

# Desert Calendar

- July 24-Aug. 15—Exhibit Southwest Indian paintings from collection of Mr. C. H. Dietrich, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 1—Walker Lake annual outboard motor regatta, Hawthorne, Nevada.
- Aug. 1—Summer visitors' tour to Moencopi, Hopi village, sponsored by Flagstaff Cavaliers, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 1-7—National archery tournament, Reno, Nevada.
- Aug. 2—Feast day, Old Pecos dance, Jemez pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 3-4—Ogden junior fat stock show, Ogden, Utah.
- Aug. 4—Feast day of Santo Domingo, Fiesta and summer corn dance, Santo Domingo pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 4-7—Pioneer days celebration, Raton, New Mexico.
- Aug. 6-8—Annual Cowboys' Reunion, Las Vegas, New Mexico.
- Aug. 8—Summer visitors' tour, Walnut Canyon, sponsored by Flagstaff Cavaliers, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 8—Annual Smoki ceremonial and snake dance, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 10—Feast day of San Lorenzo, fiesta and summer corn dance, San Lorenzo (Picuris) pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 12—Feast day of Santa Clara, fiesta and corn dance, Santa Clara pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 12-13—Wasatch county fair and Blackhawk encampment, Heber City, Utah.
- Aug. 15—Summer visitors' tour to a petrified forest and to dinosaur tracks north of Flagstaff, sponsored by Flagstaff Cavaliers, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 15—Assumption day, fiesta and corn dance, Zia pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 19-21—Summit county fair, Coalville, Utah.
- Aug. 19-21—Box Elder county fair, Tremonton, Utah.
- Aug. 19-21—Davis county fair, Kaysville, Utah.
- Aug. 19-22—Twenty-seventh annual Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial, dances and rodeo, Gallup, New Mexico.
- Aug. 20-21—Millard county rodeo and fair, Deseret, Utah.
- Aug. 21-Sept. 12—Third Annual Arizona Photographers statewide photographic exhibition, with emphasis on the Southwestern scene. Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 22—Annual horse show, 111th Cavalry at Camp Luna, Las Vegas, New Mexico.
- Aug. 22—Summer visitors' tour to typical cattle ranch, sponsored by Flagstaff Cavaliers, Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Aug. 25-28—Salt Lake county fair and horse show, Murray, Utah.
- Aug. 26-28—Cache county fair and rodeo, Logan, Utah.
- Aug. 28—Feast day of San Augustin, fiesta and dance, Isleta pueblo, New Mexico.
- Aug. 28-29—Annual rodeo sponsored by 20-30 club, Flagstaff, Arizona.



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The Desert Magazine is published monthly by the Desert Press, Inc., Palm Desert, California. Re-entered as second class matter at the post office at Palm Desert, California under the Act of March 3, 1879. Title registered No. 358865 in U. S. Patent Office, and contents copyrighted 1948 by the Desert Press, Inc. Permission to reproduce contents must be secured from the editor in writing.

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
One Year . . . . \$3.00 Two Years . . . . \$5.00  
Canadian subscriptions 25c extra, foreign 50c extra.

Subscriptions to Army personnel outside U.S.A. must be mailed in conformity with P.O.D. Order No. 19687.

Address correspondence to Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, California.

# Utah's Incredible Arch of Stone

A newly completed road makes it possible to reach Delicate Arch in eastern Utah's Arches national monument without all the struggles earlier visitors faced. But Dick and Catherine Freeman are agreed: it was worth the muddy roads, the quicksand and slick rock for a glimpse of the incredible crimson-hued rainbow of stone at the trail's end.

By CATHERINE FREEMAN  
Photos by DICK FREEMAN

WHEELS spun and mud flew as the rear end of the government's old Chevy truck settled into a bowl of fine silt "pudding." Our hopes had been high that morning as Custodian Russell Mahan of the Arches national monument told us he was sure he could reach that amazing cirlet of stone known as Delicate Arch. Now they sank to our boots.

Ranger Mahan, undaunted by slick mud oozing up over his boot-tops, reassured us. "We'll get her out of here all right," he said. "Bring a lot of that brush, and I'll dig out around the wheels. This is a regular occurrence on these roads," he added, grinning.

