

The Album

Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono

Being a quarterly recounting of the nature and history of two California counties

Vol. II, No. 1



Inside:

A landmark
An elusive border
A desert fantasy
A love story
More memories
Cowboy poet
and more

The Eastern Sierra

Land of Many Uses

Most of Los Angeles water supply comes from the melted snows of the eastern Sierra—the same region that is one of America's finest recreational areas.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power works with Inyo and Mono counties to maintain the eastern Sierra as a vacationer's paradise.

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Crowley and Grant Lake Reservoirs have become famous for fishing as well as for boating and water skiing.

We are doing our best to make sure that the eastern Sierra has something for everyone and remains that special vacation spot.



**Los Angeles Department
of Water and Power**



THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono

January 1989

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Photo by Louise Kelsey.

The Album, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono, is a collection of stories, history, and natural history of Inyo County and Mono County, in Eastern California.

Letters, comments, and contributions are welcome; contributions should be accompanied by photos, documents, sketches, or maps.

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CHARLEY'S BUTTE

The story of a landmark.

by George Garrigues



*Charley's Butte from the east.
Owens River near trees at foot of
butte. Sierras in background.*

Many fairy tales start with "Once upon a time . . ." and although this is not a fairy tale, it is a "Once upon a time . . ."

A small volcanic extrusion about the size of a football field exists in eastern California. Located eleven miles south of Big Pine and seventeen miles north of Independence, it rises gradually from the north, reaches a height of more than one hundred feet over the Owens Valley floor and drops off precipitously at the western bank of the Owens River. Consisting primarily of table-sized vesicular basalt boulders, it was formed from rapidly cooling magma that flowed from beneath the earth's surface through a fissure opened by earth movement. This occurred at the time, probably within the last thousand years, when the Owens Valley was the site of considerable seismic shifting and a caldron of volcanic activity. At the top of this extrusion a small level area, surrounded by large blocks of basalt appears to be a naturally created fort or hiding place. This is Charley's Butte.

In March, 1863 four men: Hiram McDonald and the three Ayers brothers, Hiram, Albert and William, were camped on Big Pine Creek. Suddenly attacked by Indians led by Chief George, the three brothers managed to escape to the safe-

ty of Fort Independence. McDonald, when last seen, had been struck by four arrows and was being pelted with rocks by the Indians.

Several days later, nineteen year old Alney L. McGee, his mother Margaret, Jesse N. Summers, his wife Mahulda and their two year old daughter Emma accompanied by negro Charley Tyler, reached the area. They were traveling from Aurora to Tulare in a horse drawn wagon and were driving a small herd of loose horses.

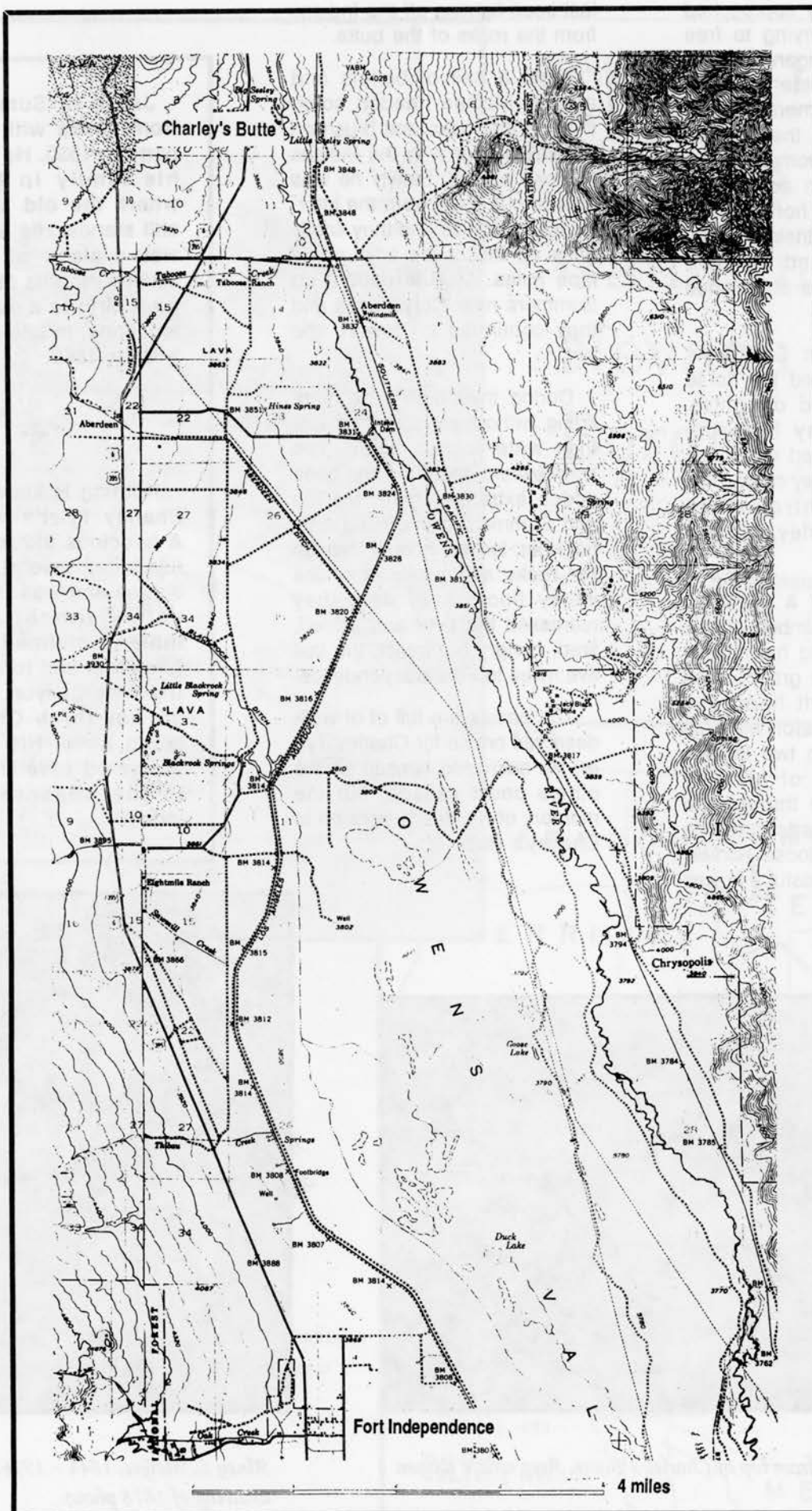
Discovering McDonald's body on their way, they proceeded cautiously despite knowledge that a peace treaty had been signed with the Indians and the fort established at Independence recently. Approaching what is now known as Poverty Hills, they observed Indian smoke signals at various locations on the valley floor. A short time later, seeing a band estimated at 150 Indians ahead, they realized they were cut off from the fort.

Attempting to flee, they decided their best chance consisted of crossing the river and going down the east side of the valley. They found what appeared to be a good place to ford the river, but the wagon became hopelessly mired in the soft sand of the river bottom.

It is not my purpose to pass judgement on the period of Owens Valley history that is called "The Indian War." I only intend to relate, in a factual manner, events that transpired during that time. No one can say who was right or who was wrong, but we cannot deny what happened.



The McGee family came to California from Texas in 1850. At the time of this incident, they were raising cattle near Tulare and had established a meat market in the booming gold camp of Aurora. They drove the cattle through the Owens Valley to Aurora where the cattle were butchered and sold.



The Indian party approached while they were trying to free the wagon, and began shooting at them. Desperate by now, McGee and Summers cut the team loose from the wagon. They placed the women on the horses and swam across the river leading the horses. The wagon containing their clothing, food supplies and \$640 in money (gold?) was abandoned in the river.

Summers, with Charley's assistance, mounted the horse with his wife and daughter. They broke away from the Indians and headed down the valley as fast as they could. The Indians, concentrating on McGee and Charley, did not follow.

Surrounded by a circle of Indians, McGee climbed on the other horse behind his mother to protect her. He grabbed the reins with his left hand and pulled out his pistol with his right. Shooting the two Indians directly in front of him, he spurred the horse through the breach. Charley attempted to catch one of the loose horses, but was not successful. He was

last seen fighting off the Indians from the rocks of the butte.

Amid a hail of bullets and arrows, McGee headed south through the rocks and brush on the valley floor with the Indians in close pursuit. Slowly he was able to pull away from the inferior Indian ponies and they finally gave up the chase after about nine miles. McGee caught up Summers near Chrysopolis and they continued on toward the fort.

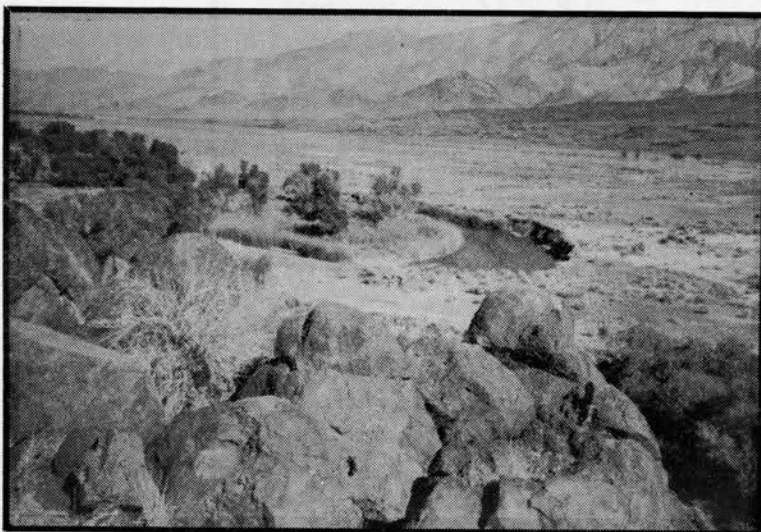
During their flight, the men, riding without stirrups, had lost their water-logged boots. The horses were spent, having been ridden extremely hard. McGee and Summers dismounted and, barefoot, led the horses through the rocks and tussocks of the valley floor. After dark they recrossed the river and limped, tired, hungry but intact, the last five miles to Fort Independence.

The annals are full of well-deserved praise for Charley Tyler. He sacrificed himself so the others could escape, but the memory of his deeds lives on at Charley's Butte.

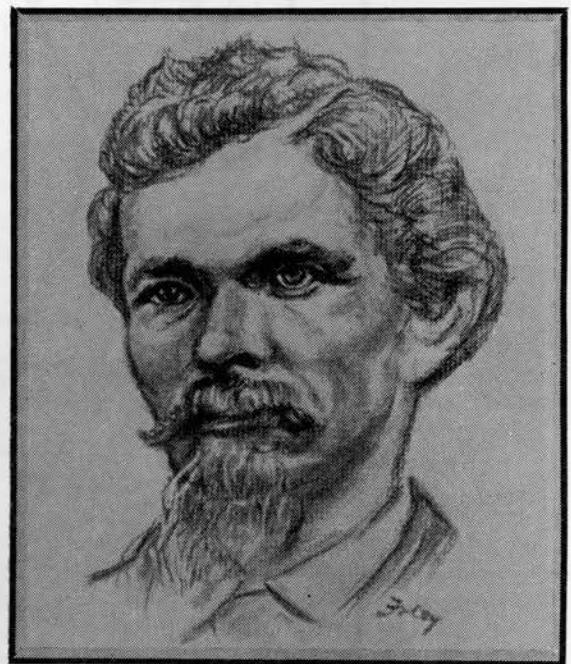
Jesse N. Summers came from Texas with the McGee party in 1850. He later settled his family in Bridgeport where the old family home still stands. His wife Mahulda was a sister of Alney, and several months pregnant. She gave birth to a daughter, Sarah Jenny, in late June or early July, 1863.



Nothing is known of negro Charley Tyler's background. A ferocious Indian fighter, he had killed several in previous battles and was hated by the valley inhabitants. The Indians claimed they captured him and tortured him in Big Pine Canyon. The whites do not think Charley was taken alive. His pistol was recovered several years later in the possession of an Indian.



Owens River north from top of Charley's Butte. Area where wagon was abandoned.



Alney L. McGee, 1844 - 1916. From a Foley drawing of 1878 photo.



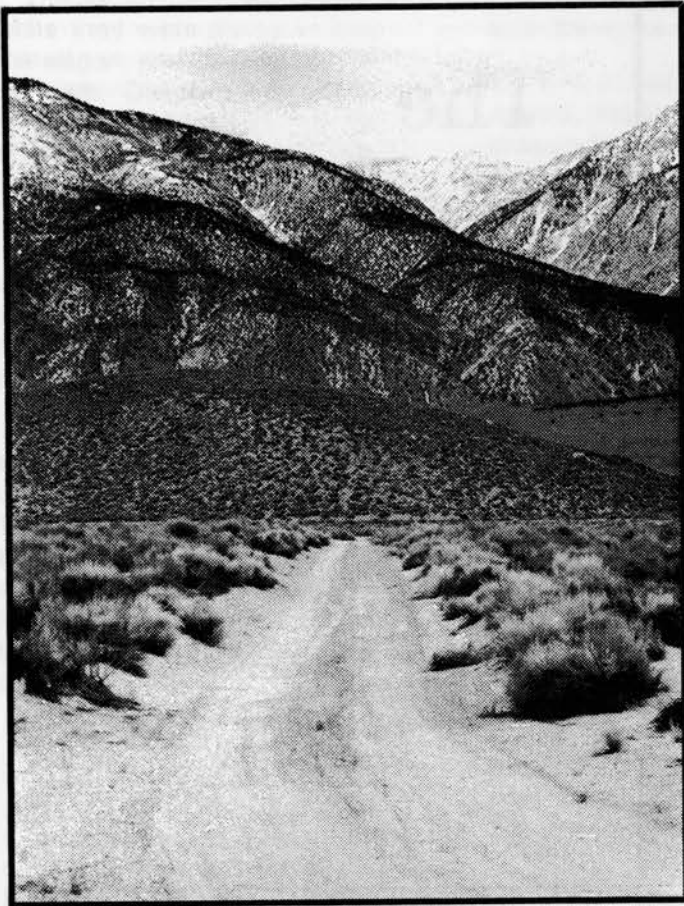
The Elusive California Nevada Border

by Thomas M. Little, Ph.D.



Western United States, showing actual boundaries of 1850 and proposed changes for the California Nevada border in 1853 and 1856.





"The explanation for this strange road is simple. It follows what was for 25 years recognized as the state line between California and Nevada"



1714 British Government offered prize for anyone finding way to find longitude at sea.

1735 Prize awarded to John Harrison who invented chronometer.

1818 US-Mex treaty established 42nd parallel as Ore-Cal border.

1844 First telegraph line in U.S. NY to Washington.

Spring of 1846 Population of California — 10,000.

Feb. 2, 1848 Treaty with Mexico giving up all claim to New Mexico and Upper California.

End of 1848 Population of California — 26,000.

Mar. 18, 1849 Brigham Young announced the formation of State of Deseret which included Nevada.

Spring of 1849 General Riley became de facto governor of California.

June 1849 H.S. Beattie, one of traders sent out by B. Young built stockade and corral at base of Sierra, first called Mormon Station and later Genoa.

Aug. 1849 Population of California — 50,000.

Sept. 1, 1849 Constitutional Convention met in Monterey.

1850 Fifty telegraph lines in U.S. stretching from coast to coast.

Sept. 9, 1850 California admitted as state and territory of Utah formed.

1851 Surveyor of General of California requested to survey border in vicinity of Carson Valley.

1852 Surveyor General of California was making survey of northern end of line.

1852 It was determined that Carson Valley was in Nevada.

1852 Sketch made of Colo. River terminus by "government engineer" (see 1855).



Traveling up Highway 6 from Bishop to Montgomery Pass, you will pass a sign plainly indicating that you are crossing the state line between California and Nevada. If you continue another half mile you will see a dirt road on the right, running in a perfectly straight line for two miles to the base of the White Mountains. This may seem strange, since desert roads seldom follow a straight line for this distance. Instead they tend to follow an easy route, avoiding deep gulleys and other natural obstacles.

