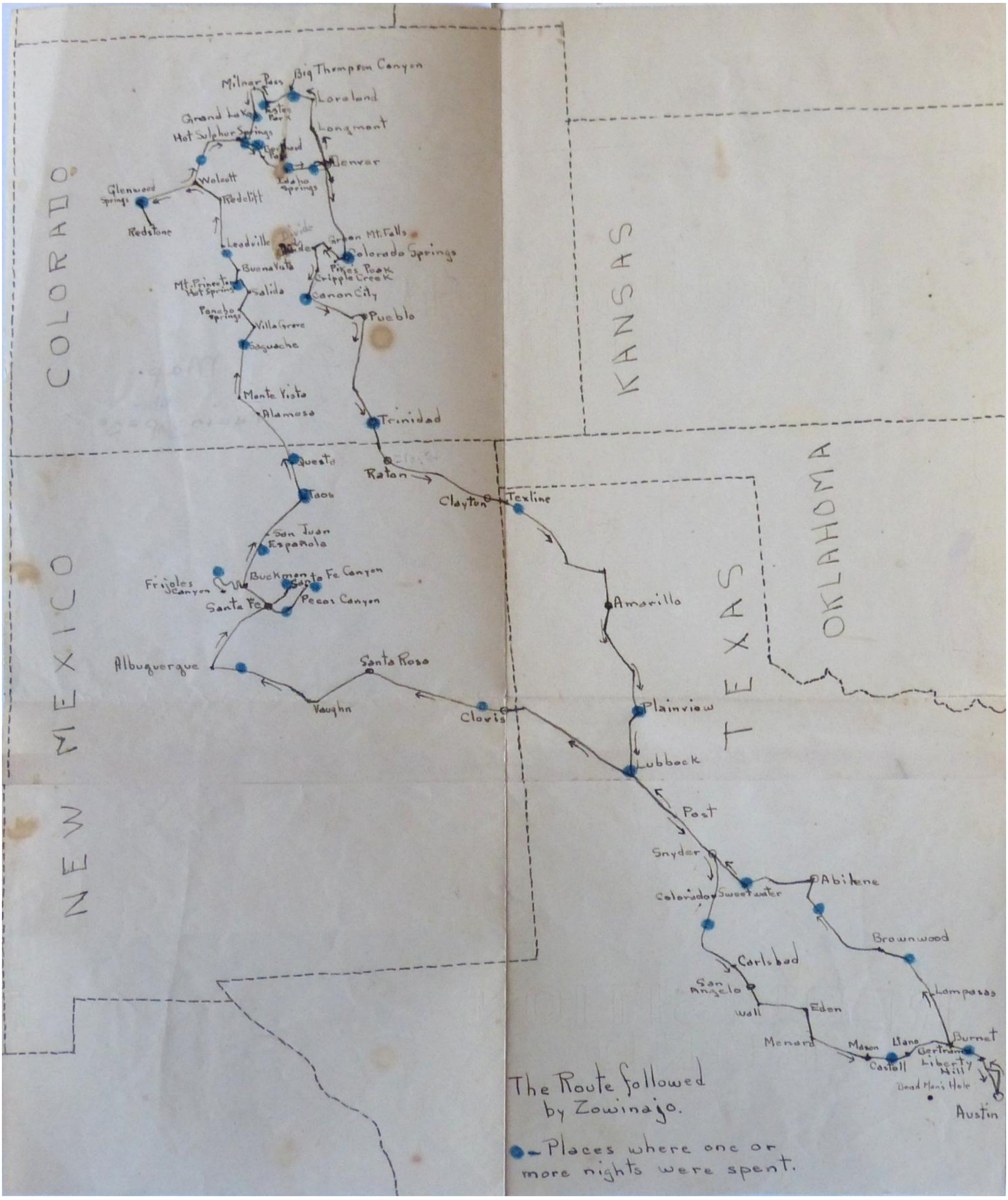


A lone sentinel on Fall River Road.


COLORADO
KANSAS
NEW MEXICO
TEXAS
OKLAHOMA
Milner Pass
Big Thompson Canyon
Loveland
Grand Lake
Estes Park
Longmont
Hot Sulphur Springs
Denver
Idaho Springs
Wolcott
Glenwood Springs
Redcliff
Redstone
Leadville
Green Mt. Falls
Colorado Springs
Buena Vista
Pikes Peak
Cripple Creek
Mt. Princeton Hot Springs
Salida
Canon City
Poncho Springs
Pueblo
Villa Grove
Saguache
Monte Vista
Alamosa
Trinidad
Questa
Raton
Taos
Clayton
Texline
San Juan
Española
Frijoles Canyon
Buckman
Santa Fe Canyon
Santa Fe
Pecos Canyon
Amarillo
Albuquerque
Santa Rosa
Vaughn
Clovis
Plainview
Lubbock
Post
Snyder
Colorado
Sweetwater
Abilene
Brownwood
Carlsbad
San Angelo
Lampasas
Wall
Eden
Menard
Mason
Llano
Burnet
Gertrude
Liberty Hill
Castell
Dead Man's Hole
Austin
The Route followed by Zowinajo.
● - Places where one or more nights were spent.

ZOWINAJO

The Account of an Informal Trip across the
Wind-Swept Plains of Texas, into Age-Old
New Mexico, and over Some of the Least
Haunted Portions of the Colorado Mountains

by

Lena Megee

With a map and photographs by the author

ZOWINAJO

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ZOWINAJO

June, 1921

ZOWINAJO

INTRODUCTION

It was a premeditated trip, so premeditated, in fact, that I sometimes had qualms about its proving as interesting as it might prove had it not been planned so definitely. But such fears were ungrounded; and in view of our experience, I should say, unoriginally, to anyone starting on a similar outing that the more you know beforehand about the country over which you intend travelling, the more you will find there to enjoy and the more time you will have left for enjoying it--a case of taking the wealth of the Indies with you. We could easily have spent half of our time in discovering what there was to be seen, had we not before starting mapped out a definite schedule; for while we had no intention of following our schedule to the letter, we found that it saved us a vast amount of time and trouble, and that we did adhere to it rather exactly.

We had been talking and thinking and dreaming about this trip for so many months, poring over the Blue Book, reading so many folders, articles and books about New Mexico and Colorado, that we thought the time to start would never come. Our respective families declared that we were even losing our appetites and failing to sleep normally, as children do before going on some exciting all-day excursion. We planned the sort of trip that we had longed for years to take: we were to be entirely free from such restrictions as train schedules and the dependence upon hotels for eating and sleeping, for ours was to be gypsy-like travelling, each night being spent wherever we found ourselves at the close of day. We planned to seek out the least advertised but most interesting spots that could be found in the three states, within the limits of our endurance and time, and to stay just as long as we chose at any particular place. Our time, however, was sadly limited, and as to the endurance--well, in spite of much preliminary training in camping and outdoor exercise of every form, we found, as you shall see later, that a real mountain-climbing endurance is something to be worked up to much more gradually than was possible for us.

At last there was only one week remaining, when simultaneously two calamities befell us: the Pueblo flood and Zona's poison ivy. Warnings were published in the papers to tourists planning to visit Colorado, and large parts of Texas and New Mexico were suffering ill

effects of unusual rains and swollen streams. This alarm was diminished somewhat after a few days, as the rains lessened, especially as our route did not lead through Pueblo until our return trip six weeks later. More serious than the flood was the fact that an essential member of our party was attacked with a severe case of poison ivy and was rushed off to a hospital only six days before our departure! Her enthusiasm, however, did not wane for a moment; and we waited only for her doctor's permission to start. On Friday she was in the hospital, though the poison had practically vanished; and on Saturday she was ready to start with us on schedule time.

Our party consisted of three grown-ups--one pedagogue and two librarians--and one eighteen-year-old Freshman in the University, in whom we felt a keen interest, but who, for reasons incomprehensible to us, had upon this occasion the sympathy of all his acquaintances. I did not notice that he suffered any degree of subjection in the course of the journey! It was agreed that the responsibility for transportation should rest upon his and my shoulders, while Zona and Miss Allen should keep us supplied with food--and never did anyone enjoy eating as we did. Not only did we regain our lost appetites, but we were fortunate everywhere we stopped in finding the most tempting fresh food, especially appealing among which were strawberries, raspberries, cherries and apricots.

A great rivalry spray up at the very start between our two groups, so great that anyone overhearing some of [the]

would-be heated discussions might easily have judged that we were not on friendly terms with each other. John and I always contended that driving the car, keeping it lubricated and in good running condition, besides stretching the tent, getting wood and water, washing dishes, unloading and reloading the luggage, and doing all the other little chores, involved more actual work than merely planning and cooking three small meals a day; but a difference of opinion seemed to prevail. Oh, they were troublesome.

Everywhere that we went we tried to secure pictures of our own that would actually show others what we had seen, an impossible feat, for pictures, and especially those of distant scenes, are at best proverbially disappointing. Several times we developed our own film in our little tent rather than wait longer to see the results. This was a very simple matter when we camped beside running water, although it was usually so cold that our fingers soon reached an uncomfortably clammy stage. Strangely, our only spoiled negatives were those that were developed by professionals, who invariably explained the trouble by saying that the film was defective--small consolation to us when seeing otherwise matchless views of places we had left forever hopelessly ruined. We realized anew that there is only one way of getting a thing done right.

But before anything further is said, it is only fair that a due amount of credit and blame should here be given Zowinajo. Zowinajo--pronounced Zo-wee-na-ho--

is the automobile that took us. Before starting, when I had visions of writing an account of this trip, I felt concerned about the difficulty I should have in holding my praise of the car down to sober limits. I even had one facetious sentence mentally framed about the recompense I was receiving from the Dodge Brothers for the good advertising I was giving their product. Alas, I may now stand in danger of a libel-suit. However, there is much, very much that could be said on both sides; and we realise that for all of our mishaps, we ourselves were to blame, for even a Dodge car that is built for only five passengers will rebel at being loading with four above-average-sized people and all of their equipment for a six-weeks' camp. Because we could so dispose of our luggage as to look fairly neat and be more than fairly comfortable was no reason for thinking that Zowinajo did not feel the difference, for we had not been long on the way before we knew to our sorrow that we undoubtedly did carry much too great a load for the size of the car.

And now that I have apologized for Zowinajo, let me venture a word in her favour, for never once did the engine fail us. We experienced every conceivable condition of road from bad to worse, including mud, sand, rocks, water, and the steepest grades that have ever been travelled by automobiles--and Zowinajo went over them all smiling. What if we did break a few springs, what if the tires did evaporate like steam; did we not go on in spite of all of these so-called troubles, and have

the nearest to an absolutely ideal trip that one could hope for, into the most charming, though many times least frequented spots, across the great, green, flat plains of Texas, through one beautiful forest after another, among the oldest inhabitants of our country, into the snow-dappled mountains, and over the highest of mountain passes?

TEXAS MUD

CHAPTER I

TEXAS MUD

Unfavourable start--A day of mud--Stranded--Brownwood--
In a swamp--Farmer Jones to the rescue--A highway at last.

The time set for our departure was noon on Saturday, June the eleventh, nineteen hundred and twenty-one, and nothing short of a cloudburst at the moment of starting would have caused its postponement. So many people had been interested in our plans that had anything prevented our leaving that day, a public announcement stating the reason would have been due them; but that was the least of our incentives. For several days, the important matter of weather had been satisfactory; but on Saturday morning a dismal change came over the sky, and a steady downpour set in. This did not last long, and by noon had become only a harmless drizzle. We had strong suspicions about the quality of the road between Austin and Brownwood, our first goal, which we expected to reach Sunday morning; but we did not allow so insignificant an uncertainty to

dishearten us that early in our journey. As John glibly expressed it, we could not be worried; and merrily we started off. Zona's brother, another youthful Freshman, substituted for Miss Allen as far as Snyder; and fortunate it was--for John, in particular--that he was with us for the next few days, as matters evolved.

For eight or ten miles out of Austin we followed a good tarvia road, at the end of which we met travelers removing their mud-chains.

"If you have chains, you had better put them on," one man called to us with conviction. We took his advice--and removed the chains forty-eight hours later, and then too soon. From the time we left the tarvia until dark, for hour after hour, we slipped and slid and spluttered and pulled, without for a moment entertaining a hope for better luck. Other troubles also came on us thick and fast that first afternoon. More serious than anything else was the fact that the steering mechanism gradually ceased to perform its function in life, and finally so tightened that only by a miracle did we manage to avoid the ditches at the side of the road and the edges of several narrow bridges that we were obliged to cross. We managed somehow to creep into a garage in Liberty Hill, where our heroism was lauded. After the loosening of some innocent-looking little bolts, we were able to proceed safely.

As night approached and the rain still fell mistily, we began to wonder about a possible camping place, our

ardor not at all dampened, and were delighted with the discovery of a grassy, wooded pasture a few miles past Bertram. After driving in and taking possession, it occurred to us that it might not be amiss to inform the owner of the property of our intention. Fortunately for him, as for us, he entered heartily into the plan, and later as we sat eating our first meal inside the little automobile-tent, made by Zona's own hands, he came and urged us to spend the night in the house rather than out in the rain. Obviously he could not understand that anyone might actually prefer camping out in such weather, but finally, with there-is-no-telling-what suspicions as to our sanity, departed. We then thought to entertain ourselves by playing a game; but soon found that after our strenuous afternoon, our eye-lids were so heavy that we were willing to give up the attempt and, setting up our cots, were soon asleep.

All went well for several hours, when I was awakened by a steady drip that had soaked through the tent and the two heavy blankets that I had over me. A steady downpour was beating upon the tent. The others awoke simultaneously as they too began to feel the cold rain upon them, but as daylight was approaching, we made no attempt to sleep longer, taking note, however, for our guidance in the future of the slovenly way in which had stretched our tent the night before. We had much ado in finding dry wood, making a fire and cooking breakfast; and by the time we had finished eating, discovered a new calamity in

the form of a nail in one of our new tires. This remedied, we were at last ready to start on our slushy way.

All day Sunday we encountered the deepest and the most clinging mud that can be imagined. In many places the road was in the process of construction, and the rain had so softened the loose soil that often we sank down to the running boards. For several miles no one had preceded us since the rain and we were obliged to cut our own ruts. It was a case of being between the devil and the deep blue sea, for while we had no intention of turning back, we hardly saw how it was possible for us to go forward. At times the rain fell in torrents, and once we found a telegraph pole across the road, which John and Marvin had to remove before we could pass. However, after two endless hours the twelve miles to Burnet had been covered. It was here that we sent a telegram to Brownwood, only one hundred miles away, intimating that we hoped to reach there by night, which message, incidentally, was delivered while we were there on Monday.

By noon we had reached Lampasas, where we had fatuously planned to spend the preceding night, and from there on, the roads became slightly less muddy, the rain appeared to be quieting, and we continued to be hopeful of reaching Brownwood by dark. By four o'clock the sky had cleared, and the sun came very near making the mistake of shining, and we felt exactly as the Noah family must have felt after the flood. Never did a sky and distant hills look so beautifully blue and wild flowers

so gaily bright as they did to us that day.

And then just before the sun set, a greater calamity than any before befell us, which I should blush to mention. Without any warning Zowinajo came to a dead stop, and and upon investigation, we discovered that the worst was true: we had used up all of our gasolene! We had had the tank filled in Burnet in order to feel entirely safe, and had no suspicion that pulling through the mud would use more than twice the normal amount. However, the disagreeable fact remained, and there in the muddy road Zona and I waited while the two boys went in search of a car owner. Dark came on, and still for some hours they did not return. Finally, after walking immeasurable miles through the black glue to a farmhouse where they found a man who owned a Ford, they did get back with enough gasolene to carry us to the next town, where by dint of arousing a sleepy garage-man, we purchased a supply. So late had it become by the time that we stopped at the first comparatively dry spot we could find, not more than twelve miles from Brownwood, and there spent the night, going on to Brown-wood early the next morning in time for breakfast. Having planned to be there on Sunday, we had found that we must go supperless to bed, a fact which our hostess must have guessed as we ate.

