

The Album

Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono

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

Vol. III, No. 2



Inside:

Mammoth Gold pieces
3 Roads to Bodie
The Reformer?
Lookout explored
Fish Slough Shorty
Convict Lake retold
Fish Tails
and more

The • Eastern • Sierra *Land of Many Uses*



This is the time of year for the annual migration of thousands of fishing aficionados to eastern Sierra lakes and streams for the opening of the trout season.

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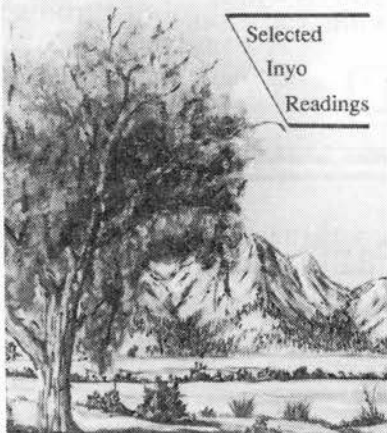
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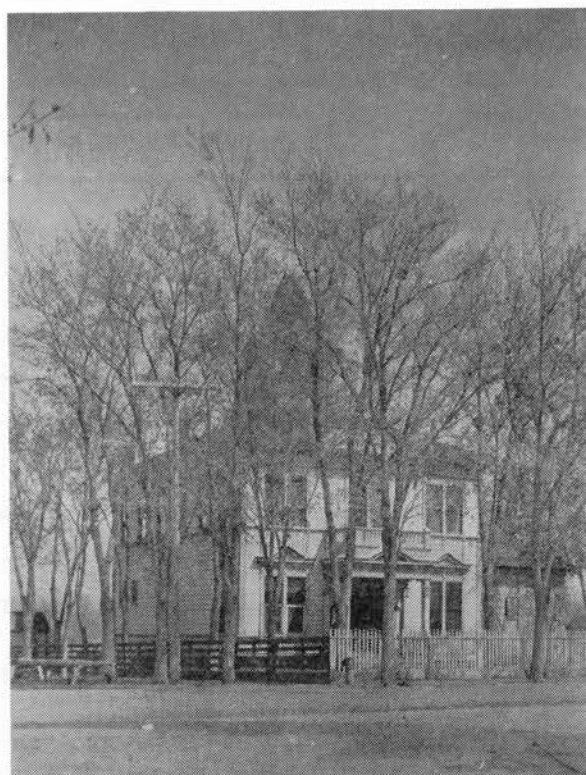


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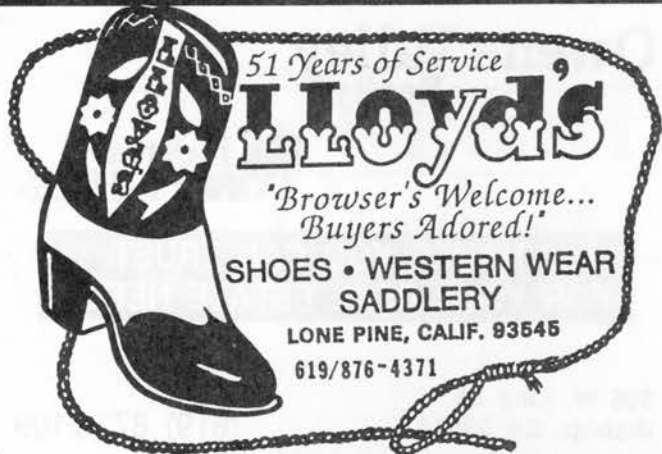
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THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono

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Cover photo by Louise Kelsey: Ernest Kinney, artist/teller of lively tales, in the wagon tracks of his father, Spray Kinney, taken near the summit of Sherwin Grade. See "Three Roads to Bodie," p.10.

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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About Town

Excerpts from Chapter Eight of Gary Caldwell's new book

MAMMOTH GOLD

Photographs by Gary Caldwell

Genny Smith Books, publisher, has given permission to print the following excerpts in advance of Mammoth Gold's publication in spring 1990. Based on years of research, Gary Caldwell's book gives a detailed, accurate assessment of the 1878 mining camps clustered about Mammoth City — including his discoveries about the people, where they came from and how they lived. Their true stories are even better than the tall tales you may have heard.

About the Author

Gary Caldwell was six months old when he made his first trip to the Mammoth Lakes country. He has been summering in the Lakes Basin ever since, except for two years in military service that included a year in Vietnam as a company commander. His summer jobs included one as a trail guide with the Mammoth Lakes Pack Outfit.

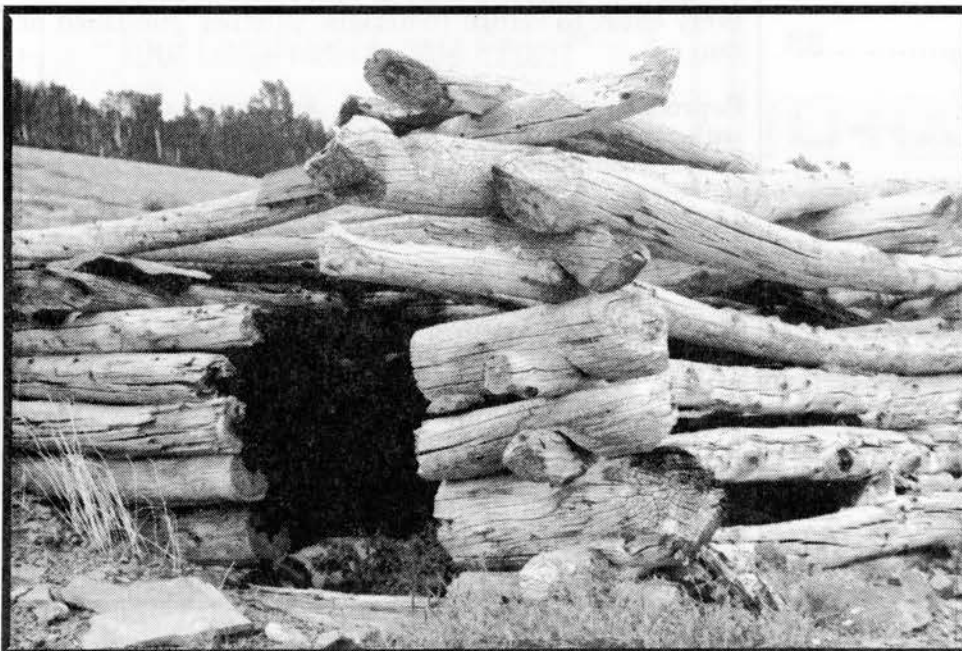
Caldwell received his B.A. degree from Claremont McKenna College and his M.A. degree in history from the Claremont Graduate School. His master's thesis is titled Mammoth City, 1877-1881. Studies and field work in archaeology and graduate work in history at UC Riverside followed. In 1970 Caldwell joined the faculty of Mount San Jacinto College in Riverside

County, California, where he teaches history and archaeology. He has participated in archaeological surveys and excavations of sites in the U.S., Mexico and Peru and regularly serves as an archaeological consultant to the Mammoth County Water District and to the U.S. Forest Service in Mammoth Lakes. In 1985 Caldwell conducted an archaeological field school to excavate a site in historic Pine City, one of the mining camps in Lake District.

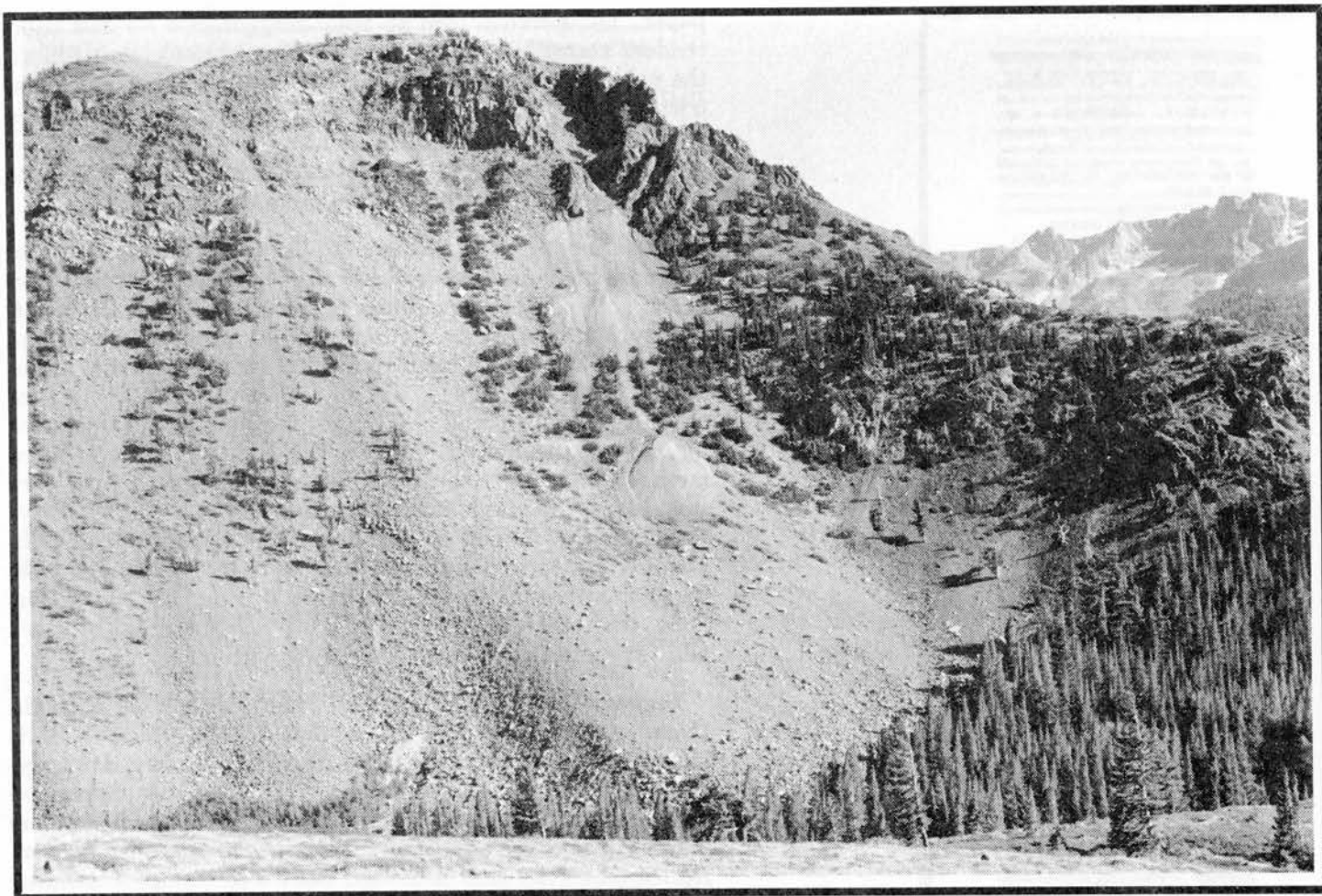
About the Editor and Publisher

Genny Smith Books began publishing on eastern Sierra subjects in 1976. Other titles are: The Lost Cement Mine, Doctor Nellie, Earthquakes and young Volcanoes along the Eastern Sierra Nevada, and Old Mammoth.

Genny Smith is a graduate of Reed College. She has been a Mammoth Lakes summer resident since 1957. She is co-author and editor of two eastern Sierra guidebooks: Mammoth Lakes Sierra, 1959; and Deepest Valley, 1962. Both have had numerous printings and editions; together they have sold over 75,000 copies. New editions of both are in progress during 1989.



This prospector's cabin probably was built after 1890, judging by its nails. Round nails became readily available only after 1890. Before 1890, square (forged) nails were in common use. Heavy snows have collapsed the cabin roof and continue to push the cabin walls sideways.



Three dumps, one below the other on the north slope of Mineral Hill, mark the entrances to the main workings of the Mammoth Mine. Though becoming fainter each year, today they are still clearly recognizable. The fourth dump, at the entrance to the lowest working, is hidden in the trees below. Mammoth City was in the ravine at the base of the slope. The Mammoth Mining Company worked the mine from 1878 to 1880. Mineral Hill is known today as Red Mountain.

About Town

Within a column headed "About Town," the *Mammoth City Times* disclosed anything and everything about anyone — from who had an unclaimed package at the stage office and the success of a local drama presentation to the contents of a consignment for the local cigar store. "About Town" was variety and all aspects of life in Lake District were fair game. For example:

Contracts were let for ashes for the toll road to cover it to prevent skidding.

Supt. Hardy returned from Bodie today, and in exactly two seconds by the watch, was astride his sorrel horse, flying around from pillar to post. The grass doesn't get much of a chance to grow under Hardy's feet.

Another team of Nadeau's came in this afternoon. This is probably the last of the season.

The biggest wood pile in Pine City belongs to Hugh Glenn. Fortunately for him there are no houses near. (*Times* 19 Nov. 1879).

So, too this chapter, like its 1879 namesake, will recount the stuff of everyday life in Lake District. How people lived, what things cost, why cash was scarce, what was important to them, what they did for fun and how they managed during the severe winter of 1879. And how they knew what was going on.