The explanation for this strange road is simple. It follows what was for 25 years recognized as the state line, known as the Von Schmidt line. Crossing two state lines is not at all unusual, as we shall see. As a matter of fact, on the north shore of Lake Tahoe there are six different lines that have been claimed as the correct California-Nevada border.

The story of this border is a fascinating account of political intrigue and even religious conflicts. Both the Mexican War and the Civil War enter into the story. Most of all, however, it is a story of some remarkable men, the surveyors who labored hard to locate the correct border. These men had to be both brilliant scholars and sturdy outdoorsmen. They had to be experts in geometry, plain and spherical trigonometry, astronomy and physics. They had to be adept at trail blazing and surviving in the wild. Besides possessing these qualities they had to contend with arrogant academics and bungling bureaucrats on one side and rugged mountains and barren deserts on the other. As remarkable as these men were, they were seldom given much recognition by historians. Sometimes one would be referred to simply as "a surveyor," as though he was just a lackey, performing a menial task.

To understand the events we need to go back into the history of this long border, the longest border between two states in the country, about 620 miles in length. While our main interest is in the portions of the border touching Inyo, Mono and Alpine counties, the events along the whole line were interwoven and had a bearing on our area.

In 1819 a treaty was signed between the United States and Mexico making the 42nd parallel the dividing line between U.S. territory in the north and Spanish territory in the south. This is important because it was this line that was the

starting point for all future surveys of the California-Nevada boundary. At the time the exact position of the line seemed unimportant, since it passed through mostly uninhabited country. It was 35 years before any attempt to run an actual survey of the line was made.

The two decades from 1848 to 1868 were eventful, turbulent and exciting years in American history. The Mexican War was fought and won. The Mormon Rebellion took place. Gold was discovered in California. California became a state. Nevada became a territory independent of Utah, and later became a state. The Civil War lasted from 1861 to 1865. The first transatlantic cable was completed. All of these events and many of more local interest took place in these busy times and affected the establishment of the California-Nevada line.

The conclusion of the Mexican war resulted in Mexico ceding "Upper" California to the United States on February 2, 1848. Shortly after this, gold was discovered in California and a population explosion resulted. By the end of 1848 the population, which had been only 10,000 two years before, had increased to 26,000. In less than a year it increased to 50,000. Such fast moving events required fast moving political activity.

In the spring of 1849 General Riley assumed governorship of California and called a constitutional convention which convened in Monterey on September 1, 1849 with 28 delegates in attendance. Riley had arbitrarily divided the territory into districts, and allotted what he considered a fair number of delegates from each district.

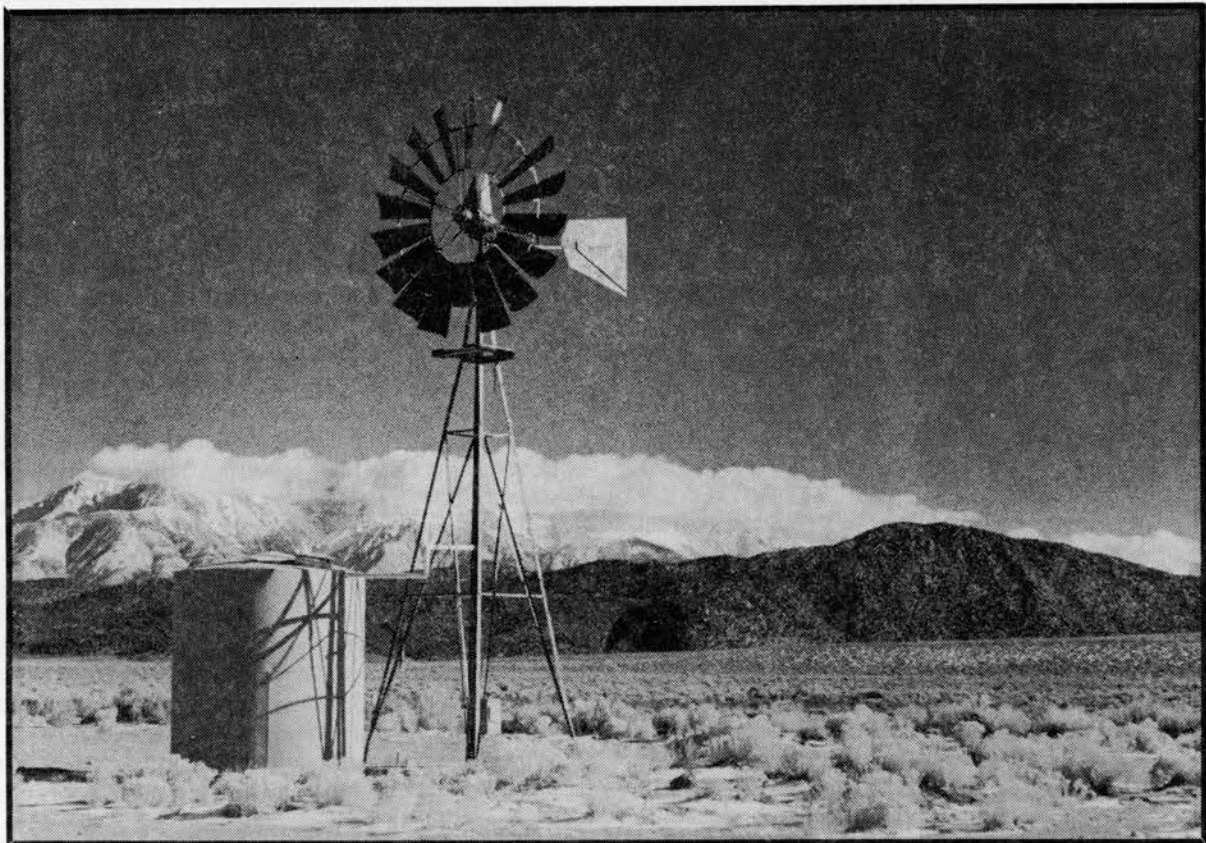
One can imagine some of the dissention that resulted. Riley was apparently an astute politician, for he not only realized the necessity for quick and decisive action, but he made provision for the dissidents to be heard. In his instructions to each district he indicated that if they were unhappy with their allotment, they could appeal to the other delegates. After considerable horse trading among districts, a delegation of 73 members was approved, but only 48 delegates finally attended.

The first order of business was to decide whether California should try to become a state or a territory. This question was quickly resolved by a vote of 28 to 8 for statehood. The problem that caused the most controversy in the convention was the location of the eastern boundary. Some favored the crest of the Sierras. Others wanted a much larger area to include all of the land ceded by Mexico. This would take in all of what is now Utah and Nevada. The opponents of this idea argued that such a state would be too large and unwieldy. Furthermore, they said, if at some further time the federal government would decide to divide the state into two or more smaller states, such division might not be to the liking of Californians.

A compromise was finally reached by taking the easy solution. They drew two straight lines on the map, one following the 120th meridian from the Oregon border to the 39th parallel, the other from this point to the intersection of the 35th parallel and the center of the Colorado River. This is the boundary today, but it did not solve all of the border problems. Instead it caused more problems than it solved, as is usually the case when politicians draw borders on a map with no knowledge of the geography of the region, nor regard for the desires of the citizens affected.

In the same year Brigham Young was trying to extend the influence of the Mormons to the west. On March 18, 1849 he announced the formation of the State of Deseret. In June he sent a trader, H.S. Beattie, to build a stockade and corral near the extreme western border of the territory. This was first known as Mormon Station and later as Genoa. The resulting influx of Mormons soon created tension among the settlers, with Mormons and "Gentiles" vying for control of the region.

On September 9, 1850 California was granted statehood by Congress. There began to be questions all along the line regarding the exact location of the boundary. An unknown "government engineer" drew a sketch of the Colorado River at the southern end of the border. The Surveyor General of California



About five miles north of Benton, CA, looking eastward...toward the border?

made a preliminary survey of the northern end of the line. The most critical area was Carson Valley because this was productive agricultural land, it was relatively more heavily settled than the rest of the line, and it was on important trade routes across the country. Late in 1851 the Surveyor General of California was requested to survey the line around Carson Valley. It was finally determined in 1852 that this whole valley was in Nevada.

In 1853 people in Carson Valley petitioned the California legislature for annexation and even proposed a new state line running straight from the northeast corner described in the California constitution to the terminus on the Colorado River. Acceptance of this line would have included Reno, Carson City,



1853 People of Carson Valley petitioned California for annexation.

1853 Border straight from Oregon Corner to Colorado River advocated.

Jan. 1854 Carson Valley obtained permission from Utah Territorial Legislature to set up a county government.

1854 California legislature appropriated \$3500 for survey of 42nd parallel.

1854 T.P. Robinson surveyed 41 miles of 42nd parallel line from Pacific.

1855 "A surveyor" for California investigated border in Carson Valley.

1855 Sketch of 1852 used to determine longitude of southern terminus.

1856 A different line was proposed to include Carson Valley in California to follow the 117.30 meridian down to the diagonal line.

1857 Carson Valley lost its self government and was attached to Salt Lake City.

1857 Residents of Genoa and Carson Valley led by Isaac Roop of Susanville, met in Genoa and drew up constitution for "Territory of Nevada" and asked Congress to recognize their independence. Plea ignored.

Sept. 15, 1859 Roop elected governor of the unofficial Nevada Territory.

Dec. 15, 1859 Roop called rump legislature and continued as governor.

1860 Higley line at Lake Tahoe.

1860-61 US Government survey of 120th meridian established point on Lake Tahoe.



Hawthorne and Tonopah in California. No action was taken on these proposals. However, in January 1854 Carson Valley received permission from the Utah Territorial Legislature to set up a county government.

Finally in 1854, thirty-five years after the 42nd parallel had been declared the border between California and Oregon, it was decided to run a survey of this critical line. The impetus for this decision was the question of who had jurisdiction over the Althouse and Sailor Mining Camp. The California Legislature appropriated \$3,500 to conduct a survey of the line from the Pacific to Pilot Knob, a distance of 82 miles. Nine surveyors and engineers turned down the job because of the low price. Finally Mr. T.P. Robinson, county surveyor of Kla-

math County, accepted the job only after the clause "... or so much of it as the appropriation of \$3,500 will allow" was inserted in the contract. How could he lose?

Robinson used an unusual method for running the line of the 42nd parallel. He laid out a great circle line from the initial point and then corrected back to the parallel. There were doubts about the accuracy of his survey because of suspected inaccuracies in the distances he measured. From his notes it would appear that he ran the line only about 41 miles instead of the 54 he reported. Thus he covered only about half the distance to the Northeast corner of California. At least the survey settled the question of who had jurisdiction over the "Althouse and Sailor Diggins" mining camp.

In 1855 there were piecemeal attempts to survey parts of the border. A surveyor for California investigated the border in Carson Valley, and an 1852 sketch was used to mark the Colorado River corner.

In 1856 another attempt was made to change the border so that Carson Valley would be included in California. Instead of following the 120th meridian it was proposed that the line be shifted eastward two and a half degrees. This would have included Reno, Carson City and Hawthorne but not Tonopah. This effort also failed.

By 1857 the Mormons felt that they were gaining control over all of Utah Territory, so they rescinded the right of self government they had granted to Carson Valley two years before. The residents of Genoa, Carson Valley and Susanville were indignant over this action, so Isaac Roop of Susanville called them together in Genoa where they drew up a constitution for the "Territory of Nevada." They asked Congress to recognize their independence, but the plea was ignored.

This encouraged the Mormons to launch an uprising against the U.S. Army in September of 1857. After a few minor skirmishes, peace was made in May 1858 with some concessions on both sides.

In the five year period from 1859 to 1863 there were two towns near the as yet unsurveyed line which underwent considerable turmoil due to the uncertainty of their position. The first of these was Susanville. We have already seen how Isaac Roop led an unsuccessful attempt to form a "Territory of Nevada" in the region including Susanville, Carson Valley and Genoa.

Roop, known for his persistence but not for his modesty, changed the name of Lake County to Roop County and claimed a portion of Plumas County as Nevada land. Susanville was made the County seat and a special term of the First District Court of Nevada was authorized for January 1863.

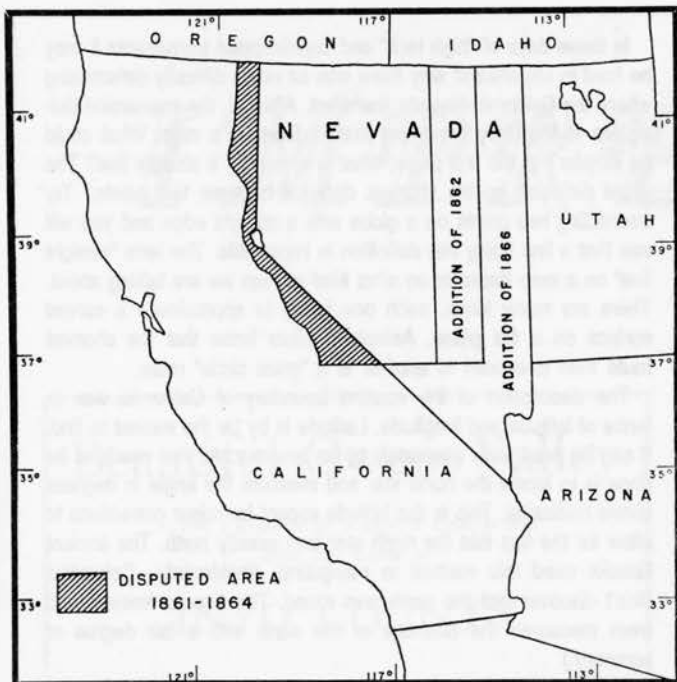
After the first session of this court the Roop County Probate Judge issued an injunction against the Plumas County Justice of Peace restraining him from holding court in the disputed portion of Roop County. The Justice ignored the order and was fined \$100.00, imprisoned and then released on parole. A Plumas County judge then issued an injunction against both the Roop County judge and sheriff, and Roop County countered with an injunction against the Plumas County Sheriff. The Plumas County sheriff then arrested the Roop County sheriff and the latter escaped and gathered an armed band in Susanville. The Plumas County sheriff organized a posse. There was apparently no bloodshed and it was finally agreed that Susanville (and Roop's farm) were within the boundary of California as defined in the California constitution.

The portion of Roop County inside of California became part of Plumas County, the balance incorporated into Washoe County. Poor Isaac Roop! His one possibility of immortality was to have his name attached to a county such as Ormsby, Storey and Nye, but even that honor eluded him.

Actually the border conflict in the vicinity of Susanville may not be settled yet. Every few years the citizens in that area attempt by ballot or court action to be annexed into Nevada. So far they have been unsuccessful, but if they ever succeed perhaps the name "Roop" will be resurrected.

The other town which became involved in the state line controversy was Aurora. This situation was just the reverse of the Susanville one. In this case California claimed a region which was really east of the true line. On March 2, 1861 the Territory of Nevada was organized by an Act of Congress. California wasted no time in claiming Aurora, and on March 24 established Mono County with the county seat in that town.

One of President Lincoln's first acts after his inauguration on March 4 was to appoint James W. Nye, a New York politician, governor of the new territory.



Historical diagram of Nevada. The "Sierra Crest" boundary is shown approximately as it was interpreted by the DeGroot Map of Nevada Territory, 1861, in Bancroft Library, University of California.



March 2, 1861 Territory of Nevada organized by act of Congress.

March 1861 James W. Nye of New York appointed Governor of Nevada Territory.

