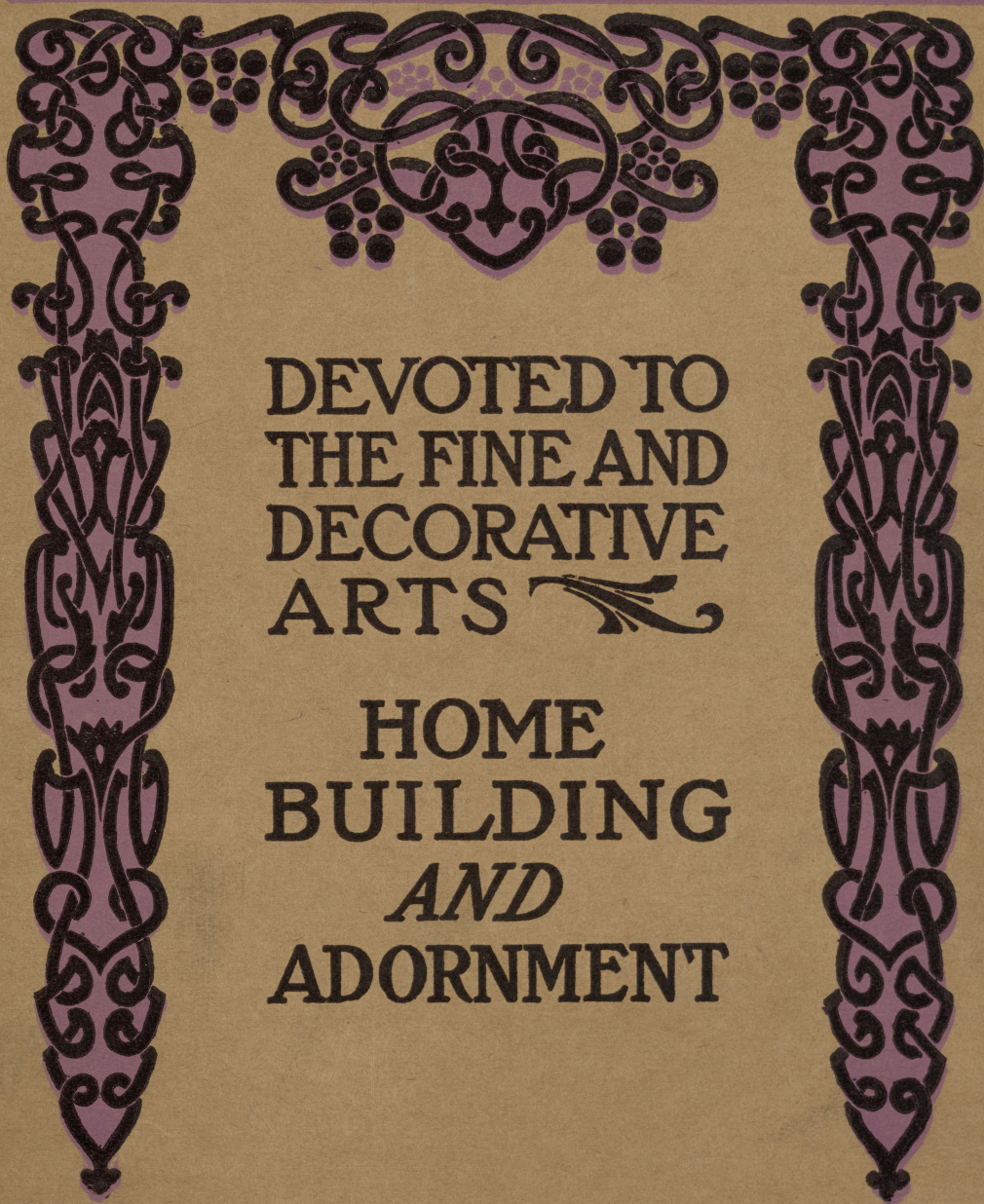


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"A Pilgrimage to the Artist's Paradise" 6
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Fine Arts Journal



DEVOTED TO
THE FINE AND
DECORATIVE
ARTS 

HOME
BUILDING
AND
ADORNMENT

Written for the Fine Arts Journal by
Nina Spalding Stevens

70-

A Little Journey

from New York
to the

Grand Canyon

of Arizona

by five artists
and their friends,
November nineteen ten

Written by *Nina Spalding Stevens*
Assistant Director Toledo Art Museum
Illustrated from photos and sketches
Printed only for private distribution