The Newspapers

News is always a hot topic, but even more so in mining districts where rumors of new strikes and rich veins bathed the harsh camps in a perpetual rosy glow. News circulated by signboard, by word of mouth and through the newspapers. Itinerant editors/publishers, their small presses and cases of handset type with them, wandered from one district to another, to wherever they thought they could make a go of it, following the booms and leaving the busts. They were a witty, crusty, irreverent, perceptive lot. Chronically short of money, they frequently raised cash by offering a part interest in their

MAMMOTH CITY TIMES.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1879.

NOTICE—Messrs. Lester & Harrison, No. 206 Montgomery street, are sole agents in San Francisco for the MAMMOTH CITY TIMES.

TRAVELER'S GUIDE.

Bodie Stage Line.
Leaves Mammoth City for Bodie daily at 4 a. m.
Leaves Bodie for Mammoth daily on the arrival of the Carson stages.

ABOUT TOWN.

W. H. Lester is confined to his room by a severe attack of rheumatism.

The Mammoth mill shut down Monday for want of quicksilver, which is expected here daily.

It is beautiful sunshiny weather at present; weather that can be enjoyed by all.

Mammoth City hunters come in quite often with burro rabbits of a snow-white complexion.

Twenty pairs of snow shoes, each with a man on top of them, left this morning.

Pine City is quiet just now, the wood choppers having gone into winter quarters.

We understand that J. R. Simon & Co. have a lot of freight between here and Bishop Creek.

That fine library at "The Temple of Folly" has been opened as a circulating library. For particulars read notice under the head of "Beeiners Locals."

Mammothites believe in enjoying themselves, and they do it. Two parties in a week speak well for their social proclivities.

The best of cigars, toilet articles, notions, etc., to be had at D. Block's Mammoth avenue, next door to J. R. Simon & Co.

Another man is reported lost. He was last heard from between Deadman's and King's by the pony rider on the day the latter was lost.

The installation ball to-morrow night at Giles' hall ought not to be forgotten. It will be a delightful party, or we miss our guess considerably.

Some wretch or wretches stole two pairs of snow shoes from Sam. Argall and his little boy, last night. Anybody who would steal snowshoes would do anything mean.

Members of Mammoth City Lodge, No. 56, K. of P., will bear in mind the fact that to-night is the regular meeting night of that body, and will be governed accordingly.

The mail arrived here Sunday and Tuesday. It left again yesterday. Regular communication is now established between here and Bodie, for which we are all truly thankful.

Three little folks, Johnny Gillson, Morley Stewart and Kitty Johnson, were enjoying the magnificent coasting on the Avenue to-day. We like to hear the melodious laugh of the young folks.

Giles' Hall is beautifully decorated for the ball of the Knights. Members of the order will be out in force, and everything done that can be done to make their installation ball a grand success.

A certain young man of this place proposes to build an immense sled and devote his attention to coasting with the ladies the remainder of the winter. The fact that 1880 is leap year has nothing to do with his determination.

paper. Their humor ran to wild exaggeration — and their readers recognized it as such. Evidently Hoole and Elliott, the publishers of the Bodie *Morning News* felt that Lake District had a future, for they started its first newspaper, the weekly *Lake Mining Review*. For the first few months they printed it in Bodie. The first issue, costing twenty-five cents and delivered by carrier, appeared on May 29, 1879.

Just a month later, William W. Barnes, bringing with him the press he had used to publish the Columbus (Nevada) *Borax Miner* and Benton's *Mono Messenger*, started the semi-weekly *Mammoth City Herald*. Barnes announced that the *Herald* would devote itself to the local news of Bodie, Mammoth City, Mineral Park, Mill City, Pine City and Inyo County, and include as well any important news from other mining camps, the nation and the world via telegraph. (Mammoth City had no telegraph. I have not yet figured out where the nearest telegraph office might have been — Carson City? Reno?) Barnes issued its first four-page edition July 2. Subscription rates in October, 1879, were \$8 per year, \$2 for three months or twenty-five cents a copy. By November, 1880, the rates had changed to \$5 a year delivered by mail, and fifty cents a month delivered by carrier.

Barnes offered R.D. Bogart, a former editor of the *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, the opportunity to purchase a half-interest in the *Herald*. Bogart agreed and made a downpayment of \$100 "after a long delay." When Barnes demanded payment of the balance due, Bogart evaded paying by one pretext or another and finally refused to pay at all. The rival *Review* observed that although both were competent newspapermen, their being managers together was as unlikely as their being angels in heaven. Apparently Bogart thought he could maneuver Barnes out of control, since, in theory, he owned half of the business. Barnes objected and kept demanding payment. Bogart then sued Barnes. When a jury of Lake District citizens decided against Bogart, he "withdrew the suits at his own cost and accepted a compromise."

Retiring to lick his wounds after his defeat Bogart approached Fred Farnham, an old and bitter enemy of Barnes. Bogart asked Farnham to advance him \$600 to purchase the *Lake Mining Review* from Houle and Elliott. After Farnham moved to Mammoth City, he and Bogart renamed the *Review* and in October began publishing the *Mammoth City Times* as a semi-weekly. Its subscription rates for mail delivery were \$8 a year and \$3 a month; for delivery by carrier "in vicinity," 25 cents a week.

Both the *Herald* and *Times* were published on Wednesday and Saturday. For several issues the sharpshooting between the two papers was lively and colorful. Bogart ridiculed Barnes and the *Herald*, made puns, accused them of various small crimes and called the *Herald* that "wretched little concern down the street."

They say the the little *Herald* has virtually passed into the hands of Mr. Tubbs, the lawyer. The little *Herald* ought now to stand on its own bottom.

Private advices from San Francisco reach us to the effect that there are to be assessments on three of our mines within a week or two. Wonder which they will be: And we wonder if

Mammoth City Times, October 29, 1879. Courtesy the Bancroft Library. Genny Smith collection.

but one needs to be a little critical in the selection of them — some have been a long time out of the memory of the hens that laid them. In the matter of cured provisions, the various stores are well supplied. Hams (Eastern) rate at about 25 cents a pound, and bacon at 18 and 20. Groceries are about fifteen percent higher than retail prices at the Bay [San Francisco], but the articles supplied are of first grade. Milk is supplied by a rancher at the foot of the grade at 12½ cents a quart; but for butter we are mostly dependent on the outside world. This butter comes in barrels, and some of it — but we forbear. The Round Valley farmers bring in a little butter, but it is nearly always poorly made and anything but attractive to the eye. Besides, it frequently is so ill-fitted for a forty-mile journey that its offense becomes rank and smells to heaven. We are worse off for vegetables than anything else. Potatoes about as big as walnuts bring five and six cents a pound, and other vegetables are poor, scarce and very dear. We are not mostly dependent on canned goods, but it is hoped that when the Valley ranchers wake up to the fact that we have a market here for their products, they will rustle around and make the earth more fruitful of things we need. Hay and grain are high — so high, indeed, that the average horse eats off his head in just two months. Hay — wire grass hay at that — sells for \$45 a ton, and barley brings about 4 cents a pound . . . Fruit is scrumpy, small and not over toothsome. Peaches, nectarines,

grapes and apples are the chief varieties . . . To simplify accounts the fruit wagons sell all as it comes for 12½ cents a pound, until crow's feet are seen, and the silent worm that gnaws introduces himself, when with a true spirit of enterprise, competition and want-to-get-home-ativeness the sagacious dealer subjects the remainder of his stock to a shameful sacrifice, and sells it at 10 cents. The chief luxury we have . . . are trout . . . These are caught by the Indians in the South Fork of the San Joaquin, and retailed at about 50 cents a dozen.

This last sentence is particularly interesting, as it reflects the absence of native trout in eastern Sierra lakes and streams. Although most waters now teem with trout, all have been planted. As early as 1879 the *Herald* suggested that the State Fish Commission stock Mammoth's lakes. Apparently they, or a private party, heeded the *Herald's* suggestion, for just a few years later Old Charley caught trout in Lake Mary for the picnic Helen Doyle described. The stream the *Herald* calls the South Fork is known today as Fish Creek.

Unlike groceries which were often in short supply and expensive, whisky was abundant and cheap and frequently mentioned by the papers. In an article titled "Off the Track," the 13 September 1879 *Herald* commented that there was "no tanglefoot in town"

Miners often dug their cabins into a slope, piled up rocks for the side walls and roofed them with canvas or shakes. The earth provided warmth and shelter from the fierce winds and cold. Although somewhat hidden by shrubs, many foundations such as this one at Mammoth City can be located today.



and that the saloons were selling only Miner's Joy and Woodchopper's Delight, both whiskies of local manufacture. The same issue also noted that, on the whole, sales were not good due to the nature of Mammoth City's "over-temperate citizens." (We can only wonder if that comment is tongue-in-cheek or the Mammoth Mining Company's attempt to burnish Mammoth City's image.) On August 13 the *Herald* noted that "[m]ost of the saloons in town have reduced their prices to one bit [one-eighth of a dollar]." Did this indicate a generous supply on hand or, rather, that the district's imbibers just did not care much for the homemade product that, at best, was raw, potent and thirty days old? The Temple of Folly, a saloon that ran frequent ads, in November advertised a new drink.

Rock & Rye at the Temple of Folly. The new remedy for coughs, colds, etc. Everybody drinks it. (*Mammoth City Times* 12 Nov. 1879)

Advertised prices for a cord of wood in October were "\$4 on the ground and \$5 delivered." Each dwelling stored quantities of wood for the winter. It was cut near Pine City and sledded to Mammoth City after the first snow.

To appreciate what these prices meant to a Mammoth City miner, let us relate them to what he earned, probably three dollars a day and certainly no more than four. That is three dollars a *day*, not an *hour*, for a ten- or twelve-hour day, six days a week. If he bought his meals at the Yosemite Chop House at 50¢ a meal or \$8 a week, that meant half of a week's pay would go for meals. Or, if he cooked his own food, the *Herald's* prices give an idea of costs to feed a family.

Happy New Year, 1880

The *Times* welcomed the new year of 1880 optimistically, predicting a population of 10,000 for Mammoth City alone, and "the erection of a dozen quartz mills, 110 saloons, banking houses, a new building for the *Times*" (Chalfant, 1935). Wishful thinking? Tongue-in-cheek? Stiff upper lip? Wild exaggeration? No doubt all of the above!

According to Chalfant, even in the midst of the winter's severe hardships, Mammoth's people still looked ahead and welcomed holiday festivities.

Advertising columns of the *Mammoth City Times* . . . carried announcements of three livery stables, two hotels, five stores, a drug store, a ladies' goods store, five saloons, and other concerns, indicating that Mammoth still had some business hope.

With all the discomforts of the situation, Mammothites were able to find a gayer side. The *Times* observed that "Mammothites believe in enjoying themselves and they do it. Two parties in a week speak well for their social proclivities." The crowning event was to be an installation ball on New Year's night, given by Mammoth Lodge, No. 50, Knights of Pythias, the only fraternal organization which had secured a foothold. It was to occur in Giles' hall, which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion. (1935)

The ready-made New Year's resolutions offered by the *Herald* in its column titled "Resolves" are a good example of mining camp editors' earthy humor. (Some of the meanings are obscure — your guess is as good as mine.)

Resolved to take your own liquor plain. There is confusion in mixed drinks and bother to the bar-keeper. You may want to stand him off before the year is over, and it is well to cultivate friendly relations.

Keep your vest pockets loaded with two-bit cigars. You thus become an object of interest to your friends.

Don't carry gilt-edge fine-cut [chewing tobacco] for your own use and nigerhead plug for your friends. It is a mean deception.

Eschew the Newport glide, pare down your feet and give the other dancers a chance to live.

When you go to the theater, don't make everybody's life miserable by telling how much better you saw this thing played in New York or some other seaport.

Don't ask female book-agents to come up to your room and show their books. They are innocent creatures and should not be led into temptation.

Don't gamble in stocks unless you have got a dead point.

Pay a little more attention to your wife and give the hired girl a rest. You won't have so much fun, but it will save you buying hair restorative.

Give your temper the grand bounce. If the other man catches your pedro, omit the usual remarks. (21 Jan. 1880). ❄

Opposite: Corner of cabin dug into hill (above) and upper log wall and roof of cabin (below). Although this cabin is not in Mammoth City, it illustrates how sturdy cabins were constructed without finished lumber and with a minimum of nails. Lumber and nails were usually not available at the isolated sites of many early mines. Note the notched logs and the hand-hewn shakes.

Newspaper clippings from Mammoth City Herald, October 29, 1879. Courtesy The Bancroft Library. Genny Smith collection.



quartz, being perfectly denuded and having narrow seams of talcose clay on each wall. Like the upper ledge, the course of the ledge is almost in a northeasterly and northwesterly direction.

Another Discovery.

On the same day that the above locations were made, Messrs. Darmet & Bloch struck a ledge about eight feet wide on the opposite side of the canyon, on a mountain divided by a narrow gorge from the main chain of the Sierras. Free gold was horned out plentifully from this ledge, and three locations have been made, the Red Deer, Robespierre and La Belle France, on which a cut ten feet long has been run with a depth of nine feet, showing excellent decomposed quartz, from any piece of which gold can be horned. The ledge lies in talcose slate with clay lining, runs northwesterly and dips westerly.