March 24, 1861 California established Mono County with county seat at Aurora.

July, 1861 Gov. Nye visited Aurora, convinced it was in Nevada.

1861 New government of Nevada appointed a Surveyor General to survey parts of Carson valley and settled areas near border.

1861 California legislature petitioned to accept "Sierra Crest Boundary" — refused.

1861 Lieutenant Ives determined position of southern terminus at Colorado River.

March 21, 1862 Gov. Nye appeared before California Assembly to argue for "Sierra Crest Boundary."

Sept. 3, 1862 Mono County officials elected in Aurora.



Nye travelled by sea to California, and soon after his arrival in Carson City he visited Aurora in June and was convinced that it was in Nevada. Being an astute politician, and aware of the bitterness surrounding the Susanville controversy, he decided to be patient and await the outcome of a survey to settle the argument.

In September of 1862 Mono County officials were elected in Aurora. In September 1863 another election was held, but this time, to be on the safe side, voters were given two ballots, one for Esmeralda County, Nevada and the other for Mono County, California. Just after the election a 102 mile section of the oblique line from Lake Tahoe was completed, and Aurora was definitely proven to be in Nevada. The county seat of Mono County was moved to Bridgeport.

The citizens of Aurora were doubtless pleased to find themselves in a different state from their neighbors to the west, the town of Bodie, which they considered a den of iniquity. The story is told about the editor of the Aurora paper who told of a little girl whose parents were planning to move to Bodie. She finished her prayers at night by saying, "Goodbye God, we're going to Bodie." The Bodie editor countered by maintaining that the punctuation of the girl's prayer had been incorrect. What she really said was, "Good, by God! We're going to Bodie!"

It was many years before the bothersome 120th meridian line was firmly established. Many people on the east side of the Sierras were unhappy about the artificial boundary and preferred a more natural one. In 1861 the California legislature was petitioned by Nevada to accept the "Sierra Crest" line. The petition was denied. On March 21, 1852 Governor Nye appeared before the California Assembly to argue the case. Nye was known as a logical, eloquent and persuasive orator. He presented his case with glowing phrases and intelligent arguments. The members of the assembly listened attentively, then informed him that nothing could be done since the boundary line was spelled out in the constitution.

Nye pointed out that the constitution could be amended, but was told this would take too long. He finally threatened to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, but realized this course would stand no chance since Nevada was just a Territory and besides California had much more population and political power. Had the Sierra Crest line been accepted the Owens Valley would have been in Nevada and this would have had a profound effect on the water problem.

In the 1860s there were numerous attempts to establish portions of the line. In 1860 the first of six lines that have crossed the north shore of Lake Tahoe was referred to as the "Higley" line. It was the farthest west of all the lines. Another U.S. Government survey in 1860-1 established a different line. In 1861 Lieutenant J.C. Ives, who had explored the Colorado River by steamer, marked the southern terminus of the California-Nevada line. In 1862 a survey was started from the northern terminus, but the results were considered preliminary. The Houghton and Ives line of 1863 from Oregon to Lake Tahoe was recognized by statutes of both states and is described in the California Government code, yet it receives no actual use and only a handful of people know where it is.

On October 1, 1864 Nevada was admitted as a state. Nebraska, Colorado and Montana had all sought admission, but Nevada was the only territory admitted during the Civil War and this was mainly because of the huge silver revenues which helped finance the Union cause.

It was not until 1867 that a really serious effort was made to locate the northeast corner of California. On October 1 Daniel G. Major was awarded a contract to survey the 42nd parallel with particular attention to its intersection with the 120th meridian. He set up an observatory at Camp Bidwell, a military installation near the crucial northeast corner. From this observatory he made over 2000 astronomical observations through three lunations (complete lunar cycles).

When Major was satisfied that he had the exact latitude and longitude of the spot, he measured 9.7 miles north and 5 miles east and there he built a dressed sandstone monument to mark the "official" northeast corner. He did not explain why his corner was more than two miles west of the Houghton-Ives corner surveyed four years before. The authorities in Washington (who had probably never been to California) had complete confidence in Major's work. It is not known how Major arrived at his results, but it is probably that he did not use telegraphic signals. In view of the huge number of astronomic observations he made, he must have used the old "moons of Jupiter" method or some lunar phenomenon to determine longitude.¹

The insistence of authorities in Washington to accept his results led to great frustration for the next surveyor. In 1872 the U.S. General Land Office entered into a contract with Alexe Von Schmidt to survey the entire line from Oregon to the Colorado River. The story of this remarkable man's accomplishments and subsequent shifts in this elusive boundary will be narrated in the next issue.

¹ Ed. Note: Without an accurate clock set to Greenwich time, the moons of Jupiter, which disappeared at a specific time, were used. Longitude was calculated with an ephemeris, or almanac, relating the disappearances to Greenwich time.



1862 Survey started from northern terminus but results considered only preliminary.

Jan. 1863 Nevada claimed Susanville and established 1st district court there.

1863 Houghton-Ives corner.

1863 Houghton-Ives line at Lake Tahoe (Statutory Boundary).

Sept. 2, 1863 election for both Esmeralda & Mono counties held in Aurora.

1863 Oblique line run showing Aurora to be in Nevada just after election. Only 102 miles of line completed.

1864 Nevada admitted to Union as state.

1865 Oblique border extended 72 mi. beyond where 1863 survey ended.

Oct. 1, 1867 Daniel G. Major awarded contract to survey 42nd latitude line.

July 1868 Major began survey from Camp Bidwell near northeast corner.

1868 Major found surveys of 1860 and 1863 placed NE corner too far to the east.

1872 US General Land Office made contract with Von Schmidt.

1872 Von Schmidt line at Lake Tahoe (Marked boundary).



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In these days of "high tech" and sophisticated instruments it may be hard to understand why there was so much difficulty determining where the California-Nevada line went. After all, the convention delegates in Monterey drew two straight lines on a map. What could be simpler? In the first place, what is meant by a straight line? The usual definition is "the shortest distance between two points." Try connecting two points on a globe with a straight edge and you will see that a line fitting this definition is impossible. The term "straight line" on a map depends on what kind of map we are talking about. There are many kinds, each one trying to approximate a curved surface on a flat plane. Aeroplane pilots know that the shortest route from one point to another is a "great circle" route.

The description of the eastern boundary of California was in terms of latitude and longitude. Latitude is by far the easiest to find. It can be done fairly accurately by an amateur. All that needs to be done is to locate the north star and measure the angle in degrees above horizontal. This is the latitude except for minor corrections to allow for the fact that the north star isn't exactly north. The ancient Greeks used this method in navigating. (Incidentally, Columbus didn't discover that the earth was round. The Greeks knew it and even measured the diameter of the earth with a fair degree of accuracy.)

The question of finding the longitude of a point is a different matter. It is a problem that has plagued astronomers, navigators and surveyors for centuries. Columbus used changes in the variation of the compass for a very crude estimate. Galileo in 1616 devised a method based on repeated observations on the moons of Jupiter, but the method was not very precise and most difficult to use in practice. Nevertheless, he tried to collect the fabulous reward that had been offered by the king of Spain, but with no success. Portugal, Venice and Holland also offered very large rewards, and the king of France was cheated out of a very large sum of money by an unknown German inventor. In 1714 the British government offered a reward of 20,000 pounds for a practical solution to the problem.

It soon became apparent that the solution to the problem lie in a combination of accurate astronomical observations and precise measurement of Greenwich mean time. To do this an accurate timepiece had to be built that would not be affected by changes in temperature and buffeting by rough seas. John Harrison, a self educated Yorkshire carpenter, tackled the job. After 21 years he had made four "chronometers." It took 26 more years to arrange a test, and in November 1761 a ship sailed from Portsmouth to Jamaica, returning five months later. The test was eminently successful, meeting all of the stipulations of the reward. The Board of Longitude balked at paying the whole reward, insisting on more tests and detailed plans for the chronometers. After eleven more years, in 1772 Harrison was given the entire award at the insistence of George III.

The problem of finding longitude was not quite solved for land surveys, since chronometers could not be expected to keep perfect time when hauled over rough trails in stagecoaches. One other thing was needed: instant communication between Greenwich and locations in California. The first telegraph line was built from Washington to New York City in 1844, and within ten years telegraph lines stretched from coast to coast. On August 8, 1858 the first transatlantic cable was completed. Finally it was possible to pinpoint fairly accurately some points on a meridian.

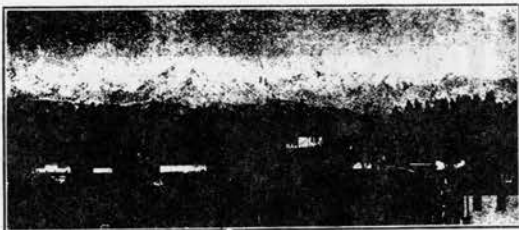
IMPRESSIONS

Beautiful Owens Valley

*is the Paradise of Eastern California
and the Gem of*

INYO COUNTY

Owens Valley presents an area of 720 square miles, a garden spot which, with its tributary regions, offers greater attractions for homeseekers, more chances for investment, and a greater diversity of undeveloped opportunities which appeal to miner, farmer, manufacturer and stockman, than any other territory of equal extent in the United States.



View of portion of Bishop, in Owens Valley, Metropolis of Inyo County, California.
(Looking west toward Sierra Nevada) Photo by F. G. Bentley, Bishop

Geologically a part of the great Nevada Gold Fields, and possessing within itself the undeveloped resources of a new empire, combined with the incomparable climate and soil of California.

OWENS VALLEY is a new domain for the miner, farmer, investor, stockman and tourist.

For particulars address

INYO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BISHOP

CALIFORNIA

by Marguerite Sowell

Note: The author spent eighteen years in the advertising business in Los Angeles. She ultimately became V.P. Director of Media Services with an international advertising agency before moving to Bishop.

create a notice for the newspaper. There was no thought of other forms of media, because newspapers were the only game in town. "Truth in advertising," was non-existent, and to please employers, flights of fancy flourished.

At the turn of the century things changed a bit with the passing of the snakeoil merchants who were losing their ability to captivate a "sophisticated" audience. Advertising agents no longer skulked in alleys buying space for pennies and selling it for dollars. Magazines reluctantly began to sell space to quality advertisers. The message, although still stilted and flowery for the most part, began to take on a meaning beyond the mere ego gratification of a manager/owner.

It is impossible to tell what the net effect of advertising was in those days, but it is evident by the copy, that much thought was given to writing ads. An example of advertising in Owens Valley about that time is given below. Apparently the Inyo Chamber of Commerce decided that the rest of the world should be aware of the beauty of Owens Valley. The resulting ad appeared in the September 1, 1908 issue of *Inyo Magazine*.

Wow! I'm sold! This, today, would be known as a "reader ad," implying that not many would take the time to read this much copy. But it is written persuasively, and the number of advertising impressions per day on citizens at that time was low enough to give them time to digest a long ad. (It is interesting to note that the first paragraph is *one* sentence — a no-no in today's advertising community.)

In the advertising business, one impression equals one person viewing (or hearing) one advertising message one time. Media (radio, television, newspaper, magazine, etc.) are selected based on the number of impressions anticipated for a particular ad. How complicated our society has become.

But before the copywriter, before the production manager, art director and media specialist, advertising messages were roughed out and sent to the printer in hopes that the resulting advertisement (not called 'ad' yet) would be presentable and persuasive. Small business managers in the late 1880s, who felt the crunch of competition, would appoint the best speller on the staff to

About that Home

If you consulted the Delphian
Oracle the Message would be

Ask the Inyo Chamber of Commerce

In Eastern California lies a new domain:
The Gem of Inyo County. Tourists,
investors, miners, farmers or stockmen will
find it worth while to address a letter to
the secretary:

**Inyo Chamber of Commerce,
Bishop, California.**

Follow-up ads tell the same story, but in a different
way. The Chamber used this technique in the following
(October 15 of the same year):

In 1908, Inyo advertising began several techniques that are used today. The combination, or omnibus, ad (selling several services or products at one time):

An appeal to women:

W. H. Shirley & Co.
 New and complete line of
 MEN'S FURNISHING GOODS AND
 CONFECTIONERY
 FRUITS AND TOBACCOS
 Billiard and Pool Room in Connection
 Cor. Main and Line Sts
BISHOP BAKERY
 Bishop California

Your Wife Knows
 Our product is equal to the imported
 article
STANDARD FLOUR MILLS
 We do gristing too.
A. S. KILPATRICK & SON
 Bishop, Cal.
 Mills on Bishop Creek

STEVENS
Leece & Watterson,
 SPORTING GOODS
 OF ALL KINDS

 Come in and see our
 Stock of 20-gauge Shot
 Guns--Just the thing for
 Ladies - - - -

The service ad (including bath)

FRENCH LAUNDRY
 Dry Cleaning, Dyeing, Pressing
 and Repairing
 Baths 35c. Open until noon Sunday.
 A. Cazassus, Prop. Bishop, Cal.

The special class appeal:

WHEN MINING M'N
 COME TO BISHOP
 THEY GO TO THE
Valley View Hotel
 Headquarters for Mining Men
 Everything first-class
 GEO. W. LEIDY, Prop.
 Bishop California

The integrity sell:

In a class by itself
**Inyo Mines
 Syndicate...**
 BISHOP, INYO COUNTY,
 CALIFORNIA
**Strictly High Grade
 Mining Investment**
 Subscriptions Now Received
ATTRACTIVE
 because of clean-cut, business principles,
UNIQUE
 because of conspicuous merit
 No obligation incurred by inquiry.
 Write for information. Address:
INYO MINES SYNDICATE

And don't forget the classifieds:

FOR SALE
 Ideal Ranch in the unsurpassable
 climate of Inyo County, California;
 foot of Sierra Nevada Mountains,
 near town of Bishop.
 200 acres. Every acre suscept-
 ible of cultivation; 40 acres now in
 alfalfa, averaging 3 tons per acre.
 Am renting these 40 acres for \$300
 annually.
PRICE - \$8,000
Address: P. O. Box 58
Bishop, California

Now that's a deal!

It seems clear from the above that Inyo County was on its way to making a good "impression" in the advertising world.

DESERT FANTASY

by Louise Kelsey

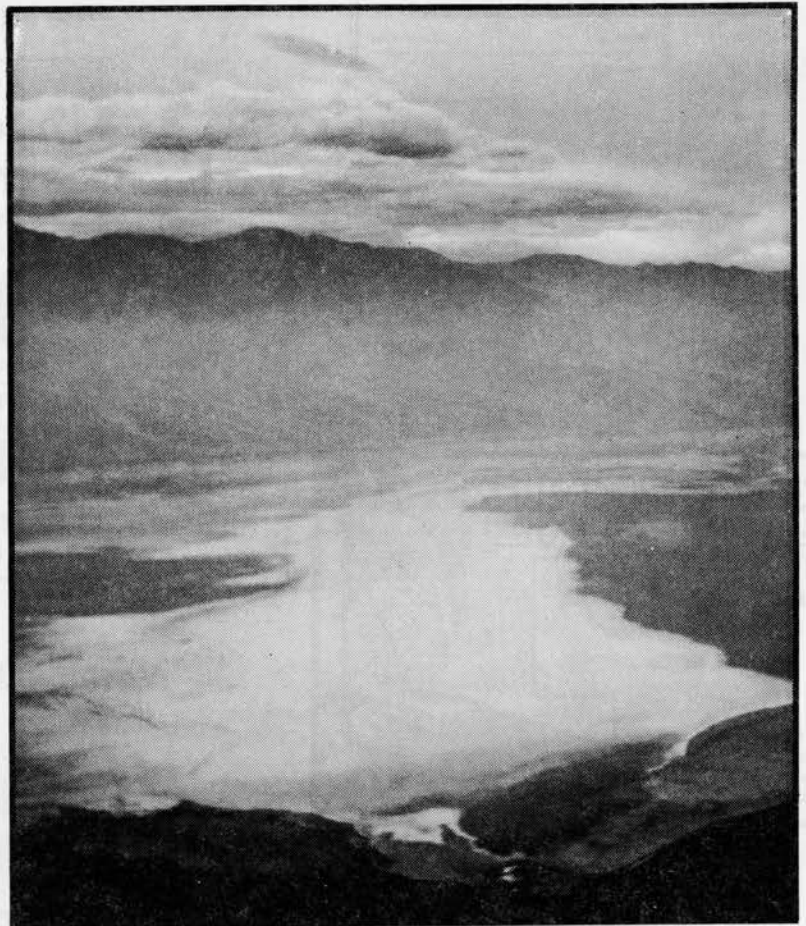
This, The Desert

Inyo and Mono counties hold the desert in all of its shadings. From the dry sea of Death Valley to the deep snows of White Mountain, the desert is presented in beauty and harshness.