We were urged to remain in Brownwood for several days, as the general opinion was that the roads north of there were impassable; but as the sun was shining brightly that day, and as we knew that nothing could be

worse than what we had already been through, we saw no reason for tarrying longer; and as soon as luncheon was over, we were on the way again. While there, we enjoyed a swim in a new hot-water swimming-pool, our first experience on the trip of hot water swimming, but by no means the last, as we found one such spring after another throughout New Mexico and Colorado.

For the first afternoon after leaving Brownwood, we met with no serious difficulty in making our way through the superfluity of mud along the way, and felt decidedly cheered, in spite of being warned frequently about worse places ahead. About dark we started, in compliance with instructions, on a detour from the main road, feeling entirely safe in thus proceeding as the moon shone brilliantly--as it can nowhere else as in Texas. But we had gone no more than half a mile when suddenly in skirting the edge of a swampy lake, one of our rear wheels sank into a hole, the differential hung on an imbedded boulder, and the engine stopped. Try as we might, we could not budge the car. After pondering the matter, the boys decided to don their bathing suits as the most practical attire for the occasion and see what could be done; and from nine o'clock until midnight they worked, trying first one scheme and then another, while Zona and I stood by and made unwelcome suggestions. Finally in desperation, they surrendered; and carrying our cots across the cozy swamp to a place somewhat less wet, we

were all soon asleep, serenaded by the croaking of no fewer than a million frogs. Later in the night, as if we had not had misfortunes aplenty, a fresh rain drove us for a while to the car for shelter.

With morning our prospects seemed brighter, for not far away we saw a farm house, whither the boys hastened for aid as soon as they had swallowed their coffee. There they secured the help of two men and some horses--after driving the horses in from a distant pasture--and soon we were again on dry land. We were then only fifteen miles from a graded pike, of which we had heard frequent glowing accounts, though we had become so skeptical about roads as to have no faith in such reports. But you must not get the impression that we reached it any time soon, for it was five o'clock in the afternoon when finally we did come upon it.

What took place in the intervening hours I should like to withhold from a trustful public, were I not determined to tell the whole truth. Zowinajo had been covering herself with glory--and mire--for some miles, pulling easily through an unbelievable amount of soil of the consistency of glue, when came upon Friend Farmer Jones's own pet mud hole, into which he wiled us poor innocents, looking on sardonically the while. We knew the moment that we sank down why he had cut up the opposite side of the road with his wagon wheels, leaving the impression that the side that we finally chose to attempt was the one that other automobiles had traveled. Small consolation was it to us, as we stuck fast there more than hub-deep for five long, broiling, hungry hours

to see other cars wend their way cautiously but successfully through the opposite side.

"Why didn't you tell us to go that way?" Marvin demanded of the only person who gained anything by our predicament.

"Well," he grunted, "some folks would blame me if I told them to try that side and then they couldn't make it. So I just don't say nothing."

After so long a time he succeeded, with the help of four strong horses, in extricating us, and the marvel is that there was anything left of Zowinajo after the struggle. Our fellow travelers who had plowed through the road beside us, in each case aided materially by Marvin's and John's pushing ability, waited in sympathy at the other end of the mud until we should be safe, more, I am convinced, to phase the villain than for any other reason; for when upon our asking him his charges, he said fifteen dollars, such a chorus of protest went up that he was obliged to reduce the amount to ten. We appreciated the spirit of our sympathizers, but were grateful for release at any cost.

By that time, our brains were in such a completely muddled condition concerning the time of day, the day of the week, the locality, and so forth, that it was several hours before we felt normal. A few days later while visiting in Lubbock and relating our experience with Farmer Jones, Zona exclaimed,

"What about the notes you wrote up while we sat there?"

"That reminds me," I answered, "I left us stuck fast in that mud hole, miserable and hopeless."

"Go this minute," she commanded, "and get us out. We were there quite long enough as it was."

In a short time after our release, we reached the long-talked-of pike, and it did not seem possible that such a phenomenon could be true--a straight, absolutely smooth, graded highway, something to be dreamed of but never actually experienced. The boys whooped, and away we went, slinging mud in every direction. In every town through which we passed, we were the object of the most open-mouthed interest, but we could not stop then for such an insignificant matter as our appearance.

And thus ended the first and by far the most disastrous stage of our journey.

ACROSS THE PLAINS TO THE MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER II

ACROSS THE PLAINS TO THE MOUNTAINS

The Staked Plains--Lost near Muleshoe--A night on the plains--Lost in a sand storm--Estancia Valley--A national forest--Albuquerque--La Bajada--Santa Fe Trail.

For several hundred miles after our escape from the superabundance of mud in the central part of the state, we followed an excellent highway, until, in fact, we found ourselves a few days later lost on the great plains of Texas. In the meantime, Zowinajo had parted with all traces of her misfortunes; Marvin had reluctantly given up his place to the original member of our party; we had enjoyed two swims, one in a lake at Sweetwater and one in a perfect oasis in the form of Two-Draw Lake at Post; had climbed the Cap Rock into the very heart of the Staked Plains; had visited friends in Lubbock; and were nearing the border between Texas and new Mexico, not far from the euphoniously named town of Muleshoe. We had been obliged to make a detour through a ranch on account of a washed-

out bridge on the main road; and as all roads look alike across those boundless ranches, we soon realised that we were hopelessly lost. There was nothing in sight but a great dome of turquoise sky dappled with puffy white clouds, vast stretches of pungent sagebrush and wild flowers, herds of beautiful black cattle, and sand, quantities of sand.

There is something unspeakably thrilling about the great open plains, even though you know not where you are nor whither you are going.

Putting our heads together, we decided that it was contrary to our theory of life to retrace our footsteps, and presently were rewarded by seeing that our road was leading us to a little ranch house far across the plains.

Upon arriving there, we were told that we had gone very little out of our way, and were then, in fact, only a few miles from Muleshoe. Before starting on, we filled our thermos bottles and had an ice-cold drink at a windmill, beside which hung a spotlessly clean gourd dipper. Before night overtook us, we had passed Clovis, New Mexico, and had found near the road an active wind-mill and a tank filled with clear, cold water; and here we stopped for the night.

No experience on earth can compare with that of spending a night in the open on the plains, under the great, low, starry canopy. As we set up our camp, we gazed enraptured at the crimson sunset sky, as the blaze of color flooded the entire dome and cast a ruby glow over the vast

level country. The color faded imperceptibly as the moon climbed higher and higher, lighting the plains almost as clearly as day. And if we were thrilled with the sunset, there is no way to describe our sensations at sunrise the next morning. There was no sleeping for us after the first tinge of color appeared in the sky while the stars still shone, for the picture changed rapidly, becoming more and more flaming until finally the rising sun caused its intensity to fade.

As the sun rose higher, we felt no inclination for wasting our precious time, and were soon traveling again. Everything was exhilerating: the great distant stretches of level country, the keen, bracing atmosphere, the good roads, and the sensation of flying away, away from every care in the world.

After a few hours on the plains, we began to see more broken country with rolling hills all about us and mountains peeping up over the horizon. All morning there was no thought but one of joy; but early in the afternoon, an angry black cloud and stormy gale raced with us. We had hoped to get at least as far as Las Vegas that day on our way to Santa Fe, and had driven so fast trying to leave the storm behind us, that we had begun to think we must not be far from it, when unexpectedly we came upon a small town for which we could not account. The name on the station--as well as we could see through the swirling sand--was Vaughn.

"Give me the Blue Book," some one demanded. "I never heard of Vaughn."

Our worst fears were confirmed: we were not on the road to Santa Fe at all, but on one leading to Albuquerque. In leaving Santa Rosa at noon, we had taken a route toward the southwest instead of a poorer one leading northwest; and on account of the great cloudiness had not suspected our mistake. Again we were obliged to make up our minds quickly; and the unanimous vote was that even though we had not intended including Albuquerque, we might, since we were so near it, do well to see it, too. Zona suggested as if inspired that we "make it part of the trip," and was quoted thenceforth on every possible occasion.

But first we must look for a place to spend the night, as it was then about dusk. A cold, disagreeable sand storm still blew, although we had avoided the rain that had alarmed us earlier in the afternoon; and we could hardly believe in our good fortune when we spied a deserted schoolhouse, beside which stood a wind-mill and running water. The four walls and part of a roof were all that remained of the building, but they served to break the wind. As we ate our supper, hundreds of white-faced cattle came to drink at the tank that was fed by the wind-mill, making against the sunset sky a charming picture.

We found the next morning that we were not far from a town of which more than one person spoke as "Stanchy." We made wild guesses at the actual name of the place, and were somewhat surprised at last to see it spelled out Estancia. It was only then that we knew we had camped

in the famous Estancia Valley.

Shortly after leaving Estancia we found ourselves without warning within the boundary of Manzano National Forest, densely wooded with beautiful pine, fir and spruce trees, through which our road wound about, up hill and down, beside a playful stream. Especially charming did it seem to us, coming upon it as we had from the plains; and we felt impelled time after time to desert Zowinajo and wander off from the road to see some of the forest's hidden treasures and to make its more intimate acquaintance. It was our first thrilling meeting with the forests, of which we were to see many.

Ten miles before entering Albuquerque we could see across a level stretch of country, through which our road led in an unbroken, straight line, to the town itself, which lay in a valley, reflected in a mammoth mirage. In spite of the many mirages we had been seeing as we crossed the plains, we could not but exclaim over and over again about the grandeur of this one, until at last John said,

"You talk about this thing as if it were something remarkable. Didn't you ever see a mirage before?"

Just then a prairie dog barked beside the road, and our superior Freshman's attention was completely diverted, as it was every time he saw one of the impertinent little creatures.

"Well," I answered, "Mirages do seem almost as remarkable to me as prairie dogs. Didn't you ever see a prairie dog before?"

We were not at all sorry that we had a glimpse of Albuquerque even though we did no more than drive slowly through it, for it is like no other city. A quaint, picturesque, Spanish style of architecture prevails throughout, and well-kept streets, quantities of trees, and charming homes add to its attractiveness. To anyone interested as we were in the distinctive type of architecture seen there as well as elsewhere in New Mexico, I would suggest reading, by all means, the chapter on Native Architecture in New Mexico in George Wharton James's beautiful new book entitled New Mexico, the Land of the Delight Makers. One drives through a city and carries away a definite impression, and the one that we carried away of Albuquerque was that--we liked it.

We had heard interesting reports about the country between Albuquerque and Santa Fe, the precise nature of which, however, we could not remember; but for some miles, as we plowed through the scorching sand, we almost despaired. After an hour or so, however, the scene changed. Suddenly our road carried us up a steep hill and through a deep slash in a mountain, through which we caught glimpses of mountainous country beyond. There was even snow to be seen soon, a marvelous spectacle to us Texans. But the best was still to follow. Ten miles ahead of us, we could see one tiny, black object after another threading its precipitous way down a mountain side.

"Can those insects be automobiles?" someone wondered, and made the usual demand for the Blue Book. Sure enough, we read that ten miles farther on, we should "use caution for sharp turns on La Bajada grade." Now, it was thrilling to be nearing a grade on which caution would be necessary, though before many days had passed, we were so accustomed to warnings of that nature that they ceased to impress us.

However, for a first steep climb, La Bajada did rather well. It was a magnificent drive, the entire mile and a half of its length being plainly visible from the valley below, one loop of the road lying almost directly above the other. The curves were indeed sharp, but the sensation in turning them and rising ever higher and higher repaid us for any amount of trouble or alarm. We did not count the curves but were told later that there were twenty-three. When we had reached the top, we looked back upon the entire length of the climb winding circuitously down below us.

Soon we could see the city of Santa Fe hiding itself among the trees at the foot of a wonderfully beautiful range of snow-flecked mountains, and before dark, we had reached it. We immediately began making inquiries about possible camp sites in Santa Fe National Forest, but nothing seemed farther from the minds of the people we asked than the beauty of the country about them. We inquired of three different individuals about Santa Fe Canyon in particular, and none of them know of its existence. Finally, in desperation, we started out eastward on the

historic Santa Fe Trail towards Las Vegas and the Pecos Canyon. We were at once charmed with the sunset drive through the pine-covered mountains; and the road being perfectly graded, we sailed on and on until it was too dark to see anything more. The drop down into Apache Canyon was especially alluring and as we found there our "ideal camping site," (each one was always more nearly "ideal" than all its predecessors), we stopped. As the night air carried a decided chill, we were not at all sorry to discover the ruins of an old adobe house just off the road, almost hidden in the side of a hill over-looking a sparkling little stream. Here we took possession, and even John, the cynic, admitted the perfection of the spot. The full moon rising over the hillside added to our joy in the splendor of the scene.

ROUND ABOUT SANTA FE

CHAPTER III

ROUND ABOUT SANTA FE

Apache Canyon--Pecos Valley--Santa Fe Canyon--Pajarito Plateau.

We awoke in our adobe mansion in Apache Canyon to find that Sunday had dawned clear and crisp. We did not hurry in making a start, so entranced were we with our charming setting. Never since we left home had we realized so poignantly the brevity of the time we had at our disposal, and the multitude of places we had planned to see; but from then henceforth we were continually familiar with the sensation. Time after time did we lament that we could not stay on and on and let the beauty of our surroundings penetrate our very souls. It was nine o'clock before we were packed and ready to depart on an investigating tour of the canyon of the Pecos River.

A few miles past Gorietta and Valley Ranch, and we were driving over an enchanting road beside a noisy, tumbling, little river. On all sides were the tall, straight pines covering the mountain sides, their dark green standing out in sharp contrast to the many groves of

INSIDE THE FAÇADE OF THE OLD GOVERNOR'S PALACE
SANTE FE



Old Governors' Palace Sante Fe.

delicate pale aspens. Our road twisted and curved in and out, and up and down, always in sight of the dashing water, sometimes high above it on a narrow ledge, and then again at its very side with meadow-like stretches beside it. For fishermen it must be a veritable paradise. We had made an agreement at the very beginning of the trip that whenever anyone wanted a picture, all that he need do was to say the word and Zowinajo should stop; and poor Zo made slow progress that day.

We had spent several delightful hours and had covered twenty miles of all kinds of road where often the most expert driving left room for terror, when we reached such a bad road that even we were obliged to turn back. The day was flying past much too rapidly, and we decided to return to a charming spot in the canyon which we had noticed that morning, designated as a public camp ground, though bearing no ear marks of a place serving that purpose. In fact, we were alone in our possession of it that night and could not have hoped for a more "ideal" camp site. But cold! It was simply impossible for us to get warm enough to sleep, and all of the explaining that "the reason was the sudden change from the Texas climate to that of an eight thousand foot elevation," did not relieve the situation.

The next morning we spent little time in making a start, and it was not many hours before we were back again in Santa Fe, eager to see more of it than we had been able to see in passing through on the preceding day. I shall make no attempt to describe the quaint old town, so adequately has this been done by other writers; as, for

instance, George W. James, Ernest Peixotto and Agnes Laut. Everything was there just as I had pictured it to myself: the sleepy plaza, the historic old Governor's Palace, the wood carts drawn by diminutive donkeys, the narrow streets, the old, old adobe houses. One could easily imagine one were back in some old-world city. There was even a modern building that was an exact replica of the Alhambra--I could almost see the three beautiful princesses peeping from a tower high about us. We saw the little adobe building that is said to be the oldest house in America, and won-[d]ered what its first inhabitants were like; and visited sev-eral of the old missions, which are so graphically des-cribed by Governor Prince. A warped old ox-cart with heavy wooden wheels braved the weather on top of a dingy curio shop wherein one could purchase all kinds of Indian and Mexican handiwork.