Now we understood why he had worn overalls and work boots, and had brought a strong shovel. But it was tough work digging out the mud faster than it oozed in, and pounding the brush down into the holes. Again and again we tried and each time the wheels of the old truck edged forward a few inches and then spun without progress.

"She'll make it next time," Ranger Mahan would say confidently. At last, she really did. With a snort and rattle the car rolled out onto firmer ground. An extended survey of the road and flats beyond brought our hopes to a new low. It was evident the car could never cross the bogs which lay ahead. So we fell to cutting more desert atriplex and artemisia to make a road back over the soupy mud for the car's return.

After that experience we expected Ranger Mahan to tell us we would have to try another day. But he wasn't born an Irishman for nothing. As soon as we were back on solid ground, he proposed another possible route to the arch.

"If we go 15 miles farther around by Thompsons, I'm sure we can make it," he predicted cheerfully. His confidence was infectious and we were hopeful as we bounced away toward Thompsons.

Our driver warned that we hadn't reached the bad place yet. But rolling over a smooth desert road on the higher mesas made it easy to believe nothing could stop us again. Then we saw water on the road ahead. Russell and Dick jumped out to reconnoitre. Before they had returned within hailing distance I knew we would not get through that day. Their shoes, caked

*Russell Mahan, Uncle Sam's custodian at Arches national monument greets visitors to his colorful sandstone domain with a friendly welcome.*



with mud to the tops, were mute testimony of the condition of the road.

"This'll dry up in a couple of days," said Russell, "and then we'll try it again. Might even be all right tomorrow." Thus ended our first attempt to reach Delicate Arch. It was only a short distance from us, according to the custodian, yet it might as well have been on the moon.

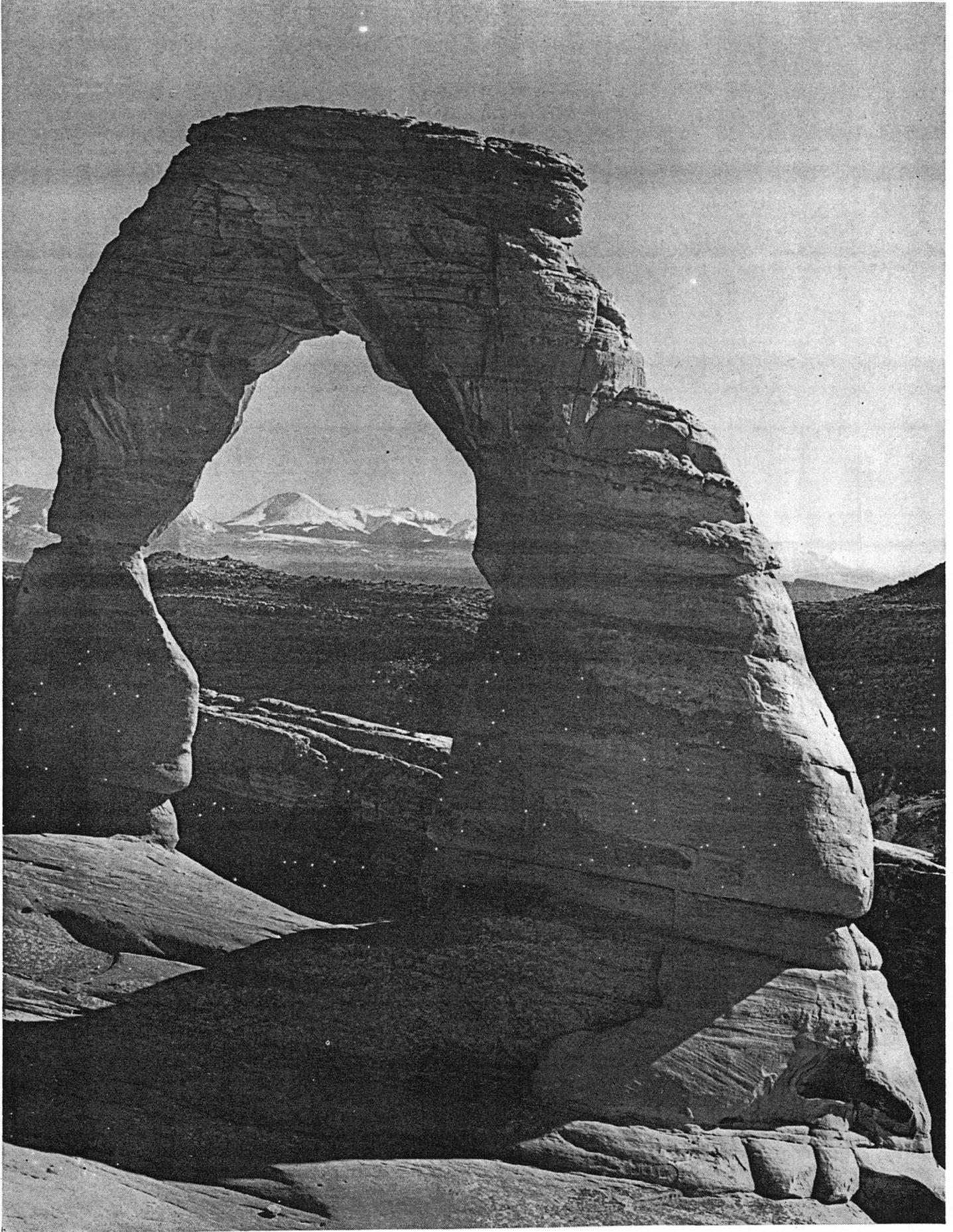
There are 88 known arches in Arches national monument in southeastern Utah. Delicate Arch attracts, perhaps, more attention than any of the others. After one has seen a picture of its graceful contours he feels he must see the original, no matter how difficult it may be to reach.