THE GRAND CANYON OF ARIZONA
By THOMAS MORAN

Thomas
Moran
Viewing
The
Grand
Canyon
of
Arizona



Preparatory
to
Placing on
Canvas
Another
Conception
of Its
Matchless
Beauty

Pilgrimage to the Artist's Paradise

By NINA SPALDING STEVENS

OUT from Salt Lake City, once there rode a little band of horsemen whose way lay to the southwest across mountain passes, through pine forests, and over broad plateaus. They descended into rocky valleys and crossed arid deserts. Both man and beast endured hardships and suffering with dogged patience, which became courage as their perils grew. For days they saw nothing but great gray stretches of sage-covered mesa until a sudden meeting with a band of roving Indians, filled with danger though it was, became an event almost welcome in the monotony. They were in saddle from dawn until sunset, so weary and worn with travel that even the bears which prowled about the camp at night could not disturb their sleep, nor yet the laughing and sobbing of the hysterical coyote.

There were no cliffs nor crags rising against the sky to warn them that the end

of their trail had been reached. No hint of the hidden beauty or grandeur of the Canyon rose above the rim, when suddenly, bathed in the sunset light, there lay before them a scene of such unreality, of such surpassing beauty, that they seemed at last to stand face to face with God and Eternity.

To one at least in this little party, it was like a vision of the world beyond; for thus it was that Thomas Moran first saw the Grand Canyon of Arizona. Looking across the awful chasm to where strange and mystic forms lift themselves into the opalescent light, it was as though a rainbow had burst and spread its coruscations upon them. The sublime spectacle lifted the soul of the young artist into a sort of ecstasy which he, in turn, has given to the world through the interpretation of his brush.

Thirty-seven years later, in November,



ARTISTS' PARTY ON BRIGHT ANGEL TRAIL, GRAND CANYON

—Photo Kolb Brothers, Grand Canyon

1910, Moran was again to view this phantom city of the gods, but under far different circumstances. Instead of long and weary rides over a hitherto unexplored country, he arrived at the door of the lux-

urious hotel perched upon the rim of the Canyon, in a private car, in the company of four brother artists of a younger generation. These had yet to receive what was perhaps the greatest sensation of their

lives, in their first sight of the infinite beauty of that chasm which the master artist with gold tipped brush, has painted in all the colors of paradise.

Never before had so large a group of serious artists made such a pilgrimage to the far west with the avowed intention of studying a given point of their own country, and thus will this visit to the Canyon become historical. On the evening of November 5th the party gathered in Chicago at a charming dinner given by Mr. R. R. Ricketts at the Union League Club, leaving later in a private car over the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway.

The five artists of the party were Thomas Moran, Elliott Daingerfield, Frederick Ballard Williams, DeWitt Parshall and Edward Potthast, men of radically different schools of painting, who would each translate the great scenes before them by the white light of their own temperaments. Mrs. Elliott Daingerfield, Mrs. DeWitt Parshall, Miss Ruth Moran, Mr. and Mrs. Giles Whiting, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Buek and Mr. Gustave H. Buek, all of New York, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Simpson of Chicago, and Mrs. George W. Stevens of Toledo, made up the rest of the party. To Mr. Gustave Buek, vice-president of the American Lithographic Company, is due the credit of suggesting and organizing the excursion. His enthusiasm and kindly tact were unvarying.

The days flew by like moments, each one filled with interest. Many of the party never had been farther west than Chicago and every new phase of the country was eagerly watched. There was much discussion, as was inevitable, of paint, technique, quality, juries and art museums. One subject started by Mr. Buek as a jest became a prolific source of argument.

"Well, what *is* Art?" he asked one morning when there seemed to be no chance of agreement. This became a by-word and never failed to bring its laugh.