Toward evening, we began anew our inquiries about Santa Fe Canyon, of the existence of which we felt convinced, even though no one in Sante Fe had seemed to agree with us; and finally by going to the Chamber of Commerce, we re-ceived instructions for reaching it, as well as the cliff dwellings in the Rito de los Frijoles and the famous town of Taos, the other two places thereabout in which we were most keenly interested. We had, however, planned a zig-zag sort of trip that would include also the pueblos of Tesuque, Santa Clara, Pojuaque, Picuris, and Nambé, but were warned on account of the recent floods not to attempt to go over the roads. We were not even sure, from the

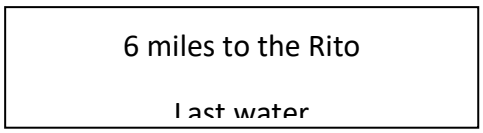
information we received, that we should be able to go from the Rito to Taos, eighty miles farther north, and thence still northward into Colorado, although the reports about those sections were a trifle more favorable. However, the immediate problem being solved, we found our way into Santa Fe Canyon at last, at the very mouth of which we stopped for the night, spending the next day exploring it more fully.

We found Santa Fe Canyon similar to the Pecos Canyon in that the road followed a dashing stream through a densely wooded forest, and yet in many ways quite different from it. The country was wilder and at places the scenery more striking; but the road was so badly washed out (as we had been told it would be) that we made slow progress, and finally deserted Zowinajo altogether, going on foot for several miles farther. The river was small but extremely picturesque, and the trees were marvels to us. At one place we recognized the work of beavers, and found our guess corrob[or]ated a little farther on by a government notice.

After the middle of the afternoon we started back to Santa Fe and thence toward the Rito de los Frijoles, near which we hoped to camp that night before exploring its mysteries the next day. From Santa Fe to Buckman we had twenty miles of good road through the valley, and then suddenly we started over an old lumber road up the side of a mountain--and such climbing as Zowinajo had to do! This grade to the top of Pajarito Plateau was three

miles long, over rocks of all sizes and shapes, and almost as steep in places as the worst climb on Pike's Peak. But the view from this road was magnificent, superb. Back past Santa Fe, and looking only a mile away, were the snow-covered peaks in the Sangre de Christo range, and in our immediate vicinity there stretched a vast series of mesas, layer upon layer, as far as one could see. Below us, through Buckman, ran the Rio Grande, wide and swirling and swollen. We had hesitated a moment before crossing the long bridge above it, as there was no foretelling how much time we might be obliged to spend on the opposite side, once we had crossed.

On for fifteen or twenty miles farther we went, atop of the mesas, through Water Canyon and Ancho Canyon. We could not understand the nomenclature of the former, for when we did finally come upon a tiny stream, there was so little water in it that we could scarce tell whether it was running or not. Then, just as we were setting our jaws before tackling the steepest and roughest grade we had yet ascended, we saw a notice to this effect:



That being the case, we stopped and prepared to camp for the night. Here we found the temperature so high compared with that of the two nights in the Pecos Valley that we did not even set up our tent, grateful for any

thing that would help us save time the next morning,
when we intended making an early start for the Rito.

EL RITO DE LOS FRIJOLES

CHAPTER IV

EL RITO DE LOS FRIJOLES

The trail--Ruins of cliff-dwellings--The Ceremonial Cave--
The waterfalls--A New Mexico sunset.

Before daylight--and daylight happened to be as early as four o'clock--even John was awake and impatient to be off. But at best we could never finish breakfast and get all of our luggage packed on in less than an hour, regardless of our enthusiasm. We were undeniably excited over the prospect of our visit to the beautiful Rito de los Frijoles with all of its ancient wonders.

There we found everything exactly as we had expected, everything in its place precisely as we had read and heard about it. For that reason alone it was vaguely disappointing, for trust as we might for the spirit of prehistoric ages to creep upon us, as we had foreseen it would, we could not experience it nearly so keenly as we had in anticipation; as, for instance, when reading Miss Laut's charming rhapsodies in Through our Unknown Southwest. To use the words of Howard Mumford Jones, "They do

no good forewarned who tempt a spell."

The trail leading down into the deep canyon did surprise us a bit in being so well-built, so safe, and unexciting, although a marvel of patient workmanship, when we had been led to expect something much more perilous. When Miss Laut wrote about it, it was "a narrow steep tier of six hundred steps." It was still picturesque, even thrilling, as it wound its way cautiously down the precipitous cliff, first in one direction, and then in the other. From this trail we caught glimpses of the valley below; and it was not long until we saw and immediately recognized the ruins of the large circular community house of several hundred rooms, called Tyuonyi. On, on we went, down and down, and around countless sharp turns, thrilled with anticipation, but realizing even so early in the day that the same trail must be followed, and up instead of down, at the end of the day.

When we had at last reached the foot of the steep descent, we had no difficulty in finding everything for which we looked in this deep canyon so replete with historic association of an unknown age. For hours we saw no living creature in any direction, and roamed at will along the cliffs, honey-combed with countless black openings which had been dug out of the soft rock by those prehistoric people about whose identity and whose fate so many people have wondered and disagreed. Climbing up one little ladder after another, we poked our heads into these caves, examining every detail of their interiors, including



Ceremonial Cave in El Rito de los Frijoles.

such interesting features as the impressions of ovens and other alcoves, of narrow passages from room to room, and of tracings of crude images in the walls.

For a mile or two we followed an easy trail--all trails were plainly labelled--to the series of tall ladders leading for hundreds of steps up the precipitous side of the cliff to the Ceremonial Cave. Here a large semi-circular level had been hollowed out, in the center of which a tall ladder projected from the sacred kiva under-ground. Around the sides of the concave were smaller alcoves that were used, I have been told, for the placing of urns of incense, candles, and what-not that figured in the sacred ceremonies. We descended the ladder into the kiva, and again waited confidantly for I-know-not-what quiver of emotion, which, I regret to admit, failed us again.

After several hours of exploring this unparalleled open-air natural museum, we relinquished our association with the spirit of ancient times, and wandered in search of the two waterfalls, which, we had heard, fell a hundred and sixty feet at the mouth of the canyon. A youth whom we found busily engaged in a hammock near the charming rustic inn, told us that we could find the falls two miles down the little stream, which, incidentally, is perpetually fed by the melting snow on the Jemez Mountains; but it was the longest two miles that we had ever encoun-tered. The farther we went, the hotter beat the sun and the steeper and rougher became our path; but the canyon



Upper Rito Falls

grew interesting in proportion to our discomfort, the trees taller, and the rugged cliffs more nearly perpendicular as they closed in toward each other. Still on and on we climbed with never a hint of a waterfall to encourage us, until finally, when we had almost despaired and were ready to turn back defeated, we caught sight of a sign on the opposite side of the stream pointing to the "Upper Frijoles Falls of the Rio Grande." We started on with new vim, and soon saw that the ravine had become deep and narrow below us, and very wild and magnificent ahead. Still farther for several hundred feet we climbed before we could look back and see behind us an exquisite waterfall pouring over a blackish rock formation.

Yet still father we came upon the lower falls, but there the trail ended abruptly, and it was only by hanging over the precipitous brink that we could obtain even a glimpse of it. The only possible way of having a good view of it would have been from an aeroplane, unless perchance there is some method of approach in the ravine below that can be reached from the valley of the Rio Grande. The lower was even more magnificent than the upper fall, for instead of clinging to the rocks, it fell sheer down through the air in a filmy white veil and struck the rocks below with a roar. Far ahead toward the Rio Grande, a glorious panorama of gigantic cliffs and huge striated mesas stretched.

Above the noisy waterfall we ate our sandwiches and lingered until we felt strengthened for undertaking the



Lower Rito Falls

return climb through the canyon; and then, too late to undo the ill effects of our earlier struggle, we discovered that a smooth, comparatively easy trail lay hidden among the trees on the opposite side of the stream. This improvement made it possible for us to cover the ground quickly, in spite of a scorching sun, and soon be ready to attempt the final climb out of the canyon. We realized that we had not spent nearly enough time in this marvelous valley, but had not an ounce of reserve energy upon which to call. Slowly we began the ascent of the white dusty trail, and after many a halt for breath, always in the heat of an unclouded sun, we were at last at the top. Soon Zowinajo was taking us away from the Rito de los Frijoles, a weary but a thoughtful family.

As the sun was still high in the sky, we drove on and on, hoping to reach country that was new to us before stopping for the night. Water was always a vital consideration, and we knew that between our camping place of the previous night and Buckman, we should find none. Never were we so thankful for any decision of ours as for this one to push on, for had we not done so, we should have missed the most unspeakably magnificent, never-to-be-forgotten sunset that can be wildly imagined. There are no words in our language that can convey the picture of it, for any that might be employed would sound extravagant, while giving only the faintest hint of the glory that flooded us. We were out on the sandy plains,

surrounded by snow-splashed mountains, and with the lurid flame in the sky, every mountain-top, every shrub, yes, every grain of sand became ablaze with color. The Sangre de Christo Mountains--what an appropriate name at that moment! As long as I live and see beautiful sunsets, I shall think of that one.

Only when the glow had completely faded did we realize that night had come and that we were still far from--water. It had been a hot summer's day, we had trod upon and breathed dust all day, and would have given much for a few gallons of clear water; but our strenuous day was beginning so to tell upon our physical beings that we voted to stop and sleep regardless of cleanliness. To add to our discomfort, we had no more than stopped than we realized that a sand storm was brewing, and soon our eyes, ears, and mouths were full of fine sand, and our faces and hands grimier than ever. We lost no time in stretching our tent and cooking something to eat, and in two seconds were sleeping soundly.

TAOS

CHAPTER V

TAOS

Through Española and San Juan--Northward along the Rio Grande--The Arroyo Hondo--Taos--Over the mountains to the Red River of the South.

Bright sunshine on the roof of our tent awakened us, and we found ourselves on a bleak sand hill with a beautiful range of snow-covered mountains on our right and the muddy, swollen Rio Grande on our left. A signboard informed us that Española was not far away, and there we hoped to be before our gasolene supply was exhausted--for we had been unable to get any since leaving Santa Fe two days earlier. In Buckman, however, the night before, we had not only been unable to find gasolene, but had been warned that the road to Taos was probably impassable, and that on account of a washed-out bridge at Española--which is on the opposite side of the river--we should not be able even to go there. Nevertheless, as we had talked to people in Santa Fe who had recently traveled over the same road, we had come on in the face of these warnings; and our hearts sank as we approached Española and saw the



A makeshift crossing over the swollen Rio Grande at Española.

long bridge across the Rio Grande twisted and broken in the angry river.

For a moment we were non-plussed. Then, by walking out on the remaining portion of the bridge and around a corner or two on it, John and I saw that to span a hundred foot gap from its end to the opposite shore, a suspension foot bridge had been swung. With light spirits, we hurried back to the car, and taking a bucket apiece, started across for gasolene. A quaintly interesting place we found the little town to be; and we did secure gasolene, though at forty-two and a half cents, the most we had to pay anywhere on the trip. Back across the suspension bridge we started, and it swayed so uncertainly back and forth a few [feet] above the swirling water that we thought every moment would surely be our last. Even when we had reached firm ground, we still felt a sensation of swaying dizzily from side to side. We related our experience to Zona and Miss Allen, and so thrilling did it sound that they too must needs try crossing.

We were informed in Española that the road to Taos was safe, and our spirits rose still higher; for we could hardly have borne the disappointment in not seeing that historical and celebrated town, even though we had reconciled ourselves to missing so many of the other Indian pueblos. We did pass through San Ildefonso and had a visit in San Juan, a most fascinating pueblo.

The Indians seemed very socially inclined and interested in us, and we not only drove slowly about in front of their little adobe houses, but were taken inside to see their

black pottery. Many of them spoke English and dressed in a style that was a mixture of the civilized and the savage. Here, as in Taos later, we saw the typical coiffure of the men, which consisted of a knot of hair on the back of their heads, secured with wide red band. Many of the Indians wore blankets or sheets about them, some times over their heads, and practically all of the men, women and children wore spotlessly white boots, which they called puttees. The houses were of adobe, low and close together, and they, as well as the streets, were swept clean. All about were conical ovens of clay, and before all of the houses strings of meat and other food hung in the sun to dry. The crude corrals gave an additional touch of picturesqueness, constructed as they were of an assorted mixture of little trees and sticks, covered over with a sort of thatched roof.

The annual fiesta in San Juan was to take place the following afternoon, and we were torn between two desires: we would have give[n] much to see the fiesta, but staying would mean more than twenty-four hours' delay, when we were already several days behind on our schedule. Finally we left our decision to the quality of the camping ground we could find, as our discomfort from the sand and dirt was growing; and as we could find no desirable place, we forfeited the fiesta and started on for Taos.

A more glorious drive than the one we had that day would be hard to find anywhere. Early in the day, we followed the snow-covered range on our right, noticing in



The winding road to Taos along the Rio Grande.

particular one high peak against which lay a perfect cross in white. After passing Española we went through a section of country that carried one back to the old countries, so ancient and foreign an aspect did it bear. The road became a narrow, twisting, little lane, shaded by mammoth trees centuries old.

But the best part was yet to follow, for suddenly our road led down to the very brink of the river and clung to its bank at the foot of high cliffs. On both sides the cliffs were wildly rugged, and the coloring was beyond description, that of the rocks harmonizing perfectly with the soil and all of the plant growth. The predominating tone was a deep violet, tinged here and there with varying shades of red and gray. The road was beautiful, winding in and out just above the water, which splashed madly through its rocky channel. One glorious view after another unfolded itself as we moved on and on for some twenty-five miles, happily but slowly, for there were many rough places, narrow ledges, and steep grades.

Many people would, no doubt, be so concerned about the condition of the road that they would miss all of the beauty of the surroundings, as we had occasion to discover. As we stood spell-bound at one spot, allowing the beauty of it to make an indelible picture upon our consciousness, a roadster occupied by two men with set jaws came from the opposite direction, and the one driving inquired how the road was farther on.

"Not so bad," John answered cheerfully. "It keeps along by the side of the river. How is it back your way?"

"Oh, it keeps along the river, just like this," he growled, as if he were condemning it beyond any hope.

At one place the road left the river to follow for a short distance the course of a dancing, crystal stream that rushed into it from the mountains. The sun was uncomfortably warm and so were we, and it came to us as an inspiration: why not have a bath then and there? It would equal Vachel Linds[a]y's "plunge in a mountain torrent." Five minutes later we were in our bathing suits and trying to gain courage to venture into the icy water. Such a noisily glorious time as we did have! The water was so swift and cold and the rocks so ubiquitous that swimming was out of the question, and even standing was a feat in itself. After so long a time and with many a false step, we managed even to cross the entire twenty-five feet of its width. While we were splashing in this Arctic torrent, some people in wagons passed along the road, and we were amused to see how frankly amazed they were at the spectacle we presented. But never did water make anyone happier than it did us; for, in spite of its temperature--or perhaps because of it--it made us feel for the rest of the day as if we had had a tonic.

Our road soon led us back to the river and a few miles farther reached the junction of the Rio Grande and

the Arroyo Hondo, where two mighty canyons meet. Following the course of the Arroyo, we made a rapid ascent, until imperceptibly we found ourselves high up on the side of the cliff, overlooking the dwindling stream below us. With no warning whatever, we suddenly came out on top, with a level plain stretching ahead of us. Twelve miles away we could see Taos, nestling at the foot of a beautiful range of mountains, the highest in New Mexico.