Two days later we made our second attempt to reach Delicate Arch, and the gods of desert roads were good to us this time. Although the valley route was still deep in mud, we were able to traverse the road from Thompsons without serious difficulty.

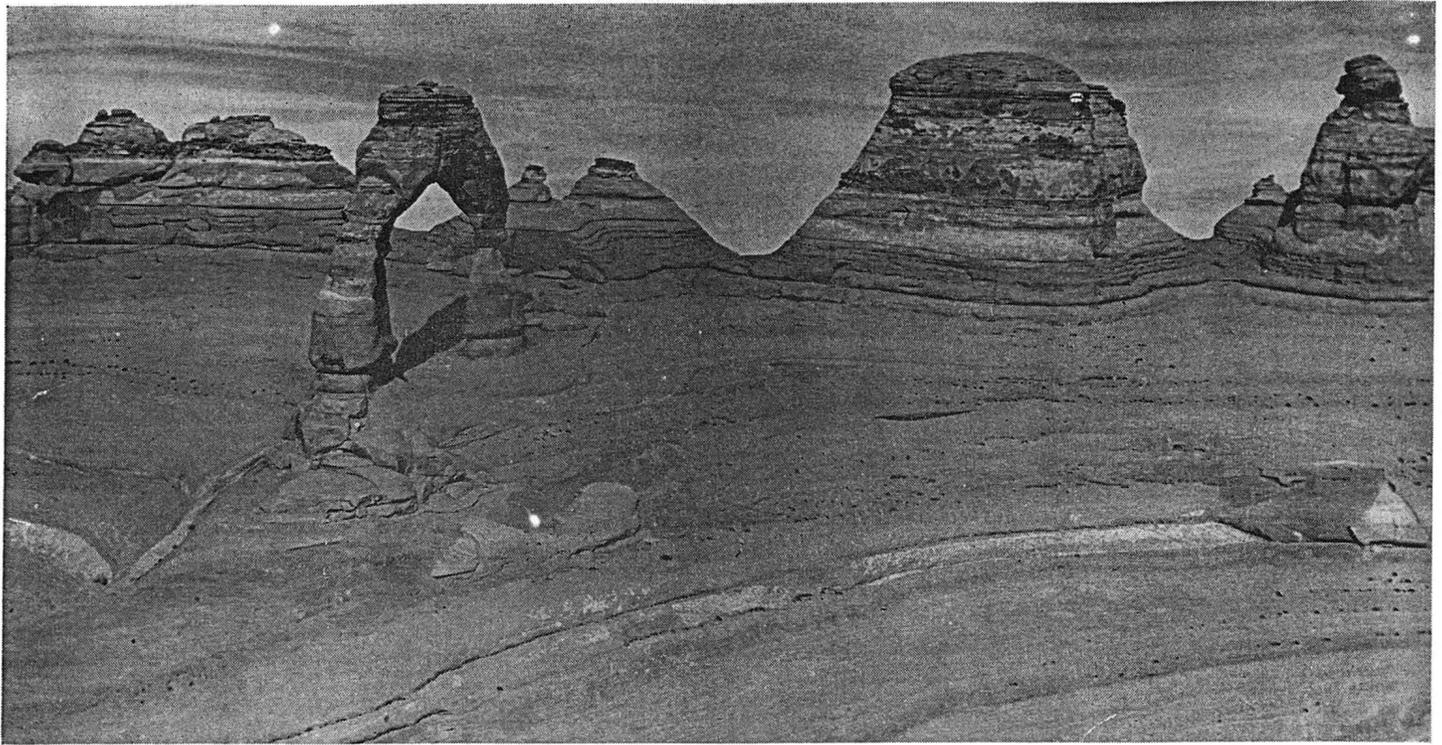
Since that first visit to Arches national monument a passable road has been completed to Delicate Arch, and today visitors to the Monument are able to reach this rare natural "rainbow" without difficulty.