In August Last,

J. P. Forbes and Eugene Therot made a location on a ledge lying further north and west of the last named ledge, and called it Mineral Chief. The lead is about twenty feet wide, in talcose slate. During this month Messrs. Unsworth and Terrence Kelly have made two locations south of the above, showing some beautiful orange quartz, which a very little depth must prove a valuable lead. The locations are named Cupel and Critterion. They run northwesterly and dip west. Phil Mackey and J. Cronin have also a claim on the same ledge, and a most encouraging one, called the Calais, and those who know the grit and energy of the owners hope to see them prove up a valuable property.

No More Milk Till Spring.
Our supply of the lacteal secretion has been cut off, and the average baby is inconsolable. So is his sisters, his cousins and his aunts. Mr. Sears, who has been supplying our citizens with a pure, fresh article of milk for some months past, has concluded to winter at his ranch at Big Pine, some ninety miles from here, as the high price of feed would not justify him in running his dairy at this place through the Winter. He left this morning, taking his stock with him, but announces his intention of returning in the Spring.

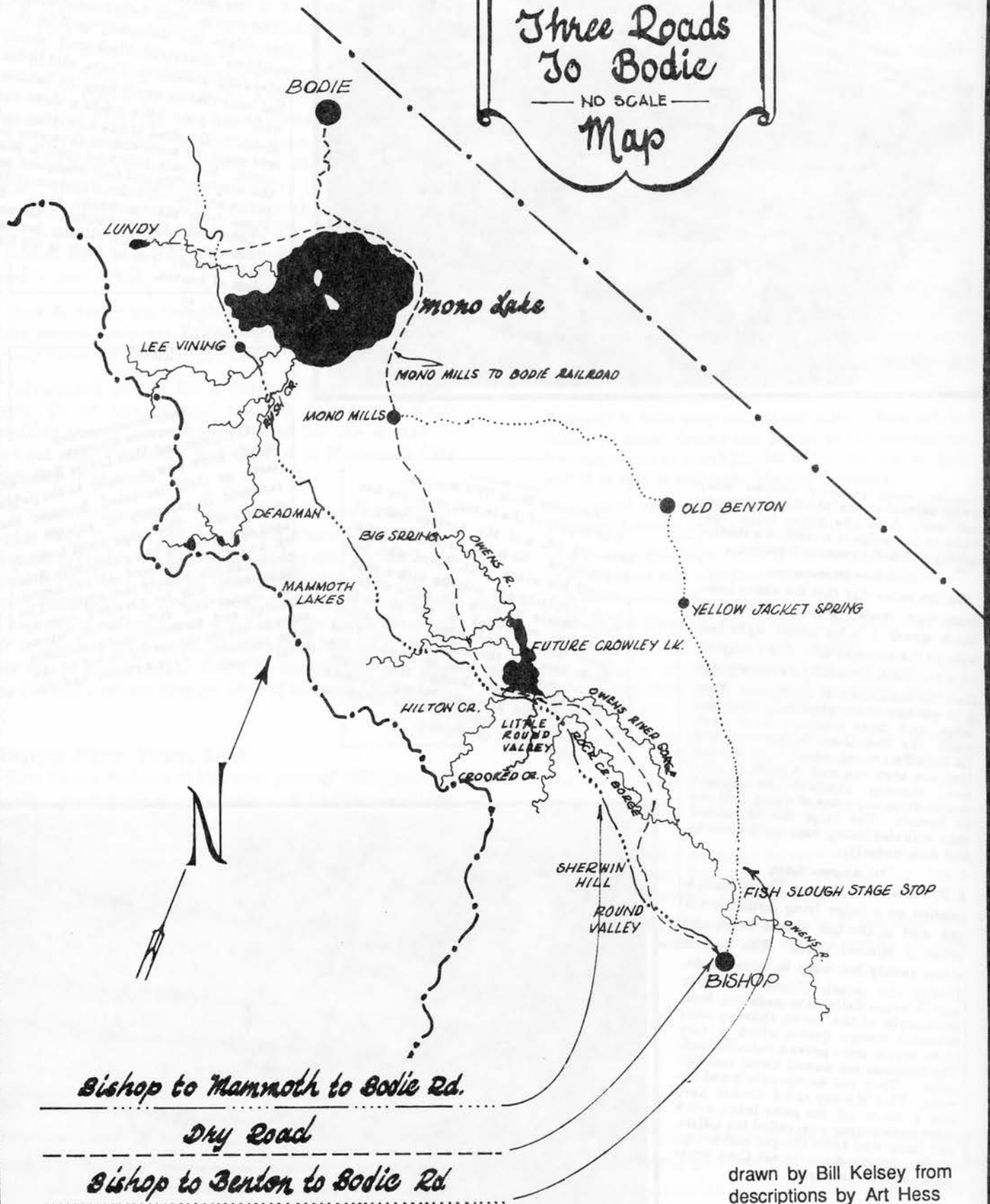
He Buries the Hatchet.
The vicious little bald-headed wretch that drives the mercenary quill in the would-be dictatorial black-mail sheet, yclept the Mammoth Times, said in his last issue that he would bury the hatchet with "the poor little concern down the street." Hundred to one he's lying, and will come out more vicious than ever to-night. He only held up a spell to read the Virginia City and San Francisco papers a sermon—did this Napoleon of the Press from his "mountain eyrie," for "Lake and adjacent districts," the only "Pioneer and reliable mining journal" in the world. For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Deserves Success.
Al Currier and Miss Lizzie Rutter evidently know how to cater to the public taste, as their increased business has rendered it necessary to enlarge their dining-room. The large room formerly used as a saloon is being tastefully fitted up, and when completed Al can accommodate all the hungry that apply. The Miss Rutter will be presided over by Miss Rutter and Mrs. Currier, whose pleasant and accommodating manners serve to render the savory dishes all the more palatable. Al is a rustler and deserves success.



Three Roads To Bodie Map

NO SCALE



drawn by Bill Kelsey from
descriptions by Art Hess

Three Roads To Bodie

by Louise Kelsey

illustrated by Ernie Kinney

When you watch heavy equipment cutting grades, building shoulders or laying a smooth, black path for fast cars and heavy 18-wheelers you may not think of the days before gasoline or diesel . . . unless you stumble onto an old, old roadbed, one that was made before trucks hauled most of what we need to the markets and shops that we reach by car.

THE TIME AND THE TERRAIN

In the mid-1800s the granite barrier of the Sierra Nevada limited the westward reach of freight roads that serviced the California/Nevada corner of the Great Basin. This was one of the last areas to roar to the California gold rush. From the late 1800s until the arrival of the auto and the truck, freight and folks moved behind horses and mules. And these people and animals moved over some of the roughest, driest areas of the west.

THE NEED FOR HEAVY HAULERS

When they came west by horse or covered wagon, families learned how to move clothes and food and pots and pans. But what about farm equipment or mining machinery . . . wood, milled lumber, hay or building materials? These things, essential to the growing communities and mines of the Eastern Sierra, needed heavy wagons, strong animals and skillful drivers. Drivers to whom God dished out an equal amount of guts and good sense.

Throughout history moving "things" was the first step in creating cities and counties. Industry and agriculture leaned heavily on freighting to exchange raw goods for salable products.

The pioneer communities and booming mines of the Eastern Sierra were no different, except for one thing . . . freight movers. There were no river barges to float goods. Limited rail-beds moved limited freight a limited distance. So until trucks evolved, the job fell onto the sturdy shoulders of freighters, their wagons and their teams.



George C. Kinney and the Stud horse, used for his size and strength. Kinney Family collection.

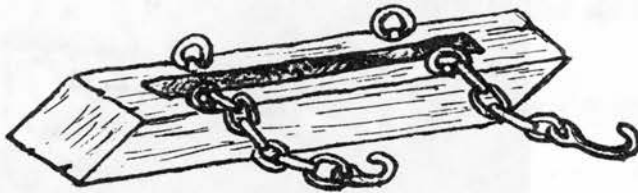
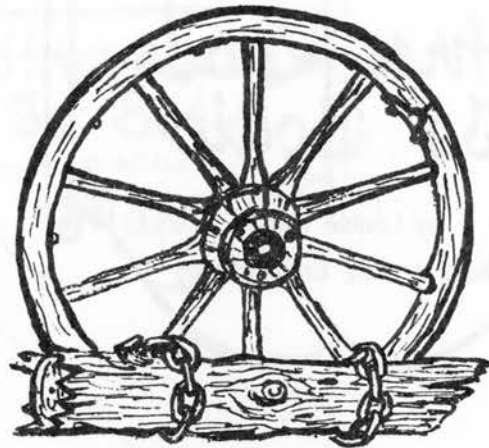
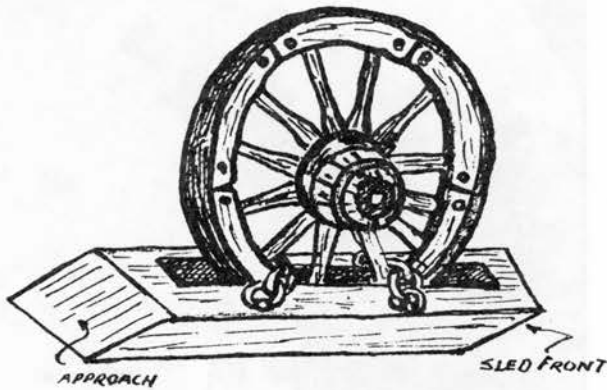
MEET TWO FREIGHTERS, GEORGE C. AND SPRAY KINNEY

Well-known among the freight haulers of pre-truck time were George C. Kinney and his son, Spray. Fortunately Spray's son Ernest Kinney is alive, well, and an expert at talking about the "old days" in a way that evokes the vitality of yesterday as if you were there.

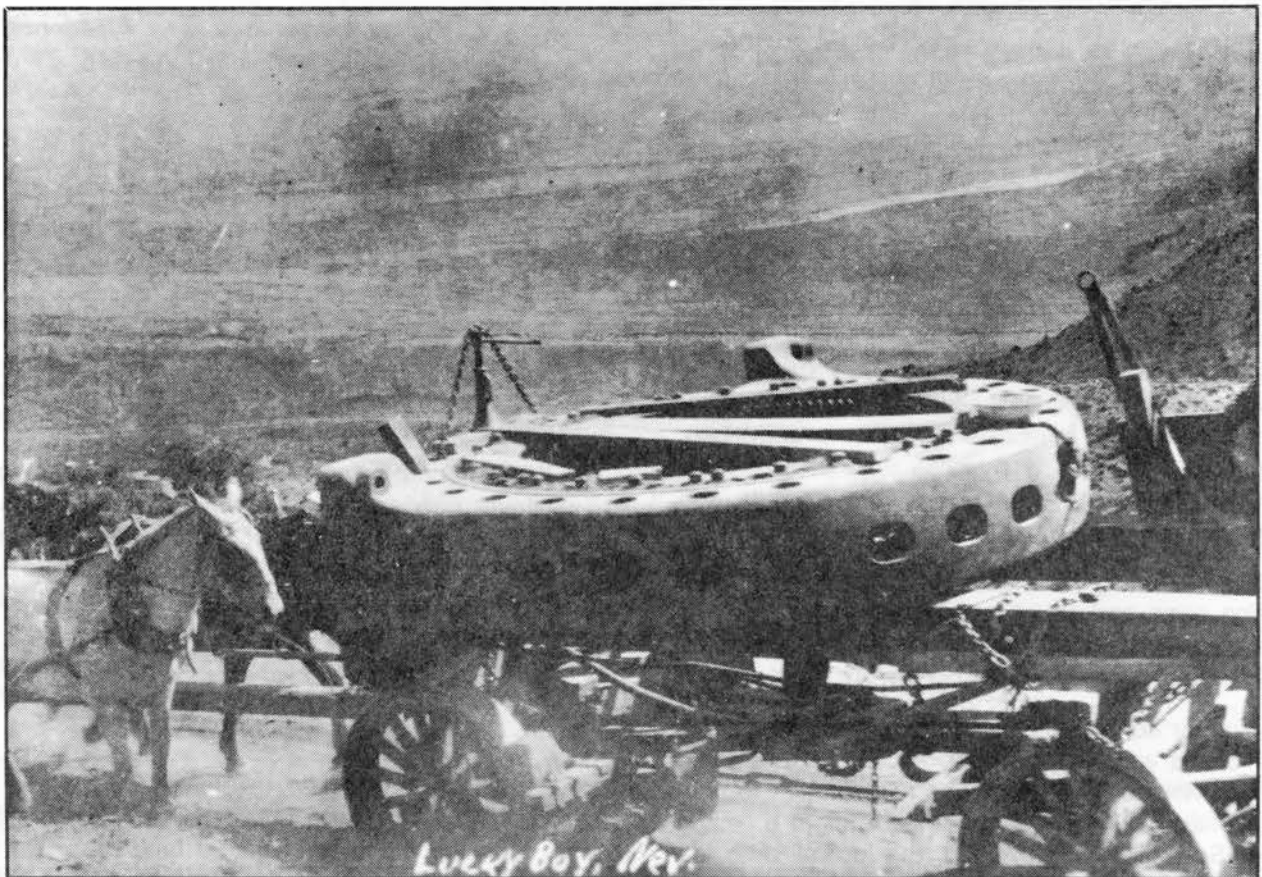
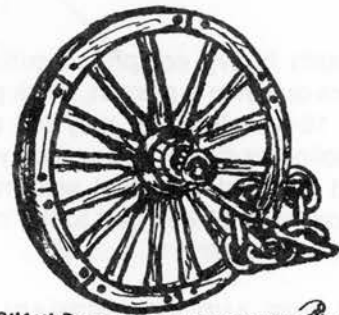
When George C. hauled wood, mining supplies or whatever needed moving, he carried several essentials in his wagon. He was never without water, an anvil and a blade. When the terrain needed a little leveling George was his own engineer and road crew. His blade made many uneven portions of landscape level enough for his wagon to cross. If the outfit needed equipment repair George would replace a horseshoe or repair a chain on the spot.