Soon we had gone through Ranchos de Taos, the Mexican town, stopping only to see the quaint old mission church high on a hill; and four miles farther had reached the American town, the former home of the celebrated Kit Carson, the scene of many a stirring incident in the earliest history of our country, and the present home of a flourishing art colony. Here we reveled in the many artistic homes, missions, and other buildings in the picturesque Spanish style of architecture, some of which were extremely old and quaint.

From there, in spite of the approaching night, we went on three miles farther to the Indian pueblo, too impatient to see it to wait until the next day. On our return from the pueblo, we met scores and scores of Indians of all ages returning on horses from a hunt, whooping and racing. Three of us were keenly excited and felt as if we were actually in the land of our first Americans, but John did not, or would not, see anything unusual in it.



An Indian pueblo at Taos

"I do not see what there is so remarkable about anyone's riding horses or yelling that way, or even in killing rabbits," he insisted, and never did admit to any other reaction.

We were directed to a clear spring beside a noisy stream in Taos Canyon not far from the American town, and soon were again settled after another altogether delightful day. The next morning found us again at the pueblo, where we spent many hours. The two community houses, where several hundred individuals live precisely as their ancestors lived thousands of years ago, were exactly as they had been represented to us, one five-storied building across the river from a seven-storied one, both built terrace-fashion. These were much more imposing and more interesting than any of the other pueblos that we had seen. We talked with some of the Indians, who seemed more reticent, or perhaps more shy, than the ones we had seen in San Juan. They were preparing for a dance that very afternoon, which fact may have accounted for their lack of interest in us.

By three o'clock that afternoon we had reluctantly bidden Taos farewell, vowing to return to it at our very first opportunity. We had been tempted to spend the remainder of our time there, leaving Colorado for a later visit. But once on our way, the new surroundings compelled our entire interest, for we had almost as wonderful a trip over the mountains as we had had the day before along the Rio Grande.

We went northward from Taos through Carson National Forest and over the very tops of the mountains to Cuesta, thirty miles away, reaching there about sundown. Up and around we went, with frequent glimpses of long-distance stretches of country that were worth any amount of Zowinajo's climbing for us to see. Before reaching Cuesta there was a spectacular descent, which was one of the most delightful drives that we found anywhere. In the valley below us we could see the little Mexican town, surrounded by perfectly modelled mountain peaks, dappled sparingly with snow patches, at the base of which ran an altogether charming stream, the Red River of the South. On its banks among the tall, rustling trees we camped and made no haste in departing the next morning. We were reluctant to leave New Mexico after receiving only this brief taste of its varied charms.

RAPIDLY CHANGING SCENES

CHAPTER VI

RAPIDLY CHANGING SCENES FROM NEW MEXICO TO GLENWOOD SPRINGS

The San Luis Valley--Mt. Princeton--Eagle River--Battle Mountain--Mt Massive--Glenwood Canyon.

For one entire day after leaving Cuesta, we traveled through the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado, always approaching the snow-covered mountains but never seeming to come very much nearer to them. We gradually realized, for two reasons in particular, that we had left New Mexico behind. First, the quantities of brilliantly colored geraniums that had invariable adorned the windows of the houses throughout New Mexico became more and more rare; and second, we began to see what Miss Allen termed "real" houses. She declared that she had become so satiated with adobe that any kind of frame or stone house looked like civilization to her.

Our chief concern during the day was the question of our being able to follow the route we had planned, for everywhere again we were warned that the road was washed

out and bridges gone. Nothing of the sort materialized, as it turned out, although at three different places, we were obliged to cross bridges conspicuously marked "You cross at your own risk." Each time we hesitated for a moment, and then closing our eyes, plunged ahead.

As I think now of the San Luis Valley, one feature stands out predominant. For miles and miles between Monte Vista and Saguache we passed such a number of artesian springs shooting geyser-like into the air that we were filled with wonder at the spectacle. We became so curious that once, even though night was almost upon us, we felt impelled to stop and see whether the water was hot or cold. Another odd feature of this strange valley was that every house that we saw was deserted and in ruins. In spite of the mysteriousness, however, we agreed, at the time we stopped to examine the water, to investigate one of these houses with the view to spending the night in it; but no sooner had we stopped than swarms--I might better say droves--of mammoth mosquitoes sent us fleeing.

Early in our second day in Colorado, we found ourselves at last in the very heart of the mountains which we had been approaching for such a long time; and all day we delighted in them. That night was spent at the foot of Mt. Princeton--which, incidentally, is higher than Pike's Peak--near the hot springs swimming pool, which met with our approval entirely. Before we left home, we had worked out a very lovely scheme of seeing the entire state of Colorado from three mountain-tops in various parts of

the state, the first of which was Mt. Princeton. Hence, with the long climb to its summit in view, we started out early the next morning, and spent many hours struggling toward our goal.

As usual, Zona and John had no difficulty whatever with their hearts or knees or breathing, but, whether we liked to admit it or not, Miss Allen and I soon began to lag and pant. We took the climb more and more slowly, and yet the higher we went, the shorter became the distance that we could move forward before being obliged to stop and gasp. Moreover, there was nothing particularly interesting along the way, as we were hidden in a ravine with no outlook from any point. Anticipation of what we should see from the top spurred us on longer than we should otherwise have been able to drag ourselves; but after so long a time, when our second and even, we declared, our third and fourth wind had been exhausted, even that prospect ceased to inspire us, and we offered to wait where we were while the others finished the climb. Just then, however, our trail disappeared completely, and they decided to give up trying to reach the summit, even though they should have been in plain view of us all of the way. I had been sadly disillusioned about myself. For years I had climbed over hills and valleys, day in and day out, without considering the question of fatigue, and here on an apparently easy trail I found myself breathless and wobbly.

When we had reconciled ourselves to our failure, we turned back and with no more symptoms of heart failure tripped merrily down to our starting-point, had a hot swim, and started on toward Buena Vista. To our chagrin, we made the discovery from our enchanting road that the real trail to the top of Mt. Princeton was not the one to which we had been directed, but another on the most prominent surface of the mountain, the course of which we could distinctly see zig-zagging picturesquely upward, and overlooking, no doubt, the most magnificent stretches of country.

The next day was one filled to overflowing with raptures, for we condensed, according to a folder that we carried, and likewise to our unanimous vote, "five hundred miles of scenery into a ride of less than one hundred miles." First of all, there was the Eyebrow Road. This is a wonderful drive high above the Arkansas River between Buena Vista and Leadville, from which one has magnificent views of brilliantly colored rocky mountains in the foreground and exquisite panoramas of the snow-covered ones farther away, prominent among which is Mt. Massive, the giant among the Colorado peaks. We were on this narrow ledge, with a precipitous drop of several hundred feet below us to the river, when someone decided that according to the Blue Book we were not on the road to Leadville after all, at which John, who was driving, switched Zowinajo around at a terrifying rate, and with innumerable



Twin Lakes.

short backings soon had us facing in the opposite direction. His skill was applauded, but we modestly suggested that thereafter he wait until he should reach a spot a trifle less perilous before turning around, whether we were on the right road or the wrong. As it happened, we had not been wrong after all, and again had all the thrills of driving over the Eyebrow Road.

Another prominent feature of the early part of that day lay in the masses of wild flowers that bloomed luxuriantly beside our road and covered the surrounding hills. Hundreds of thousands of wild rose vines, covered with delicate pink blossoms in extravagant clusters had, in fact, been a constant joy to us from the time we left Santa Fe, and continued to be so throughout Colorado until we were again in Texas. And now we had also great fields of every hue: flaming Indian paint brushes, miles of yellow dandelions, and many, many flowers that were unfamiliar to us.

By far the most beautiful spot that we saw before reaching Leadville was Twin Lakes, a few miles off our road, but in plain view from it, lying at the base of majestic mountains. We could not resist the temptation to follow the road leading around the lakes and for a short distance into the most fascinating gulch that can be imagined. This road, again according to our folder, was a new one that had been cut through to Glenwood Springs by way of Independence Pass and Aspen; and had it

not been for the fact that following it would have meant our missing the country about Leadville and Redcliff, we should surely have obeyed our inclinations and seen more of the charms of that seductive ravine. We did, in fact, investigate to our satisfaction the other end of this road while in Glenwood Springs, as I shall relate later.

After leaving Leadville, we found that the scenery became more and more magnificent. For miles we followed a beautiful stream, which we discovered was Eagle River, and which for one day we were hardly for a moment out of sight of. As we approached the little town of Redcliff, the mountains seemed to enclose about us and grow taller suddenly, as the river turned abruptly into a deep canyon, from which, to our surprise, there dashed a railway train. Straight ahead of us there rose a perpendicular wall, ending high above in a rocky turret, just below the top of which we could discern a road.

"Read what the Pike's Peak Ocean-to-Ocean folder says," I urged. "We can not surely be going up there."

"That is exactly what we are going to do," John replied. "Listen to this: 'At Redcliff, turn sharp left and immediately begin long winding climb to the top of Battle Mountain.' What are you going to do about it?"

"Oh, I am going to begin it--and that is not all! I expect to finish it."

"But listen again," he put in, "and be encouraged: 'Few roads open up scenery as awe-inspiring.'"



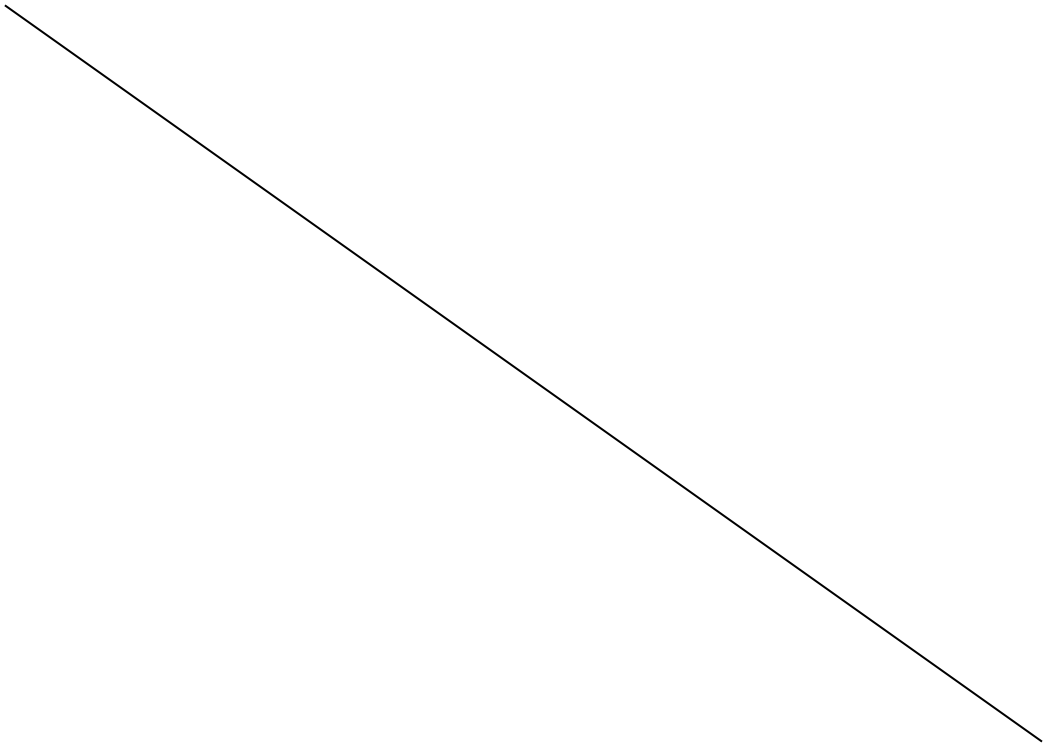
Mt. Massive from the summit of Battle Mountain.

And indeed the climb was not all--not nearly all -- for the descent farther on was more thrilling even than the ascent, and the two miles in between were not absolutely lacking in sensation. As Zowinajo bravely worked her way up the mountain's side, and above the surrounding mountain tops, we gasped, and exclaimed, and were awed to speechlessness in turn. Across from us and far below, could be distinguished the road we had traversed for the past few hours, following the winding course of sparkling Eagle River; and all about were magnificent stretches of snow-bedecked mountains, chief among them still Mt. Massive. In the immediate foreground was what a breezy traveler from Kansas with whom we exchanged experiences later that day termed Hell's Melting Pot. He was very much upset at having to climb such mountains in order to reach the Pacific coast, but even he had been impressed with the tremendous spectacle below him. A feverish mining activity was going on in that marvelous rocky hole, and all along the sides of the bare cliffs below us tiny houses clung as if by a thread.

We were so absorbed in one marvel after another that we had no time left in which to be concerned about the safety of the road, though I as driver was obliged to keep at least half of an eye on it all of the time. It was here that Zona began mentioning a peculiar knocking sound in the wheel over which she sat--on the outside of the road, incidentally, below which there was

a precipitous drop of a few thousand feet--but we assured her that the sound was caused by slightly slipping lugs, and that she was in no danger whatever. She was so persistent, however, that as soon as we reached a garage, we had the wheel investigated, and were told that only a miracle had saved it from going to pieces at any moment!

As if we had not been served well enough for one day, we continued to have still more impressive country upon which to gaze. On down Eagle River we went, into more and more gorgeously colored hills, until they reached their climax of brilliance near the Canyon of the Grand. Some of the hills were of brilliant crimson, varying through all shades to delicate coral. Frequently a stratum of pure white would occur, adding much to the beauty of the scene.



But by far the greatest interest of the day and one of the greatest of our trip was the Canyon of the Grand River, through which we drove for fifteen miles before reaching Glenwood Springs. It was the one spot to which we had definitely looked forward for many days, and hence were apprehensive of finding disappointing. But it exceeded every possible expectation. Between the tremendous rocky cliffs on each side there was barely room for the river, bordered on one side by a railroad and on the other by our road. The cliffs still boasted beautifully colored rocks in chaotic profusion, and in addition quantities of luxuriant trees.

"I am glad to see the trees," exclaimed Miss Allen, "for to me they add a hundred per cent to the beauty of the cliffs, no matter how interesting otherwise."

At every turn there were diverging gorges and gulches, from which small streams frequently dashed madly into the river. The river curved so rapidly that one could never see very far ahead, the road always clinging closely to its side, though the railroad opposite occasionally made short-cuts through tunnels.

As we neared Glenwood Springs, we found occasional signs of life. A few doll-like houses clung to the cliff beside the road, one of which had recently suffered a disaster. By a great circular gap in its roof and another in its outside wall, could easily be traced the course of a boulder that had tumbled from the mountain above and cut its way directly through the house as if it had not been there.



Glenwood Canyon

We did not loiter through the canyon, as we expected to spend several days nearby; but went on to Glenwood Springs and even a few miles farther to another "ideal" camp site beside a little mountain stream and under mammoth trees, where we put up our tent and prepared to stay for a while. We considered that we had reached our final destination, for all of the ground that we should go over later, though new to us, would be nearer home than we were there.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

CHAPTER VII

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

Redstone--In Glenwood Canyon--Hanging Lake.

We drove into Glenwood Springs late in the afternoon and knew instantly that we liked the place. "Liked" is a mild word to use, for it was with a real pang that we dragged ourselves away a few days later. Every one with whom we talked or had any business dealings seemed to feel a personal interest in making our stay a never-to-be-forgotten one. The town with its poplar-lined streets and its mountainous setting, was a pretty one, and not least among its attractions was the wonderful open-air, hot-water swimming pool, the largest, according to advertisements, in the world. Fortunately for us the popular tourist season had not opened in full swing, and every day we spent hour after hour in the thoroughly delightful water with practically no one to share it with us.

Besides the swimming pool and the canyon, there was only one other place near Glenwood Springs--Hanging Lake -- about which we had heard anything that we remembered; but our kodak man gave us such an interesting account of a day's



Mt. Sopris and Chrystal River

trip to Redstone that we could not resist investigating it.

