

# ANDREW GLEN - 1878-1973

By Beveridge Ross Spear

Andrew Glen, a tall Paiute brave, the youngest son of Mono John, was the terror of the town. He always rode a fine, large horse.

Andrew's weakness was "firewater." When drunk everyone kept out of his way. He might attempt to charge his horse over someone.

In daylight he'd stagger up to anyone, crying murder and cursing, then plunge in for a kill. His black hair straggled down over his face; his eyes cold with murder, his lips purple, his mouth a slobber, but uttering terrifying shrieks. He was violent, and only another drunk would clash with him.

At night people hurried home. They locked their gates and doors, putting out all lamps and candles. Should Andrew see the light he might attempt to come in. In the dark one could hear the clicking of his spur chains as his horse walked softly by. It took several men to put him in jail, but when sober and out he was sullen and revengeful.

He said to me, "Rossie, when I drunk I don't know what I do. I no remember. All I think is kill. Rossie, when I drunk you take club. Beat me so I nearly die. Then maybe I no kill someone."



Old Bennie Morris, an Irish miner, went on his sprees, as well as bootlegged. They got together one night, and Bennie's shotgun blast riddled Andrew's right leg so completely above the knee it had to be amputated. Andrew emerged with a wooden leg. This ended his riding and manual labor.

Glen was an artist at braiding rawhide riatas, hondos, twirling horse hair rope and making hackamores. He was excellent in all leather craft and could make a living doing this artistic work. It finally dawned on his mind that he must quit drinking before he killed someone. If he did, he'd be hanged for it. But who could help him quit?

About this time a preacher came by who read the Bible to Andrew. He told him the God of the Bible made the mountains and everything. Also, that God's power could change his life so he'd never again drink, fight, or go to jail. After days of listening, Andrew believed, accepted the God of the Bible, submitted to baptism and joined the Lone Pine Church of God.



His simple, childlike trust connected him with God. Andrew never again drank or went to jail. He quit cigarettes, cursing and fighting. He became quiet, peaceful, and wonderfully happy. This experience with God lasted to the end of his life.

Of all my Indian friends since 1900 or earlier, Andrew is the only one to my knowledge, who became a baptized Christian.

Andrew went to school after 50 years of age. He learned to write simple letters. In one letter he wrote: "Burkhardt he dead." He mentioned several others by name including "Indian boy." To each name was added, "He dead." He concluded, "Me got five cats, three dogs, no wife. Goodby. A. Glen."

Andrew came to my room in the Dow Hotel. I played him a tape of beautiful music. He sat unmoved. He'd never seen a tape machine. I spoke into the mike and played it back for him. He was silent. I spoke again, "Hello Andrew, my long-time friend." Then played it back. He seemed perplexed because it worked so fast.

"You do it," I said, holding the microphone to his mouth. He hesitated. I made other suggestions. Finally he spoke a sentence. Immediately I played it back. He almost raised up out of his chair. It worked for him just as fast! He couldn't doubt. It was Andrew himself on the tape.

From here on he talked freely. I interviewed him for three-quarters of an hour, asking a series of questions about his past troubles. He came clean on every point. He shot back a decisive, "Yes," or "No," to every question.

"Andrew," I said, "Pray to God in Paiute. He will understand."

He deliberated, collecting his thoughts, then prayed. It was short. This is probably the only Christian prayer in Owens Valley Paiute on record. His prayer is partially translated, but I'm not satisfied. The Indians seem reluctant to tell me what Glen says in his prayer.

"Andrew," I said, "two years ago you promised to sing me an Indian war song. Do it now."

As he sang, I recalled hearing his father, Mono John, sing it. The definite melodic line, and cohesive rhythm surprised me.

"What do the words say?" I asked.

"I don't know." His answer shocked me. The Paiute language is being lost. It is actually dying out.

We played Andrew's song for two old Indians. Neither of them knew what the words meant. One said, "I war dance many times long time ago to that song, but I don't know what the words say."

Here's an amusing incident in Andrew's life. It happened where the present Tuttle Creek Road turns south through the boulders to the Alabama Hills community.

He related: "My mamma said, 'Andrew, you see that rock over there?' I said, 'Yes, Mamma, I see that rock.' My mamma say, 'Andrew, you born by that rock under bush.' "

"Every time I see that rock I know where I born. The county make the new road and take away that rock. Now I don't know where I born." Then he laughed with pleasure.

He didn't know his age. "Rossie, I pippity-five. No! No! sixty-five. No! No! Seventy-five! I don't know!" I guess he was born by "that rock" under the "bush" somewhere between 1879 and 1882.

This old Paiute lived to be 90 or more years of age. His travels were from Big Pine to "Nittle" Lake, Monache Meadows, Darwin, Coso Mountains, and Hunter's Ranch Mountain. That was his world.