Freighters had to be inventive. To drive a heavily loaded wagon down a grade as steep as the Sherwin Hill took more than brakes. To help the team hold its load George forge-welded a light chain to roughlock the back wheels onto a wheel-sled. Then he sledded the rig

ROUGHLOCKS ~ USED ON HEAVY LOADED DOWN HILL WAGONS



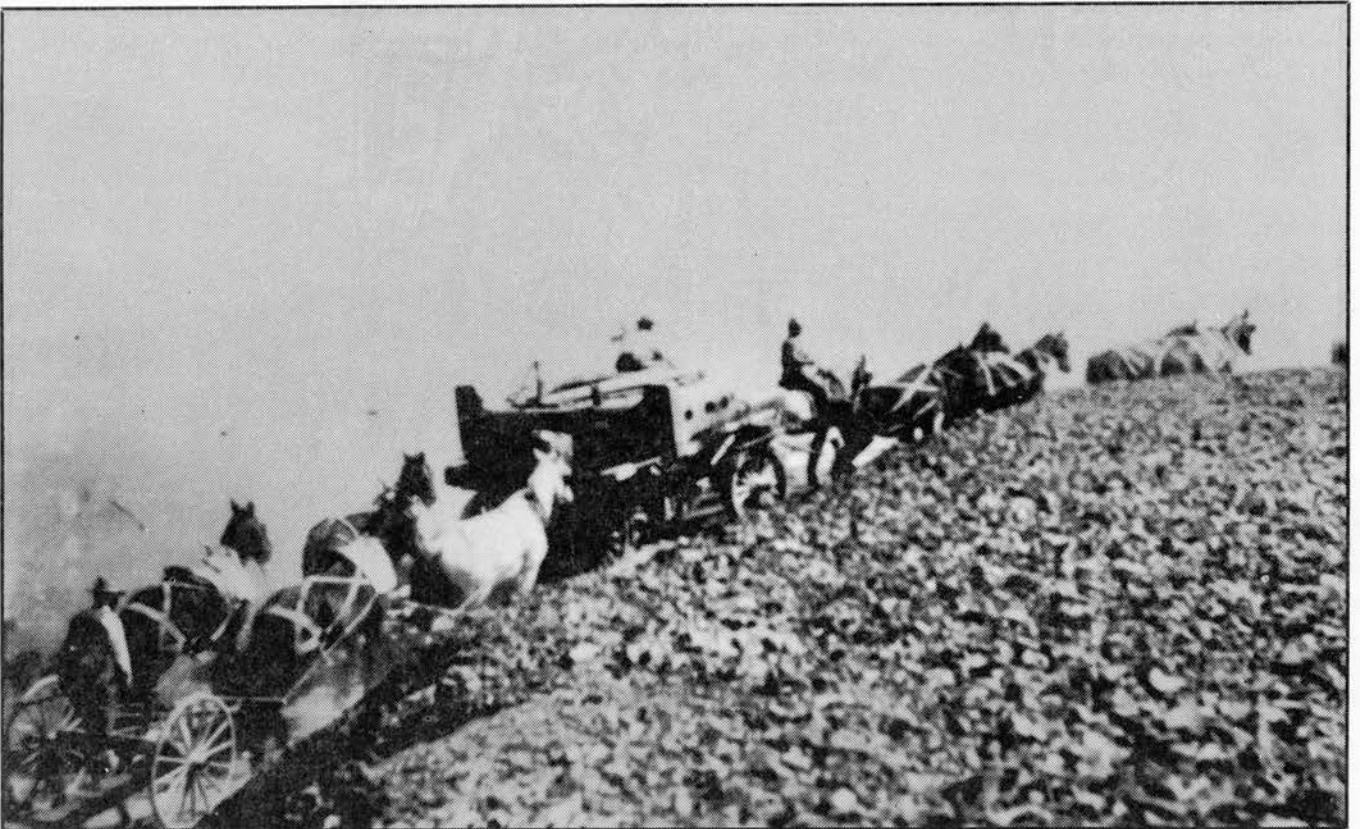
- ERNEST G. KINNEY - 90 -



1904 photograph on Lucky Boy Grade from Hawthorne to Lundy. Kinney Family collection.

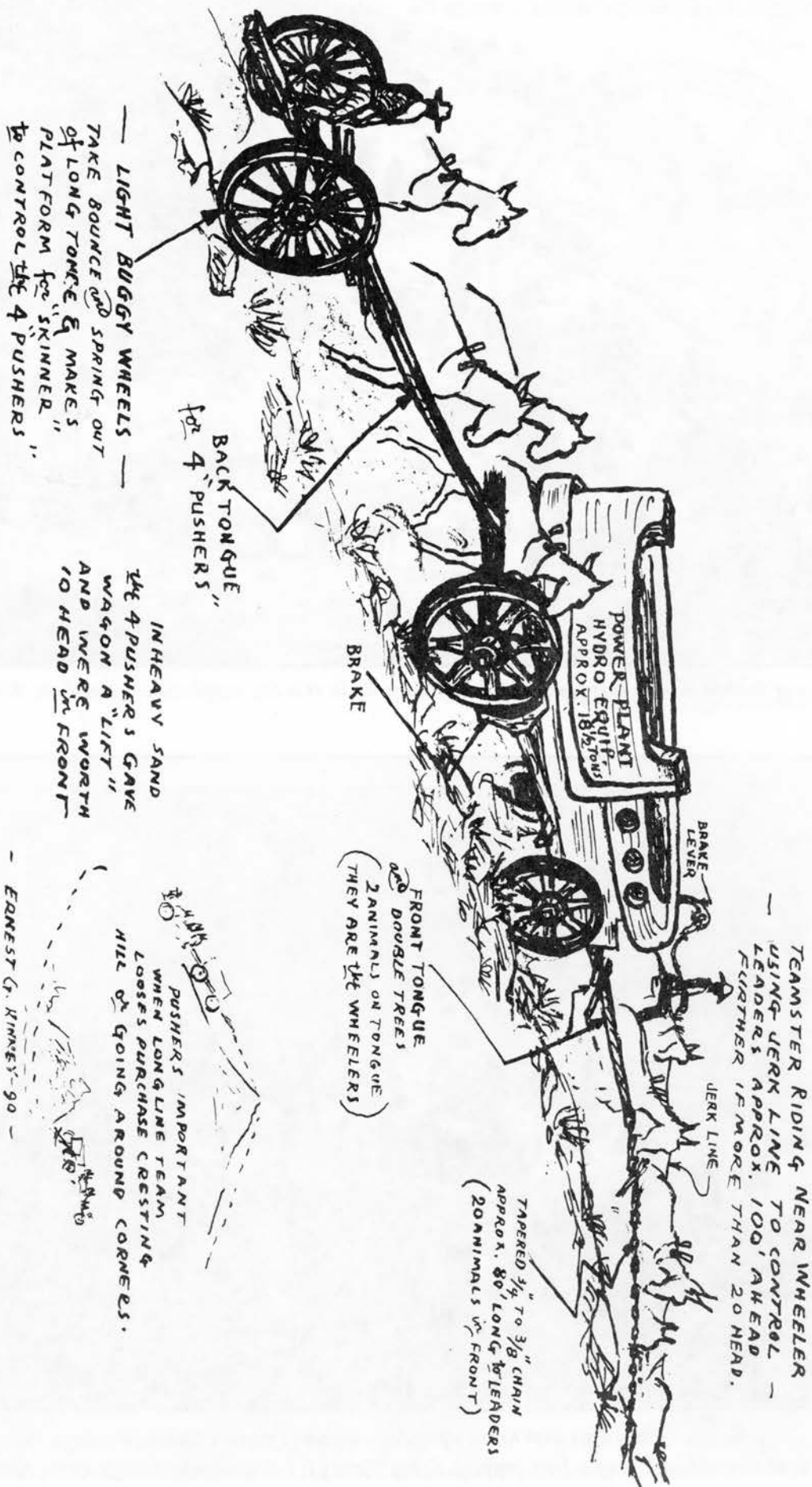


Wood hauling out of Benton. Note water barrel and size of rear wheels. It is dry, rough country out there. Kinney Family collection.



George C. Kinney going over Lucky Boy Pass with heavy equipment, requiring pushers. Behind is George, riding the dolly, a Kinney invention to keep the back tongue from popping. Spray Kinney is riding wheeler with jerkline. Kinney Family collection.

HEAVY WAGON LOAD RIGGED for "PUSHERS"



down the grade. This technique scarred deep ruts into the Bishop tuff (lava) of Sherwin Grade. When the ruts became axle-deep it was a simple matter to move the road course a few feet east or west . . . and no permits needed!

Another method George and his son, Spray, used to get around in this mountainous country was the "dolly." The problem: as a wagon is pulled up a grade or around a curve, the pulling power of the team is lessened as they round the bend. The answer: a team of animals in front and a team behind the wagon, giving the load to both pullers and pushers. At the end of the back tongue was the "dolly" made of two buggy wheels on an axle with a driver and reins. The weight of the rider on the dolly kept the tongue from popping up and down. Clever, those Kinneys! *(There will be more of the Kinney Clan in future stories).*

ROADS OF THE EASTERN SIERRA

"The Dry Road" kept surfacing here and there . . . in conversation, in a book or in a paper. It was Art Hess, born in 1890, who pulled it out from way back in his memory. Art recalled the road was one of three that went north from Bishop to Bodie. No wonder three roads went to Bodie! In the 1890s Bodie reached a population of 10,000 which made it California's second largest town. Art described the three roads.

BISHOP TO BENTON TO BODIE

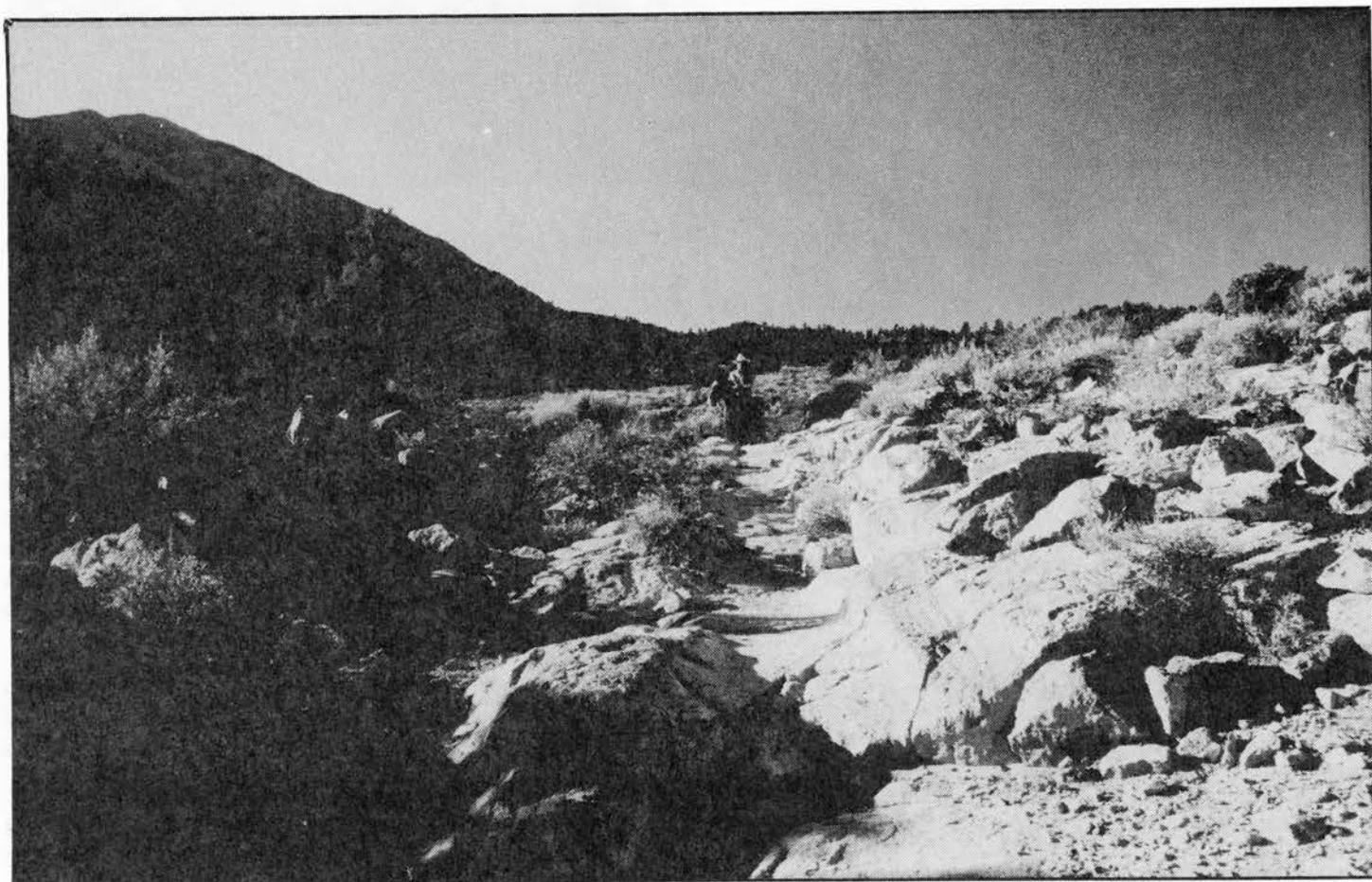
This route went to the Fish Slough stage coach stop, then north to Yellow Jacket Spring, on to Old Benton, and northwest to Mono Mills. From there it paralleled the Mono Lumber Company railroad around the east side of Mono Lake and up to Bodie.