"You will find the road rather dangerous," he warned, "though people have been over it recently."

"What is Redstone?" we wanted to know.

"Well," he answered, "it used to be a town, but bigger coke-burning concerns than the one they had there put them out of business, and now everybody is gone." And then as a parting injunction, he added, "Remember, you want to hug the cliff along the river."

We had heard enough to want to discover more, and early the next morning were off up the valley of Crystal River on our thirty-mile trip to Redstone. This was the other end of the fascinating road into which we had wandered at Twin Lakes a few days before. For miles we went toward Mt. Sopris, another peak which is higher than Pike's, and one of the most majestic that we saw in Colorado, later losing it behind a smaller mountain. One of the best views we had of it was at the junction of Roaring Fork and Crystal Rivers, where the mountain stood like a towering island above the joining waters. But even after we had lost sight of Mt. Sopris, our road did not by any means lack interest. The country became more and more rugged, the canyon closed in about us, the river became swifter as it roared over giant boulders, and the red coloring in the hills grew more intense. The trees, too, were so dense that often we could not see ahead of or above us.

The same floods that had kept us alarmed throughout New Mexico had played havoc with Crystal River and the

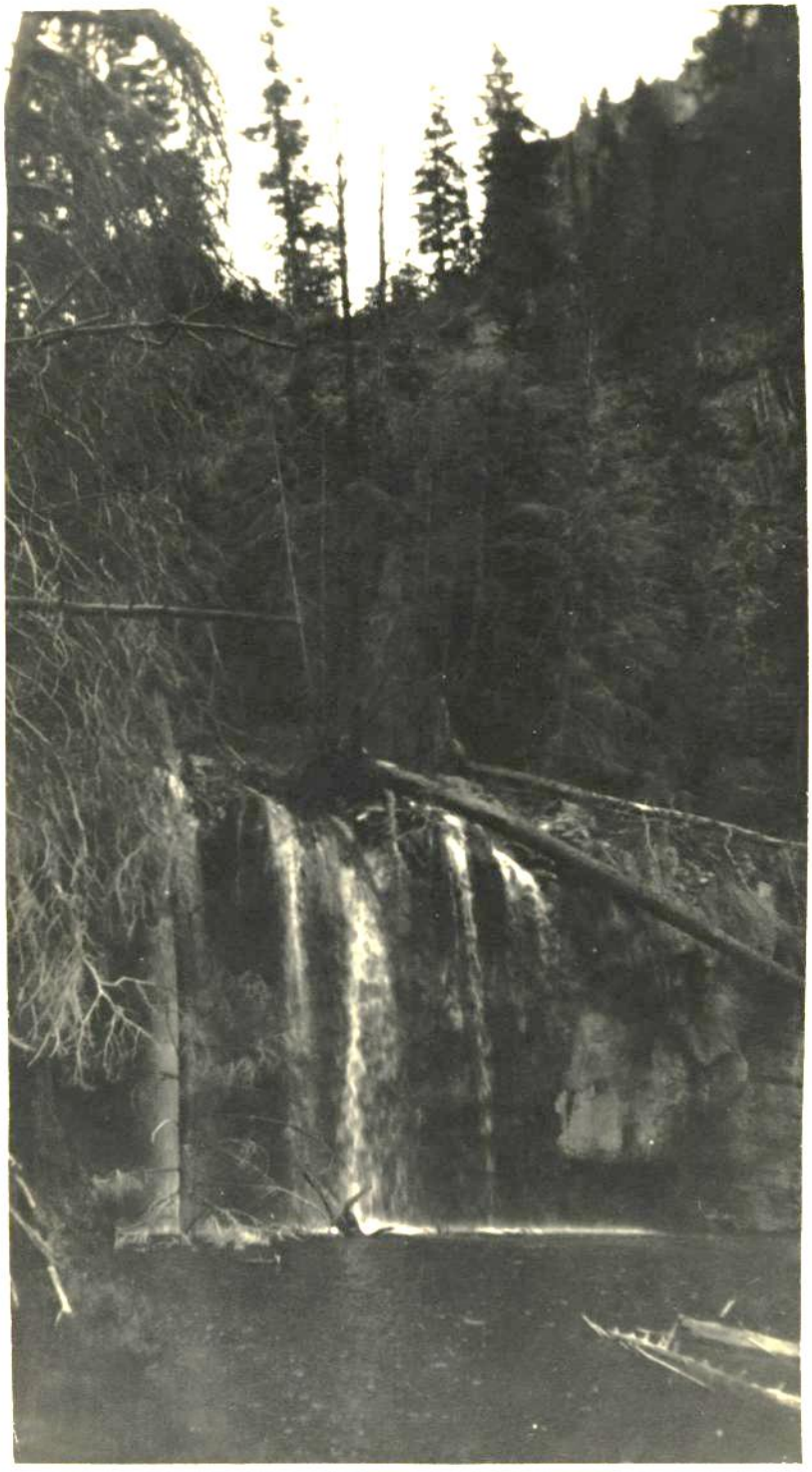
dirt road beside it. At several places the original road had been washed down the river, and a temporary one was being used. But we could see nothing perilous about any of these places and were about to laugh our informant to scorn for so exciting us, when unexpectedly we came to a halt. The stony cliff had so encroached upon the river that there had been no chance to build the road farther away, and what do you think had been done? The road had been tied to the cliff with wires, the outside drop to the water being padded with nothing more substantial than loose shrubbery. For the first time we hesitated and pondered the situation seriously. But since, as Johnny tersely expressed it, we could die only once, we decided to drive over the wires. After a few miles we had crossed so many such places that they ceased to excite even comment.

So entranced were we with the scenery that we could hardly believe it when we rolled into the quaintest town that I have ever seen. On the two sides of one long, shaded street there were at least a hundred bungalows and cottages, all modern and attractive, and several unusually charming inns, but never a living soul about. One had the feeling that a great pestilence must have driven the inhabitants away overnight. Along the opposite side of the river ran a long line of coke ovens, deserted likewise. There was a sadness unutterable about it all. Here had stood a charming village in unspeakably beautiful surroundings, and here each year, no doubt, thousands of visitors had come to spend a few

happy months; and now there was only the drear loneliness of a deserted village.

The next day after our Redstone trip we had another of a different nature. As Zowinajo must be left with a car-doctor to be cured of some ills and to be bathed, we took the opportunity to explore the Canyon of the Grand afoot--I cling to its original name even though we were informed that the name of the river has now been changed to the Colorado. We soon found to our sorrow that walking along a dusty, white road on a warm summer's day did not prove altogether delightful even though the surroundings left little to be desired. We knew how much more beautiful the canyon was several miles from town than it was where we walked; and losing heart at the prospect of covering so much distance, we stopped at the first intersecting ravine that we reached.

A noisy stream tumbled down this gulch, and more to pass the time than anything else, we decided to look for its source. Our previous attempts at climbing had been good training, and we had little difficulty even without a trail in skirting perilous cliffs and in following the course of the frivolous little stream. But we felt fully repaid when at last we found ourselves in view of a high waterfall, dashing straight down through the air, apparently from the very top of the mountain on to a wild profusion of rocks below. Underneath the waterfall a dark cave had been washed out, and there in that cool spot we stopped, after upsetting



Hanging Lake

many of the loose, slippery rocks and starting them madly scurrying down the ravine. It was only after several hours that we finally wended our way back to town and the swimming pool.

By far the most beautiful place near Glenwood Springs is Hanging Lake, high up in a cliff above the canyon. The signboard at the entrance to the trail from the road says that it is one mile to the Lake; but we decided that what it lacked in horizontal distance, it made up in altitude. For every foot that we went forward, we went at least two upward. It was a most picturesque trail, however, and the view backward over the tree-tops to the canyon was magnificent. The stream in the ravine alone was fascinating, tumbling at a rapid rate in one waterfall after another; and our attention was continually being claimed by clusters of dainty wild violets. How we ever succeeded in dragging ourselves over the last perpendicular stretch will always be a mystery to me; but when we did reach the top, all of the struggle was at once forgotten.

The lake itself was a charming thing, deep and blue and cold, and the uniqueness of its setting added to its charm. There was a level space only large enough for the lake, below which the water poured in a hundred separate streams, each hurrying in its own course down the hillside through trees and shrubbery, and all joining farther down into one stream. The water above the lake fell into it from a height of twenty or thirty feet in a veil-like



Spouting Rock

curtain through a wild profusion of pine trees, some of which had been upset at their roots by the force of the water and dangled in its pathway.

Still higher in the cliff and almost hidden among the trees, we could scarcely catch glimpses of another and apparently much more gorgeous waterfall, and fatigue forgotten at once, we scrambled up still farther. It must have been there all of the time, but why had no one told us about it? From over the top of the rock no less than sixty feet high, a tremendous stream dashed, underneath which, about half way up, another gushed forth from a hole in the solid rock. This waterfall, I was told later, is known as Spouting Rock. For all signs of life that we saw there, as well as at many other paces on our way, we might have been the discoverers of this secluded marvel; and my heart was filled with envy of those early comers who first laid eyes on the many wonders of that wonderful land.

OVER THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

CHAPTER VIII

OVER THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE FROM GLENWOOD SPRINGS TO ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Gore Canyon--Hot Sulphur Springs--Berthoud Pass in the rain--Lookout Mountain--Big Thompson Canyon--Estes Park--Copeland Lake.

On the afternoon of July second we started on our way from Glenwood Springs to Rocky Mountain National Park, our next place for stopping any length of time, keenly impatient first of all to reach Berthoud Pass. For the day and a half before we did reach it, however, we were not at all bored, for if the scenery ever failed us, we still had the temperature to think about. We traveled over many a stiff climb and countless dangerous places, but always with magnificent views of the mountains all about us as we went. Since the day we had reached Glenwood Springs we had seen very little snow, though we had not missed it in our absorption, but now we welcomed it again with enthusiasm. Before nightfall of our first

day, the temperature had dropped so low that no amount of clothing seemed to warm us, and when we awoke the next morning, it was not surprising to discover that a fresh snow had fallen in the night upon the mountains surrounding us.

The most noteworthy feature that day besides the cold was Gore Canyon, twenty-five hundred feet above which our road carried us. As we were about to start the ascent, we met a car full of men who had just come over it, and who warned us vehemently about it.

"If you have any nerve pills with you, you had better take them before starting," they laughingly advised John, who was driving.

"Is it so dangerous as all that?" asked John, hesitating.

"Well, you have an inch or two to spare on the outside of the road occasionally," they answered encouragingly. "Still you may make it, if you watch your step, especially at the sharp curves."

We thanked them and started on, our hearts beating frantically. Soon the view became stupendous. The river ran like a thread half a mile below us, the perpendicular sides of the canyon rising abruptly from it, forming a scene of grandeur indeed. At the first sight of it, we naturally thought of stopping for a picture, but postponed that pleasure until we should have penetrated deeper into the canyon. We turned a few corners on a road no more startling than several over which we had been before, expecting every moment to find the places about which we



Berthoud Pass on a rainy day.

had been warned, and not once stopping Zowinajo while we gazed down into the mysterious depths. Then after a very short distance the road veered away from the canyon, temporarily, we had no doubt, and it was not until we had traveled several miles farther that we were convinced we had left Gore Canyon behind. And not one single picture attempted! We felt cheated, somehow, but hardly knew where to place the blame.

We could not forget our disappointment until later in the day when we reached Hot Sulphur Springs, and had had a delightful swim. In the meantime, the cold had increased, and when we reached Fraser, near the beginning of the ascent over Berthoud Pass, we were informed that it had been snowing on the Pass and that people familiar with the road thought it unsafe to try starting over it that late in the day. In view of that op[i]nion, we sought and found an entirely charming spot beside a lovely mountain river in a dense pine forest, where we spent the night, hoping for better weather then next day.

But our hopes were all in vain. The day--July fourth, incidentally--dawned with a dull sky, which became duller every moment. By the time we had traveled only a few miles a fine rain began to fall, and still higher we found ourselves within the clouds themselves, so dense that we could hardly see a hundred feet ahead. Again we were keenly disappointed. Occasionally we caught glimpses of snow-covered peaks near us, which were only tantalizing because we could see no more. We did, however, see the



At the top of the Continental Divide at Berthoud Pass

beautiful stream beside the road, and quantities of the most exquisite pine trees that we had seen anywhere. The day was so cold that even on the steepest and longest pulls the motor was never once overheated, and when in descending we turned the engine off, it came near freezing.

Until we reached the summit we were still hopeful that the atmosphere would clear, but we were too sanguine. And then while discussing our plans for the next several days, someone had a brilliant idea. From Denver, we had planned to go to Rocky Mountain Park by way of Big Thompson Canyon, spend a few days in the park, and then return to Denver over the Switzerland Trail. While in the park, we expected to take a long drive over the Fall River Road, returning to the park. Now a new road connecting with this road and leading to Grand Lake over Milner Pass had been completed only since last year, and this we had longed to see, but taking it would necessitate our returning to Denver over Berthoud Pass, over which we should already have traveled earlier in our trip. The brilliant idea was this: why not deliberately come back over the same ground, since we had not actually seen it? We all agreed that Berthoud Pass called more appealingly to us than any other road we could think of, and our plans were at once altered--provided, of course, we could select a clear day for our next crossing. We told Zona that we would "make it part of the trip."

In the meantime our cold, rainy July fourth became

colder and rainier, and by noon, when we reached Idaho Springs, we had lost all of our zest for camping and sought a hotel, the first time since leaving home that we had found any use for one. It was entertaining when we were again back in Texas to relate our experience, even though we were accused of having drunk of the waters of the Hassayampa. I had taken with me for just such an emergency some heavy woolen underwear, and this with the thick Red Cross overcoat which had served me well in all kinds of weather in northern France the year before did not succeed in making me comfortably warm.

The next morning we were awakened by a brilliant sun, and our spirits rose. We could afford then to laugh at our dismal prognostications of the night before of being obliged to spend the balance of our limited time in a dreary hotel, while the rain beat down day after day. Before the day was over we had, in spite of many stops, almost reached Estes Park at the entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park.

From Idaho Springs to Denver, a beautiful, well-kept driveway leads, the climax of which comes at Lookout Mountain, from the summit of which one gets a tremendous view of plains stretching for hundreds of miles to the east. Golden, five miles away, and looking only a stone's throw, was almost beneath us, and the road from Golden to Denver, twelve miles away, stood out like a white ribbon. The streets in Denver were plainly visible, marking the town off into squares. Over the plains as far we could see there were numbers of immense irrigation lakes, and back toward the west there



Grandview Point on Lookout Mountain

stretched the snow-bedecked Continental Divide.