On each side of the road were acres of pinyon and juniper. Hoary old specimens, healthy and strong, they complement the rose-reds of the sandstone with their rich green foliage. Not quite so plentiful, but found in great numbers, was the single-leaved ash, a small tree, but lovely and golden in the fall. As we followed the washes, yellow tamarisks, willows and cottonwoods intensified the brilliance of the sun where just two or three weeks before, orange-hued rabbitbrush had bloomed in profusion.

At last we pulled up beside an ancient weatherbeaten log cabin. The low rather flat roof was covered with small pieces of crushed greenish rock containing copper, and the logs were whitened and grey like pieces of driftwood on the beach. Turnbow cabin had been used, we were told, for over 50 years by sheepmen who came in every winter to pasture their sheep. Located at the end of the road, it had been operated as a source of supplies. All the cowboys and shearers for miles around have beaten a shiny trail over the slick rock to its door. The interior, a rendezvous for numerous rodents, is not inviting. But the



*This photograph of Delicate Arch was taken in the fall when the La Sals in the background were covered with the first snow of the season.*



*While Nature has spent countless ages carving Delicate Arch she also has been eroding the bowl in which it is located.*

greenish roof and greying sides blend harmoniously with the soft tones of the landscape.

"It's about two miles by trail now. We'll have to watch for quicksand as we cross Salt wash," warned the custodian. "Last week I got into it, and was down to my knees before I knew it. Luckily I had someone with me."

In the salty wash we found pickleweed and coarse grasses through which we pushed our way to higher ground. There we found great outcroppings of rosy agate which in the process of cooling had been cracked so much the stone is not commercially valuable in spite of its beauty.

Russell called our attention to the polished trail we were following on the sandstone. It had been made by the hoofs of the cowboys' horses. We needed no markers to follow it, but we did need wind to keep up with the long legs of the custodian. As we were visualizing mounted cowboys carefully picking their way over these sandstone shoulders, Russell interrupted our thoughts.

"There it is," he called. "Probably you can't see it." We looked uncertainly over the landscape. "Right there," he pointed. "It's end-on and looks like a pillar instead of an arch. We'll get a better view soon."

A final pull over a high sandstone shoulder and a drop into the bowl below brought us within close range of the amazing arch of stone. We wanted to stop and look, but Russell kept us going "for the best viewpoint," he explained.

Delicate Arch is located on the edge of a great sandstone bowl smoothed by the

wind-driven sands of countless years. The trail leads up the edge of this great bowl and as we reached the foot of the arch its smoothness seemed somewhat alarming. Russell and Dick were disappearing around one of the buttresses, their feet clinging to what appeared to be the narrowest kind of an indentation. It is a good idea to wear rubber-soled shoes for this trip.

We cautiously followed Russell Mahan around the rim to where we could look through the slender crescent of stone which is Delicate Arch. Rising from the sandstone ridge it looks like a giant handle by which the bowl might conceivably be lifted. Soft salmon-pink against a bright blue sky, the arch forms an exquisite frame for the snowy 13,000 foot La Sal mountains to the south. This was the view Russell had wanted us to see first, and it was well worth the trouble of carrying heavy cameras and tripod. Dick fairly trembled with excitement as he carefully set up his equipment on the slick rock where one misstep might have been fatal.