BISHOP TO MAMMOTH TO BODIE

This road headed from Bishop to Round Valley, up Sherwin Hill and over the summit, down Sherwin Hill to the sawmill on Lower Rock Creek, up to the swampy meadowland of Little Round Valley, across Crooked Creek and into Mammoth (in the summer), from Long Valley north over Deadman, across Rush Creek, through Lee Vining, across the west side of Mono Lake and on, to either Lundy or Bodie.

THE DRY ROAD

Art's best recollection was the Dry Road. It has never been described better. This road ran from Bishop out to Round Valley. It crossed Lower Rock Creek at the bridge just south of the Chance Ranch, a little below the present Paradise Lodge. From there the road cut up (or sledged down) through the lava of the Bishop Tuff until it reached the tableland near the Gorge Road, east of Highway 395. At this point faint scars in the Bishop tuff



Freight road on south slope of Sherwin Hill.

Louise Kelsey photo

can be found. They are not as deep as the Sherwin ruts, but deep enough and straight enough to tell a road-searcher that here are the remains of The Dry Road. From the high and dry stretch between the Rock Creek Gorge and the Owens River Gorge the road wanders north and into the mesa maze. Here all traces are lost among the many roads that cross and re-cross the mesa.

The Dry Road turned west through a cut near Sunny Slope, then across the marshy land of Crooked Creek and Hilton. It stayed on the west side of the river through Long Valley (no Crowley Lake yet), crossing at Big Springs, passing Mono Mills, up Cottonwood Canyon and into Bodie.

Author's Note:

Some good and hardy friends have helped trace some portions of the great and important old roads. There has been a lot of fun, a lot of laughs and a deep sense of awe at the determination of men to move things. I have by no means found all of the roadbeds. I am happy to leave some of them to you. Remember, when you start, take water (perhaps a bite of food) and a sense of adventure. Good hunting! ❁

REFERENCES AND CREDITS:

Ernest and Yan Kinney, interviews

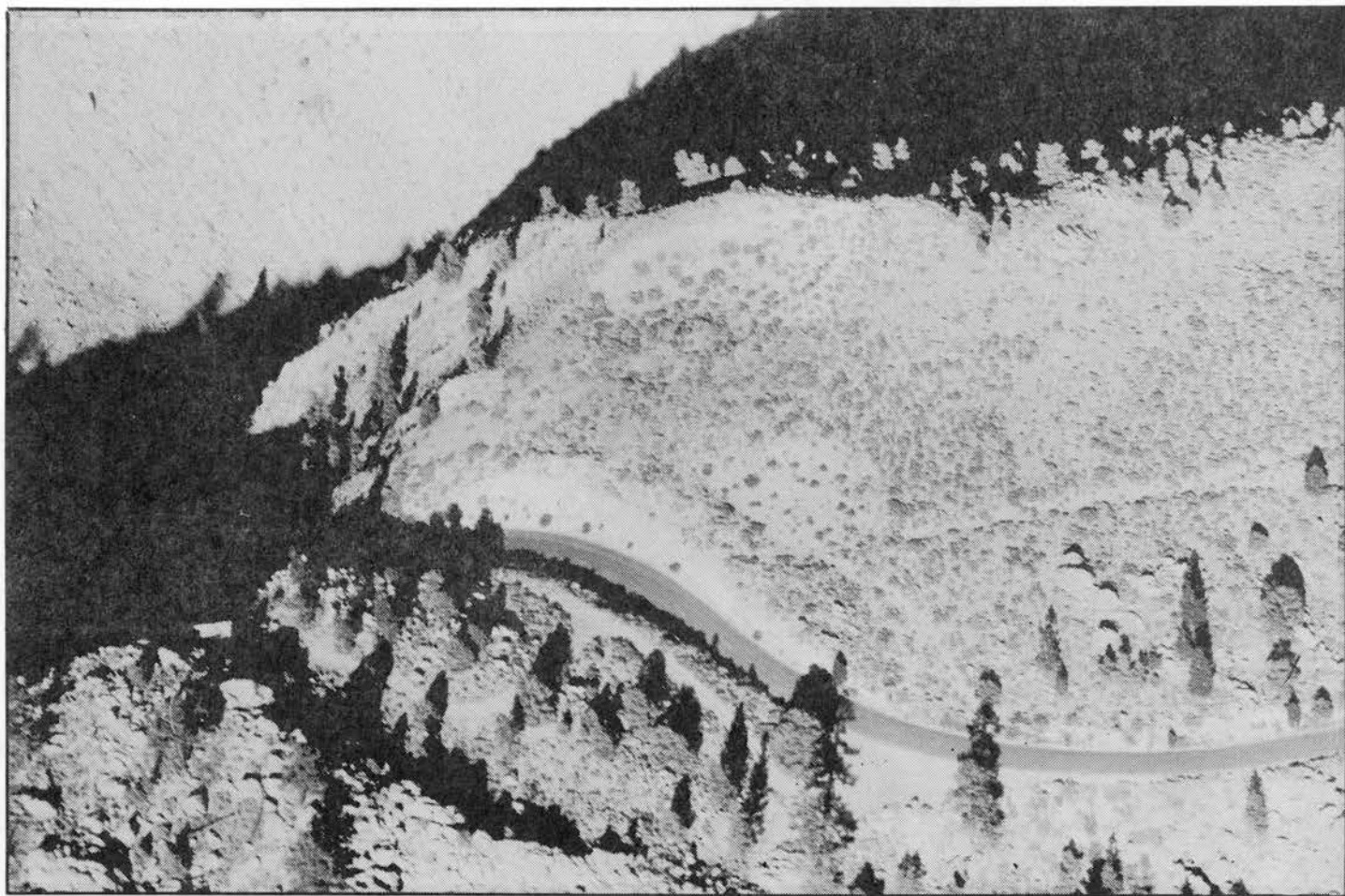
Art Hess, interviews

Ernest Kinney, sketches, diagrams and old photos

Bill Kelsey, map

Bill and Louise Kelsey, photographs

Fieldwork - Yan Kinney, Bill and Annie Jenkins, Denton Sonke and Bill Kelsey.



"The Ghost Road" closely following paved road.

Aerial photo by Louise Kelsey



LOOKING IN ON LOOKOUT

*Looking out at Lookout. View over northern Panamint Valley
David A. Wright photo 1989.*

by David A. Wright

It is summer in Panamint as I find myself heading relentlessly up the boulder-strewn canyon. My mule beneath me strains her heart out up this Godforsaken country as we push ahead in our search for wealth. Boulders endlessly pound at my mule and myself until, in agony, I curse everything I can think of. There is evidence that others have come this way before me, in huge wagons with wheels of iron rim and seats of pain. How could they put up with this constant pounding?

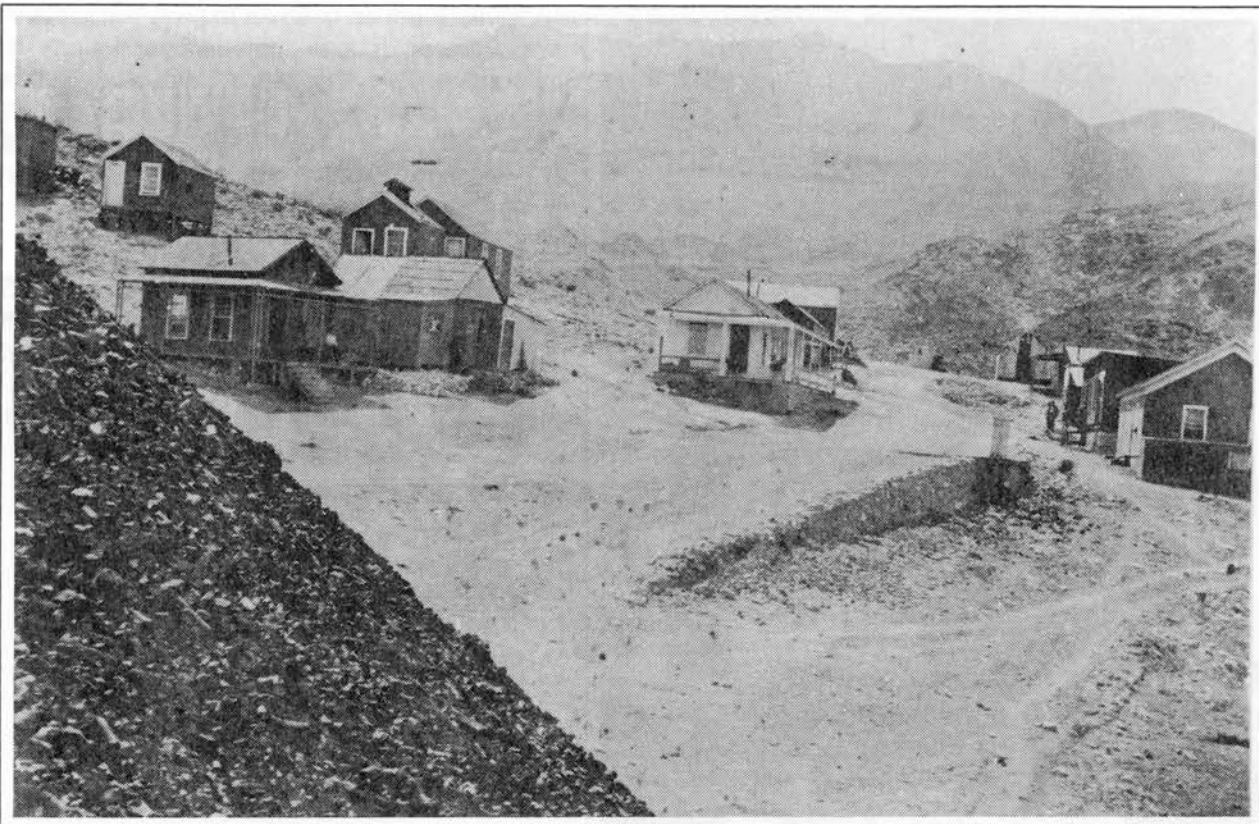
This land in which I seek fortune changes the human landscape of emotion and mood, just as light and shadow change upon the landscape of earth and sky. One can run the gamut of feelings in each passing foot, mile, and segment of time.

At last! The backbone of the ridge where I seek my wealth is topped, and my mood changes to excitement! The rocks of the canyon floor cease, and the way becomes smoother. Before me spreads the exhilarating expanse of Panamint Valley, 3,000 feet below.

