



By Ben Ames Williams

PROLOGUE

WILL BISSELL'S store in Fraternity village is not only a store; but also it is a social center and a clearing house for news of the countryside.

Chet, short and straight and vigorous despite his seventy years, was speaking when Saladine came in; speaking, as he was apt to be in the spring, of fish and fishing.

So Saladine asked curiously: "Out where, Gay?" He was a famous hunter of the deer and of partridge and he liked trout as well as any man.

"Carey's brook, out in Hostile Valley," Gay explained. He pronounced the word to rhyme with "smile," with a long vowel in the second syllable.

"I don't know as I ever see him," Saladine confessed. "I never got out to Hostile Valley." He chuckled faintly. "Matter of fact, I always kind of dodged the place. Didn't like the name of it, I guess."

another channel; but when by and by Will began to turn out the lights as a suggestion that it was time to go home, Saladine and Chet went out to Jim's car together and in the car started up the hill. Chet's farm was on the shoulder of the ridge, where two roads forked; and Jim stopped to let the other man down.

Saladine asked gravely: "Did they kill Will?" Chet shook his head. "The other three sons all got killed their own selves," he explained. "It was like it was a judgment on Enoch. After the war his head went queer from thinking about it and he'd have died on the town, but this Will, he come home and took gentle care of the old man till he died."

But it would be long after dark before he came home, and many things would happen in the intervening hours. The past is a book which any man may read, but it is impossible to look ahead with certainty through thirty seconds' span.

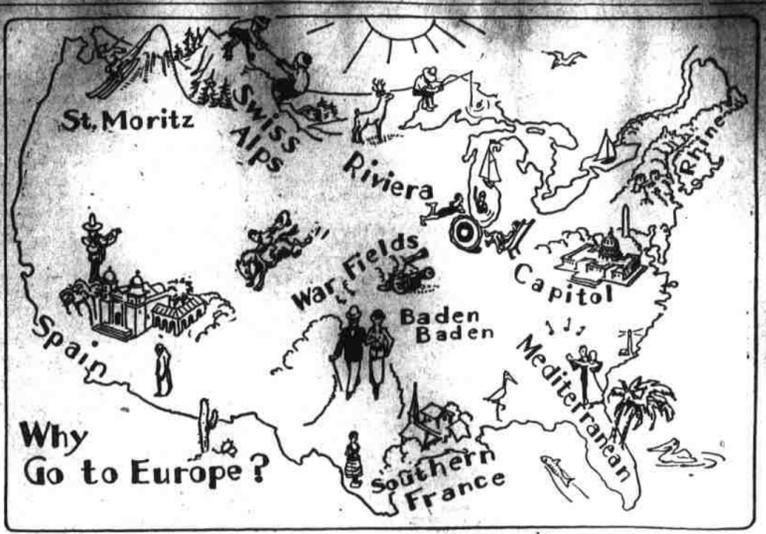


"Well, if you ask me, it's enough to make any woman kill herself."

But he set out with no misgivings. It had rained the day before, and in the night; a sharp torrential downpour. The road from his farm to the village was rutted and washed away along the borders, and mud splashed merrily under his wheels.

And there was a pricking excitement, a deep sense of adventure, in him as he drove. He had no clear and certain notion of the proper route, knew only in a general fashion where the Valley lay, and steered as it were by compass now. He meant to come to Carey's bridge, at the upper end of the Valley, and fish downstream; so at crossroads or at fords, he took what seemed the most promising turn, and once or twice he passed abandoned farms, with the glass broken in the windows, so that the empty rooms looked out at him with hollow eye sockets.

By and by he arrived at a farm where a man had just felled a knotted old beech across the road, blocking the way; and he pulled up to ask directions. The farmer took off his hat and scratched his head.



"See America First" Now More Than Just a Slogan

WELL, well, well. So the Smiths are going to spend their vacation in Europe this summer? Well! Be right in the swing of things, won't they!