The country at this time of the year was peculiarly beautiful. All of the more brilliantly colored leaves of autumn had fall-

en. The scrub oaks, which a few weeks before, had been glowing with crimson and old ivory, now were but masses of gray twigs which veiled the earth. The gray green sage-brush stretched to the far off horizon and white-faced cattle nibbled at the dry bunch grass which grew between. The little autumn flowers were reserved and delicate in their hues and all the landscape seemed to feel the restraining hand of a master. Small and symmetrical pine trees covered occasional slopes as though arranged by a landscape gardener. The prairie dogs all stood at attention, with military erectness, by the doors of their little homes, as the train passed. The ants had made, in miniature, small red cones which duplicated the greater volcanic mountains in the distance. The train passed through fringes of cottonwood trees and forests of juniper, making welcome stops at the artistic Santa Fe station hotels along the way.

At the foot of Bill Williams' mountain lies a small and innocuous town called Wil-



MR. POTTHAST SKETCHING AT INDIAN GARDEN ON BRIGHT ANGEL TRAIL



THOMAS MORAN AT HEAD OF THE TRAIL,
GRAND CANYON

liams. The same Williams which once vied with Bad-Man Town in iniquity, while in the distance rise the majestic San Francisco peaks, white with snow. Here the special car left the main line and continued its way to the Canyon, while the through train sped on to the coast.

After going across a beautiful country of cedars and juniper, the road led into the majestic Coconino forest, where grand and stately, green-plumed pines, set as precisely as though by the hand of man, opened long vistas on either side. The trunks seemed to have been but recently scraped by a forester; this red bark gave a feeling of peculiar lightness even to the depths of the darkest wood.

The party arrived at El Tovar hotel a few moments before sunset. They were

rapidly driven to Hopi Point, three miles beyond, from which is one of the most beautiful views of the Canyon. There was a most unusual sunset. The road lay through the forest; between the deep green of the pines, the sky along the horizon was as red as a pigeon-blood ruby; it was as though the sun shone through a stained glass window.

The artists were led to the rim with their eyes closed, that the vision might burst upon them for the first time in its entirety. All was still with the silence of infinity. This was a tremendous moment, one of the most impressive that life could hold. It was as though the earth had opened before them and heaven was spread at their feet. So unreal, so unearthly did it seem that one feared it might burst like



MR. DAINGERFIELD ON RIM OF CANYON
NEAR EL TOVAR



JOHN HANCE, THE PIONEER GUIDE, TELLING ONE OF HIS FAMOUS YARNS.

an iridescent bubble and vanish before one's gaze. This fear was never quite lost even in the days that followed, and awaking at night one ran to the window for the assurance of its reality. Slowly the color faded from the sky and the distant towers and domes changed from pink to blue, leaving the pinnacles alone crested

with light as though illumined from within. Great purple shadows gathered about their foundations. The awful depth became mysterious and terrifying and no sound was heard save the rushing of the wind through the pines and a far away murmur of the mighty rapids of the Colorado a mile below. No word was spoken

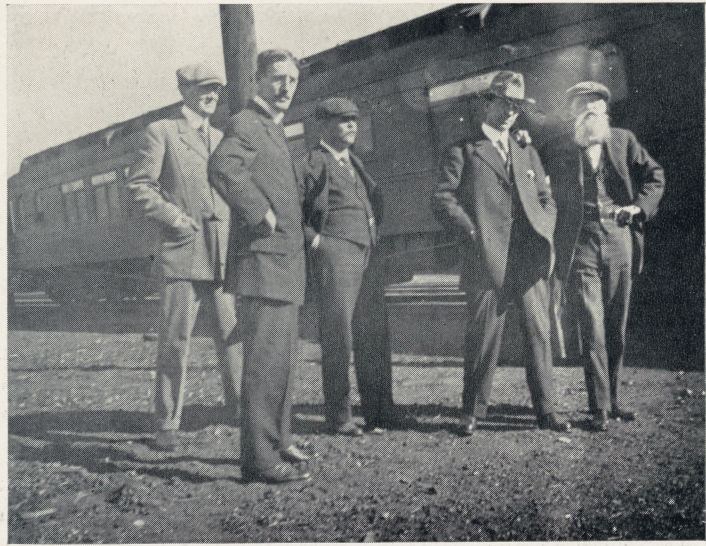


ARTISTS' PARTY AT HANCE'S CABIN, GRAND CANYON

on the homeward drive. It was like going from one world to another to enter the comfortable and luxurious Inn with its lights, its glowing fires and to hear again the voice of man in lightsome talk.