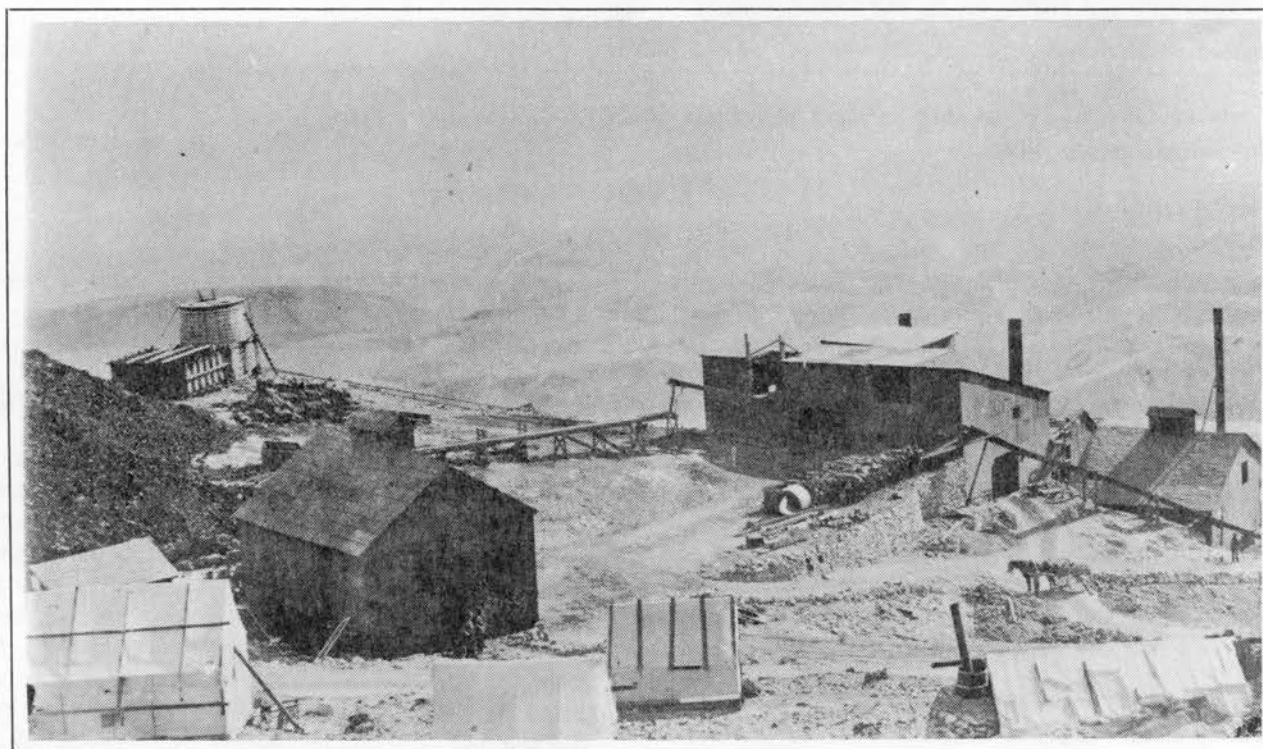
Anticipation ensues. I know that my wealth will be found a little to the east on the knoll they call Lookout. As I reach my claim, a bit of disappointment sets in as I see I am not the only one to have found it; there have been others, but they are gone. My inquisitive nature takes over. Where 'did they go? They left behind so much.

Later, I find I am again on the roam. This time up into the cool pinyon forests of Wildrose Canyon, high in the Panamint Mountains. The route is much smoother up this high. In the dense forests I find curious objects. They have obviously been constructed by man in search of wealth, but seem to serve some other purpose. Legend has it that they once were a part of the quest across the valley where I had been searching for my own wealth, but what connection do these monstrosities of stone have to do with that place? Why have men toiled so hard on something that served so little purpose?

"One man's trash is another's treasure." I have found my treasure here on Lookout Mountain, and in Wildrose Canyon. On this



Main Street, Town of Lookout, and Argus Range. Historic photo courtesy Eastern California Museum.



Modock Furnaces, Panamint Valley and Panamint Mountains, looking north. Historic photo courtesy Eastern California Museum.

barren mountaintop 4000 feet above the sea can be found the reward of the adventurer in search of the ghosts of the past. And up in the cool pinyons 7,000 feet above the sea and 15 miles further east more treasure is to be found.

The wealth of Lookout that men of old searched for pinched out long ago in the Argus Range. When the silver, gold, and other precious metals stopped pouring out of the mines called Modoc, Minnietta, and Defense, the men stopped pouring out of the dying towns of Cerro Gordo, Virginia City, Aurora, and the towns of the Mother Lode. When men stopped searching for Lookout, Lookout's fires grew cold, as did the fires across the valley. Only a few short years before, men had scrambled into this land in search of what had been hailed as the outpost of hell standing in the way of California.

But I came up to Lookout to see the treasure these men left behind. It is a treasure because civilization has left so few of the bones of yesterday's cities that they are truly a rare and precious commodity.

Things have changed in the ten-score-and-one decades that have passed since Lookout died. My "mule" is an old, worn trail bike. The homes and hopes of men have collapsed. But the rocks, oh how little have they changed! You may wish to inspect the remains of Lookout; while you are enduring the rocks on the old road to the site, I will tell its story.

THE BEGINNING

It was less than a diamond anniversary past the days of the '49ers when men began to trickle, then flood out of the camps east and west of the Sierra to scour the harsh land they cursed in crossing it back then. J.S. Childs, E. Burke, B.E. Ball, and J.E. Boardman happened to be prospecting ten miles east of Darwin on the

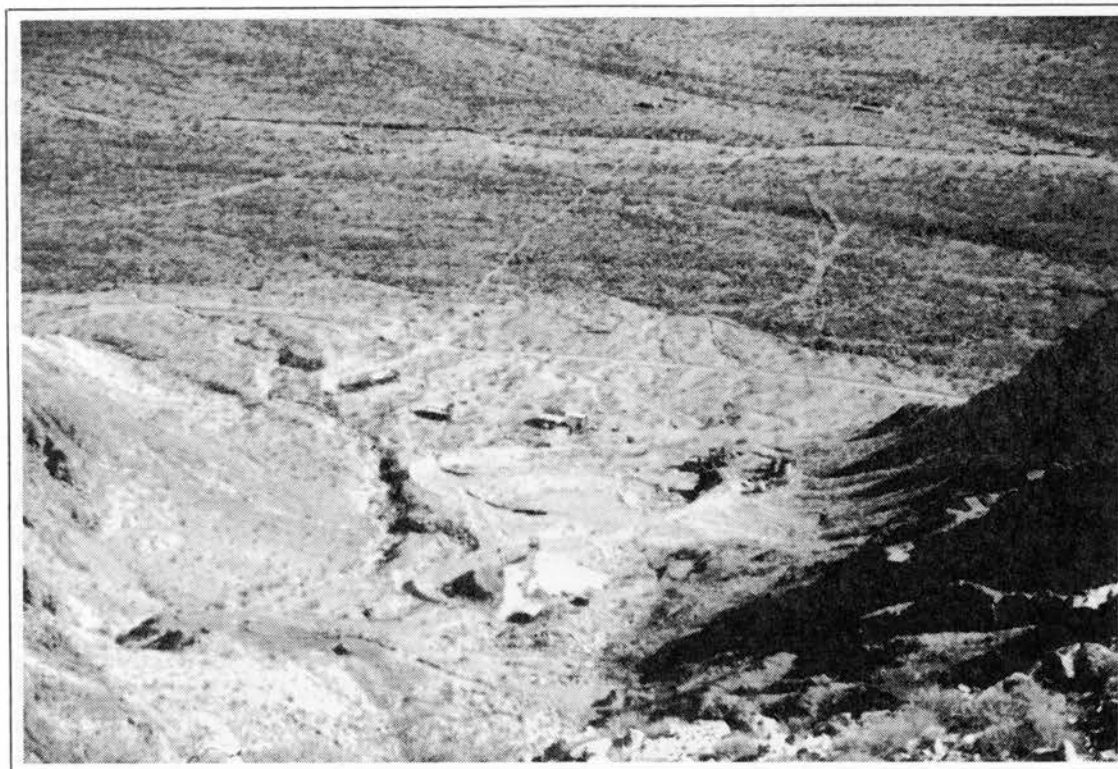
sheer and violent granite eastern slopes of the Argus Range. What they found brought back assays of 101 to 293 oz. of silver per ton of ore, plus gold in commercial quantities. The ore was a complex of gold, silver, lead, copper, and zinc. Several mines were founded in that time, most notably the Modoc, Confidence, Eclipse, and the Kentuckian, later the Minnietta. These were scattered around and upon a 4,100-foot high knoll that jutted out from the Argus Range. The nearest mill to treat the ore was the R.C. Jacobs Surprise Canyon Mill in Panamint City, which required a rough trip down the mountain, across the desolate waste of Panamint Valley, then a grueling climb up the steep confines of Surprise Canyon.

Three months after the initial discovery, the claims around the Modoc were consolidated upon the mountaintop and organized into the Modock Consolidated Mining Company, with a board of directors in San Francisco, among whom was George Hearst. Hearst, who had made his fortune in the Black Hills of western South Dakota with his fabulously rich Homestake Mine (still in operation today), caught the siren song of Lookout ore.

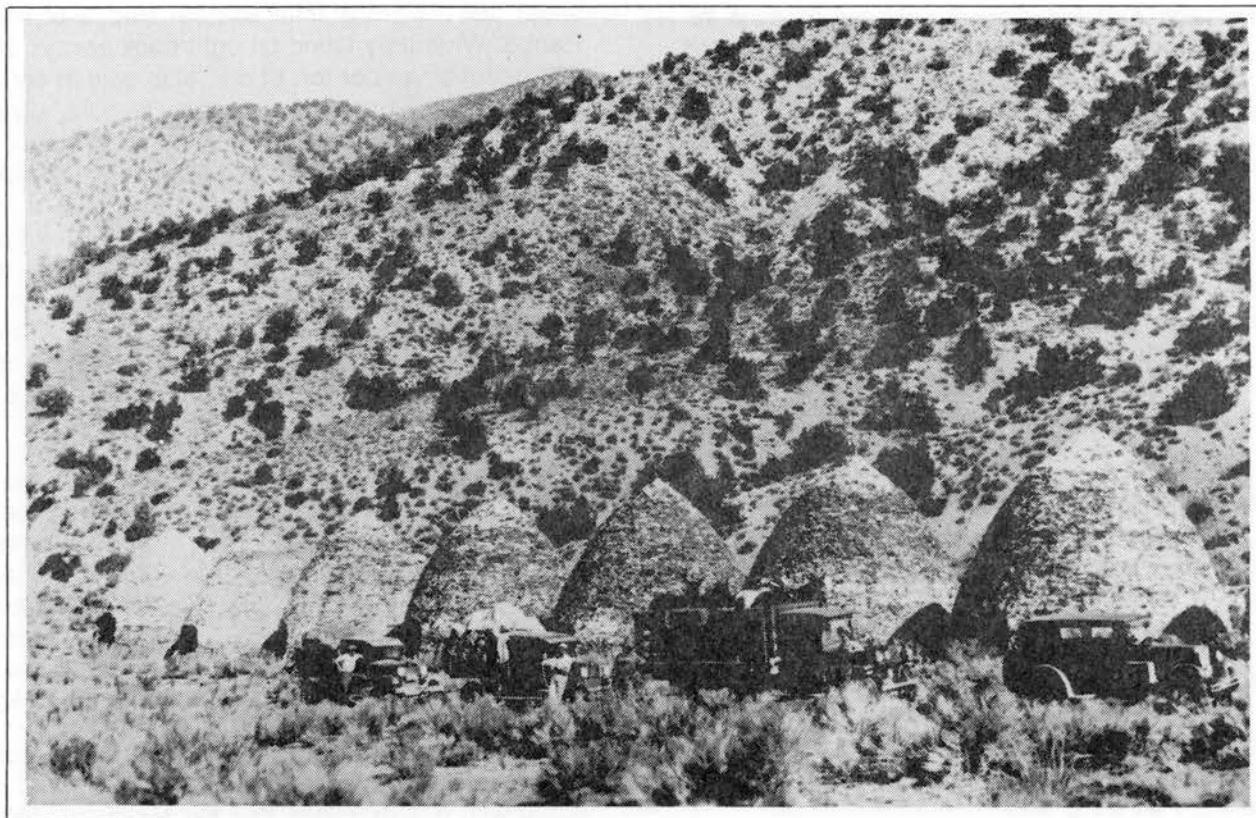
Down below the Modoc group, near the bottom of Thompson Canyon, was the Minnietta. It was consolidated with nearby mines into the Minnietta Belle Silver Mining Company.

The mines were remote. The site was above a barren valley miles from any civilization, so it was decided to create a civilization on top of Lookout Mountain.

To release gold and silver from its mother rock, it is necessary to smelt the ore. The Modock Company sent engineers to the site to find a suitable location in which

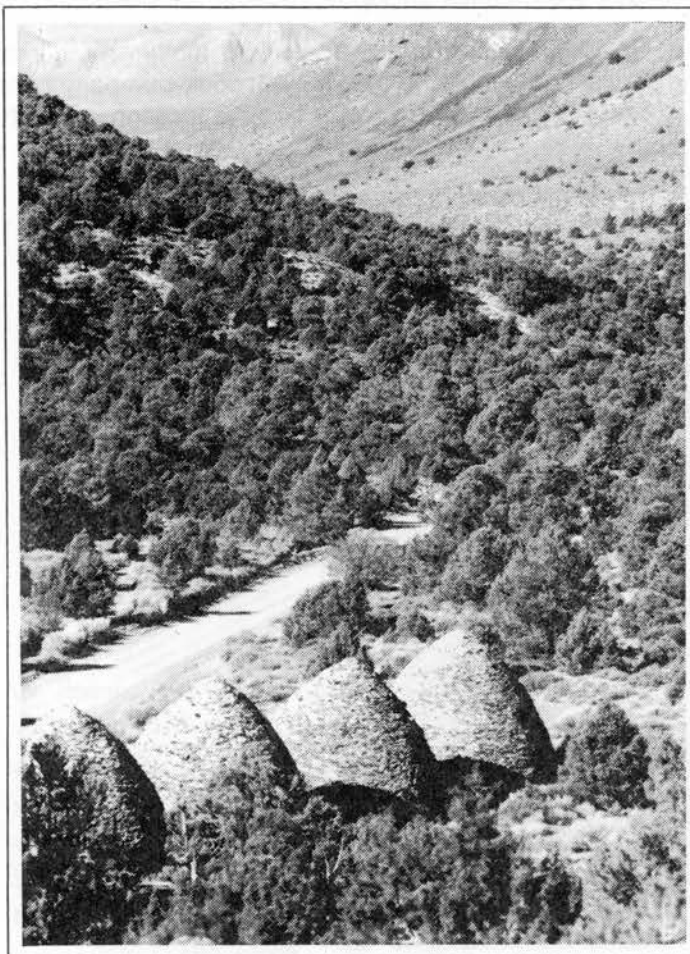


View from summit of Lookout Mountain of the Minnietta Mine. Note scattered rock ruins in the bottom of canyon to upper at upper edge of photo. David A. Wright photo 1989.