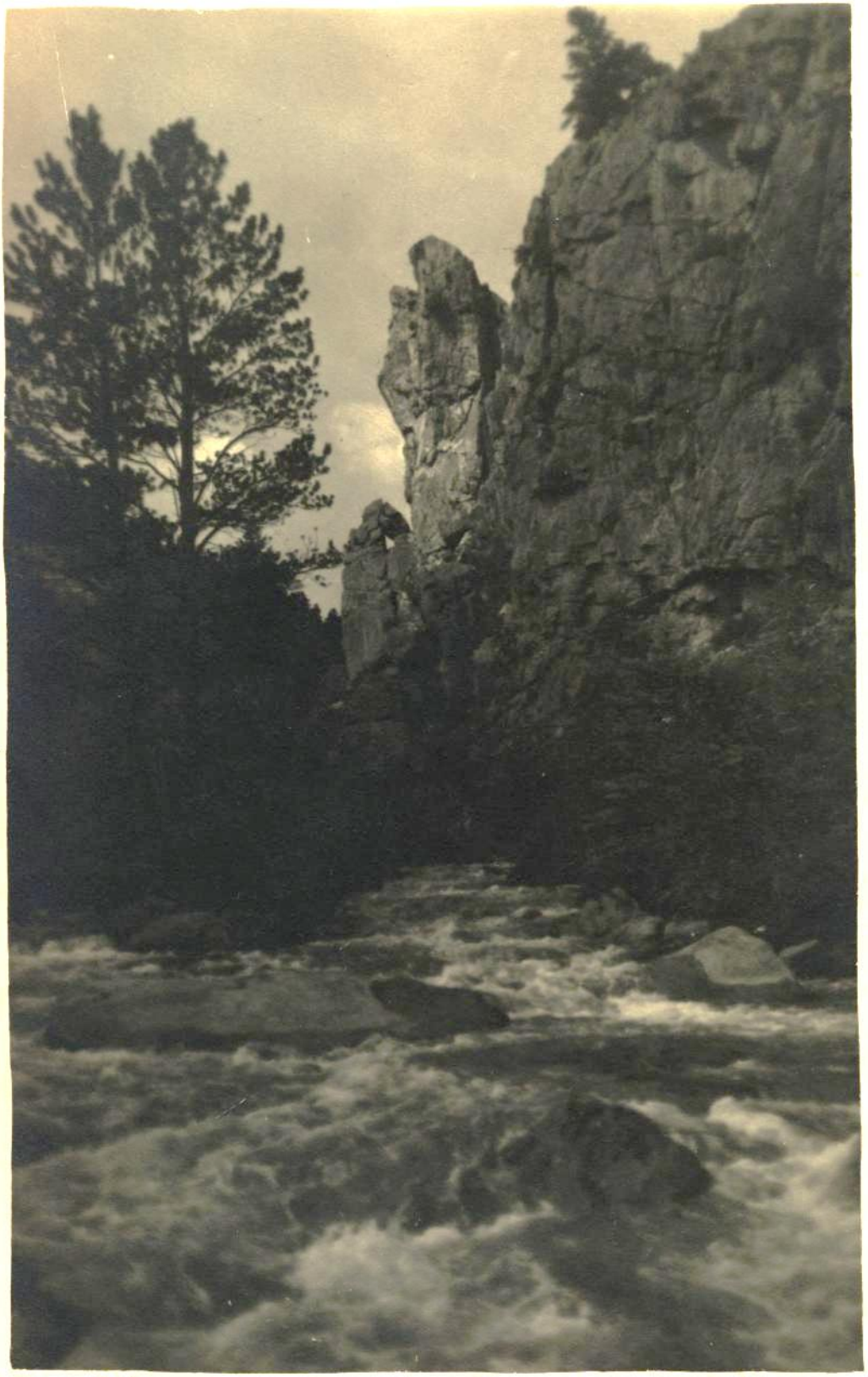
After spending a few hours in Denver we went on, through Longmont and Loveland, to Big Thompson Canyon, finding on the way very badly washed-out roads and a great deal of mud, so much, in fact, in places that detours of several miles were necessary. One feature of the day, however, that held our supreme interest was the abundance of cherry orchards heavily laden with the bright red fruit.

Once into Big Thompson Canyon our road improved, or if not, we did not know the difference, so absorbed did we become in the canyon with its roaring river and wealth of vari-coloured rocks and stately trees. As in Glenwood Canyon, the river and the road occupied for some distance all of the space that was left between the two gigantic cliffs. Frequent signs, which we decided to respect, warned us, "As you value life drive slowly and cautiously."

At a certain station in the canyon twelve miles from Estes Park, we had planned to follow, according to the Blue Book, a "scenic option" through Devil's Gulch, but before we realized it, we had gone past the station.

"Shall we turn back?" I inquired.

"No, no," a chorus of protest came back. "Not as long as we have <u>this</u>." And when we had reached the end of the canyon, we were still of the opinion that if the proposed option were any more marvelous than what we had been through, it must be "going some."



A typical view in Big Thompson Canyon

Through Big Thompson Canyon we had our first taste of meeting great numbers of fellow tourists. Heretofore, we had seen extremely few people on the road at any place, so few, in fact, that we had been made to feel as if the vast expanses of plains, valleys, and mountains were ours alone to enjoy. It was a glorious feeling. And now we must share everything with hundreds of sordid, prosaic human beings who knew not the meaning of real appreciation--or so it seemed to us. To be absolutely truthful, I am convinced that it seemed that way to only three of us, for it soon became apparent that the youthful Freshman was actually enjoying the sight of so many other people.

There was one glorious night in the canyon, and then early the next morning we entered Rocky Mountain National Park, stopping to make inquiries in the village of Estes Park about the places in which we were particularly interested. Foremost among these, naturally, was Long's Peak. Our informant told us that few trips had been made to the summit this summer, as the late snows had been unusually heavy, but it evolved that a tentative plan was afoot for a trip the very next day. Zona and Miss Allen immediately spoke for places in the party, though John and I had not forgotten our experience on Mt. Princeton and had no desire to delay a party by our tenderfootedness. Within me there was a duel--whether to be a real sport and go with them regardless of consequences, or to



A beaver dam in Rocky Mountain Park

use an ounce of commonsense and stay behind--and as John was not particularly enthusiastic about going, we decided, erroneously perhaps, that the glory would not repay us for the effort.

Our first day was spent in obtaining a general impression of the wild mountain park, of its innumerable majestic peaks, rugged gorges, mountain rivers and icy lakes, all of which have been described appreciatively in various bulletins issued by the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. Many charming rustic inns were scattered about, so different from the usual hotel that we were almost tempted to break our camping record voluntarily. We resisted, however, even Long's Peak Inn, an attractive place which breathed the atmosphere of its mountainous surroundings, and two miles further on found for ourselves an undoubtedly ideal place to build our temporary home in a grove of aspen trees beside a romping stream of icy water, and overlooked by Long's Peak itself.

But before actually stopping we felt impelled to go a few miles farther still and have an open-air swim in Copeland Lake, our first experience of swimming in snow water at an elevation of 9000 feet. It was even colder than our plunge in the mountain torrent in New Mexico had been, and we did not break any long distance records.

LONG'S PEAK

CHAPTER IX
LONG'S PEAK

Through the pines to timber-line--Snow banks--Alpine flowers--Chasm Lake--To the tip-top.

"Wake up, you sluggards, and look here," Miss Allen called from outside the tent the morning of the projected climb to the summit of Long's Peak. "You would never guess what we have."

"And, what is more, we are not particularly interested," mumbled John from underneath his six inches of covering in his secluded section of the tent; but curiosity getting the better of Zona and me, we at once poked our heads out--to see a snowy white frost over everything!

"It can not be frost!" we argued.

"But it can be and is," Miss Allen announced, as she hustled about collecting wood for a flickering little fire that she had succeeded in starting. At that even John's conscience began troubling him, and in spite of

aching fingers we were all soon ready to do our part toward reaching the climbing party by seven o'clock.

John and I had made no plans for the day--indeed, we had had no opportunity even to think of planning anything, such a flurry of excitement was there in the atmosphere. But there would be sufficient time after seven for us to consult our inclinations. We could not resist accompanying the others to the starting-point and watching them as they trotted off horseback, a crowd of ten. If truth must be told, a pang of envy too late entered our hearts.

As they disappeared in single file around a curve half a mile up the side of the mountain, we breathed a sigh of relief.

"And now what shall we do?" I asked. "You know we have a broken spring that we could see about having replaced."

"And I must get a hair-cut in town," John remembered.

"Then there are our pictures to be called for this afternoon," I added. "Perhaps we could just start a little way up the trail and turn back whenever we liked."

"Suppose we do that," he agreed; and with no more ado, we began our impromptu and exclusive exploring trip on Long's Peak, warning ourselves to be very, very careful not to lose our way.

On and on we climbed, and before we could realize it, found ourselves even with the tops of mountains that had towered high above us at our starting-point. For

miles our trail followed the course of a madly dashing stream, the source of which we finally reached. Occasionally we had glimpses of the great stretches of plains to the east, but soon had reached such a dense forest that, for a while at least, we could see nothing very far away. My climbing ability had improved remarkably and higher and higher we wandered, with never a thought of turning back. We did not even rest often, but the reason for that was that every time we did stop for a moment, swarms of mammoth insects behaving strangely like mosquitoes but looking much too large made life miserable for us. Several days later when upon calling at a shop where we had left our pictures to be developed, we found them ruined by tiny specks on the negatives, which were explained on the ground of defective film, I promptly answered,

"Oh, no, I can tell you what they are--they are mosquito bites."

Before we had even thought of turning back we began to pass snow banks beside our path, and soon had reached the tiny dwarfed trees at timber-line. Here we found a great bank of snow on the side of the mountain from underneath which the melted snow poured in a stream--the very one that we had been following. In Texas snow is such a rarity that both John and I became at once tremendously excited. All around the crevasse caused by the water we cautiously crept, exploring every curiosity to our hearts' satisfaction. It was a thrilling experience. We had,



A secluded waterfall near the top of Mong's Peak.

however, left our coats with Zowinajo, and found that we could not tarry long on the snow.

As we started on our way we discovered that the trail branched. To our left there was the most beautiful view of the snow-covered summit that we had seen, while to the right we could distinctly see the fresh print of horses' feet.

"Now you know we cannot hope to go all the way to the top, so why try to follow the beaten path?" I suggested. "Besides, there is nothing wrong with this trail to the left--and look what it is leading toward! Shall we follow it?"

"We shall," my agreeable companion promptly answered, and follow it we did, laughing to scorn all warnings we had heard about taking unfamiliar trails.

And then began the hardest climbing we had done, up, up across a barren rocky stretch for mile after mile, but still with the wonderful view ahead of us coming nearer and nearer to us. If we had left the trees behind, we still had the most marvelous Alpine flowers to cheer us. Fresh and dainty and of the most exquisite shades of color, they clung in masses to the rocky surface. There is no way of expressing the emotions they excited. The final climb followed the very crest of a high ridge of boulders, from one side of which we could look back over our trail and from the other into a deep ravine through which ran a little river that had its source in the snowy peak above and that reached, miles below, the neighborhood of the Inn. We stopped and gazed, spell-bound.

"Don't you wonder where we are?" I asked John. "We do not even know the directions absolutely."

"I'd be willing to bet you anything that that is Chasm Lake," he insisted, for on the opposite side of the canyon from us and far below was a mirror-like lake at the edges of which floated great chunks of snow. In a way it answered the descriptions we had read of Chasm Lake.

"I will not concede the point. Have you ever heard of a lovely waterfall in the vicinity of Chasm Lake?" I asked.

"Well, no, but there are plenty of things about this country that I have never heard of. We shall see tomorrow if that is not Chasm Lake."

What is in a name, after all? And why are we always vaguely disappointed in the places about which we have heard the most? Here we had found ourselves unexpectedly overlooking an incomparable scene, including a beautiful waterfall and a secluded glacial lake hidden away in a cavernous, snowy gorge, and had had no words to express our rapture until the thought entered our heads that the scene was a familiar one. Strange as it may seem, we do not yet know the nomenclature by which that spot and others that we saw that day and other days are known, and are happier for our ignorance.

For many hours the two of us wandered about, and not the least of the keen enjoyment to me lay in the fact that it was all ours alone to enjoy. But in my own delight I

had not realized that again the youth with me might feel differently. Suddenly as we stood upon a towering ridge looking into vast distances, he exclaimed,

"Wouldn't you like to see a human being somewhere? Think of it--all day long and never seeing a living soul!"

Just before dark, we waited at the Inn for the return of the more ambitious climbers, and to this day, no one of us will concede that his day could have held an ounce more of pure delight. But some day, I, too, shall go to the top. When we had finished relating our experiences, they told us theirs, which were, briefly, as follow:

They had ridden their horses for five and a half miles--a short distance past the timber-line, where we had left their foot-prints and gone in the opposite direction--leaving them only when they reached Boulder Field. This was a vast chaotic expanse composed solely of huge rocks, from one to the other of which they were obliged to leap. Once across this they came to the Keyhole, from which they had their first magnificent view of the country on every side--of the long stretches of the plains in the east, and of innumerable snowy ranges, one overlapping the other as far as they could see to the west. It was a glorious, a thrilling, spectacle.

Up, up then they climbed over cliffs almost perpendicular and through one tremendous snow bank after another. One bank in particular offered sensational opportunities, for it led them almost perpendicularly for some

hundreds of feet. Steps must first be dug in the snow before an ascent was possible. Below them for thousands of feet there was nothing but dizzy spaces, punctuated by the few level spots on which they had found their footings. When this place was reached on the return trip, the method of descent was very simple: each one in turn coasted down at a terrifying rate, with nothing more substantial to break his speed at the end of the snow than one firmly braced man. It must have been exhilarating, to say the least, if not well-nigh terrifying to mere tenderfeet.

"Was the view worth so much effort?" we wanted to know.

"Worth it?" Zona answered, as she moaned with weariness. "I would not take anything on earth for this day's experience. I could never have imagined anything so altogether marvelous as the climb up there, so thrilling as the descent, and so indescribably impressive as the view from the top. I shall never, never forget it."

OVER THE DIVIDE AGAIN AND BACK

CHAPTER X

OVER THE DIVIDE AGAIN AND BACK

Through Rocky Mountain Park--Chasm Falls--Fall River Road--Milner Pass--Grand Lake--Berthoud Pass on a clear day.

The next day after our experiences on Long's Peak, we enjoyed the banner day of our trip--if, indeed, any one day can be agreed upon as the banner day. Starting early, we soon reached the popular Highline Drive, which joins the Fall River Road near Horseshoe Falls. This drive was beautiful, especially in that exquisite vistas of snowy peaks appeared one after another between the tall pines through which the road wound. Long's Peak was always predominant, and as we went farther, we had views of it for several days from points on all sides. The only drawback that we could find to this drive was the fact that it was too conventional, too easy, and--well, too well known, even though our own good fortune in having undisputed possession of the road continued even here, very much to our surprise. There was nothing to indicate

that we were in anything so formal as a park.

We had intended to make stops of short or long duration as we felt inclined at several places which could be reached by short journeys from the road, camping for the night wherever night should catch us; but at the first halt, which proved to be by Horseshoe Falls, we made the discovery that we--and especially the two of us who had gone to the summit of Long's Peak the day before--preferred, strangely, to let Zowinajo do all of the work of transportation. Hoping that we should find the falls very near the road, we stopped the car and started up the dim trail in a rugged ravine. The water tumbled and splashed and was very pretty, but we did not actually reach the falls--or not, at any rate, to our certain knowledge, though we had become so skeptical about much-advertised spots that we decided we may have seen it without recognising it. With some reluctance we abandoned the attempt to reach it, and started out again along the peerless Fall River Road.

This road is one that had tempted us from the beginning in spite of its fame, for never had we heard a report of it that lacked interest. We had been warned, however, of the dangerous hair-pin curves and narrow ledges, and one friend had pleaded with us, with tears in her eyes, not to attempt to drive over it. As we expected, there was nothing dangerous, if one were only careful--as we considered we always were. The road climbed ever up and up, one terrace almost directly above another, and one broken-backed curve following

another in quick succession. And always the noisy little river sang in the pines below us. Ahead, sometimes miles away, we could see our road, a white thread clinging dizzily to the mountain side. Again and again we stopped at the most entrancing spots and let the glory of it all flood our beings.

The best known place was Chasm Falls, in which, after our experience at Horseshoe Falls, we felt little interest, though John and I, at least, were determined to investigate it. Fortunately, it was very near the road; and it proved to be an exquisite waterfall, dashing in a veil of white through a solid rock gorge. Just above a small rustic bridge which had been built from rock to rock, the force of the water had beaten out a great black concave in the rock, and had then made a dash back toward the opposite side with the same fell intention, but with less success.