As a matter of fact, the Smiths won't. For these last two or three years the swing of things has been definitely away from setting Europe as a goal for vacation travel.

There are several reasons for this. One of them is that the average pocketbook is decidedly slimmer than it was a few years back. The others don't count—except for one. That is the fact that Americans are beginning, it seems, to discover that the good old U. S. A. has appeal, scenery and travel interest in an abundance that the vacationer can find in no other land on earth.

That's almost literally true. Just suppose now that you are sitting there dreaming about far-off Spain, famed for its sunny skies, brilliant afternoons, gay, starlit evenings and white towers glistening under merry red roofs.

Much of southern California is like this. The bountiful country, spotted profusely with orange groves and sloping vineyards, guarded by snow-capped mountain peaks, is sprinkled with old Spanish missions, lovely in architecture and rich in tradition, often built 300 years or more ago.

Visiting California, you may pass through other glories of the West—Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico. Where in Spain will you find a Painted Desert, a Garden of the Gods, a Yosemite falls?

Or let's say it was England you were thinking about. The charm of the English countryside you will find in many parts of the New England states. On a Vermont hillside you may stop for lunch or for a day or two of rest and recreation in a quaint old English inn.

and battlefields of the Civil war. No American's education is complete if he has not scanned the countryside from the crest of Look-out mountain, spent a few moments in reverie at the sites of the battles of Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Shenandoah.

No trip through the South should overlook the most beautiful capital city in the world, Washington, D. C.; if it is not that already, is certainly destined to become that. It is considered the most important capital in the world, and it is surely the busiest at the present time.

These things that we have been talking about are for the larger part vacation attractions in America that are comparable with those in Europe. But the United States has more and more to which Europe can never pretend.

Most important of these are the national parks, which were host to nearly 4,000,000 persons last year and will probably be visited by an even greater number during the tourist season of 1935.

America has its own "Mediterranean" coast, you know. The palms and beaches along the Gulf of Mexico are visited by throngs in the summer as well as in the winter. Florida's climate and vacation attractions might be compared to those of southern Italy. New Orleans is a piece of Old France, even to the dress and habits of many of its people.

Outstanding of all these national parks is the Grand canyon of the Colorado river. There is nothing like it anywhere else on this earth, at least. This fearful panorama of nature at its wildest, most awesome and at the same time most beautiful is a sight to remember for the rest of your life.

Some of the other national parks have sights to see that are nearly as grand, but in a different way. There is Sequoia, in California, with the oldest living things in the world, the giant trees, whole forests of them, which tower above as high as the skyscrapers of our metropolises. Yellowstone is the oldest of our national parks and one of the most popular, with its Old Faithful Geyser and its other natural wonders.

Our national parks contain good hotels, where fine meals are served and where prices are adjustable to almost any pocketbook. They get us out of doors in summer, when we need a relief from the year's work, and let us follow their delightful trails through gigantic laboratories of nature. They give us a true picture of what our forebears had to conquer when they first explored this land and built upon it the nation which we like to think is a good deal better in which to live than any other on earth.

Half-forgotten in Maine hills was

Hostile Valley

Its men were strange and sullen . . . Its women were silent, fearful . . .

What was its secret?

Jim Saladine invaded this sinister Eden, found the most beautiful woman he had ever seen—and murder!

BEN AMES WILLIAMS

has written in "HOSTILE VALLEY" a story you will never be able to forget. Follow it from week to week as it appears serially in this newspaper.

THIS IS THE FIRST INSTALLMENT!

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"Gadgets"

You will not find the word "gadgets" in many dictionaries; perhaps for the reason that most dictionary compilers consider the word to be slang. Yet, the word "gadgets" is well known to everyone, and is used in every-day language in connection with some articles that has a practical use, and, usually, can be bought at a low price, one that is of a mechanical nature and is supposed to do something that is more difficult without it.