Charcoal kilns, 1929. Note forest around kilns is still sparse. This area was denuded 50 years before for the hungry smelters of Lookout. Historic photo courtesy Death Valley Museum, D.V. Nat'l. Monument.

Charcoal kilns, 1987, David A. Wright photo



to build a furnace. Several areas were considered, most notably at the bottom of the mountain, where it would be easier to haul in supplies, ship out ore, and nature could bring down ore and water; but there was overwhelming favor for the mountaintop location, more suitable to human habitation, especially in the summer months.

Consider this: back in 1877, there was no such thing as air conditioning. The upper site, at about 3,700 feet would have climate similar to Lone Pine, whereas the lower site would be about 15-20 degrees warmer. The mountaintop location won out, to the dismay of the company engineer, and a company town was built up around it. Water was piped in from springs to the west in Stone Canyon. Snow's Canyon, six miles south, was selected for water supply for the Minnietta Belle Company. Their pipes are still to be found, twisted and broken.

THE MATURING OF LOOKOUT

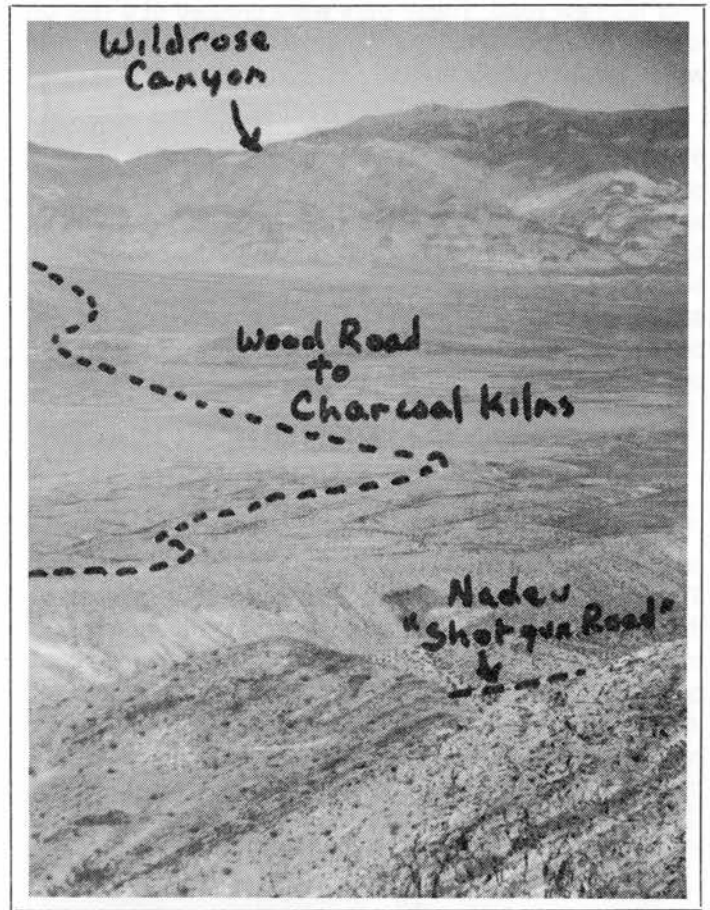
Soon Lookout began to be civilized, to grow to more than four score buildings of native rock and wood. A year after the discovery, the May 1876 *Kern County Courier* wrote "... that new and much talked of mining district in our backcountry ... In Lookout District 10 miles east of Darwin, the Modock Company has found an immense body of first class ore, and will soon have a furnace or mill erected." By the time that the furnaces were nearing completion, the California Bureau of Mines could report in October of 1876 that "... the 60 ton fur-

naces are ready to start up. The Company has excellent boarding houses, blacksmith shops, etc. which are perfect in all their appointments."

With the great heat needed by furnaces came the hunger for great quantities of a source of that heat, namely wood or coal. Coal in the form needed to smelt is not found in the Panamint region naturally. Wood in its usual form is neither hot nor lasting enough to produce the heat necessary. But charcoal, similar to what we use in our barbecues, could supply that heat. To produce the charcoal needed consumed entire forests of the scant resources in the Argus Range, and the eyes of the Modock Company turned to the great range across the valley.

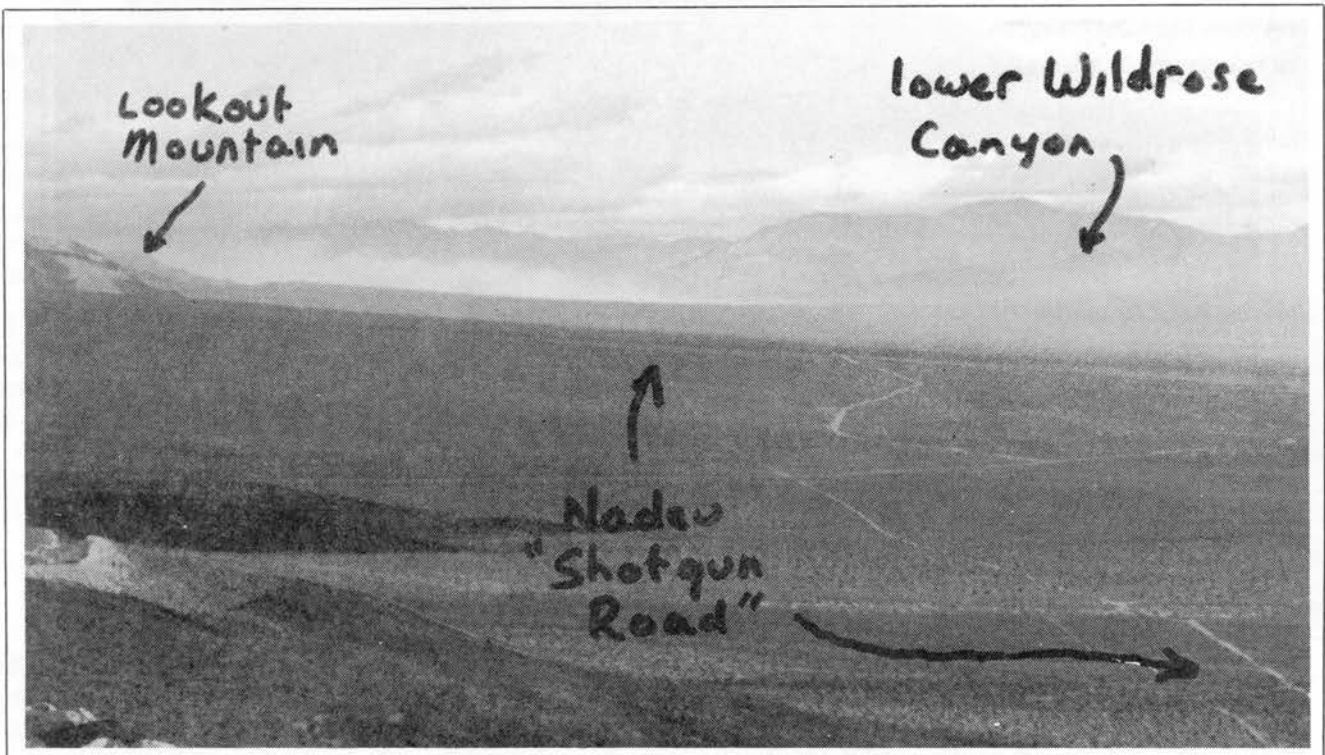
When the furnaces were first started in October 1876, production of ten tons of ore treated per day (which yielded about \$500 per ton of silver) required 3,000 bushels of charcoal. The *Coso Mining News*, reported that the mines were inspected by engineers on hand to witness the first firing of the furnace and in the opinion of Superintendent Barber, "the furnace is working charmingly." By the end of the year, the Argus Range was denuded of its forest.

The community of Lookout prospered. Transportation needs were filled by a tri-weekly stage to Darwin. Hauling needs were filled by Remi Nadeau, founder of the famous Cerro Gordo Freighting Company. He proceeded to survey and build suitable roads in the vicinity; one south through Panamint Valley, and over the Slate Range. This was the first surveyed road in the Mojave Desert, nicknamed the "shotgun road." By the end of 1876, he had hauled more than 5,000 bars of silver



View easterly across Panamint Valley from townsite of the Nadeau "shotgun road" and the wood road to kilns in Wildrose Canyon. David A. Wright photo.

View north from summit of Slate Range on Trona-Wildrose Road up Panamint Valley. David A. Wright photo.



over his new road. These bars were created at a rate of four to five per hour; at 90 pounds each, they were worth \$400 to \$500 apiece.

By the time the postal service had noticed Lookout, there was another Lookout in California, so the post office was christened "Modock." About this time, there was to be found on the mountain a population consisting of 140 voters, with eight children taught by the Darwin school district. These helped to support Lookout's three saloons, two general stores, and community hall. Lookout never had a cemetery, though one known death did occur. Lookout was a peaceful town.

CHARCOAL PRODUCTION AND THE WILDROSE KILNS

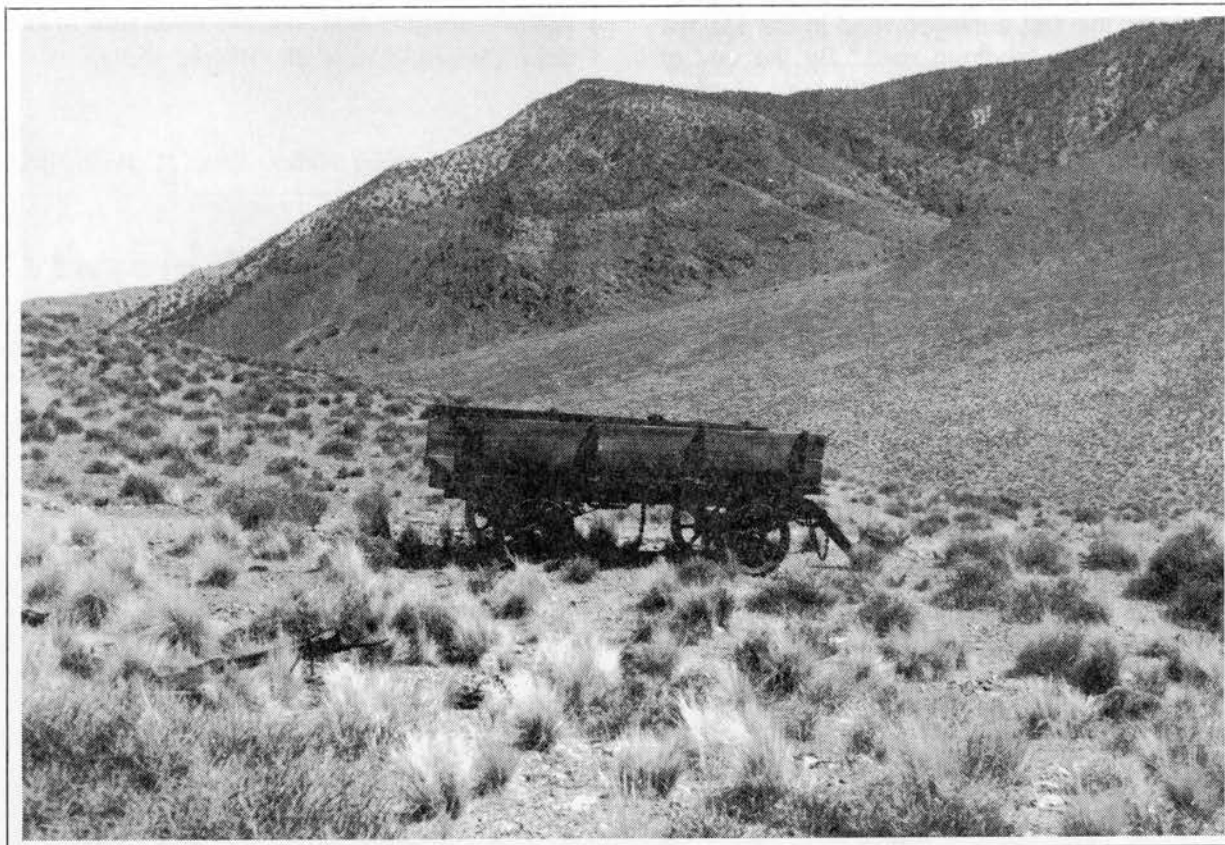
As previously mentioned, the Modock furnaces consumed the scarce timber of the Argus Range in a hurry. The *Inyo Independent*, Dec. 1876 gives us a glimpse of the activity that brought the demise: "Not less than 500 mules and quite an army of packers, teamsters, coal burners, wood choppers, etc., are constantly employed in furnishing coal and other local supplies . . . The furnaces are receiving no less than 3,000 bushels of coal per day. The average output of one furnace since October 9 when it was first started up, is close to 160 bars every 24 hours; a second furnace of the same

capacity will soon be in constant operation, and then the daily yield will be over 300 bars, or about 13 tons of bullion . . ."