El Tovar is built of logs, which manner of building is peculiarly appropriate. The walls of the large room called the rendezvous, are of dark-stained logs held by mighty rafters. Pine knots blaze in a stone fireplace and great Indian jars filled with glowing branches of scrub oak decorate the room. Sitting around the fire after dinner and chattering about a hundred things of the world, it was hard to realize that just outside the door there lay sleeping that great calm spirit of the Canyon, awaiting that first touch of the sun to become sentient and alive with a personality which attracted and repelled, but fascinated always.

Sounds came from the Hopi House, just across the way, of Indians singing and dancing, sounds which lured one within the stone walls of this miniature Indian village. After bumping one's head on the low doorway, one found oneself in the heart of a family of Navajos, taciturn and pessimistic, wearing their blankets and glancing up with never a smile into the faces of their visitors. Baby hands were weaving with the same skill as their elders and baby eyes looked up with the same suspicion. Farther on in this adobe-lined pueblo, the pleasant and friendly Hopis were holding their lit-



THE FIVE ARTISTS EN ROUTE TO THE GRAND CANYON



ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD SKETCHING AT YAVAPAI POINT

tle vaudeville while the people from the hotel sat around them in a circle. The women had sweet faces and the men looked like nice overgrown Buster Browns, with their shining black cropped hair and all in the picturesque costume of their race. It was interesting to puzzle out the symbolism of the altar in their little place of worship. The sun and the moon, rain and lightning were easily distinguished and the collection of Indian and Mexican handiwork was



NAVAJO INDIANS ON RIM OF GRAND CANYON



F. BALLARD WILLIAMS SKETCHING AT GRAND CANYON

most rare, and displayed artistic talent.

Everyone awakened at dawn with somewhat the same feeling that they had when children, waiting for Christmas morning. The painters were out making color notes for hours before breakfast. Mr. Daingerfield was sometimes silent and, sometimes, colorful adjectives came tumbling from his lips in a passion of appreciation. Words which in his moments of ecstasy came nearer to describing the emotions of the Can-

yon than the most finished efforts of authors and poets. What mysterious forms of beauty, invisible to the rest, peopled the Canyon for him! For Nature is to Daingerfield an embodied spirit.

That sunrise brought with it sensations which never could come twice in a lifetime. The first pale rose of the sky found its reflection on the peaks of these sunken mountains. Slowly it crept down into the heart of the Canyon, changing the shadows from blue to mauve and mauve to pink and then the orb above the rim painted the world in gold and all things born were ravished by the sun.

The days that followed were filled with joy. Everyone in the party was tense with excitement. The realization of the beauty was so much deeper than the appreciation of vastness, that the terror of space came only in one's dreams and proved that the sub-consciousness had known and understood the truth which the veil of beauty had hidden from the mind. To sit and watch

the changes of color and light from sunrise late into the moonlight night was a pleasure which angels might enjoy. The Canyon in the moonlight did not fall into a still white sleep, but dreamed wonderful dreams and the color transformed by the magic of the moon still came to one with a faint suggestion of the glories of the dawn. De Witt Parshall went quite moon-mad and wandered for hours upon the rim in the unearthly splendor of its rays.

In the summer of 1901, Thomas Moran, accompanied by George Inness, Jr., and George H. McCord, revisited the Canyon. Shortly afterwards he wrote an article on American Art and American Scenery in which he urges the painters of the east to go west and study that wonderful country. He writes:

"My chief desire is to call the attention of American landscape painters to the unlimited field for the exercise of their talents to be found in this enchanting southwestern country; a country flooded with color and picturesqueness, offering everything to inspire the artist, and stimulate him to the production of works of lasting interest and value. This Grand Canyon of Arizona, and all the country surrounding it, offers a new and comparatively untrodden field for pictorial interpretation, and only awaits the men of original thoughts and ideas to prove to their countrymen that we possess a land of beauty and grandeur with which no other can compare. The pastoral painter, the painter of picturesque genre, the imaginative and dramatic landscapist are here offered all that can delight the eye or stir the imagination and emotions!"

This pilgrimage then of the artists was the fulfillment of his desire and during those ten days the Canyon, displaying all of her emotions, glided from summer into the depths of winter. Storms came and filled the chasm with softest clouds, moving restlessly about the peaks of this submerged world, now veiling and now unclosing visions of infinite beauty.