Sweeping down 200 feet between him and the arch, the great pink sandstone bowl looked like a huge Indian mortar. Here the wind, carrying sharp crystalline particles, sweeps around like a whirlwind, grinding very, very slowly as a fine lens is ground.

All the great arches in Arches national monument were originally integral parts of huge sandstone ridges, or "fins" as they are called. As wind and sand wear away the softer parts a large block of stone becomes undermined and breaks away from

its original position frequently leaving an arch. Then the sand-filled winds smooth of the rough edges, a process which the hardest rock withstands the longest.

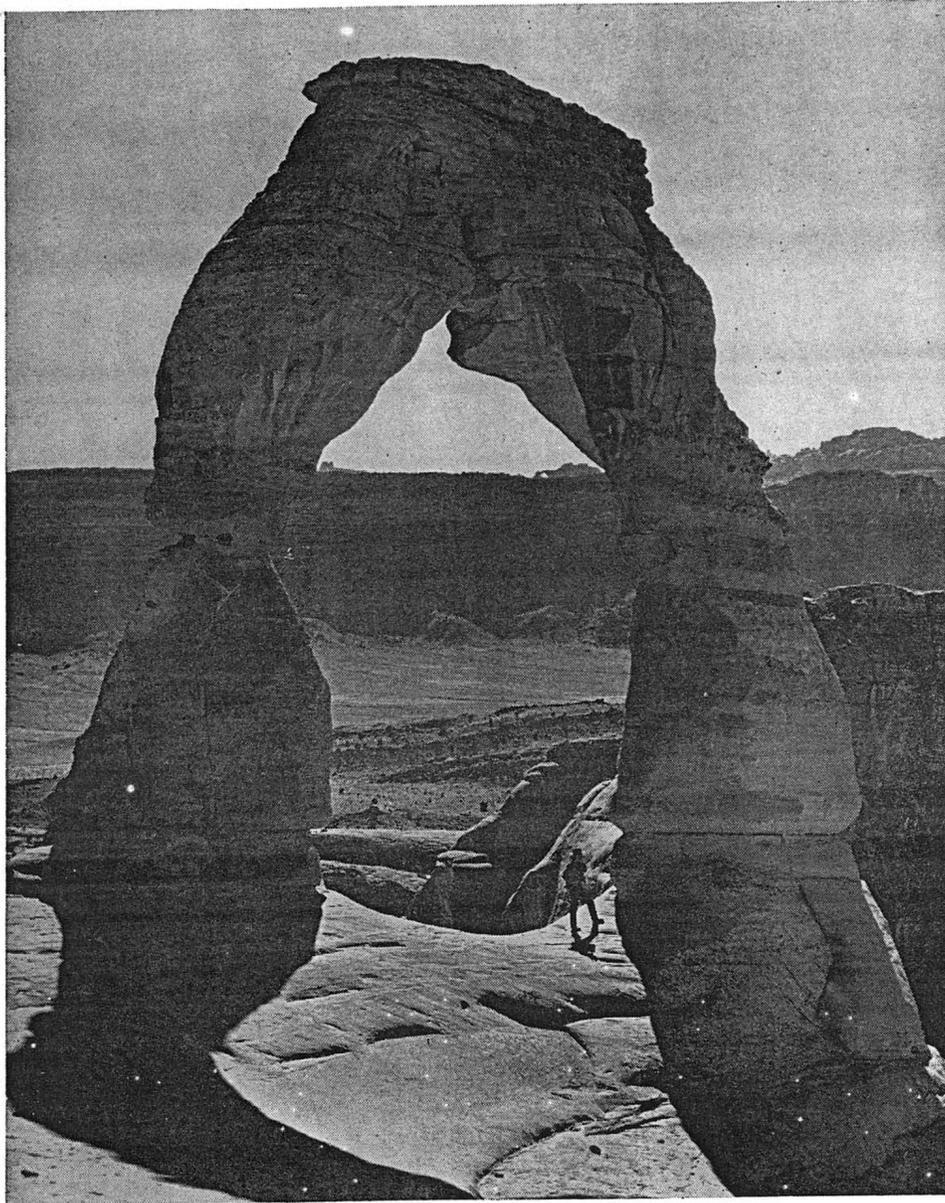
So Delicate Arch itself has been left standing, with all the less resistant stone around it eroded away. Sturdily the great bases of the arch cling to the ridge like two firmly placed elephant's feet. Save for one deeply eroded crease on the eastern abutment, the arch looks as if many centuries might pass away before the wind could consummate its destructive work.