Death Valley, with a low elevation, is total desert complete with dunes, oasis and colorful history. Bad Water, at 282 feet below sea level is the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere. It is also the final reminder of the ancient lake which covered the valley floor at intervals during the Pleistocene Ice Age. "Lake Manly" is estimated to have been ninety miles long, six to eleven miles wide and to have reached a depth of six hundred feet. Now this dry sea is a huge salt playa which can mirage into an inviting body of floating water.

This deep, dry desert has tall, dry mountains whose alluvial fans offer rock and minerals formed in the earth's infancy. Miners of the 1800s combed the debris seeking clues to riches in the hills. But it was the shaded springs that held the desert's greatest treasure.

The dune of Eureka Valley, gusting to nearly six hundred eighty feet, stands as the tallest in the nation. Its sides ripple like dry water and its base is home to rare desert plants and night-loving animal life. Again, the dry lake bed at the western base was once a great provider to migratory birds and a larder to



Lake Manly from Dantes View

I Will Always Be Here

Move, move tumbleweed! I will not let you rest. Around you go — up, over and away! Like a band of goats scurrying about a gentle hollow in the sand they bounce over the crest of a dune and are gone. Let them play their little game. They try to hide from me but I will find them for I know each nook and burrow, hole and cave. This desert valley is my kingdom, these dunes my castle. I will travel forever but will be with you always.



Desert Dune Grass

an ancient Indian culture. The graceful, buff-colored dune is dramatically backdropped by the black-brown Last Chance Range. Its age is unknown; however the sands of Death Valley are considered to have formed in the last several thousand years. Because of unique species of plants and animals evolving in this special habitat it seems likely that the Eureka Dunes are much older than the dunes of Death Valley.

Owens Valley is the high desert of sagebrush country. Dubbed "Deepest Valley," its narrow length runs two miles deep between the Sierra and the White Mountain Range.

Not a cloud has drifted past the moon; still I cannot rest. The dune creatures will be surfacing and I want to be with them. They hunt and are hunted. It is autumn and the kangaroo rats hurriedly gather seeds for future dinners; the coyotes are putting on winter fat.

Footprints make strange designs in the sand. Daylight visitors guess about them but if you will be still and watch with me this night the prints will lose their mystery. Can you see the burrow opening nearly hidden under the creosote? Watch carefully now. See the huge, beadlike eyes of my kangaroo rat? Magnificent tail! It is much longer than his body and with tufts of hair at its tip. He uses it like a painter's brush to draw designs in the sand as he plays. If you could ruffle his fur as I do, he would feel as soft as a kitten, but you cannot. He has a quiet way of moving while he is harvesting. His feet, close to the ground, scoot him along like a mechanical toy. One move from you and he will bound away in great leaps but the noise I make does not bother him.

Can you see the dim shadow beyond that rock? Our harvester must be quick because another friend is looking for food. While we are watching the kangaroo rat, el coyote is watching us from his scent post on the ridge. Since we have been quiet he will trot down

Although range and water wars have been fought through the valley and the country to the north, if you had been walking this land two hundred years ago it would be the obvious transition between deep desert and mountain desert. Still desert, desert, desert.

There is more ground and subsurface water in the high desert, and thus more plant and animal life. Sage, rabbit and bitterbrush combine with taboose and bunch grass to figure in the food chain of life on the desert. With the arrival of farmers and ranchers the look of the desert has changed but walk away from water and you are back to the basic desert.

his well-worn path to this hunting ground, for where there are kangaroo rats there are desert coyotes. Don't be overly critical of this hunter. He will catch rodents which carry tularimia and bubonic plague — transmittable to you, my guest.

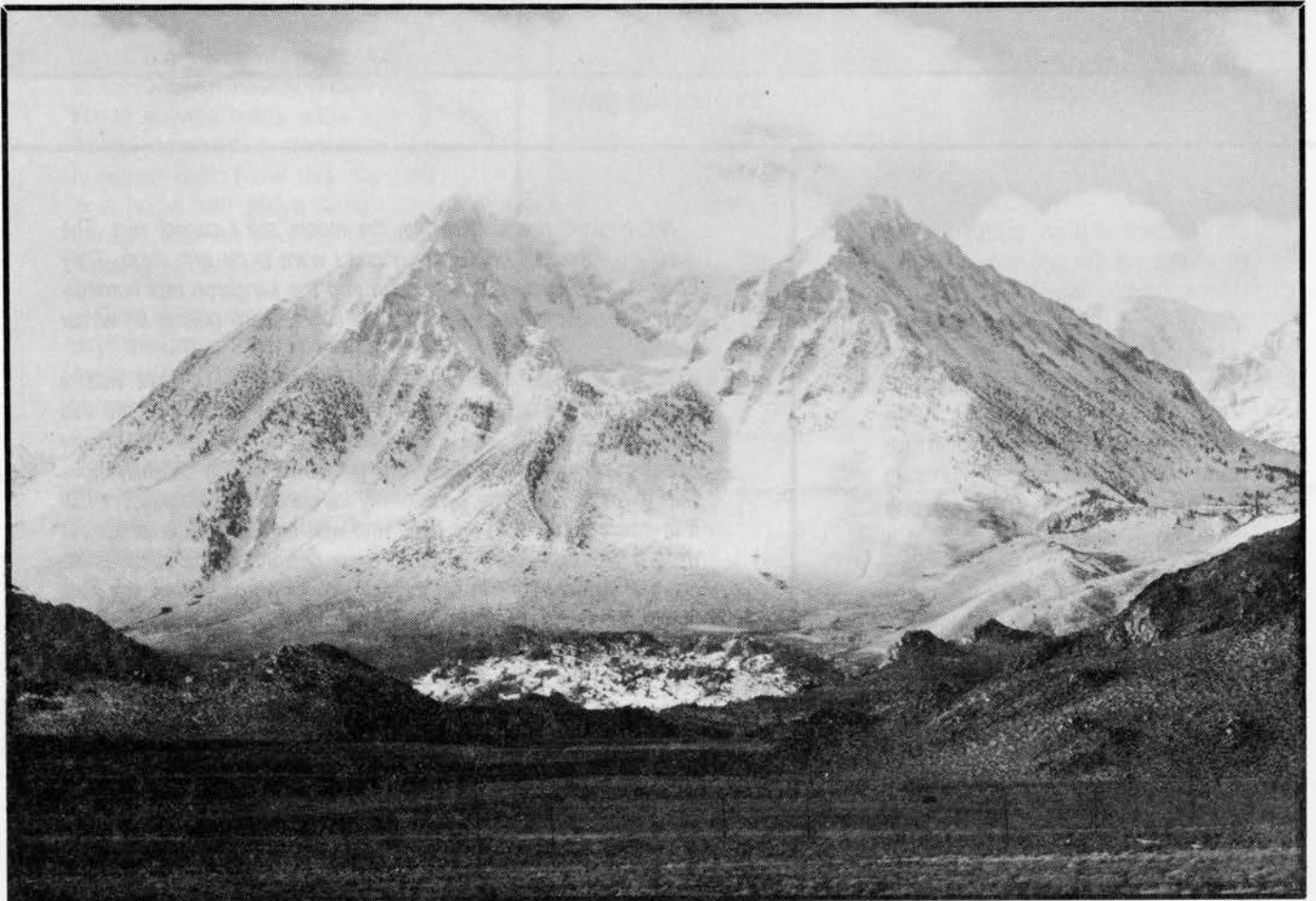
The coyote becomes a well digger in dry times. Of course he gobbles up many of the animals who come to drink from his scooped-out water holes, but don't you expect some reward for your work? If you think the coyote is tricky, wait until morning and I will show you a true clown.

Get some sleep, I'll awaken you early.

Ah, what a shame to sleep the night away on the desert. Sleep should come in the hot, quiet daylight hours. The desert night is rich with excitement, terror and fun.

Busy packrats make a game of moving things about. Sometimes they work with a purpose, but just as often they seem to be driven only by a moving mania. They have a secret, too. We can only guess they how they walk, unhurt, over cactus joints, or carry large and spiny stems of cholla to their nests. The moon is low now; deep shadows appear in the hollows of desert tracks. Move quickly, packrat! I see the fattish track of a diamondback and the unconnected, parallel markings of a sidewinder trailing in diagonal evil across the sand.

Sagebrush Country, Basin Mountain, Winter





Highest Desert, White Mountains, Home of the Bristlecone

The ranges of the Eastern Inyo and Mono are desert mountains. In the White Mountains, the peak of which is the second tallest in the continental United States, heavy winter snows and high winds combine to form an ecosystem which supports the world's hardest survivalist, the bristlecone pine. These wind-sculpt trees are nourished by minimum rainfall and share their dolomite soil with a mosaic of tiny flowers.

Reds and rusts, lavenders and silvers, yellow, green, pink and blue blossoms are so tiny and grow so close to the earth that photographers call them "belly-flowers" and that is where

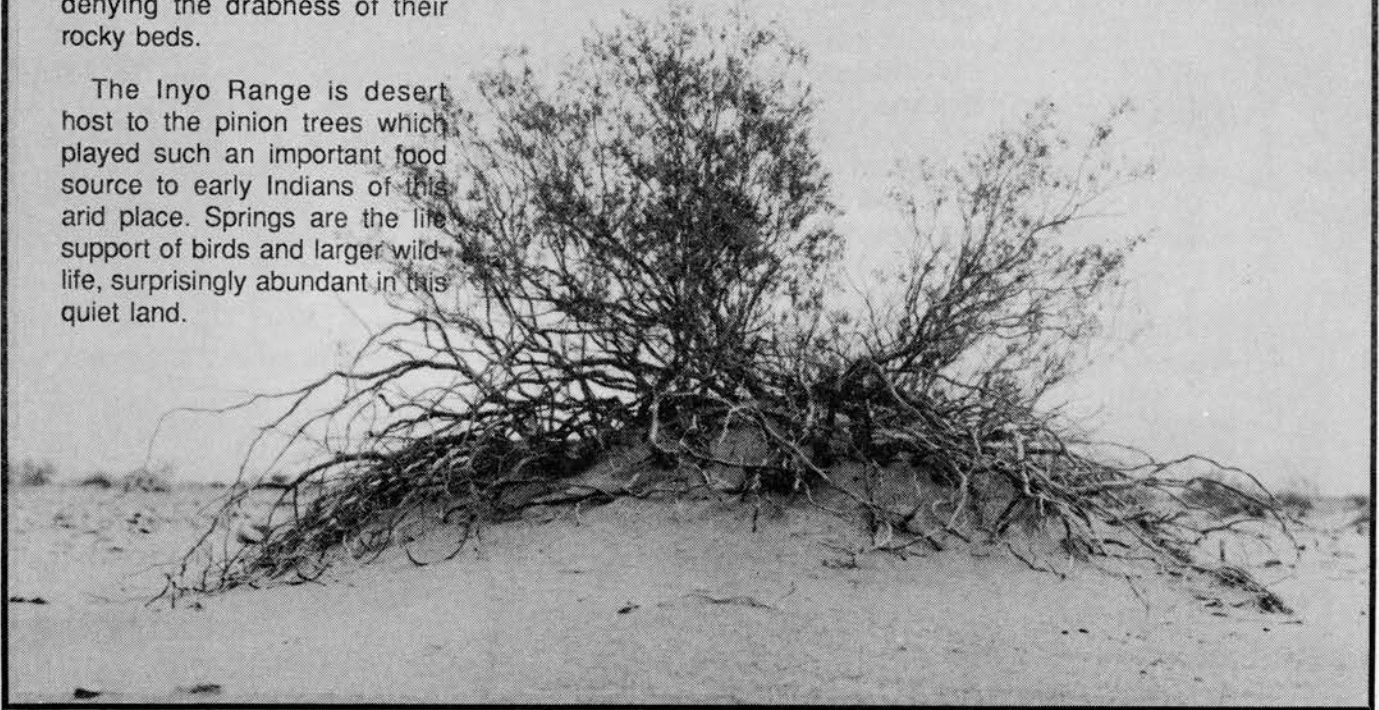
The night with its mystery fades. It is time to call my visitor . . . but no. I will let roadrunner do it for me. Nothing would please him more than to tweak your nose, my sleeping friend. Awake! Did my roadrunner startle you? Well, you startled him, but he'll be back.

Here he comes now and the bird-clown brings a peace offering. He has found a lizard and would rather play with it than choke it down. This bird rarely flies, but he can run and leap like a ballet dancer. When he raises his bristle tipped topknot or preens his too-long tail he looks as well costumed as a comic dancer. This little one's appetite is as odd as his appearance. Horned toads, grasshoppers, mice, spiders, bees, cactus fruits and berries just start his menu. So get up, Sleepyhead, and watch out for your nose!

Your visit is nearly over, so go before the sun bakes the life out of you. There are shadows moving across the sand. Look up, the vultures are gathering. They are not as ominous as you and your stories have made them. True, they are carrion eaters, but can you imagine what my kingdom would be like if these sad birds were not here? Soaring and gliding, you see them at their best. There is grace and beauty to the effortlessness of flight. They are looking

you will be to see them best. In contrast, at a slightly lower elevation, rock-filled gullies seem to erupt in a show of blue lupine mixed with red paint brush denying the drabness of their rocky beds.

The Inyo Range is desert host to the pinion trees which played such an important food source to early Indians of this arid place. Springs are the life support of birds and larger wildlife, surprisingly abundant in this quiet land.



Burrows and Brush

There is beauty here. Flowers have a short blooming time compared to their relatives in the damper areas of the west range and coast. Birds are nearly all migratory and even the animals move or hibernate from the intense heat or the extreme cold. It is a land of contrasts to satisfy the most thirsty beauty-seeking soul.