After leaving Chasm Falls, we trustingly expected to find sign-boards telling us where to turn off to reach Iceberg Lake, Specimen Mountain, and other nearby points which we had hoped to see; and hence had made no inquiries about their approach. But whether there were any such signs or whether we were so absorbed in what we did see as to overlook them will ever be a mystery to us. We were so entirely overwhelmed by the grandeur about us, however, that we could harbor no regret even at not recognizing Specimen Mountain, but went on and on, and up and



A snowy range seen from Milner Pass

up, into more and more extensive snow fields and new mountain ranges.

"Stop a moment," Zona called out suddenly, as we turned a curve in view of a high peak directly across the deep valley from us, and as, with much ado, she focussed the field-glasses.

"What is it?" the rest of us demanded, alert with curiosity.

"I think I see a bear," she eventually announced, her voice trembling with emotion. "See, on the very top of that mountain! Doesn't that look like a bear to you?"

"Are you talking about that black rock?" John asked sarcastically. "It does not take field glasses to know that that is not a bear."

Since early that morning when a deer had walked up within a few feet of us and intently watched us eating breakfast, we had been seeing wild animals in every unusual object along the way, but this bear of Zona's was the most far-fetched.

Almost before we knew it, even though many joyful hours had elapsed, we found ourselves on the tip-top of the Continental Divide, on the new road over Milner Pass. On every side lay deep snow banks, often fantastically shaped, as far as our vision could reach, and magnificent views not only back down the length of the Fall River valley, but ahead to a new snow-clad range not far away but across another deep valley. In this new valley there



On the crest of the continent at Milner Pass

ran a serpentine stream, visible for miles and miles, along the banks of which grew the greenest of grass and the darkest of pine and spruce trees.

The road had not yet been sufficiently worked and in places, particularly near the top of the Pass, was slushy, rough and narrow. It gave one a sensation of thrill, delightful after it was past, to have a portion of the crumbly soil on the outside of the sharp edge cave off and roll frantically down the mountain side. I dared not look at my passengers, as I feared their paleness might upset me. However, only once did they give voice to any alarm; and that was where we found the newly-worked road in an unusually treacherous condition from the melting snow. Fragments of the cliff above had tumbled in heaps at the inside of the road, and in order to pass I was obliged to drive to the extreme edge of the embankment. The valley lay hundreds of feet straight below us, but I did not look at it; and after passing safely, I took the word of the others that I had allowed at least an inch on the outside of the road. At other places the road had been recently cut through snow banks which stood higher at the sides of the road than the car itself. But after we had passed the highest portion, the road was not only good but extremely picturesque as it wound breathlessly down.

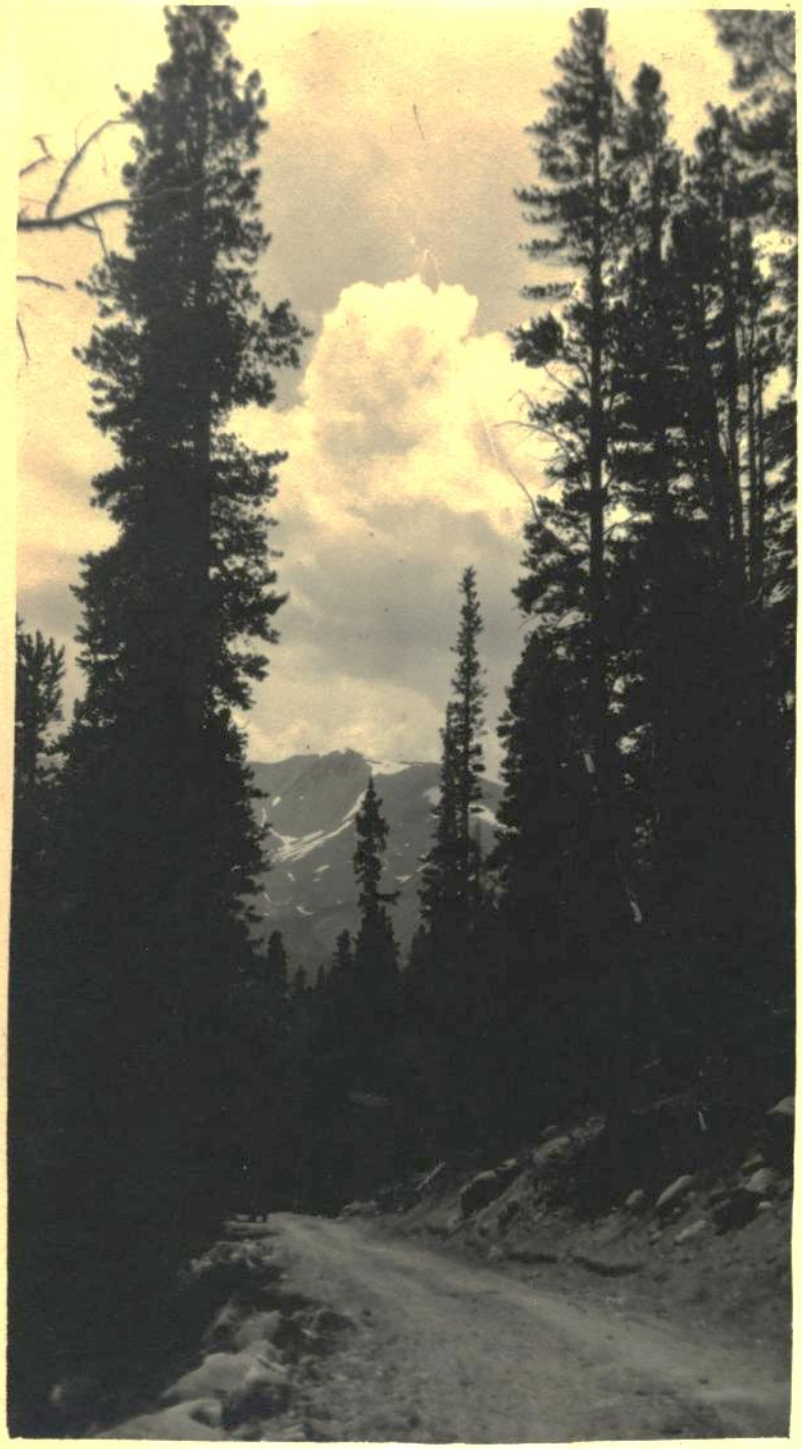
Before we reached the valley below us, we were obliged to make the most precipitous descent that we had yet seen, punctuated by the most abrupt, the most hazard-

Grand Lake

ous, and the most numerous curves. Soon we found ourselves in the green valley, through which we must drive several miles before reaching Grand Lake. Here again we found some almost impassable sections of road, which will, however, be very beautiful when improved, for it wound through a charming valley and into the densest forests. But even such unpractical lovers of the open as we were looked forward at that time to a good road, regardless of beauty.

We reached Grand Lake by dark and camped there until the following afternoon in a dense pine forest beside the river. It was interesting to meet the source of the river that we had seen in so many different places along our way, first as it dashed for fifteen miles through Glenwood Canyon, later as it ran, apparently calmly, half a mile below us through Gore Canyon, and again and again as our pathways crossed. Finally, this same river reaches Grand Canyon in Arizona. Would that we could have seen every mile of its length from Grand Lake to Grand Canyon!

The next night our camp was near Hot Sulphur Springs in an aspen grove, wherein we found many a lovely columbine, exquisite in its delicate lavender and white dress, and whence we proceeded the following day over the same route that we had travelled no less than a week before. The difference in the weather was remarkable, for instead of the cold and rain from which we had suffered on the previous occasion, we now reveled in days that were so bright and sunny as to feel uncomfortably warm even to us



A riste through the pines

Texans. The country itself appeared distinctly different. Before reaching the densely forested section our road led us beside the most marvelous fields of wild flowers, refreshed after the rain and gleaming brilliantly in the sunshine.

At last we were again ascending Berthoud Pass, unrecognisable in the different light. The lovely stream and the pine trees alone were the same, for new mountains appeared everywhere, new snow banks, and new canyons. The motor, instead of freezing, became overheated, not at all surprisingly, forcing us to stop for water continually. But one experience was altogether unforeseen. About noon, as we neared a sharp curve, a car blocked the way ahead of us. Naturally John was out at once and had run ahead to investigate--and just as naturally forgot for some time to return and report to the rest of us. In the meantime one car after another came from behind and in turn was obliged to stop also. In each case the men in the car went ahead--and forgot to return. If it had not been for the fiery heat, our curiosity would not have permitted us to sit there so martyr-like, propped up with rocks behind the wheels to keep us from rolling for thirteen miles back down the mountain-side. At last our informants returned, and shortly after, a shrill whistle blew, and the procession started forward. The cause of the trouble was a huge steam shovel that was attempting to cross the pass in its snail-like fashion, blocking the traffic each



Perfect specimens of pines on Berthoud Pass

time it moved forward from one widened place to the next. It was so big and clumsy that even then there was the most meagre space left for others to pass, always, it goes without saying, on the outside of the road.

Were we altogether glad that we had made this second trip over Berthoud Pass? There is no denying that it is an enchanting climb; but it is not so enchanting as we had expected it to be from the veiled impression we had received through the haziness of a rainy day. So much had been left to our imagination that it had run wild, causing us to expect Goodness-knows-what wonders, which we should always have firmly believed existed, had we not brought ourselves back to be disillusioned. It was a great pity. Our one consolation was that the change in our plans had made it possible for us to see the marvelous country about Milner Pass, which we should otherwise have missed altogether. That crossing of the Continental Divide is something to be lived over again and again as long as memory lasts.

COLORADA SPRINGS



looking down upon a few of the curves on the Pike's Peak Highway.

CHAPTER XI

COLARADO SPRINGS

Ute Pass--Pike's Peak--William's Canyon--Cave of the Winds--Seven Falls--The Garden of the Gods.

For two days after crossing Berthoud Pass the greater part of our traveling was of the kind that the vast majority of people prefer--civilized, advertised, popular, and easy. I do not mean to belittle Denver or Colorado Springs in any way; they simply did not furnish the proper setting for the type of vacation that we sought, even though we had delightful experiences in both places, including the marvelous drive from Colorado Springs to the top of Pike's Peak.

We had not intended driving up Pike's Peak, but the nearer we approached it, the more tempted we were; and after spending one night in rosy-hued Ute Pass, started early in the morning on our eighteen-mile climb over "the highest motor road in the world." It was spectacular in the extreme, but, I am obliged to admit, held, in our minds at least, a mere fraction of interest and beauty as



Through the snowbanks on Pike's Peak

compared with many other places in which we had gloried. Still, there were the sublime distant views over the surrounding mountains and across the great plains to be had nowhere else; there was the sudden drop in the temperature to be experienced so quickly on no other drive in the world; and there were the nearest to perpendicular grades, the most curves, and the most perfectly built road that can be imagined. It was an experience well worth having. Zowinajo had a great time struggling around some of the steepest corners and must needs be rested and cooled at frequent intervals, but otherwise moved blithely ahead as if she were accustomed to such traveling--and truthfully she should be accustomed to meeting almost any emergency at this stage in her strenuous career.

There are few features of Pike's Peak of which so much has not been made that every child who can read does not know of them; but I must admit that I had never heard of the Bottomless Pit. This is a gorge not far from the summit, a great cavern along the upper edge of which the road curves, and across and below which the city of Colorado Springs can be seen miles away. It furnishes a truly magnificent outlook. Again, the great rockiness of the mountain was a decided surprise to me. Mammoth beautifully colored boulder fields extend on all sides for miles and miles, and down one particular valley a series of big lakes lie, serenely calm. So early in the season was it when we were there that a great quantity

of snow still remained, banks of which had been recently cut through in order to open the road for the season's travel. Merely for the novelty of it, John filled the radiator at times with the crisp, clean snow.

Aside from the drive to Pike's Peak there were few places near Colorado Springs that we cared to visit again except for the educational advantage to our youthful Freshman--although this may sound like the proverbial parent's excuse for seeing the circus. William's Canyon is always beautiful though much too short, and Seven Falls in South Cheyenne Canyon is a real wonder; but I was delighted to find that John's opinion of the Garden of the Gods coincided with mine exactly.

"I can not see anything in this but a few scattered rocks," he commented as we drove through.

"But," argued Zona, "You must have imagination in order to see the wonders in these fantastic formations."

"It is such a strain on the imagination," he promptly answered, "especially when there are so many hundreds of places around this country that meet the imagination as least half-way."

A DAY OF ENCHANTMENT

CHAPTER XII

A DAY OF ENCHANTMENT FROM COLORADO SPRINGS TO CANON CITY

Green Mountain Falls--Petrified Forest--Cripple Creek--
Phantom Canyon--The Shelf Road.

Between Colorado Springs and Canon City, which was to be the grand finale of our trip before starting homeward across the plains, we had selected the most interesting route that we could find. Instead of taking the shortest and no doubt the best road, which leads through the low lands, we had planned to start northward to Divide, to go from there through the busy mining center about Cripple Creek, and thence southward to Canon City by way of the marvelous Phantom Canyon, which stood preeminent in our expectations. With this plan firmly fixed we started out.

The first short detour that we made was in Green Mountain Falls, a station only a few miles from Colorado Springs. From the road we caught a glimpse of a waterfall high up in a densely timbered mountain, and finding a road

leading in that direction, we followed it, soon finding ourselves in an enchanting spot at the foot of the falls. It cast a charm over us, causing us for at least the hundredth time since leaving home to long for several months to spend at this one spot alone.

The next section of this day's trip was equally charming, and entirely different from any country through which we had been. Always with Pike's Peak in the background we drove through a beautiful, rolling meadow land, covered over with flaming fields of flowers bordered with exquisitely formed pine trees. It looked for miles and miles like a carefully planned landscape garden. The flowers were of the most delicate as well as luxuriant varieties, millions and millions of them waving on their tall, fragile stalks in the breeze.

And then the scene changed again. We discovered at a cross-road that by going a few miles out of the way we could see a petrified forest, and as this would be a unique experience to all of us, we did not hesitate to welcome it. We found it exceedingly interesting. Many huge stumps of giant Redwood trees had been unearthed, some as much as eighteen feet in diameter, and all looking like marble, while showing every minutest detail of the fibre of the wood.

From the Petrified Forest to Cripple Creek we found still a different kind of scenery. We had seen rocks and more rocks everywhere we went, but those here were of an

unusual color and the most unusual shapes. Among the many peaks, formed apparently of solid rock of a pinkish gray tone, canyons of all sizes met each other.

"The Garden of the Gods can not hold a candle to this," John exclaimed, and we all agreed with him.

Soon we began seeing small mines in the mountain sides, which reached more extensive proportions the nearer we came to Cripple Creek; but in our ignorance of mining they meant little to us. Already we were feeling the keenest anticipation in approaching Phantom Canyon, which lay a short distance past Cripple Creek. We saw little of superficial interest in the town itself and did not tarry there, stopping only long enough to inquire about the road to the canyon.

"Phantom Canyon?" the man whom we asked repeated after us. "Why, you can not go there--it is all gone."

"Gone? I do not understand," I answered. "And why can't we go there?" I was so amazed that I must have spoken almost incoherently.

"All washed away--the Pueblo flood," he answered laconically.

"But surely the road is there. Can't we even see it?"

"Oh, no," he patiently explained. "The road is gone, too. Everything is gone. There is not a canyon any more."

I tried to think, swallowing my disappointment.

"Well then, how can we get to Canon City? Or can we go there?"

"Let me see. Yes, you can get there, if you can make it over the Shelf Road. It is not a regular automobile road, but the stage has been going over it. But you want to be careful. It is dreadfully rough and sometimes the cliff below you drops straight down for a thousand feet to the river. Look out for people coming, as there are not many turnouts. Still you have the inside of the road at the highest place."