On a misty morning arrived W. J. Locke, the author, creator of *Septimus* and *Paragot*. At the end of the second day, when the sun had not yet pierced the veil of mist, and he had to leave without seeing the Canyon in its full glory, he said, appreciative of even this privilege, "I was fortunate enough to see the Canyon first in fog, and, when the gray of it had lifted, to see it in storm."

One beautiful drive was taken to Grand

View Point where the party stayed at Pete Berry's ranch. He is one of the few remaining westerners of the early type. When Miss Moran first saw Pete, it was some years ago and he was younger and straighter, with keen blue eyes which held the faraway look of those accustomed to great level spaces. One sees this expression in the eyes of seamen and of men who live on the prairie. It was on the train where first she saw him, dressed in his best black cutaway, which when unbuttoned to pull out a handful of gold with which to pay the conductor, disclosed a cartridge belt bristling with guns. He was on his way to Williams to find a photographer who had slandered him. The photographer was a bit unwise; for Pete already had killed a man who had shot his brother.

The way to Grand View Point through the Coconino forest was like driving through some dignified English estate. The great red pines, the pinyon pines, junipers and cedars, the pungent cincona, with its dainty wild rose blossom and the multi-colored rocks peeping through the gray of the sage on either side of the road, made a way of infinite variety.

The view from the point is one of the most glorious of the whole length of the river, for there, across the awful space beyond the northern rim, lies the painted desert. So far, so still and so glowing with supernatural splendor that all the appreciation of a lifetime seemed to gather into one moment, in a mighty effort to comprehend the miracle spread before the eyes. One would not have been surprised to have seen Fra Angelico's angels drifting about in the golden light. The writer wept, much to her chagrin at the time; but later, as she thinks of that moment, it is with pride rather than shame of her tears.

The painters worked all day and sometimes half the night, wandering far upon the rim in search of ivory cliffs, characteristic trees and bits of composition. Mr. Williams painted constantly, as his time was

shorter than the rest and in his tiny sketches, one felt all the majesty of space. Mr. Potthast worked indefatigably with brush and pencil, and took back numerous interesting sketches. Mr. Moran also was moved by the same spirit and again painted the Canyon in a mist.

On stormy days there was a perfectly appointed studio in which to work, fitted up for the use of artists who might chance to come to the Canyon. After the clouds had lifted and the sun was shining once more, the party assembled, in riding array, to take "The Trail to Those Below." There was much amusement and much snapping of cameras in the little corral beside the hotel at the mounting of the mules. Pete and Johnny, two wise little animals whose packs were larger than themselves, led the way down the Bright Angel Trail, looking back occasionally to see that the long line of riders were following properly. The descent seemed perilous or safe as one had fear or confidence, and while some of the party rode down with joy, to others the trip meant heroism. The guides were watchful, the mules sure of foot and the plateau was reached without mishap. For two hours the way lay along the side of a creamy cliff and some one cried with wonder, "Oh! how strange, the Canyon is all yellow and white." But five hundred feet below the rim, the Canyon began to be all red, in an infinite variety of shades and hues, and, looking up, the vast golden rocks became but as the foam upon the crest of the sea. The plateau was soft with sage brush and although the snow still covered the ground about the hotel, here was found a small, but fertile garden, with roses and chrysanthemums blooming luxuriantly under vivid green trees.

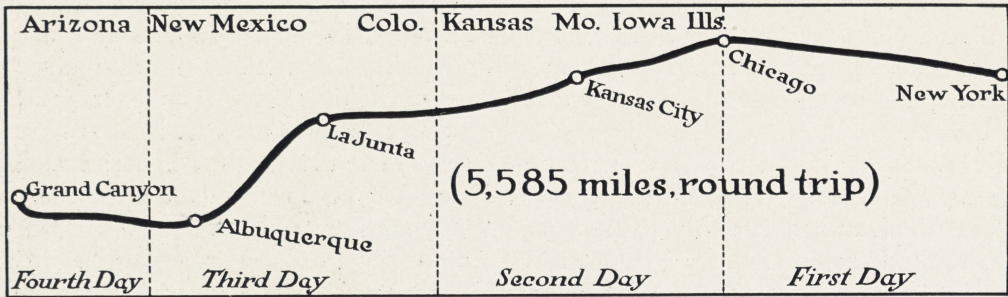
John Hance, one of the most unique characters of the west, was waiting at the foot of the trail with a greeting. Thirty years ago John Hance came upon the Canyon in a prospecting tour and there he has

remained ever since, exploring its length and breadth and loving every moment of it. His stories of the snakes that swallowed each other, and of the fish, so long that it took thirty-five minutes to pass a given point of the river, have become classics. He, himself, acknowledges that he is the greatest pioneer, guide and liar of Arizona. Cap. Hance believes in himself and the Canyon. His home in summer is in a log cabin on the rim, but when the snow flies, he pitches his tent on the warmer level below.