Reference:

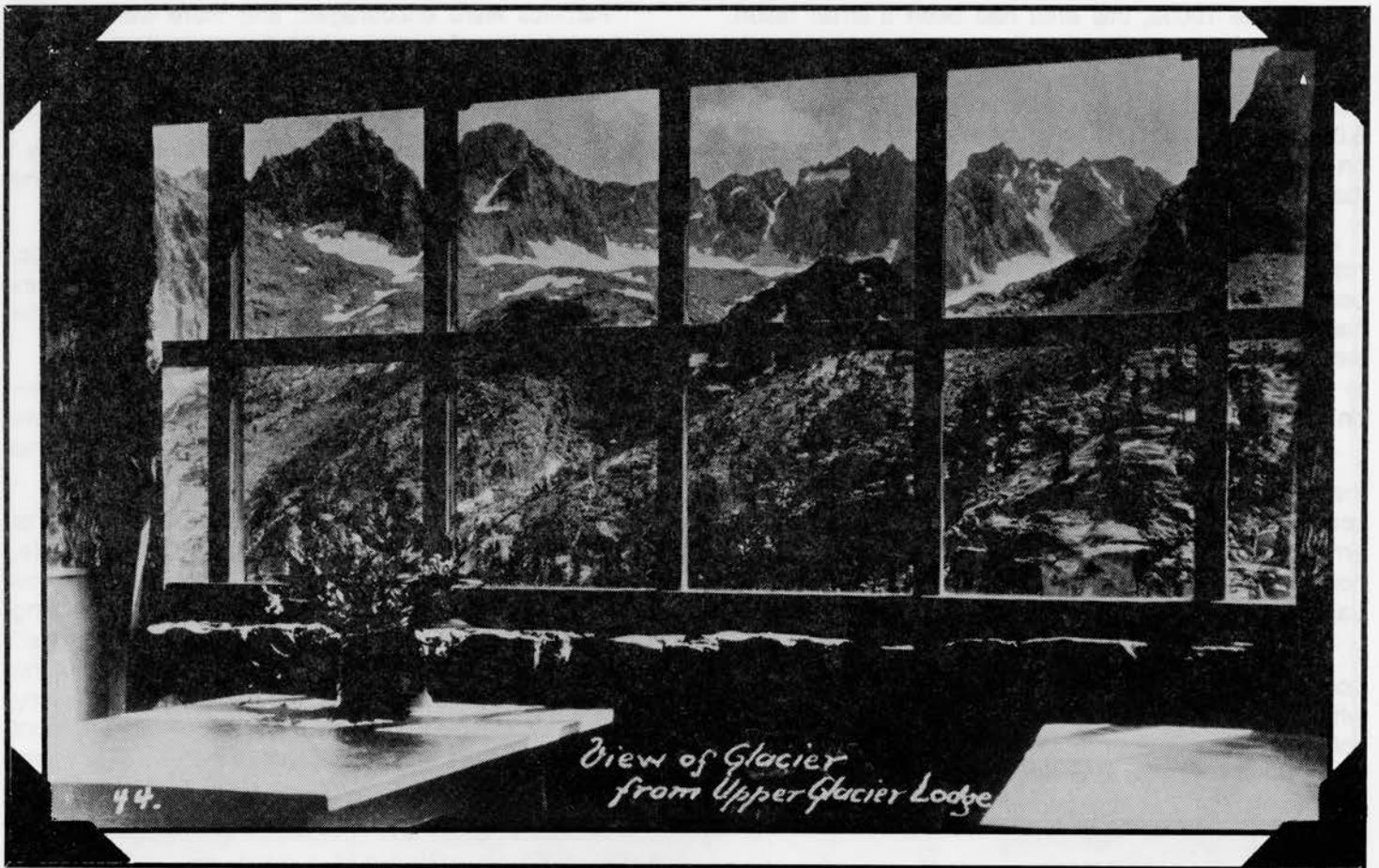
1. *Death Valley National Monument*
by James W. Cornett
copyright 1986 by Death Valley
Natural History Association
2. *Eureka Dunes Environmental Analysis*
Bureau of Land Management,
Department of the Interior
July 10, 1976
3. *Deepest Valley*
by Genny Schumacher Smith
Revised edition 1978

for food and their food is the rotting flesh of the dead. One after another they settle, black and heavy, around their macabre feast. The heat makes them ruffle their feathers, adding to their already unkempt appearance. The rank, foul-smelling air contributes to the mood. No song lightens the somber scene.

Enough, visitor? Death frightens you? Then go! I am not afraid. I will always be here.

This is the desert, I am the wind.





The Spirit of Glacier Lodge

....a love story

by Marie Taylor

If you venture out of your room at the Lodge in the wee dark hours before dawn, tread carefully along the narrow hallway. The lights may flicker and dim. As your eyes adjust to the change, you'll probably be jolted by a surge of brightness. Do you feel a cool breeze, encounter a cold spot that makes you shudder and pull your wrap tighter around your shoulders?

Perhaps you'll catch a whiff of foxtail pine. In case you peer down from the balcony into the main Lodge room and think you see a tiny wisp of smoke, as if someone had just added a few logs to a woodstove to fend off the night's chill, don't panic.

It's only Glacier Lodge's resident ghost on his self-appointed rounds.

Is Glacier Lodge really haunted? Some people definitely think so, others aren't sure. But everyone who has stayed there for any length of time will tell you they have felt the presence of "something." We'll call it a spirit.

Long before the white man came to the Owens Valley, the Palisade Glacier area was an Indian hunting ground. That fact alone is usually enough to set some folks off creating legends and mysteries. Not this time. The Lodge's spirit is different.

Since the 1900s, this area had been a small resort where locals and a few luckily-knowledgeable out-of-towners could hike and fish. Several small cabins, a tiny but comfortable hotel, and a dining cottage stood at the 8,000-foot elevation. A few tents were also maintained on the cliff above Fourth Lake, at about the 11,000-foot mark.

As the story goes, during the Depression a Valley resident who either owned or worked for the local lumberyard made a monumental decision. People in town had very little money, the lumber business had no customers. Rather than sit idly by, the employees would go to work, building something with the materials they had on hand.

Their project was to improve the resort, known only then as "that place up Big Pine Canyon." They would construct the most beautiful lodge of its kind in the Eastern Sierra. When they were finished, they had created not only a main lodge, but a miniature version at Fourth Lake to replace the tents.

The work was arduous, particularly at the upper Lake Lodge, seven miles away and over 3,000 feet higher, where all materials had to be packed in on mules. The spirit and determination of these men, their love of the area, and their desire to create hope when many people were in despair, can't be ignored as the beginning of the "something" that remains today.

George and Bertha Hall became the first owners/operators of the exquisitely-finished resort, dubbed Glacier Lodge. When George passed away, Bertha sold it to two young couples, Pete and Kay Holmes and Bill and Lynn Wier.

Pete Holmes, described as extremely charismatic, embarked on his new venture with extreme enthusiasm. He was a newly-discharged Navy Lieutenant Commander who loved the mountains. Our story focuses on his years, from the end of World War II through 1947, and the heyday he created.

Pete's ideas were innovative and sometimes controversial, but by early 1946 Glacier Lodge knew it was a winner. One of Pete's first improvements was an upgraded hydroelectric plant, which remains today and is the usual explanation for the eccentric lighting. A string of housekeeping cabins stretched behind the hotel. Plans were underway for a dining room extension.

Usually booked to capacity during hunting and fishing seasons, the resort hummed with visitors enjoying the best of everything in a High Sierra vacation. Many of the guests were professional people from Southern California. Eleven dollars a day, up to twenty-five for extras, made it quite exclusive.

Because of its proximity to the Alabama Hills, the Lodge often hosted movie stars who were filming there. A regular was Joel McCrea's wife, actress Frances Dee. Other notables included Gregory Peck and John Wayne.

Families were encouraged, and there were always lots of children. A number of families came from Europe. Glacier Lodge was an affordable alternative to expensive Continental resorts.

"The scenery is just as magnificent as in my country," one European visitor was purported to say, "but the ambiance here is supreme!"

That special ambiance was everywhere at the Lodge. In addition to three good meals a day, the employees offered friendly and expert services which reflected their love of the area and of anyone who appreciated it.

Pete wanted the best, and hired knowledgeable people to work for him. He never failed to attract raconteurs and interesting personalities to enliven the meals and provide stimulating hearthside conversation.

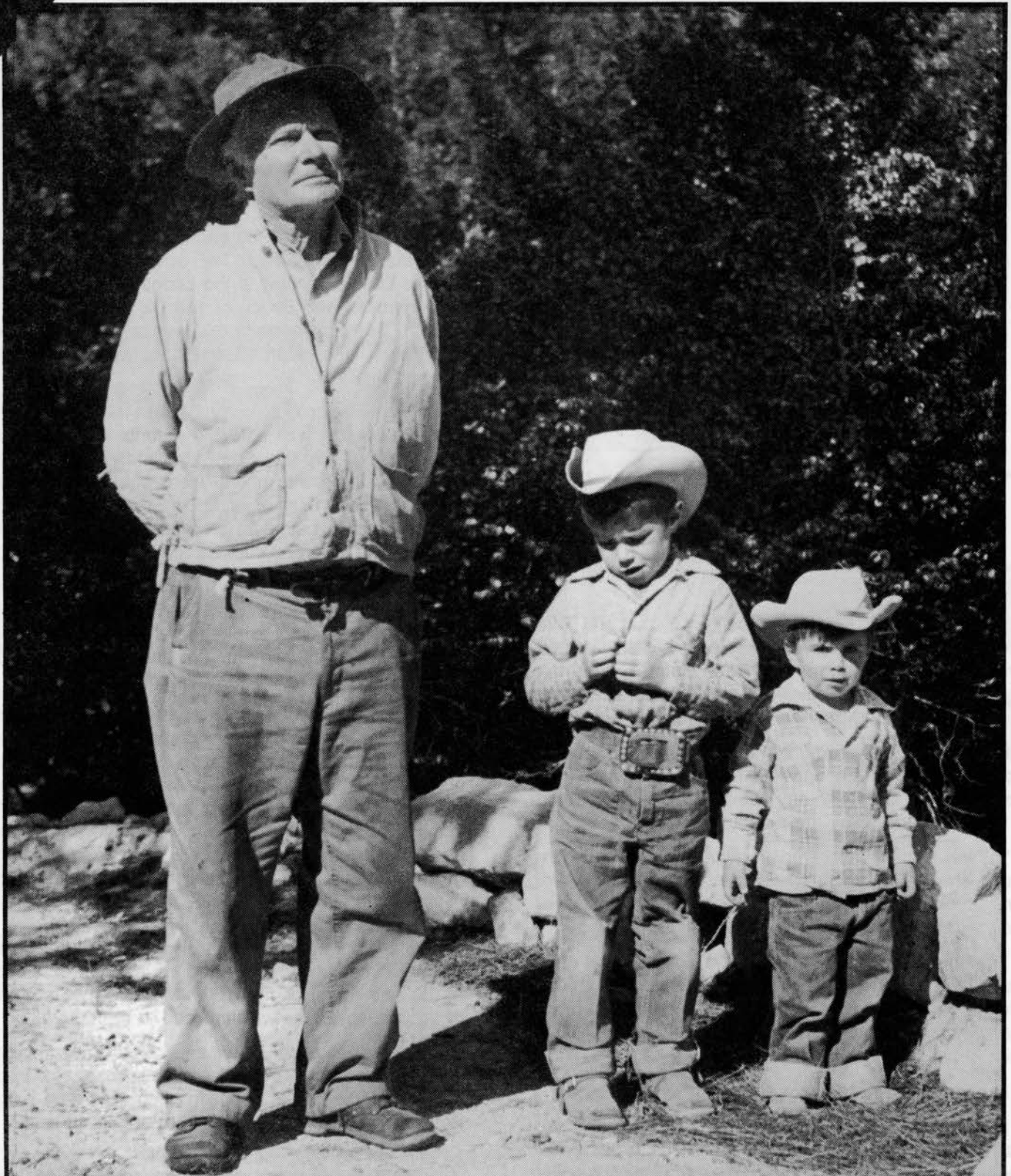
Big Pine Canyon at that time had a goodly share of interesting personalities, among them Norman Clyde. Norman's mountaineering skills in the Eastern Sierra had gained him international fame. Guests hiking through the Lakes area might find him at "Eagles Roost" or "Palace Hotel," his two private camps, where he rested between expeditions. The major peak directly west of Glacier Lodge is now officially designated Mount Clyde, and there is also a Clyde Minaret in the Mammoth Mountain area.

Between Fourth and Fifth lakes, the celebrated artist Robert Clunie maintained a permanent camp. In an unimaginably beautiful setting, he would spread out his finished oil paintings while he worked on the next. The backdrop of the Palisade Glacier was his first gallery, and no one could deny he had captured the beauty God created.

At Lake Lodge, visitors were greeted by Belle Tyler, who turned out marvelous meals and scrumptious sticky buns on the large woodstove, not an easy job at that elevation. Many people remember Belle's spryness and refusal to grow old, but little is known of her except that she had retired as the cook at the Quaker college in Deep Springs before coming to Glacier. She was one of the two people who remained at the higher elevation year around, the other being Norman Clyde.

Directly below Glacier Lodge, Glacier Pack Station's owner Ed Sargent offered day rides and the major source of transportation for tourists and their baggage to Lake Lodge, as well as mules for supplies to Lake Lodge. Among Ed's wranglers were Smalley, Tony the Basque, and The Swede From Down Below. And let's not forget Mack, the Perfect Cowboy. Always bedecked in the gaudiest of cowboy apparel and gear, Mack put Tom Mix and Gene Autry to shame.

The guests loved this group, who always managed to perform an impromptu rodeo if things were looking a mite dull. But sometimes things got a mite dull for the wranglers, too. At one point, after the summer season 1947, "something" convinced several of them to go to Tonopah on a "marryin' frenzy." They came back with



Norman Clyde, celebrated mountaineer, with two prospective climbers, Bill Manning Jr. and Larry Manning. Norman enjoyed the lodge and especially the young people, when he wasn't encamped in the upper lakes reading Latin and Greek literature.



Bill and Barbara Manning, December 1947

wives, and as far as anybody knows, they're still married to them.

You're probably asking yourself, was that the love story? Not yet. We'll have to back up a little for that. First, we must mention that Pete Holmes, Norman Clyde, and Ed Sargent disliked each other intensely. It has even been said they hated each other.

Pete wanted to promote the Lodge. Ed wanted to promote his pack station. And Norman didn't want to have anything to do with any enterprise; he only wanted to live there and enjoy the mountains he loved.

"I think if they had given it some thought," he continues, "two of them might have ganged up on the third. But they were all so dead set in their ways, that never occurred to them."

The three men tolerated each other, but only because they probably admired each other for their respective talents and their individual efforts on behalf of the Palisades Glacier area. "Something" kept them from killing each other.

Now, let's get to the love story.

In July 1946, Barbara Adams, fresh out of a Southern California high school, landed a summer job at Glacier Lodge. At the end of the season, "something" made her decide to stay on and work the winter shift.

Then in February 1947, two young men who couldn't find good jobs in Los Angeles decided it would be fun to become ski bums. They headed for Sun Valley, Idaho. Their first stop was Glacier Lodge.

"Something" caused one of the young men to sprain his ankle his first day there, so he gave up his youthful

quest, leaving his friend without a car and without the money to pay for their room and board.

The friend stayed on for two weeks before he gathered up the courage to tell Pete he couldn't pay the bill. Pete had been waiting patiently for the young man to come to him, and was ready with not the Sheriff, but a job. Casting dreams of Sun Valley aside, Bill Manning happily took the offer. Within a few days, he met Barbara Adams.

After several months, "something" told Barbara and Bill they were meant for each other, and in October 1947 they were married. The ceremony took place in front of the big window in the Lodge building, officiated by Reverend Ted Brock of the Big Pine Community Church. Some folks claim this was all part of the marryin' frenzy, since soon afterward another set of employees tied the knot.

"When I decided to marry Bill, it seemed like a real good idea and I was sure my parents would approve" Barbara says. "We drove down to Jimmy Nick's Chevron station in Big Pine to phone them with the good news. They weren't pleased at all, but we went ahead anyhow. Since Bill and I have just celebrated our 41st wedding anniversary, I'm pretty sure we made the right decision."

People who know Glacier Lodge in the 1980s may chuckle at this prenuptial call, commenting that it's still sometimes necessary to use the phone at Nick's Chevron. Telephone service was not available at the Lodge in the 1940s, and even now, it's sort of iffy.

