



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.

Saladine asked gravely: "Did they kill Will?" Chet shook his head. "The other three sons all got killed their own selves," he explained.

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.

There was a moment's hushed pause; the same thought in all their minds. Huddy Ferrin's fame, it was clear, extended far.

Now, a two-pound trout is for the streams about Fraternity, unusual; and to catch three such monsters in a single day was without precedent.

Will Biswell, from behind the candy counter, remarked: "Bart, he stops in here once in a while, on his way to East Harbor."

"I don't know as I ever see him," Saladine confessed. "I never got out to Hostile Valley." He chuckled faintly.

And he added: "His sister, this one that killed herself, Amy her name was, she kep' house for him. She was a nice-looking woman, too."

Chet McAusland said now: "I went in there once. It's an awful hole. Once was enough for me."

Luke shook his head. "I dunno. That was after I come back here."

"It wasn't that, so much," Chet declared. "It was more that the folks out there, you can't ever drive 'em. Old Enoch Ferrin riled them, got their backs up."

But Chet said strongly: "Well, if you ask me, it's enough to make any woman kill herself to live out there. That's a miserable place."

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!

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.

But Chet would not; and Saladine's curiosity was stimulated by the other's attitude. And two or three days later, when rain and the promise of more rain made farm work a tedious business of turning water-soaked clods which weighed heavily upon the plow, he took the opportunity thus afforded.

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.

Lon Pride, the garage man, had news to relate. "Hear about the murder out at Liberty?" he asked, with unctious. Jim had not heard, and Lon said: "Old Man Mayhew lived on the road to Mac's corner, they found him dead this morning with his head beat in. They've sent for the sheriff."

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.

It's handiest for him. What do you want to go in there for, anyway?" Jim said: "Fishing."

Saladine understood the allusion. He had heard tales enough of this woman who was wife to Will Ferrin. Legend painted her as a figure at once glamorous and sinister, seductive and heartless, enticing and without scruple.

After a few rods, however, he checked the car; for the road emerged upon a naked ledge, beyond which it dipped steeply downward. Directly across, two miles and lakes are reminiscent of the "ould sod."



"Well, if You Ask Me, It's Enough to Make Any Woman Kill Herself."

or so away, another ridge rose like a wall. To his right, the Valley seemed to narrow, pinched between converging ranges of hills.

Above him, the clouds scurried low and menacing; and they were like a sodden blanket across the Valley. He could discover no least sign of habitation anywhere; nothing save this sweeping forest carpet, the evergreens sodden from last night's rain, the hardwoods still half naked, thinly clad in their just springing leaves.

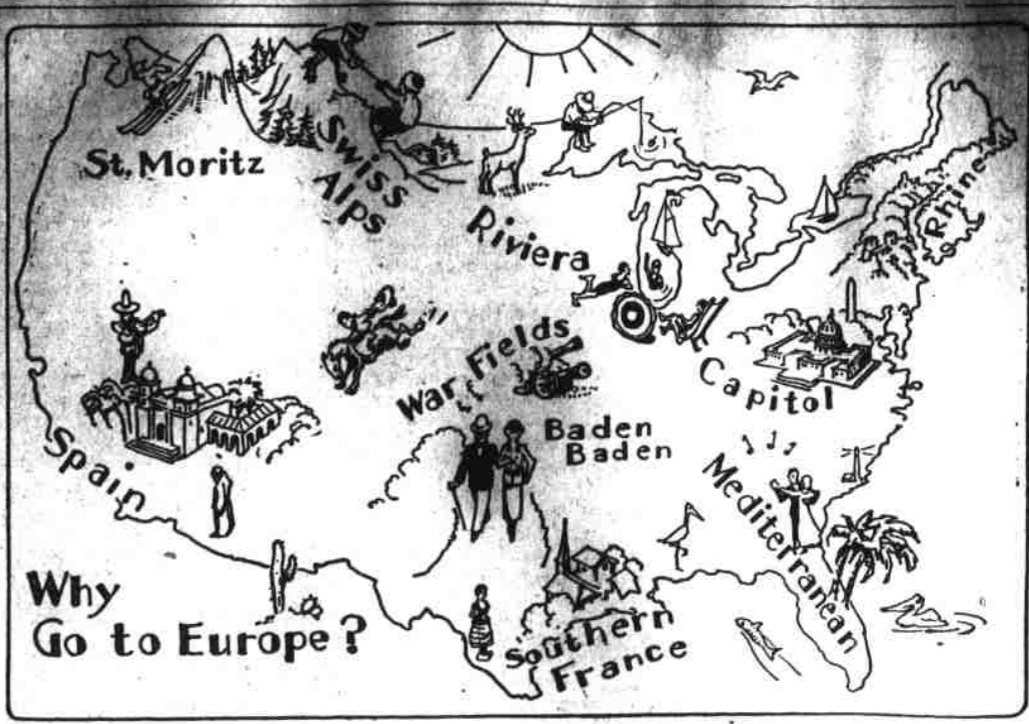
He saw a solitary crow, silent, flying on swift-beating wings as though even this dark, ill-omened bird only crossed the Valley because it must and was in haste to come to a pleasant scene.

