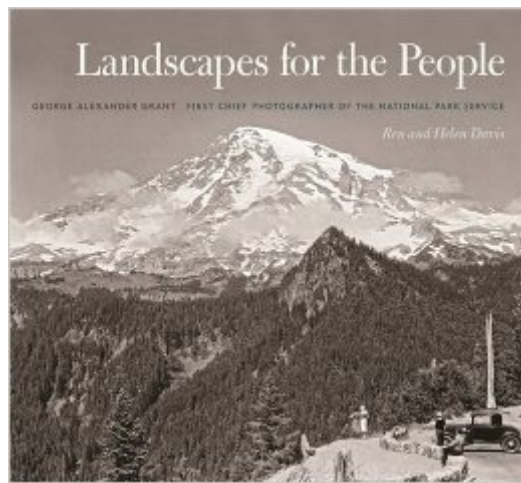


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# Landscapes For The People: George Alexander Grant, First Chief Photographer Of The National Park Service (A Friends Fund Publication)



## Synopsis

Winner of the American Library Association's 2015 INDIEFAB Gold Medal for best photography book published by an independent or academic press George Alexander Grant is an unknown elder in the field of American landscape photography. Just as they did the work of his contemporaries Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Eliot Porter, and others, millions of people viewed Grant's photographs; unlike those contemporaries, few even knew Grant's name. Landscapes for the People shares his story through his remarkable images and a compelling biography profiling patience, perseverance, dedication, and an unsurpassed love of the natural and historic places that Americans chose to preserve. A Pennsylvania native, Grant was introduced to the parks during the summer of 1922 and resolved to make parks work and photography his life. Seven years later, he received his dream job and spent the next quarter century visiting the four corners of the country to produce images in more than one hundred national parks, monuments, historic sites, battlefields, and other locations. He was there to visually document the dramatic expansion of the National Park Service during the New Deal, including the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Grant's images are the work of a master craftsman. His practiced eye for composition and exposure and his patience to capture subjects in their finest light are comparable to those of his more widely known contemporaries. Nearly fifty years after his death, and in concert with the 2016 centennial of the National Park Service, it is fitting that George Grant's photography be introduced to a new generation of Americans.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I think we can all agree that our national parks are a great national treasure. We owe a debt of gratitude to those visionary Americans who set aside the land that became national parks. One of those visionaries, in a literal sense, who captured the vision on film, was George Alexander Grant. From the 1920s to the 1950s Grant, a veteran of the Great War (WW1), criss-crossed the country capturing on film not only the distinctive beauty to be found in the national parks, but a chronicle of the development of the parks. Ren and Helen Davis have compiled many of his photographs, ranging from sweeping landscapes to intimate portraits and detail studies, in *Landscapes for the People: George Alexander Grant, First Chief Photographer of the National Park Service*. Besides the photographs, they have included very nice historical and biographical background in accompanying essays. Grant's own writings are included as well, in which he discusses the technical side of his photography for students of the art. That alone is worth reading, especially as a reminder, in the age of digital, iPhone photography, of the techniques that for so many photographers, are in danger of being completely forgotten. To be honest, Grant's photography, while impressive, doesn't have the emotional and artistic brilliance seen in Ansel Adams's work. That may be an unfair comparison. What I loved about seeing Grant's work was the history. He didn't simply photograph the parks, he photographed people developing and enjoying the parks. The clothing, cars, camping gear, tools all show a slice of the outdoor life in the first half of the twentieth century, while emphasizing the timelessness of nature.

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