At this Indian garden, as it is called, the artists were left to work while the rest of the party pushed on the river through great gorges and black iridescent rocks that looked as though set with myriads of infinitesimal and shining gems. Rocks that reflected the blue of the sky or lay sullenly in the shadow of the cliffs. Down trails so steep that it was not safe to remain mounted. The great granite cliffs gathered in tragic masses and seemed to close together overhead in an effort to shut out the happy light of the sky. They brooded over the wild, brown stream which rushed dramatically through the slit it had torn for itself in the solid rock. Here where death had set its seal and human life itself seemed frivolous and inconsequent, suddenly above the river fluttered a great tawny butterfly. A symbol of life in this chasm of death.

The party slept that night in the moonlit valley. Great fortresses and Moorish palaces were silhouetted against the sky on either side, the architecture of the gods. The moonlight fell across the cliffs, leaving great shadows black and impenetrable, and touched the walls on the other side of the valley with a silver rim. Far, far up, upon that awful height of rim, gleamed the light of El Tovar. This wonderful memory of the last evening in the Canyon was one to hold close in one's heart until the end of life.

THE ROUTE—



2,792 miles, one way—and just as far coming back

THE PARTY—

Ruth B Moran
M. Simpson
Marquita H. Simpson
Moran
Chat. Buck
Edu H. Potthast
Frank K. Ballard
Flora G. Whiting
Ellis H. Dangerfield
Carrie E. Parrish
Gene Whiting
Abbie B. Buck
G. H. Buck
Mina Adams
De Witt Parrish
Anna G. Dangerfield

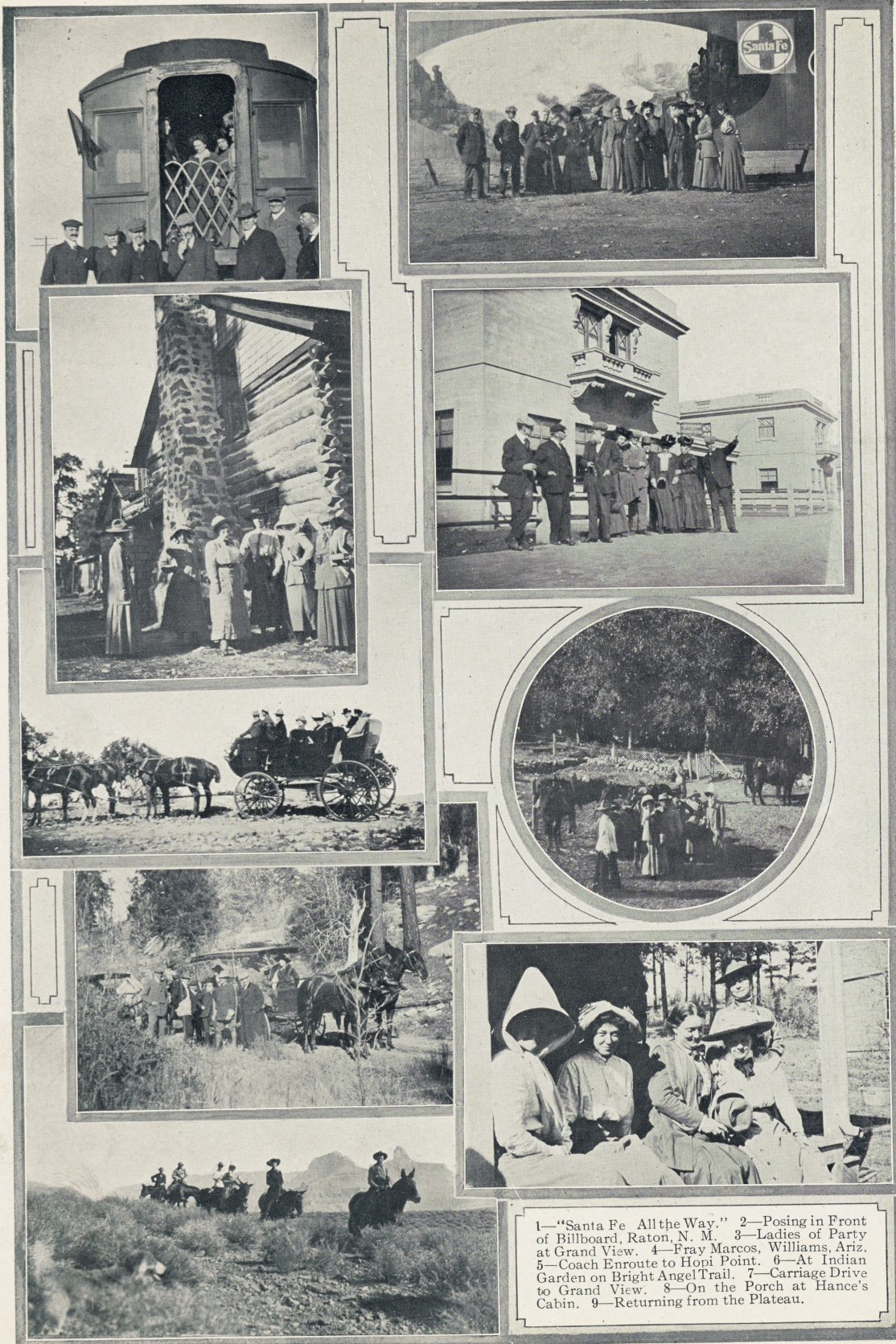
Also including
 Pullman Porters
 Train Conductors
 Canyon Guides
 Hotel Waitresses
 Trail Mules
 Arizona Pioneers
 Wild Indians