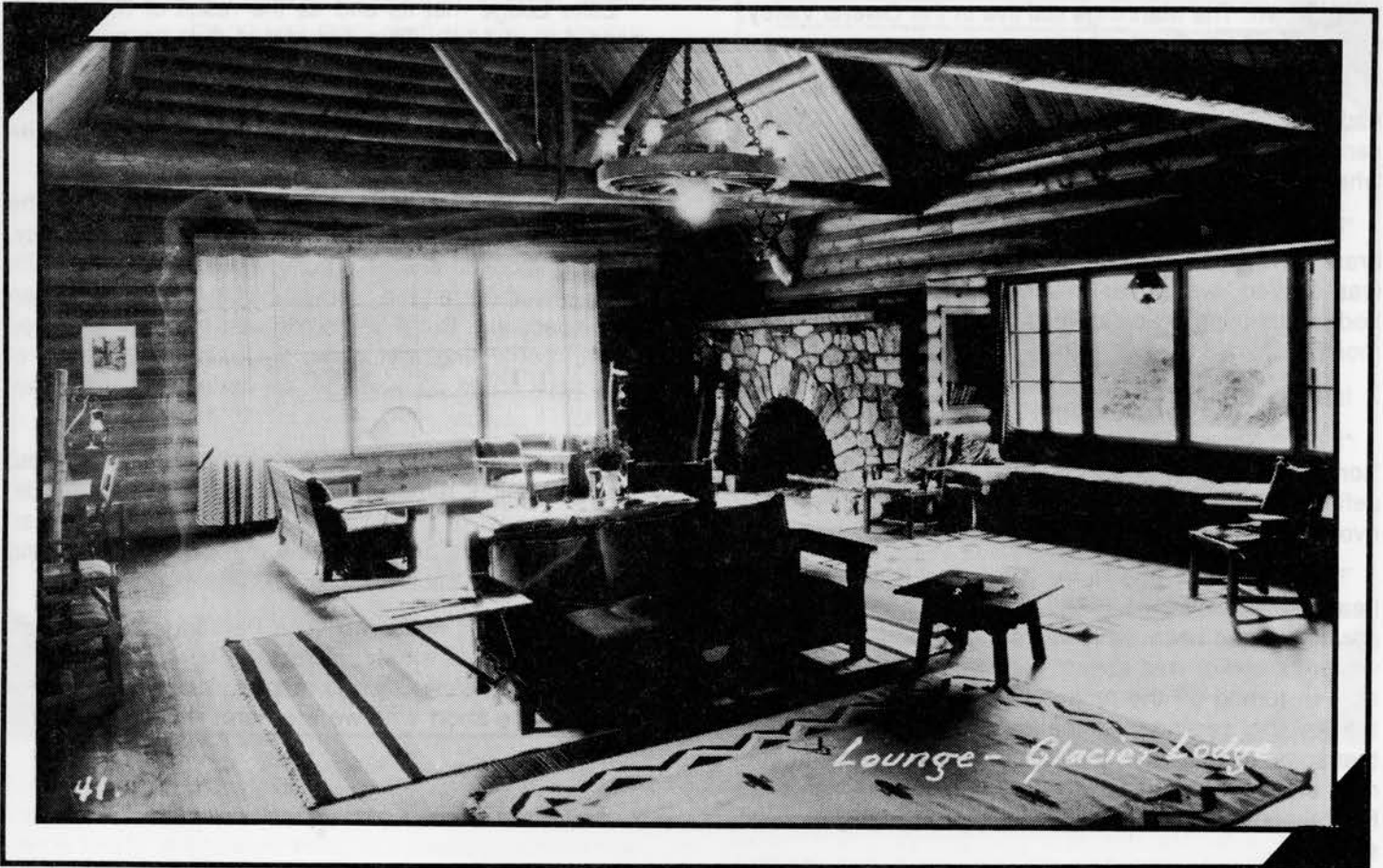
Anyhow, back to the winter of 1947. Pete and Bill had made great improvements in preparation for what was sure to be a fantastic ski season. Newsletters were sent out to the regular clientele, boasting of Glacier's new 1200-foot tow "on a hill steep enough for the expert," in addition to the 500-foot shallow-slope tow. They also offered a new warming hut, ski school, cross-country guided ski tours, races, rentals, and of course, dancing in the Lodge afterwards. The Eastern Sierra had nothing like it at the time.

Inyo County Supervisor Earl Hurlbut, also in love with the Big Pine Canyon, promised to keep the roads open as he had done for many years, so the visitors could easily maneuver the winding road to the Lodge.

The weather grew colder and colder. The generator coughed and sputtered. The pipes froze. Cord upon cord of wood sat in anticipation of cozy after-ski parties. But the snow didn't come. Neither did the guests.

"It might have spelled disaster to anyone else," Bill says, "but not to Pete. That spring, Pete had what he thought was a great idea, although naturally, Norman and Ed disagreed. Pete was going to add boats to the upper lakes for the fishermen."

"He bought six boats," Bill remembers, "each about 12 feet long and weighing about 150 pounds. After they arrived at the main Lodge, we had to figure some way to get them up to the lakes."



Pete asked Ed to help transport them on Aparaho mules, specially-trained animals who could carry platform-like saddles to handle the extra weight. Ed agreed, and quoted the exorbitant price of \$125 a boat.

So Pete and Bill fashioned wooden slings, and began hauling the boats up themselves. While bringing up the third boat, they ran into Ed, coming down with his mule train.

"Looks like you've got some trouble," Ed mentioned casually to the two exhausted men. "Looks like those boats are coming up no matter what."

Bill says he almost fell to his knees and prayed that these two men could agree just this once. His prayers were answered, and the remaining boats were taken by mule for twenty five dollars apiece.

"Ed was right, though," Bill says. "He didn't think they were good for the sport, and Norman had said they weren't good for the environment. Before long, too many fishermen had caught too many fish too easily."

Within a few years, Barbara and Bill Manning decided to leave Glacier Lodge, not because they didn't find it an exciting place to live, but because their time had come to raise a family. Although they returned often to visit, they didn't move back permanently until their children



Robert Clunie, 'on location' 1940s

were grown. The Mannings still live in the Owens Valley, not too far from Glacier Lodge.

"Those were marvelous times," Barbara recalls. "We happily worked long hard hours for Pete, for the Lodge. I served all the meals to our guests, who came running when we rang the big dinner bell behind the kitchen.

"I can't believe all the energy we had then. On our breaks, we would hike or ski. And after the dinner meal was served, we never missed dancing in the main Lodge, although breakfast call was very early the next morning."

Is there a ghost?

"I don't know," Barbara says. "But there is definitely 'something' special about Big Pine Canyon. The spirit is definitely there. Perhaps you could call the place a benevolent power spot."

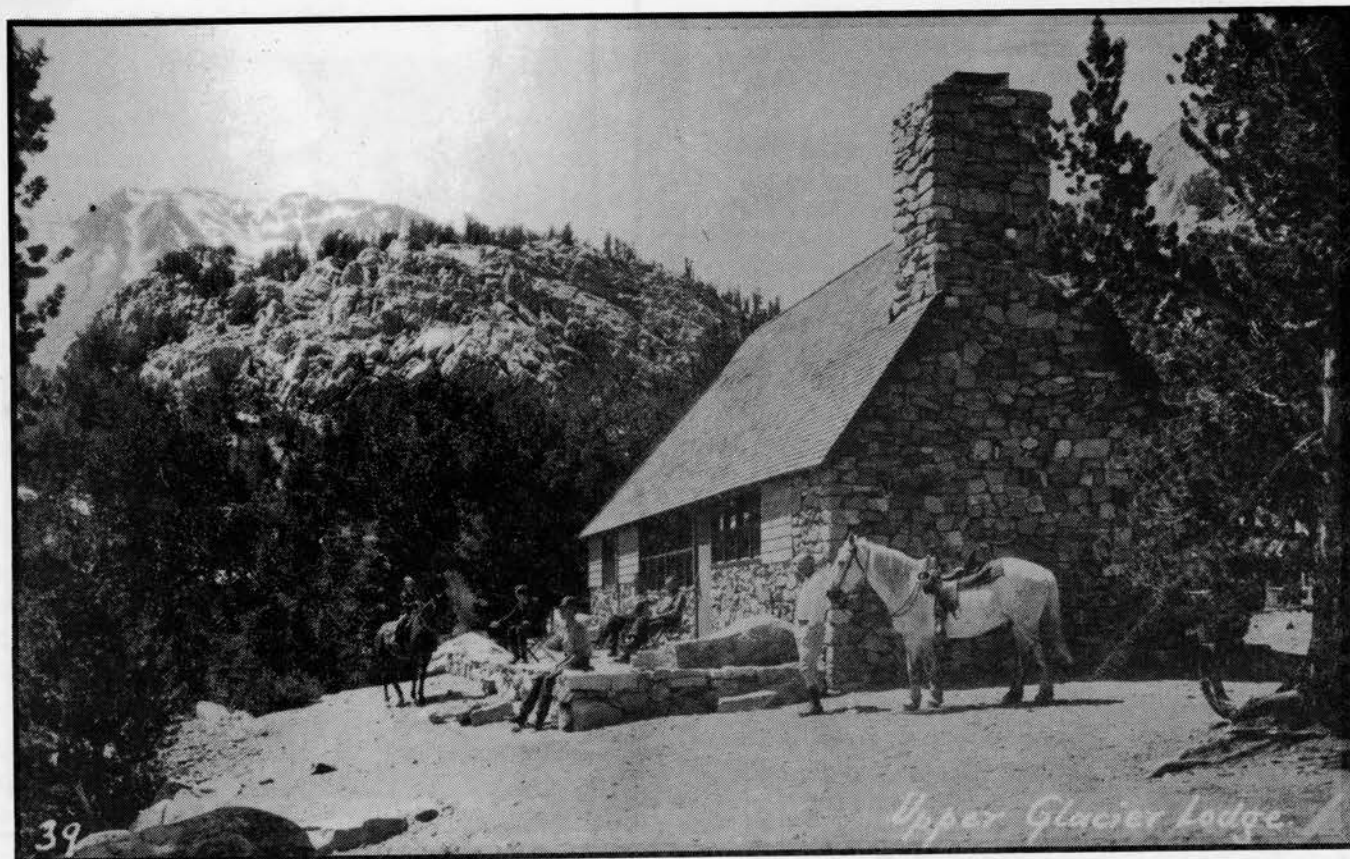
The story can't end here, you'll say. It won't. In the heavy snow winter of 1959, the main Lodge was temporarily closed because it was submerged in snow. The winter caretaker was absent, as was Norman Clyde, so no one turned off the propane tanks. An avalanche hit the building, sealing in all the leaking gas. It's suspected that some small critter, looking for a warm place to burrow, broke the fuel line. The place blew sky-high. The housekeeping cabins collapsed under the weight of the snow.

Lake Lodge met its end as the result of the Wilderness Act of 1943. This Act stated that no permanent buildings could exist above the 9,000-foot level in the wilderness area, and those who owned them were given twenty years to comply. In 1963, Lake Lodge was demolished.

Somehow, a small cabin owned by Lon Chaney, the actor, was permitted to remain, and is still there today. Chaney spooked and entertained millions of people with his talent. If he felt the "something" in the area, we can only speculate. But if you walk past his dark secluded cabin, "something" will make the hairs at the nape of your neck stand up, and you will certainly quicken your pace.

Today's Glacier Lodge is the third reconstruction, but the "something" remains. We'll leave it to you to decide: Is it the ghost of one of the early pioneers who felt so deeply about the area? Is it the cumulative energy and vitality they left behind?

Or perhaps it is the majestic Palisade Glacier itself, creeping ever so slowly down the Sierra to remind us we too should slow down to respect, love and enjoy our world for the short time we are here.





Aberdeen School 1924
Lou Rossi Collection

Memories of Aberdeen

by Leele Bell Howard
and Thelma Mairs Cooper

In the spring of 1922 Aberdeen was a flourishing community from the beautiful Red Mountain Fruit Ranch, with its various fruit tress in bloom, to the Aberdeen store six miles south, and the many ranches spread for at least ten miles in all directions from the store. They raised everything — it was a Garden of Eden.

Up on the hills at the foot of the Sierras was the Division Creek Power Plant. Leslie McAfee was foreman and he lived in the largest house, across the bridge from the plant, with his wife Kate and son Wesley. next to the McAfees, in the middle house, lived Lee and Laura Bell and their daughter Leela. At the far end, the Howard Mairs family occupied the third house. Besides Howard, the family consisted of his wife Lulu, son Omie, and daughters Dorothy and Thelma. A bachelor house, located just west of McAfee's, was occupied by Charles Chase, who built the road from the plant to the highway in use today. Highway 395 from about the 8-Mile Ranch to Aberdeen was the only stretch of paved road in the whole country. They were testing the concrete paving.

The Aberdeen School was located about five miles from the plant and about a mile from the store owned by the Stephens family. All the children traveled miles to school, some in Model T Fords, some on horseback, and some, such as the Lutzow boys, by horse and buggy. A barn and corral were built back of the schoolhouse for the horses, and a teacher's house was located on the grounds.

The school was a recreation center, the hub of the whole social life of the area. Church was held in the school, pot luck dinners were often enjoyed by everyone, and elections were held there. Les McAfee had the first radio

and he would take it to the schoolhouse so everyone could listen to the returns. Dances were popular, with Les playing his harmonica all night, a piano, and sometimes a steel guitar played by Henry Betencourt. A huge room was built on, where the dances were held. When it was being built, the men would work and the women would get the meals together to feed them. Saturdays and Sundays were big work days.



Leela: *"I can remember the dances. They bedded us down around the big pot-bellied stove and danced from sundown to sunup. They had contests, with prizes. One time my mom and dad, and Katie and Les McAfee sat around the table all evening before the dance with a great big five-pound candy box, dipping little rocks, cotton balls, and pieces of square wood in melted chocolate to put in the 'prize' box of candy.*

"Those four had such fun. They used to go up to Big Pine to dances. One year they were going to a masquerade dance in their 'flivver' – an old Dodge – with the men dressed as women and the women dressed as men. Of course, the men had corsets on and the whole bit, Les with his upside down and needing help from Kate to get it right. They set out for Big Pine on what is now the Red Mountain Road, and had a flat tire. I can still hear Les saying, 'How in the hell can women ever do anything in these corsets!'

"Les liked to tell the tourists how he got his spaghetti from those trees with the long spaghetti-like fronds."



Thelma: *"I remember how shy Charlie Case was. There was a party at the 8-Mile Ranch and the local tricksters had everyone lined up to play Kneel to the Queen, the queen just happening to be a girl he currently had a terrible case on. When it was Charlie's turn to kneel, they pulled the rug out from under him."*

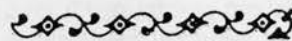


Both Thelma and Leela started first grade at Aberdeen. Thelma stayed until third grade, and Leela until fifth, after which they moved to Independence. One of their Aberdeen teachers, a Mrs. Nail, was a very prim and tiny, but attractive person. She had the children write "CAN'T" in huge black letters on big sheets of paper. They folded their papers up, went out and dug a deep hole, buried them, and for the rest of the year couldn't use that word.

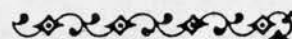
There was also a post office at Aberdeen, where Mrs. Stevens was the postmistress. It was a railroad car, still there. Later rooms were built on in back of it. This was all almost a mile from where Aberdeen is now. All that is left of the school now is the foundation of the pillars.

There were many large ranches and farms with hay fields and flowing artesian wells to irrigate them. Families who owned ranches close around were the Nutgrasses, Lutzows, Smiths, Scalarsis, Joneses, Cowserts, Deweys, Pattens, Howards, Adams, Allens, Harveys, and Orbins. The largest places were Black Rock, Taboose, and 8-Mile Ranch. There were many others. Every group of trees or stumps you see today was once a beautiful ranch.

In February of 1923, the "Big Wind" carried a good share of the Division Creek Power Plant occupants' belongings down the hill. The wind started in the night and blew all that night and the next day. Leela and Thelma decided to be a big help and collect the clothes.