And Saladine was not cold; yet he shivered. Then he laughed at his own uneasiness, and loosed the brake, and between a double screen of tangled trees and underbrush on either side of the road, began the steep descent into the unknown.

Sometimes in the deep forest the adventurer will come upon a hidden pool, its quiet surface mirroring the trees and the clouds across the sky; and to cast a stone into such a pool is to start a widening circle of ripples, so that every rock and root along the banks is washed by the disturbed water.

Hostile Valley was like such a hidden pool. Whatever strong currents flowed beneath the surface, the lives here were nowadays outwardly serene; yet they hung in a precarious balance. Saladine's coming was the rock thrown into the pool, sufficient to upset this balance, to loose deadly forces, to precipitate a climax long delayed. His simple coming would set all in motion, and by an inevitable process destroy two lives or even three; while at the same time it enriched and perfected others.

But Saladine, though he was full of a lively curiosity, had no provision of what was to come as he drove now down the hill.



"See America First" Now More Than Just a Slogan

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY

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 lakes are reminiscent of the "ould sod." You'll find Germany in several places on the United States map. Take a "moonlight trip down the Hudson river some evening. All you need is the deck orchestra playing "Zwei Herten im Drel Vertel Tacht" and it will be as easy as apple strudel to imagine you are floating down the Rhine, especially as you pass the "castles" of the United States military academy at West Point.

Or perhaps it's the weather you're worrying about. Sweltering in a stuffy office or shop, or toiling in the fields with the torrid summer sun beating down, more than often gives inspiration to fanciful revels in fields of snow, skiing down a mountain side or watching your breath dart forth in little puffs of steam as you sigh relief in getting away from the heat of July and August. Where? At St. Moritz, famed cooling-off place of the Swiss Alps?

Forget the Alps. The Pacific Northwest is calling you. Rainier and Glacier national parks, Mount Baker and other snow-capped peaks beckon with promise of cool, clear weather and scenery not even surpassed in the Alps. Paradise valley in Rainier National park is one of the world's greatest winter sports centers, and the real winter sport season lasts well through June. Even after that you will find plenty of snow in the vicinity, for the giant glacier areas haven't yet wilted under the summer sun.

Don't worry about missing the sights of the Riviera. When you see them you will be likely to deprecate them anyway, for it is almost bound to strike you that you've got something like this back home, only better. That's one objection Europeans generally find to American visitors. They just can't help bragging about something bigger and better back home. What the average European doesn't realize is that it's the truth.

Summer along Lake Michigan brings the vacationer the climate of the Riviera. (Have you ever stopped to realize that Lake Michigan is just as far south as Riviera?) The long stretches of white beach, wide expanses of blue sky and water, tree-crowned bluffs along the shore line have a charm and beauty that is enjoyed by hordes year after year. Swimming, fishing, summer sports and opportunity for relaxation are ever-present; so are the amusement gaieties of the resort world, such as dancing and cabaret entertainment.

Educational and historical relics, monuments and atmosphere are part of the magnet that used to draw American tourists to Europe. It is true that Europe's attractions are distinctly its own in this respect. By the same token it is also true that America has tradition and historical education possibilities that are certainly individual. The American tourist has too often overlooked the lore of old-time battlefields and spots consecrated by the blood of his ancestors right here at home.

Historical Trips. The South is replete with such attractions of a more serious nature. So is New England and so are many parts of the Middle West. There are many tour arrangements that plan complete historical trips for the vacationer, sandwiching in enough sport and entertainment to afford him sufficient diversion from his everyday labors and keep him from going stale.

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. Andrew Jackson's home, the scene of Sherman's march to the sea and the sites of some of the great Confederate victories should not be overlooked. Northerners will be interested in the sight of cotton growing and fascinated by the charm of southern hospitality, just as southerners are interested in the vast wheat fields, the great industries and the summer recreational possibilities of the North.

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. The Yosemite with the greatest waterfall in the world draws its share of the summer thousands.

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. There is little that the European vacation can offer us that we cannot duplicate here in our own country. And the difference in expense, it is needless to say, is tremendous. Railroads, especially the western railroads, as well as other travel media, have prepared tour programs this year which would cost less than ever this year. It's easier than ever this year to "see America first."