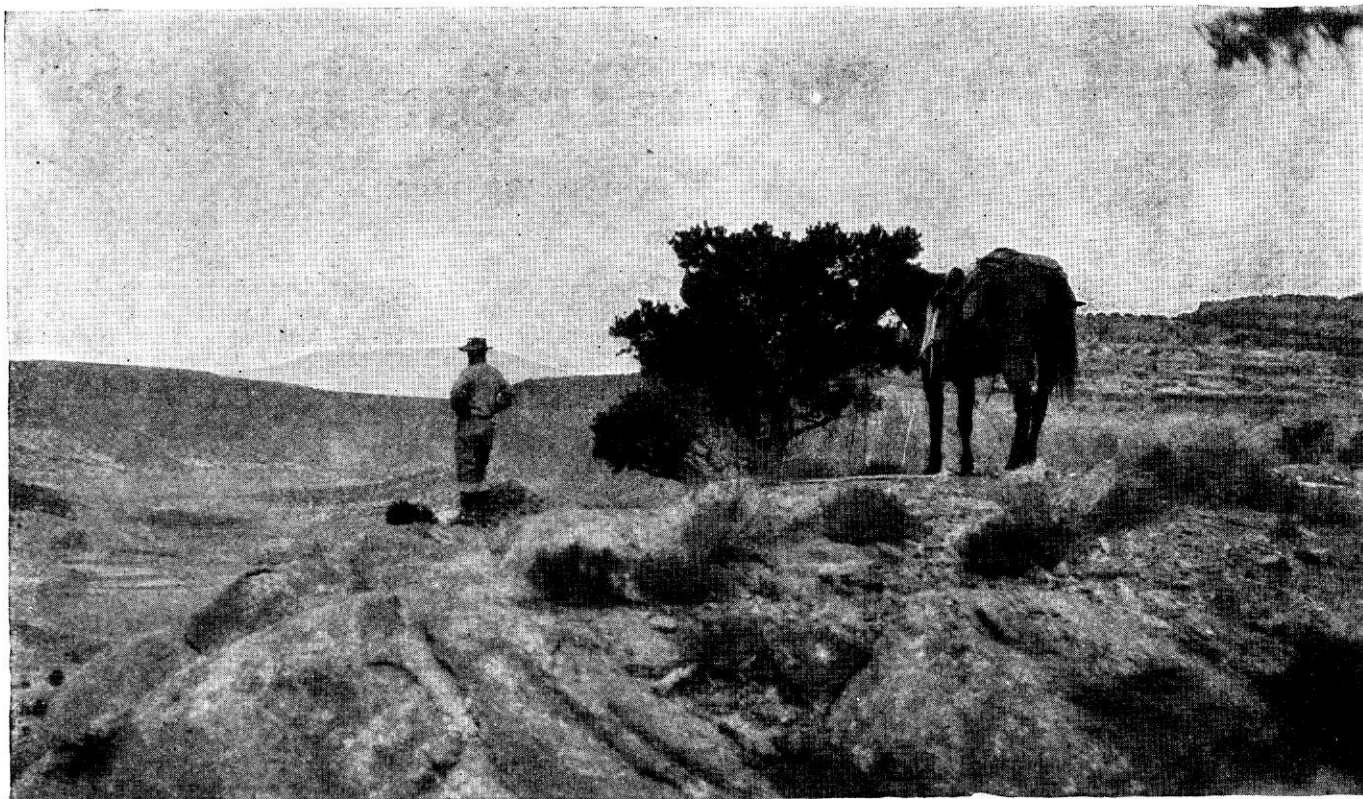
Navajo Mountain towered white and black over the abyss at our feet, a lone peak, grand in its isolation and dominance over that wind-scalloped region of stone. Over the western wall rose the long bold black-fringed line of Wild Horse Mesa, haunting in its wild beauty and inaccessibility. But superb as were these two great landmarks when I gazed beneath me I forgot them.

Surprise Valley spread there, clear and open in the intense sunlight, seemingly close, yet far below. The octopus formation was now very clearly defined. The dark green body and arms of the mammoth beast seemed to float on a sea of opal stone! There were now no clouds and sunset hues to confuse the eye. Nevertheless the impression of many colors was even more striking than it had been the night before, though in the intense light they seemed all pale, imperceptibly shading into one another.

Wetherill gazed silently for a few moments. It was not necessary to ask what he felt. But presently he said he was worried about getting down, and that



Nonnezoshe, the Rainbow Bridge.



The Approach to Zane Grey Canyon.

we had better not linger there. We were two thousand feet above Surprise Valley, with miles of unknown slope to descend.

It is not only difficult to attain such heights, but impossible to keep them. I took my last long look at what was surely the loveliest and strangest aspect of nature ever unrolled below me. Surprise Valley was the unfolding heart of a stupendous flower, every petal and part of which was of a different hue.

It was with mingled feelings that at last I followed in the careful steps of my guide—a profound melancholy that I must leave this spectacle of exquisite beauty—and a deep gratitude and uplift for the moments on the heights, that could come to so few men. Surprise Valley will never become popular, because it is remote and inaccessible. But there it is—a possession of our country—a place absolutely beyond description, somehow all-satisfying to the soul.

Leisurely I descended after Wetherill, except in the steep places where I had to slide, and whenever opportunity afforded

I gazed down and across, always aware of continual change. We were three hours making the descent on the valley side. I was hot and breathless, wringing wet with sweat, bruised and skinned, and spent with exhaustion—facts I was not aware of until I sat down in camp.

Then some impulse moved me to cast my aching eyes up the vast slope I had been hours descending. And I was to receive the most startling sensation of the day. Once again the waning sun had tipped the western rim, and its power of light and shadow and color seemed to transfigure the slope. No longer was it a slope of stone, but a cloud of columns, pillars, levels, caverns, mystic blank spaces and a reflection of the firmament on which shone the rainbow hues of nature. It towered to the azure sky. That magic light lasted a full moment, then what had seemed a cloud of rose and pearl and coral changed into the vast gray slope, the eastern wall of Surprise Valley.

Fantasy

By
MARY W. KRAMER

Pan is piping in the woods,
And the Dryads, free from care,
Dance in joy, as Dryads should,
Underneath the leafage there.

Loosened streams in rhythm flow,
Birds are singing in the trees,
Flowers their fragrant bestow,
To the wooing of the breeze.

Insects float on gauzy wings,
Wild things run with rapid feet,
Flecks of gold the sunlight flings
From above where branches meet.

Pan is piping in the wood,
Dryads dance without a care—
Ah! if we were free, and could
Also be a-dancing there.