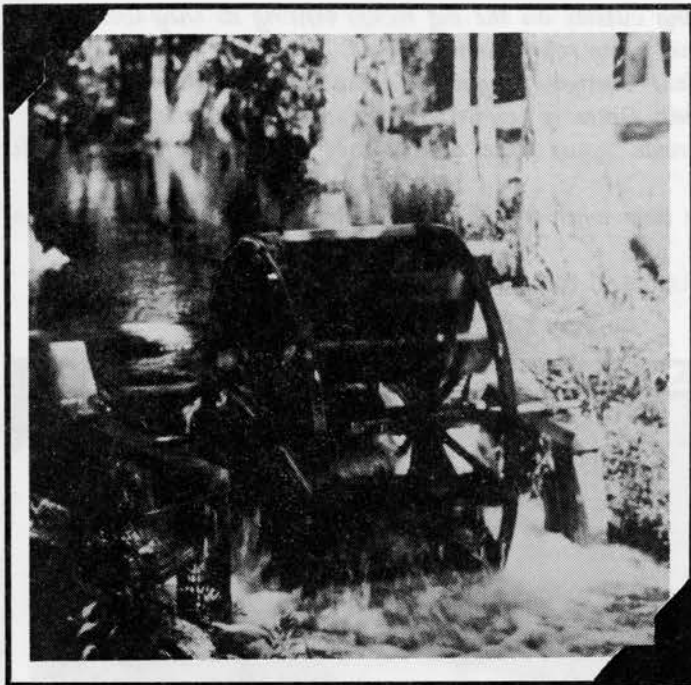


Thelma: *"We ended up down at Howard's place, accross the highway. She was trying to clean up their place and wash some clothes. I remember it struck me as so strange that she would be out there washing clothes in a wash tub."*



Leela: *"When the wind started at our house, it blew the west window in and I could see my folks standing there pushing on that window, trying to keep it from blowing in. Finally, Les McAfee came running over and took the base board off. He nailed it up across the window so we'd have a window in that kitchen. You couldn't see across the street or anyplace, it was such a terrible dust storm."*





*Old Water Wheel
Goodale Creek
at
Aberdeen*

Thelma: *"It blew out the side of our back porch where my mother had gathered a bunch of feathers to make pillows, and the feathers were literally hammered into the window screens."*



Leela: *"The little house down on the highway — Mrs. Howard had just walked out the door when wind picked up that house and blew it over. On Schabbell Lane the trees were all down, and it blew the roof right off of Henry Schabbell's house. Annie VanDeventer, my grandmother, found the curtains caught between the walls and roof of her house behind the church in Independence, after the wind had lifted it up and down."*

"But we were helping, looking for the clothes that had blown away. We just got started going downhill and kept on going — about three or four miles down to what is now Highway 395."



Their parents had other thoughts as they searched all day for the two little girls. Roofs had been blown off, and one house completely blown away; trees were uprooted and blown over; many of the homes in Aberdeen, Fort Independence, and Independence were badly damaged.



Leela: *"We seemed to have a lot of windstorms in that area. I can also remember the lightning storms — you could smell the brimstone."*

"One time the wind blew so hard that Les McAfee had to crawl on hands and knees from the Aberdeen store to the school to see if the children were safe. When he got to the school, we weren't there. Mrs. Nail had taken us to her house to wait for safe transportation to our homes."

"We used to have big watermelon feeds, with sawhorses holding boards for long tables and the melons just piled out there. After the feast, there was always a watermelon fight, not only among the kids. We always had lots of laughter and games, such as Suitcase, where each pair had to unpack a suitcase full of clothes, don the clothes, run around the house, take the clothes off and put them back in the suitcase."



Thelma: *"There were wonderful pit barbecues at the Calloway place across the river, too. In those days, the men sometimes shot game from the running boards of the cars as their wives drove, and the women would fix it in huge dutch ovens, burying them to cook. Everyone who wanted to come would contribute to the meal."*

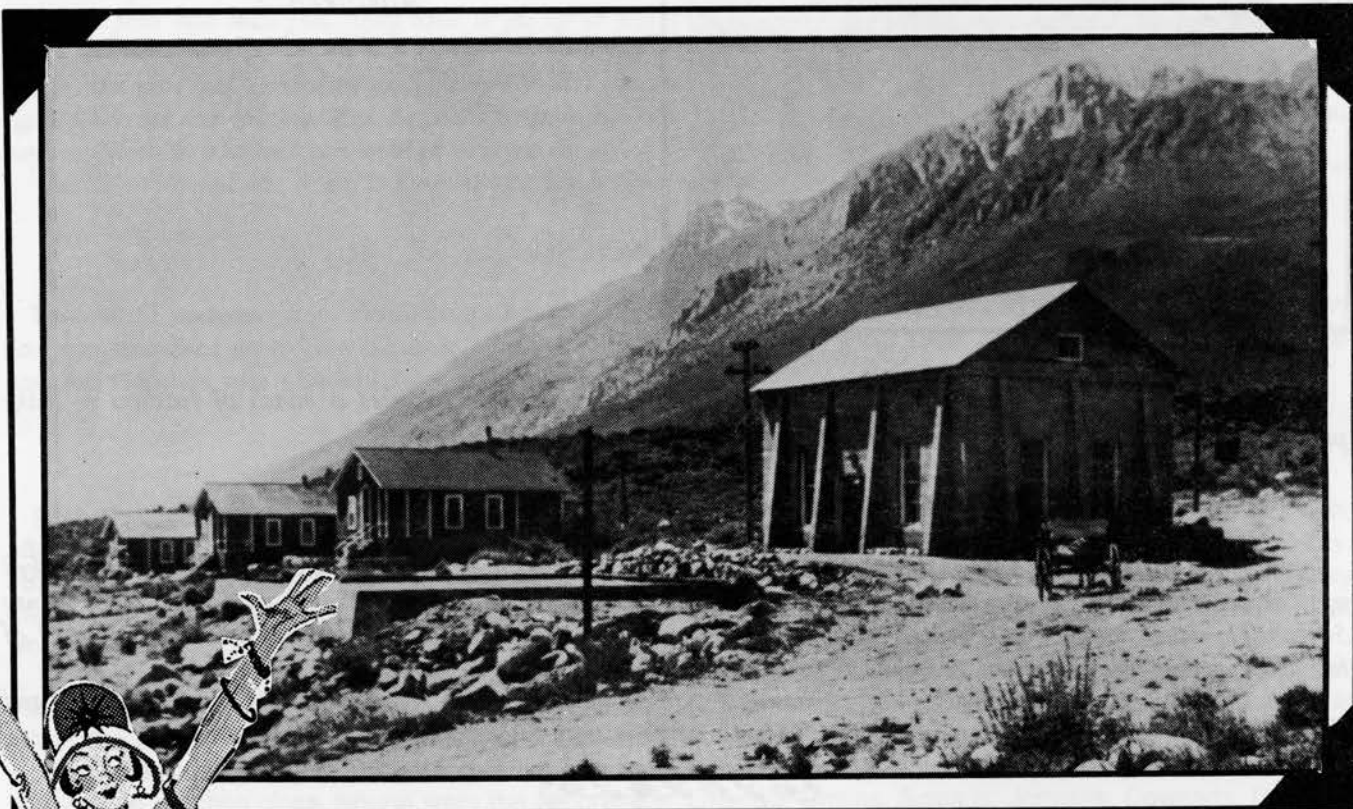


Leela: "One night Division Creek residents were sitting outside on the big rocks, visiting as they loved to do, when down on the highway they saw a long string of cars going south. Someone said, 'I wonder what's going on?' Another person remarked maybe it was the Ku Klux Klan! Everyone laughed, but the next day we learned that it was a rebellious group who had forced open the Alabama Gates to let water back into the Owens River.

"Another time, we stood outside and watched the Norman House Hotel as it burned down, more than ten miles away in Independence.

"We had such fun and close friendships — it was a time when people valued good food, good talk, and good neighbors."

Happy memories — and sad — are the thoughts of the one-time residents of Aberdeen.



Aberdeen today is still a place to eat and meet friends. About 60 people live among the trees beside the stream, with plenty to do — a great group always ready to help a neighbor. A cafe in the center serves Mexican and American food, with conversation a part of the menu. Newcomers are amazed to find so many people discover this out-of-the-way place.

Curley Fletcher, Cowboy Poet

by Joy Fatooh



In an isolated desert valley a decrepit cabin stands by a spring. It was built as a stage stop on the Bodie line; later, abandoned, it sheltered cattle drovers who brought their herds to water and rest. Some left graffiti, pencilled small and neat, that until recently could still be read. On one wall was a list of all the hands in an outfit, from boss to cook, and a date near the turn of the century. On another wall was this:

*There was a young cowboy who lived on the range
His horse and the cattle were his only companions
He worked in the saddle and slept in the canyons
dreaming of summer his pastures to change*

That particular verse was paraphrased from a popular song of the 1970s — unless, of course, James Taylor got his inspiration from that wall. Either way, through all those years — while cook and cowhands went their way, while hunting parties left bold felt-pen mementos of cold days and bad luck and fishermen recorded where the fish were biting best, while all those words went the way of the wallpaper, crumbled and blown who-knows-where by the wind — the spirit of cowboy poetry lived on.



The cowboy's heyday was a short but romantic one, and the cowboys knew it. Gleaning the romance and humor from the dust and drudgery and putting it into song or poem was a cowboy tradition. For every verse scrawled on the peeling wallpaper of a crumbling shack, thousands more were recited around the campfire or crooned to the cattle under a gathering storm.

A few were even published. And late in the era, when the open range was closing and Western novels and movies were taking over, a handful of cowboy poets came to fame. One was Curley Fletcher, a Bishop boy whose home range included that lonely cabin by a spring.

Curley Fletcher was born in San Francisco in 1892. His mother was part of Bishop's Rossi family, Italian immigrants who were already establishing themselves on good Owens Valley land. When Curley was two months old the young Fletcher family moved to join them.

Ray Milovich's mother was a cousin of Fletcher's; Ray remembers Curley as a big boy with a wild streak, a dyed-in-the-wool cowboy who loved the open range, and an incorrigible prankster: "He lived in Laws, right by the railroad station," Ray recalls. "One time he and Perry Byer got ahold of some crankcase oil and greased the rails of the Carson-Colorado. When the train came in they put on the brakes and slid clear through the depot. The conductor caught up with him and beat his

butt.

"He was always nuts about a horse — just had to ride a horse or punch a cow or something. He lived right at the site of the Drovers Cottage, and the school was where the truss business is now. It was only about a hundred yards but he always rode his horse to school. And he always wanted to get on and ride it around at recess."

Schoolmaster Arlie Brierly took a dim view of that activity: "I think Brierly beat his butt about that too," Milovich says. In a 1974 newspaper tribute to Brierly and his one-room schoolhouse, Curley's schoolmate Buck Rogers gave his opinion that his most famous poem "never would have been written, I'm sure, without the influence of Arlie Brierly. And what an influence! I can still hear the loud 'clunk' when Curley's head hit the wall as Arlie dished out said influence.

"Curley was a sort of rebel and as tall as his teacher . . . Anyway, Curley got tough and decided to take on Arlie. He was standing at the back of the room spouting off in great style as to what he would do. Arlie . . . walked back and batted him in the noggin so hard he rang the bell in the belfry. Right then I think 'The Strawberry Roan' and a lot of other good western songs and stories were born that later came from Curley's typewriter."

Curley left school after the sixth grade, perhaps to devote more time to the education he preferred, rounding up wild horses and cattle with Paiute horsemen as his teachers. Ray Milovich sums up the years that followed: "He rode with some pretty rough characters. He was a cowboy and a rodeo champ; he went all over the Western states. I think he ran a few cows back and forth across the Mexican border. He used to ride with the Cline boys chasing mustangs. He went to Sacramento and got into a bootleg business and ended up in the pokey. He was married two or three times, on the installment plan . . ."

It was on the first installment with Minnie, his childhood sweetheart, that Curley headed for the big rodeo in Cheyenne in 1917. Folklorist Hal Cannon tells the story in his preface to the new reprinting of Fletcher's anthology *Songs of the Sage*: after Curley took the prize for bareback and Minnie won in trick riding, Curley went back to the hotel and gambled away both their winnings and their trip money. Undaunted, he went down to the lobby, wired home for more money and, in an attempt to win back Minnie's favor, wrote "The Strawberry Roan" on the empty envelope his prize money had come in.

Though it went on to become the one Curley Fletcher poem everyone's heard of, hardly anyone knows who

wrote it. The poem quickly became a part of the oral literature, recounted in saloons and around campfires without credit to the author; someone made up a chorus and put it to music, and it made its way to radio, stage, Hollywood and the movies as an anonymous folk song.

Fletcher published his first collection of poetry without knowing it himself. It was his brother Fred who took nine poems to the printer, then brought a couple of boxfuls of the resulting booklet to the 1917 Gila Valley Stampede in Globe, Arizona. *Rhymes of the Roundup* was selling briskly before Curley caught on. *Ballad of the Badlands* followed, then, in 1931, *Songs of the Sage*.

Meanwhile dozens of poems were published in magazines and countless others were given away to friends. There were kneeslappers and tearjerkers, sentimental love songs and roaring tall tales, tributes to every aspect of the shrinking West: cattle and broncs, prospectors and Indians, wild things and wilderness, whiskey and rattlesnakes. Some are a little rough and ragged when it comes to rhythm and rhyme. But if you stand a little bowlegged with your thumbs hooked in your jeans and drawl them aloud the way they're meant to be read, you can make any Curley Fletcher poem sound mighty fine.

Then there were the poems that weren't published because they weren't fit to be, the ribald doggerel he tossed off for his friends. Hal Cannon says these have been passed around for generations and are still recited by cowboys all over the West to the tune of a hearty guffaw.

"He was one of the greatest practical jokers there ever was," Ray Milovich says. "One time at the Riverside Hotel up in Reno he staged a fake badger fight. He got a hell of a crowd gathered up and all hepped up for a fight between a badger and a dog. When they lifted the lid off the barrel there wasn't nothin' in it — and he was gone!"

Cowpunching and wordslinging were not enough for the restless Fletcher. He prospected with some success and established a few mines. He promoted rodeos along with his brothers, and they also collaborated in publishing a magazine called *Ride* — which, says Milovich, he also edited, solicited, promoted, and wrote in its entirety: "I don't think you're supposed to do that. All those names you read in the bylines like Breezy Summers, Windy Winters, Dewlap Wattles — those were him."

He edited other magazines as well, like Nevada's *Silverado*, penning erudite editorials that belied his sixth-grade education. Still, in his poetry, he posed as just another cowhand: "If I ain't got very much knowledge / Of literchure, figgers, an' such, / It's cause I growed up at cow college, / where book larnin' don't count fer much."

"When there was a new thing happening he was in on it," Milovich says. "When they did the first bomb test in Nevada the fallout went all over Tonopah and the prospectors' Geiger counters went crazy. Ever been out to Tonopah and seen those little piles of dirt on the flats? There's over 5,000 of those things out there. Fletcher took up about 500 of them as mining claims."

Milovich even credits him with originating two comic strips — Red Ryder and Little Beaver — but says he abandoned them to his collaborators when he lost interest.

"He had a lot of ideas but he was too fiddle-footed to stick around and get with it. He'd drift into Bishop and hang around — McMurry's bar, Charlie's Place that used to be at the Copper Kettle, the Kitty Lee Hotel. And that was his headquarters. He kind of lived his life the way he wanted to. He wasn't beholden to anyone.

"He used to go to Hollywood and work as a consultant for Western movies. When he was real broke that's where he'd go, 'cause he could eat. But when he got a couple bucks ahead he'd come back here to the mountains."