As we stood marveling at the incredible structure, Russell Mahan told us how the cowboys of the region used to call it the "Chaps" and at other times the "Schoolmarm's Pants."

"I can see how they got the chaps, but I can't see the other," he said, shaking his head and chuckling. But there wasn't much doubt that, regardless of what it might be called, Delicate Arch is Russell Mahan's pride and joy. His anxiety that we get the best view first, and the pleasure on his face when we showed our appreciation of the exquisite arch made that perfectly clear.

This "delicate" arch is not so dainty in size. As Dick passed between it buttresses, each about 15 feet in diameter, he looked very small beneath its 65-foot height and 85-foot breadth. He was going to take a picture from the side up which we had climbed, where a narrow shoulder extends to the east. He still didn't realize there was a 500-foot sheer drop below him. However, the slick and sloping rock made him exceedingly cautious. Without the rubber-shod tripod legs, he probably could not





*The size of the span may be judged by the figure of Ranger Mahan beneath and beyond the arch.*

have secured the pictures and might have lost his camera.

Looking southwest from Delicate Arch in the direction of headquarters, Russell showed us where the new road to Delicate Arch was to be built. Instead of the round-about route toward Thompsons covering 50 miles, this road adds but six miles to the already existing nine mile road into the Windows section.

We had left the wash and the Salt valley road when the vivid colors of sunset began to paint the softening outlines of the cliffs. The snow on the distant La Sals became suffused with a delicate glowing pink melting into lavenders and deep blues as the sun sank, while the cliffs in every direction made a constantly changing pattern of exquisite coloring from the deeper roses to soft mauves and purples.

It seemed no time at all before we reached Moab canyon where a little of the old Mormon dugway, built in 1855 by the

first missionaries, is still visible. U. S. Highway 160 curves down the grade below this old road, passing the monument headquarters just beyond the cliff which formed the barrier those early pioneers had to cross. Our trip to Utah's most extraordinary and lovely arch had become a reality at last and we had had a never-to-be-forgotten glimpse of the spectacular wonders of amazing Arches national monument.

### **MOST IMPORTANT**

By TANYA SOUTH

Have patience, then, and go your way  
With love and blessing every day,  
And peace and goodwill every night  
Toward everyone. For to live right  
Is most important of all things,  
And nearest unto heaven brings.

## **Hard Rock Shorty**

### **of Death Valley**



"Are you Mr. Hard Rock Shorty," asked the stranger who had just arrived at Inferno store.

Shorty looked the visitor over, and noted the brand new levis and boots and Stetson hat. "Yu can jes' call me 'Shorty,'" he replied, after a pause.

"You're just the man I'm looking for—a real old desert rat, if you'll pardon the use of the uncomplimentary term you prospectors apply to each other," the stranger gurgled. "I've always wanted to meet a real desert miner and go on a prospecting trip with him. Of course I'll furnish all the groceries, and I've got a new tent and some canned caviar and a portable radio . . ."

"I guess I ain't the feller you're lookin' fer," Shorty interrupted, and sauntered into the store to share his disgust with the clerk.

"One o' them blasted dudes!" he exploded. "I took one o' them on a trip once. But no more o' that. We set up camp over at Alum spring the first night. Had a sack o' potatoes an' some flour an' coffee—enough for a week, and we left word with Pisgah Bill to bring us another load o' grub in a few days.

"I told the dude to wash the spuds, an' do you know what that blasted tenderfoot did. While I wuz out gatherin' some wood he took that whole sack o' potatoes over and put 'em in the pool below the spring to wash 'em off—sack an' all.

"Fust thing I knowed I heard him over there hollerin' and when I went over t' see what was up there he wuz fishin' around in the water tryin' to find the taters. When he finally brought 'em up that alum water had shrunk 'em up to about the size o' peas in a Bull Durham sack.

"An' all we had to eat for a week wuz sourdough biscuits an' coffee. I ain't got no more time fer dude prospectors."