PENCIL SKETCH OF GRAND CANYON—BY F. BALLARD WILLIAMS



THOS. MORAN DESCRIBING THE GRAND CANYON—BY EDW. H. POTTHAST



1—"Santa Fe All the Way." 2—Posing in Front of Billboard, Raton, N. M. 3—Ladies of Party at Grand View. 4—Fray Marcos, Williams, Ariz. 5—Coach Enroute to Hopi Point. 6—At Indian Garden on Bright Angel Trail. 7—Carriage Drive to Grand View. 8—On the Porch at Hance's Cabin. 9—Returning from the Plateau.

SNAP SHOTS ENROUTE AND AT THE CANYON

Announcement

As one result of the "little journey" herein mentioned an exhibition of Grand Canyon paintings was arranged for.

The five artists in that memorable party, also a few others of national reputation, are represented by notable examples of their latest work, collected under the direction of Nina Spalding Stevens.

November, 1911

Grand Canyon of Arizona

The Grand Canyon of Arizona fills me with awe. It is beyond comparison—beyond description; absolutely unparalleled throughout the wide world. Let this great wonder of nature remain as it now is. Do nothing to mar its grandeur, sublimity and loveliness. You cannot improve on it. But what you can do is to keep it for your children, your children's children, and all who come after you, as the one great sight which every American should see.—*Ex-Pres. Theodore Roosevelt*, in speech at Grand Canyon, May 6, 1903.

There is only one Grand Canyon of the Colorado, and those who have placed it within reach of ordinary travelers have done the world an important service. . . . It is a stupendous intaglio carved in the silent Arizona desert by river, rain and wind.—*William E. Curtis*, in *Chicago Record-Herald*.

In coming to this place I had half a wish and half a purpose to write a description of it. . . . The hand that wrote the Hymn to Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni, might have made a word picture of this wonderful scene; but that hand is at rest, and no fellow to it exists on earth.—*William Winter*, in *New York Tribune*.

The marvelous sea of color was like a revelation of the new Jerusalem. The colossal Canyon itself could not hold the people who would throng here were it adequately known.—*Lillian Whiting*, author of "The Beautiful World."

Nature has a few big places beyond man's power to spoil—the ocean, the two icy ends of the globe, and the Grand Canyon of Arizona.—*John Muir*, in *Century Magazine*.