In 1954 Curley came back to stay: he died in San Jose and was brought home to Bishop to be buried at the Pioneer Cemetery. He had funerals in both towns; the second was a public event for which all of Bishop closed down and "The Strawberry Roan" was played as a dirge. Hal Cannon notes that he never did like the tune that had been put to his poem, and suggests that he might have chosen as a eulogy "The Tome of Time," one of his later poems in which he waxes metaphysical:

*"... And it dawned on me as the sun sank low,
O'er the distant range and the virgin snow,
That Time was finite — on swift swooping wing,
These arid wastelands an infinite thing . . ."*

Then again, perhaps he would have preferred something straightforward and down-to-earth, something like "The Cowboy's Soliloquy":

*"... Why, if I had my life to live over,
An' was put here to ride the same range —
Course I can't say it's allus been clover —
They ain't very much I would change.
I've played out my hands as I found it;
Busted flushes, an' straits, — All the same,
I ain't goin' to lay down an' hound it,
Jes' 'cause Time had a seat in the Game."*



MAKING BUTTER...

Once Upon a Time

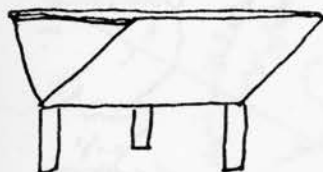
This story is taken from a compilation of stories concerning Washoe Valley in Nevada and Antelope Valley in Mono County.

This particular story was told to me by my mother, Tessa Larson Shirley. She was born and raised in Antelope Valley. Her family had migrated west to Washoe Valley in 1860. The words are an unedited direct quote from her.

—Donna Strong, Napa, CA



"After the milk is strained into the pans and set on a revolving rack, the cream is skimmed off and put into crocks or clean, large coal oil cans and every day stirred with a wooden paddle to the same degree of ripeness. It is then put into a round wooden churn. The flavor of the butter changed with the pasturage of the animals from alfalfa to clover. The wooden churn was turned with a crank. There were ladders in that churn. The churn was a foot and a half in diameter and about two and a half feet tall. The ladders went round and round. Just after the buttermilk forms you can see small flakes of butter coming. The crank was turned opposite and the flakes gathered into one solid mass. The lid was removed to check on consistency, also the feel of the butter against the ladder was an indication.



'Butter Worker



'Presser attached to one side

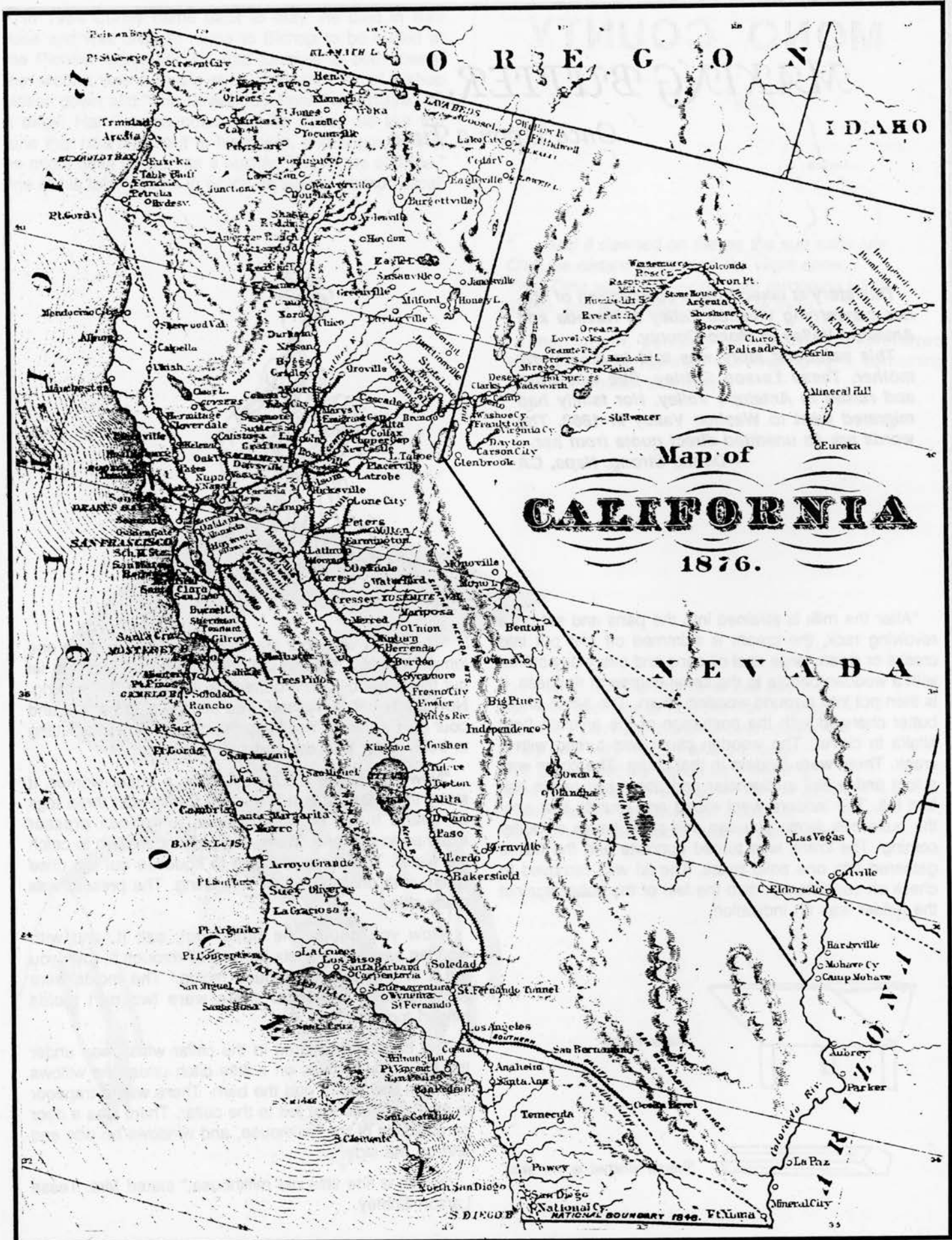
"The butter was sour cream butter. It is now all in one lump. Now you have to pull the plug in the churn to let out the buttermilk. The buttermilk was used for cooking. Now the butter is washed. You put the plug back in and pour cold water in. You keep draining it and keep putting in fresh water until the water runs clear.

"Now you turn the butter out into a butter worker. It stood three feet. It is a V-shaped trench with three legs on it and made of wood. It has a wooden presser attached to one end. There is a pail underneath to catch the water. The purpose being to squeeze out the rinse water, with only the butter remaining. The presser was many-sided.

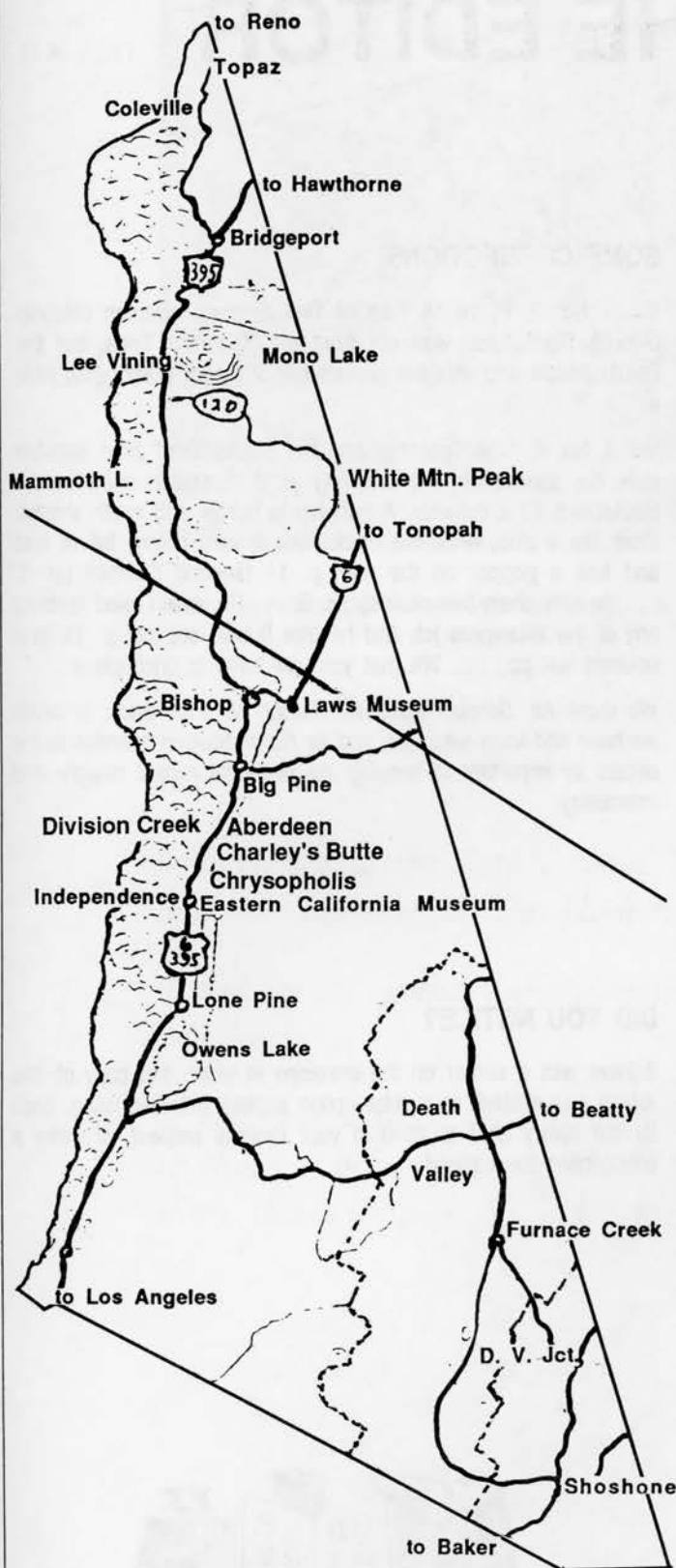
"Now you gather the butter out, salt it, and with wooden paddles you mix the salt all through it, then you put it in firkins or two pound molds.¹ The molds were rectangular or round or there were two part molds hinged together."²

The butter was stored in the cellar which was under the milkhouse. It was on a little ditch under the willows between the house and the barn. There was a trapdoor in the milkhouse that led to the cellar. There was a door on one side of the milkhouse, and windows on one end and on the side.

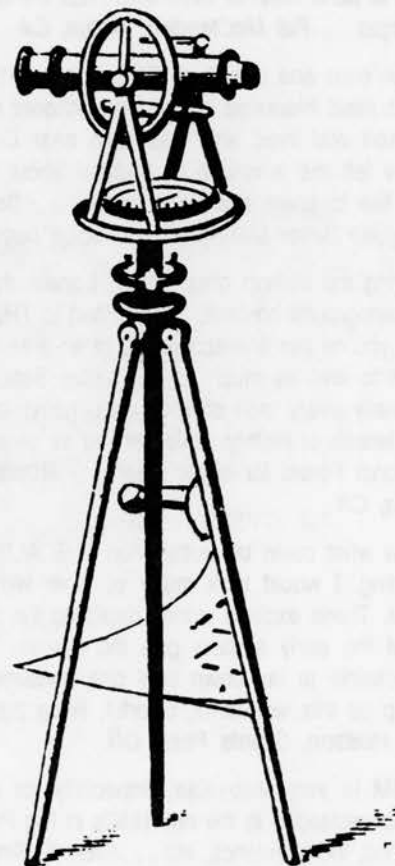
"It was a fine little old milkhouse," stated Mrs. Tessa Larson Shirley.



MONO COUNTY



INYO COUNTY



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANK YOU

I was sent a copy of THE ALBUM, No. 1, and now I am anxious to purchase the following editions and subscribe . . . I started being a guest at Arcularius Ranch in 1928, and I have known the Funk brothers since they were little boys. Your first volume seems a real treasure to me . . . **Caroline S. Liebig, Los Angeles, CA**

My father used to be a telephone lineman in the early 1900s to Bishop using a railroad hand car and morse code . . . The last time I saw Mono Lake was in 1941. It was beautiful. June Lake, too . . . I've seen rock foundations and wondered about the people who lived there. The stage coach foundation of way station at Dunmavin, east of the highway. History of people and places from Robber's Roost to parts north or even south has my interest. Or earthquake changes . . . **Pat McClendon, Argus, CA**

Having been born and raised in Bishop year 1911 to the Shirley family, I was most interested in the John Schober story. My mother was a Larson and lived and was born near Coleville in Mono County. She left me a wealth of material about that part of the country I'd like to share from time to time . . . **Donna S. Strong, Napa, CA** (See Butter Making on our recipe page.)

Before leaving the Bishop area, where I spent the summer as a volunteer campground hostess, I subscribed to THE ALBUM. May I compliment you on this fine accounting of an area my late husband and I came to love as much as our native Sonoma County. We explored nearly every inch of your area, going into near eastern Nevada in search of history while serving as seasonal employees of the National Forest for seven years . . . **Mildren E. Blackney, Santa Rosa, CA**

I don't know what could be better than THE ALBUM. The stories are fascinating. I would rank many of them with Edna Ferber's great novels. These exciting stories depicting the trials, tribulations and joys of the early settlers grip the reader. THE ALBUM is almost impossible to lay down until one consumes it totally . . . Please keep up this wonderful, colorful, living publication . . . **Bev and Wade Hudson, Grants Pass, OR**

THE ALBUM is very enjoyable, especially for our family. Our ancestors homesteaded in the mid-1850s in Big Pine and relatives lived in Bishop, Independence, etc . . . **Ellen B. Smith, Mojave, CA**

A MATTER OF FURTHER INTEREST

Questioned about the depth of the well at Dirty Sock (Vol. I, No. 1, "A Dirge for Dirty Sock"), researcher Marguerite Sowaal explains that hot water gushing from the earth's interior actually came from immeasurable depths. 12,000 was indeed the measured depth.

SOME CORRECTIONS

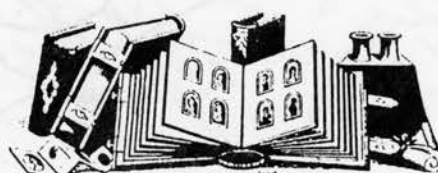
Vol. I, No. 3, P. 19 "A Tale of Two Bentons." Benton celebrity George Washington was not from the Yosemite Tribe, but the Paiute people and was the grandfather of Mabel Washington Keller.

Vol. I, No. 4, "The Teamster and the Blacksnake." John Schober calls our attention to the following: p. 9 illustration identifies the blacksnake as a bullwhip. A bullwhip is hollow and much shorter, more like a club, while the blacksnake is very heavy, full of lead and has a popper on the end; p. 11 (second column) pp. 1: . . . the stay chain (not chains); pp. 5: . . . Pa wasn't used to doing any of the swamper's job and he (not I) said so, too; p. 12 (first column) last pp.: . . . We (not you) will have to uncouple it . . ."

We thank Mr. Schober again for sharing his experience, to which we have had keen response, and for his meticulous attention to the details so important in keeping the historical record straight and interesting.

DID YOU NOTICE?

If there was a sticker on the envelope in which this copy of *The Album* was mailed, your subscription expires with this issue. Look for the handy card to send in your renewal request, or order a subscription for a friend.





A scene from Old Mammoth on the 4th of July. From the Mendenhall Collection.

Vol. II, No. 2, the sixth issue of "The Album," will have more pages and more stories of the true pioneers of Inyo-Mono, the Indian people.

Thanks to its sponsors and subscribers, "The Album" is gradually expanding.

If you have a story, long or short, a treasured photograph or antique to show, a beloved family ghost or a bit of little-known history to share, this is the place to have it published.