"It must be rather pretty in there," I ventured.

"Oh, wonderful scenery," he answered at once. "Wonderful--if the road were only improved."

After listening then to directions for finding this road, we started out, entirely upset over the discovery of Phantom Canyon's doom, but keenly anticipating though rather dreading the road ahead of us.

We soon found ourselves in a tremendous rocky canyon, through which ran a tiny stream and our unimproved, narrow road. We thought that we had seen everything in the canyon category before, but here was something different, something wilder and bigger than anything we had dreamed of. We followed the creek-bed for so many miles that we had begun to think that our informant had exaggerated about the danger, when gradually we began rising. To our dismay we crossed the stream on one flimsy little wooden bridge after another which were never meant for heavy loads. So numerous were they that frequently we

could see more than one ahead of us at the same time, in spite of the numerous curves of the canyon. For long distances there was no possibility of passing anyone had we met them, though in this respect we were for some time fortunate.

We had risen to a tremulous height when suddenly around a curve we did come face to face with another car--and we were on the outside of the road! Both cars at once came to a dead halt, the other one clinging to the side next the cliff. Apparently without hesitating John started us forward again. From my position beside him I could see nothing on the outside but space. The occupants of the other car seemed to be enjoying everything supremely, and one very charming woman exclaimed as we met,

"Think of it--New Jersey and Texas meeting in this wild spot!"

I was on the verge of replying, but it was at that moment that we moved forward, and to this day, I do not know what I said. I do remember, however, hearing her say in answer to someone's inquiry about the road,

"It is not so bad, and you have the most wonderful treat ahead of you."

After a few more miles we reached the highest part of the road--not quite a thousand feet above the river, perhaps, but high enough--from which we had an astounding view of the most chaotic and the rockiest gorge that can

be imagined. It was simply stupendous, and absolutely indescribable. And to think that we had never heard of it! We felt sure it must have a name, but upon making inquiries later found that it was not known even in the immediate neighborhood.

"This country is full of such canyons," someone told us. "We do not know them apart."

Again we wondered whether we had missed much after all by not following our original plan, for even though Phantom Canyon may have had some features of its own to rival this one in interest, it is not possible for it to have been any more tremendous and thrilling, albeit well-nigh terrifying, than this wild, unknown chasm of ours.

THE ROYAL GORGE

CHAPTER XIII

THE ROYAL GORGE

Tunnel Drive--The Royal Gorge--Skyline Drive--Pueblo--Raton Pass.

Canyon City had been from the start the last point of any particular interest that we expected to visit, but our failure to see Phantom Canyon had robbed us of a large part of our zest in stopping there. Only three places remained for us to see, the Tunnel Drive, the Skyline Drive, and the Royal Gorge.

We had found no tunnels at all on our trip and expected to surprise a few thrills here, but thrills sometimes refuse to be surprised at the proper moment. Whether we were already satiated with scenery, or whether the place really was less interesting that the advertisements had led us to believe it was, we felt a chill disappointment in the Tunnel Drive. It is true the road led, rather picturesquely, hundreds of feet above the

river, along a narrow ledge on the face of the cliff and through three tunnels cut through the solid rock, one of them at least being long enough for us to be obliged to turn on our lights in order to see the road. We were still hopeful of reaching something unexpected when we came to the end of the road and had to turn back. This turning came very near affording us all the thrills that we wanted, as it was necessary for us to back Zowinajo several times and then move forward a few inches each time, driving each time to the very brink of the precipice. It was as bad as the turning on the Eyebrow Road.

"I suppose even the Royal Gorge will turn out to be nothing at all," John predicted gloomily. And on our way toward it we were inclined to agree with him, for everything we had read about it had said that the city stood at the mouth of the gorge, and that Tunnel Drive ran into it; and although for ten miles we enjoyed a very pretty drive into a mountainous country--in plain view at one spot of Pike's Peak fifty miles away--we saw nothing very gorgeous or spectacular. Suddenly, however, we found ourselves at the end of the road, and by walking a few feet could look down into a mighty abyss.

We could not sanely have expected anything more awesome or more magnificent. It made one think of the irreverant but artless person who, upon seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time, exclaimed, "Golly, what a gulley!" We spent only a few hours there, climbing

over the rocks and peering from the most isolated promontories down into the sublime depths of the chasm half a mile below us, though we longed for time to follow the trail down into the canyon itself, a distance, we were told, of fifteen miles.

On our way back to the town our road led over the much-talked-of Skyline Drive, a three-mile section of road that had been built by convicts along the top of a narrow ridge, from both sides of which one can look down for hundreds of feet. We felt as if we were flying through the air. From one side we could see across the mountain tops and over the road that we had traveled earlier in the day, and from the other across great stretches of plains, thickly covered in the immediate neighborhood with flourishing orchards. It was a very pretty drive, and one of which any town might well be proud.

Before leaving the subject of Colorado altogether, I must mention our passing through the doomed city of Pueblo. Only six weeks before had occurred the tragic flood that had been so disastrous to it, as to much of the surrounding country. For a large part of our trip, as I have mentioned from time to time, we had seen evidences of this same flood, as far north as Manitou, where many houses were wrecked; through the San Luis valley, where many bridges were washed away; and through much of New Mexico. At places between Canon City and Pueblo we

were obliged to make slight detours where the original road had been entirely washed away, and there were evidences everywhere of sections of country having been flooded by steams that were normally dry. But none of this compared with the tragic aspect of the fated city itself. Debris was still heaped dismally about over many squares together, small sections of demolished houses were left standing, and many buildings completely upset. The water-mark showed everywhere that the water had stood from ten to fifteen feet deep. Signs of reconstruction work were in evidence, though very much was yet to be done.

For the greater part of two days after leaving Canon City, we were in sight of the snow-covered mountains. Just as we had circled around Long's Peak from the time we left our camp at its foot until we reached Pike's Peak, so we now circled around Pike's Peak from the time we left Colorado Springs until we were as far south as Trinidad. When we could no longer see either one of our guiding stars, we knew without doubt that we were leaving Colorado. Our last view of the snow-dappled peaks was of those in the Sangre de Christo range in New Mexico, over which we had gone on our way northward from Taos several weeks earlier. It was with a sharp pang of regret that we realized, as we crossed Raton Pass, that we were leaving the mountains behind us.

HOMEWARD

CHAPTER XIV

HOMEWARD

The Panhandle--Dead Man's Hole--Llano River.

From Canon City in Colorado to Plainview on the plains of Texas, it is only about four hundred and fifty miles, but judging from the short distances we had intentionally covered hitherto, we fully expected to spend at least four days traveling this distance. But three days proved to be quite sufficient for it, for the roads were good, and after we had reached the open plains, there was no object in tarrying.

So much has been said and imagined in a deprecatory way about the "desert" lands that I must speak a word in their defence. Even I, who had had only the most glorious experiences of the plains in west Texas, felt a shiver of dread in approaching the Panhandle in mid-summer after spending several weeks in a cool climate. I expected to find as we crossed the northeast corner of New Mexico and the northwestern part of Texas a parched, sandy, bare

country and nothing more. Do not think that that was the case, for it was not. There was the infinitely long stretches, of course, but they were stretches of the greenest green, dappled with immense fields of solid color, the most extravagantly profuse and brilliant wild flowers. It was as thrilling as any mountain height. When we found ourselves, finally, far from all fences, our road leading over the vast flowered plains among herds of lovely cattle, our joy was complete.

As we were nearing Plainview, we had the greatest fright of experience. For some time one of our wheels had suffered with loose spokes, as evidenced by the most doleful moaning, but none of us had felt any great concern about our safety, with the possible exception of Miss Allen, who sat over the wheel in question. We were giving Zowinajo a loose rein over an excellent road, when suddenly something metallic struck the hard road with a ring. Instantly Miss Allen was on her feet and leaning out of the car.

"Stop, stop," she screamed. "We are slinging spokes all down the road."

We stopped--"and time to stop," as John said later, "if we were 'slinging spokes down the road'." We were all out at once, examining the wheel, from which we could not find even one spoke missing. A small, insignificant piece of iron had fallen out of the car, causing all of the alarm.

We spent one day visiting in Plainview, and for one day after leaving there until we were nearing San Angelo, we were forced to think a great deal about, though we did not actually suffer with, the heat. The sun never beat with such fury, and our khaki suits were none too cool; and when the second day proved to be a cloudy one, we were exceedingly thankful. It even rained a little, and so refreshing did we find the resulting coolness that we did not mind the slippery condition of the road.

But as we were nearing the state sanitarium at Carlsbad, where the road did not look unusually slippery, John began having much ado keeping Zowinajo from pitching us all into the ditch beside the road. Suddenly, as we started slowly down a hill, we began to slip. Every one gasped at once, but the gasping did no good. As we awaited results, Zowinajo slowly turned round and round, and only when she was facing directly up the hill did she stop! It was a miracle that we and all of our belongings were not thrown bodily overboard. As soon as the danger was past we had a good laugh, declaring that we had not been frightened at all.

"I do not see anything in a little skidding to be scared about," John asserted boldly, thus centering attention upon himself. Simultaneously, the three of us exclaimed, "Look how pale he is!" There was no denying facts, and he said no more about the insignificance of skidding.

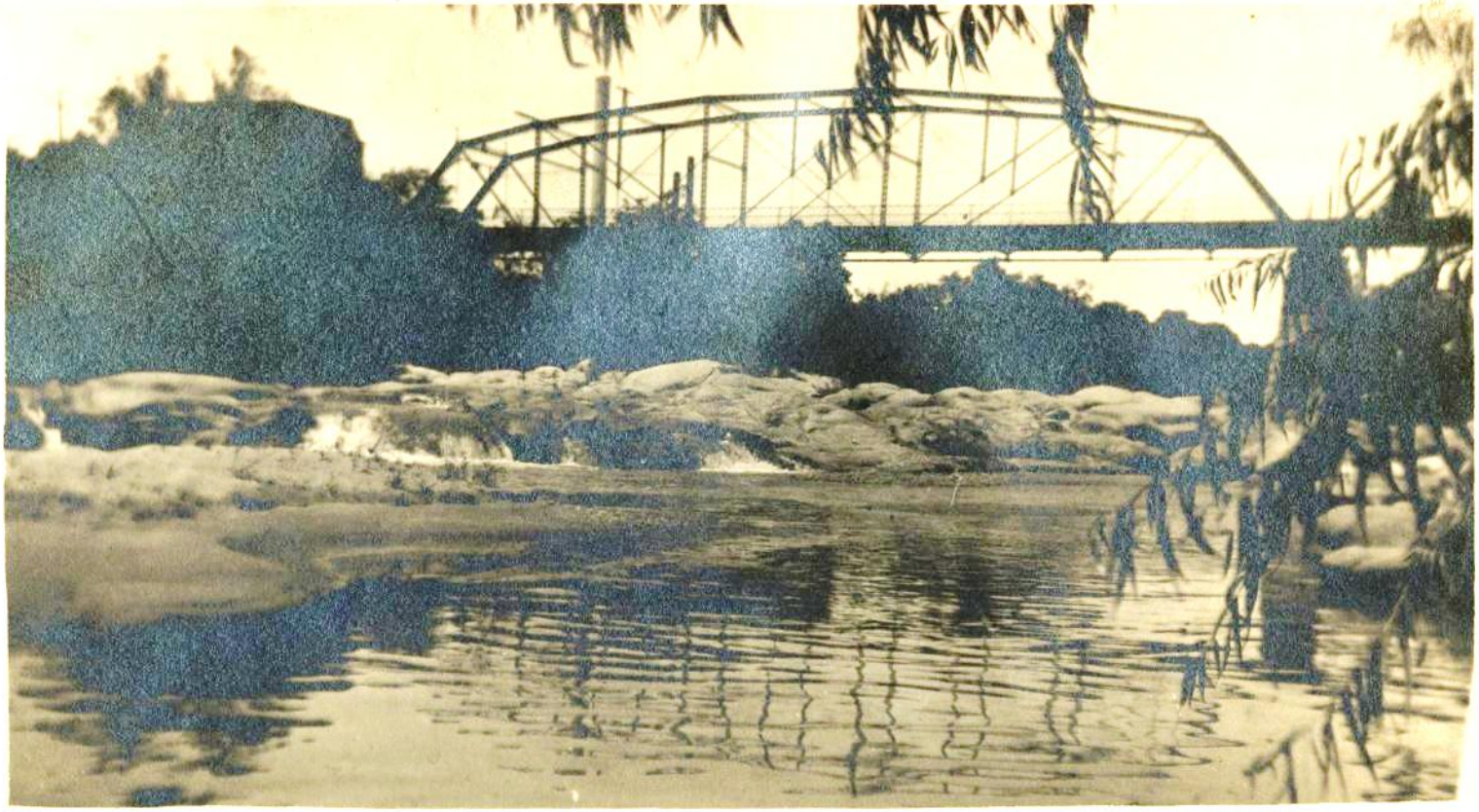
It was some time before a vestige of color finally crept into his face.

It was not long until we began to realize that the end of our journey was approaching much too rapidly. All being well, we should reach Austin by noon the next day.

"Why can't we put it off at least half a day?" I suggested. "Only twelve miles off the Fredericksburg Road, which we can take from Mason as well as not, there is Dead Man's Hole, as enchanting and as cool a spot as any we have seen, where we could spend many a thrilling hour."

The others needed no coaxing, for they had heard this wonderful place eulogized before by the few people who knew of its existence. Near the Pedernales River forty miles from Austin lies this most isolated, most lost-to-the-world phenomenon that I have ever run across. A great concave has been hollowed out far below the surrounding country by unknown geological forces, and from the upper rim hang magnificent, exquisitely colored stalactites, underneath which masses of ferns cling in tropical luxuriance. In this deep hole there is an apparently bottomless lake of the bluest water, fed by a lovely waterfall on one side and dammed on the other by the roots of giant cypress trees. It is no wonder that we were tempted to pay it a visit.

But our plans did not work out precisely in that way. After leaving San Angelo, we found the roads in



The Llano River

such bad condition as the result of the heavy rains that had played havoc with us six weeks before, that the close of day found us still much over a hundred miles from home. And then someone had another inspiration to offer. There was a good prospect of a clear full moon and a cooling breeze, and by travelling all night we could reach home early the next morning. John and I at once volunteered to take two-hour shifts at driving, and Miss Allen began planning a midnight stop for a second supper. This would mean going the shortest way and omitting Dead Man's Hole, but it would eliminate one more day's travel in the heat, and would be a fitting end to our gypsy trip.

But again Fate was not extending her favors to us. About eleven o'clock, as conversation was beginning to lag, a little knocking sound made itself heard.

"That sounds familiar," I said, with misgiving in my heart. "We had better investigate."

John got out and looked, and his verdict was "Guilty": we had a broken spring. Fortunately we were near a good camping place on the banks of the Llano River, and there we stayed until morning.

We hoped to have a new spring put in with little delay when we should reach Llano, but found that one was not to be had there at any price; and there was nothing for us to do but wait while the old one was repaired. The day was a typical midsummer one instead of one of the

rare cool ones. What in the world were we to do to pass the time away? It was small consolation to think that had we not changed our route we might almost have been by that time at Dead Man's Hole. However, we made inquiries at once about the swimming possibilities, and this time fortune smiled upon us, for only a few steps away on the Llano River, a beautiful stream, there was a made-to-order beach waiting for us. There we spent as much of the cloudless day as we dared, and finally by the middle of the afternoon, Zowinajo was able to start on.

We hoped still to reach Austin, one hundred miles away, by sundown, but the roads did not improve, and before we did arrive the moon was shining again. Strangely our spirits sank as we neared the end of our never-to-be-forgotten journey.

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