Finally, in the spring of 1877, the order to build charcoal kilns in Wildrose Canyon in the Panamint Range was given. They were supervised by S.B. Morrison. Ten were built, patterned after the kilns in Cottonwood Creek, south of Lone Pine, but built of stone. Each kiln was roughly the same size and shape, being on the average 31 feet wide, and 25 feet high. Each was about 25 inches thick at the bottom, narrowing to about 12 inches at the top, creating a parabola to burn evenly.

The May 19, 1877 issue of *Mining and Scientific Press* tells us: "Mr. Nadeau has a large force of men working on a new road from the Slate Range, up the valley, to the Minnietta and Modoc, connecting with the new road to the Wildrose wood and coal camp, where the Modock Company has a large force in the field. The new kilns, erected under the supervision of Mr. Morrison, are giving entire satisfaction and are already furnishing a large amount of clean, hard coal, very much superior to that made in the ordinary pits."

Coso Mining News, Jan. 27, 1877: "The wood and coal road to Wildrose Canyon, from whence those supplies will hereafter be obtained, is now completed and in excellent condition."



Abandoned wagon of the type used to haul wood or charcoal; found and photographed in the vicinity of charcoal kilns in 1946. Courtesy Death Valley Museum, D.V. Nat'l. Monument.

THE END

The May 11, 1878 *Coso Mining News*: "Both furnaces are now running to perfection and turning out 200 bars of bullion every 24 hours, the bars weighing an average of 85 pounds each. Thirty eight tons of ore are running through each 24 hours. The fact that there were 50,000 bushels at the kilns in Wildrose Canyon and the further fact that Mr. Guptill has put a force of men at work to run the ten kilns, of 42 cords capacity each, and to burn also in pits, and is also purchasing coal from this side of the mountains as well, is pretty good evidence that the Modoc furnaces will run for a long time."

But it was not to be. Just prior to that glowing report, events began to take place in both Lookout and company headquarters in San Francisco to cool the fires in both Lookout and Wildrose. First, the breakneck pace that the furnaces had been run led to their total failure. The Modoc Company had to reorganize to subsidize their total rebuild. Then soon after that came a crash in lead prices, which was an important by-product and valuable to the operation. Layoffs and wage reductions ensued, and remaining miners rebelled against the reduction in pay to less than \$4.00 a day. Another reorganization followed.

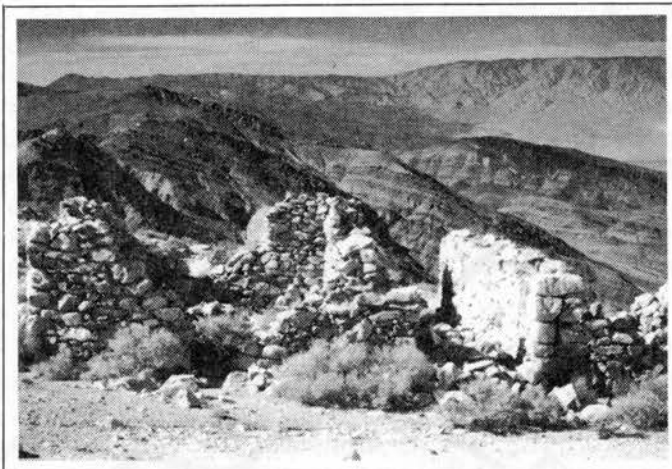
As for the charcoal kilns, it is apparent through the sketchy company records and other related sources that their fires were cooled by 1879, never to be used again.

In 1883, the owners decided to lease the entire property, but soon the lessees were reported operating at a loss. Other mines opened or were reworked, but nothing materialized to cause the same excitement. Nothing was rich enough to add to the pile of broken champagne bottles or gouged out of the bowels of the earth enough to warrant warming the hearts of the long-cold kilns. Lookout had died, but it died rich. Production figures for the period of 1875-1890 show Lookout's total wealth at its death to be in the neighborhood of \$1,000,000.

Lookout had only lived a few short years. Most towns that sprang up for the cause of precious metals of the earth sped through life in like fashion, many died even younger; but Lookout, in contrast to most fickle towns, returned much wealth to its owners.

But she also left behind much wealth. The ruins of Lookout and of Wildrose Canyon are true treasures in this time of so few places where solitude can be found in the ghostly ruins of the past.

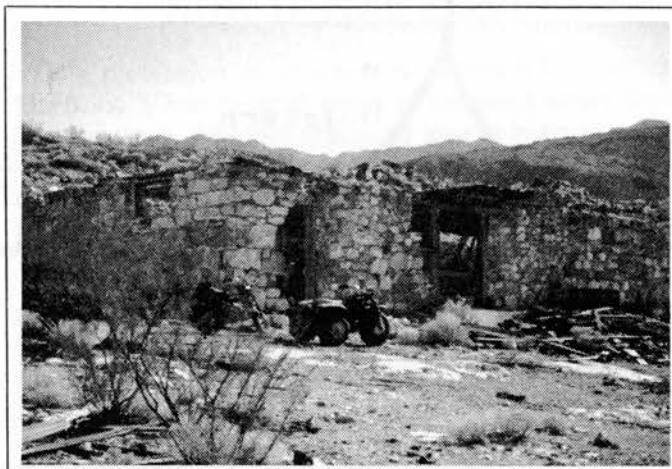
AUTHOR'S NOTE: The Cranston Bill creating roadless wilderness areas in the Mojave Desert will impact this area also. You may want to plan a trip soon while it is still accessible for those who have the equipment.



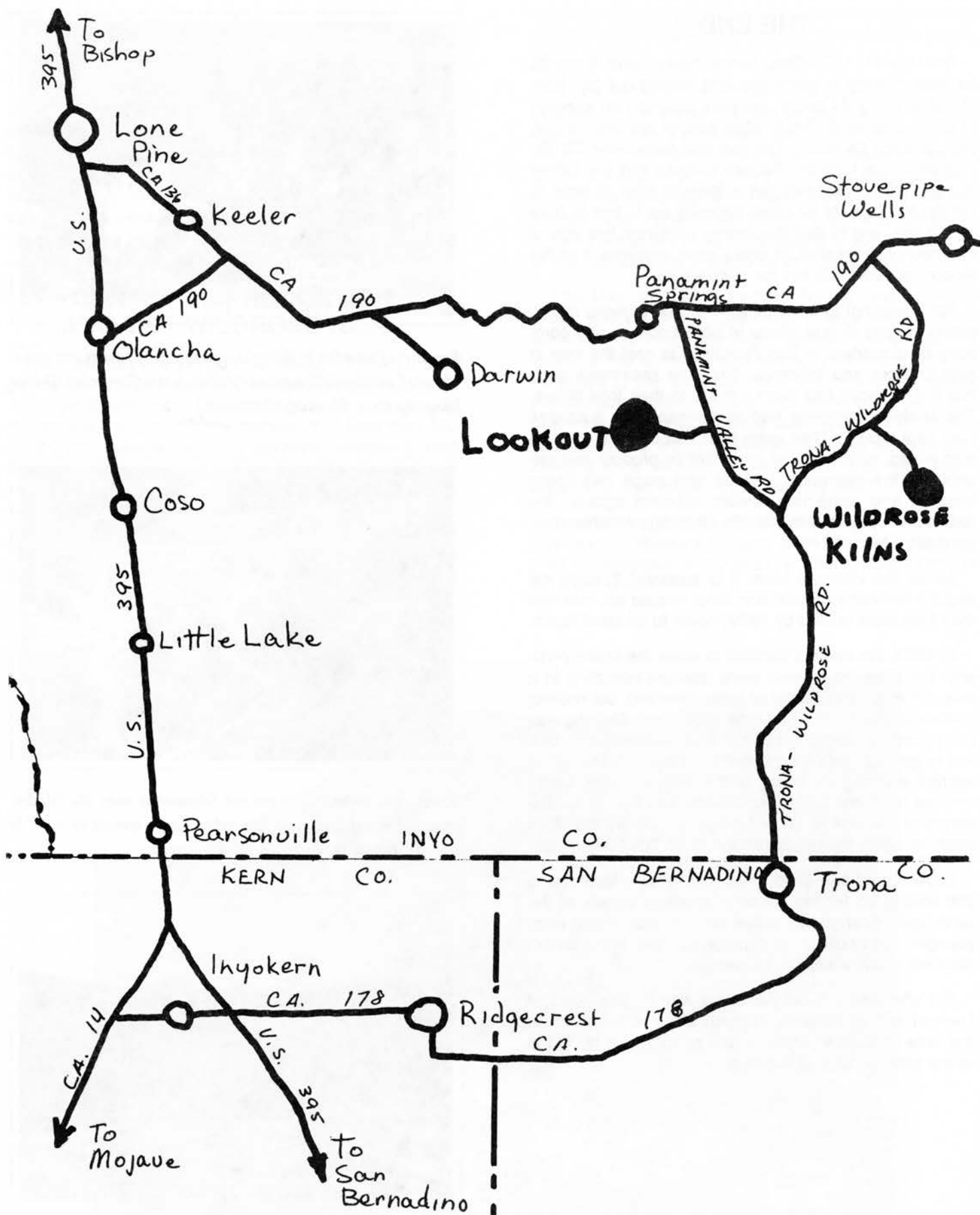
Remains of wooden building. Lumber full of square cut nails. View of northern Panamint Valley, with Panamint Dunes lying against Hunter Mountain.



View from summit of Lookout Mountain onto the Modoc group of mines and main townsite. Large terrace at right is site of furnaces.



Ruins of largest building still standing in main part of townsite. Author's and friends' modern "mules" waiting patiently at the hitching post.



D.I. Wright

LOOKOUT

What's There, and How I found it

I became fascinated by ghost towns in my high school years, or about twenty years too late. By that time it was 1970, and already California and Nevada ghost towns were pretty well picked over by bottle hunters, metal detectors, and vandals.

In those years, I hoarded all reading materials available on the subject, especially in my native Mojave Desert, the Eastern Sierra, and Nevada. Desert Magazine was still published then and the pages were filled with places I was desperate to explore.

I first read of Lookout in the book Ghost Towns and Mining Camps of California, by Remi Nadeau, in those high school days. Our family often traveled to Death Valley via Trona and the Panamint Valley. I scanned the Argus Range for the site as we sped by, but could not figure out where it was, for no signs are visible from the highway. I promised myself that one day I would find it.

On a windy, cool September morning, almost twenty years later, my friend Rick and I loaded my pickup with his Honda three-wheeler and my worn out Honda Trail 70. Our destination that day was to be Lookout, thirty-five miles north of my home in Trona, where I lived for two-and-one-half years with my twenty-year-old vow burning in my bosom with intensity.

We parked at the Remi Nadeau road and a mobilehome camp site of more recent operation of the Modock Mine. In autumn of 1987, when I had attempted a trip to Lookout, there were about a dozen mobiles along two rows, and a metal water tank which leaked enough water to create a mini oasis. Only one mobile remains, along with the dry tank and no oasis.

We unloaded the bikes and took the "shotgun road" north about one-half mile, then turned onto the original road up Stone Canyon. It was very rocky, taking a path through the alluvium on the canyon floor. We continued about three miles to a point where the modern hauling road took off on a switchback course up the side of the mountain. We tried to go on up the canyon, but before long my little Honda did not have enough power and traction to get my 200 pound frame up a steep, loose section. Rick did continue, finding that the two roads met on top of the backbone of the ridge, so we took the switchback road to the top, where there was a four-way intersection. We turned east, finding another intersection about a mile further on. We took the right fork, obviously little used, and came to the top of the mountain which my altimeter showed as 4100 feet.

Here we found two rock cabins, one on the edge of the mountaintop, and one that looked as though it may have been a business. It was directly over the top of the Modoc mines, and there were many trails and roads below.

We went back to the site of the town of Lookout, about one-half mile north. The altimeter read 3,900 feet. There were many rock walls, rock foundations, remains of three frame buildings, and the terraced foundations of the Modoc mill. There were many portals of the mine, and rock-supported roads snaked along the hillside. There was much trash, including glass and cans. The remains of the frame buildings and the roof rafters of the largest stone building were full of square nails.

On a return trip, using a dune buggy, there was more time to explore the extensive workings of the Modock Mine, and the site of the furnaces. Some of the mines were inviting to the more adventuresome of our group (not I!), and so Rick and my father-in-law Don pulled out their flashlights and ventured in. I preferred to sit at the shaft entrances and watch, listen and chew my nails. At another mineshaft we all ventured in, but I went only a few yards. I wanted some flash photos inside the shaft and that wish was the fuel to drive me inside the mine. The shaft veered around inside, but only went back about 150 feet.

We then went to another tunnel, marked "Modoc M-8." It was straight, and tall enough that we could stand upright. I went in about 200 feet, taking pictures with flash. My personal depth gage read "TOO FAR" and I went back out. Don and Rick went in approximately 450 to 500 feet farther where they came to a four-way junction in the shaft and came back to keep from becoming lost. In the shaft, they found some rosy quartz and broke off a chunk to bring out.

We drove down the mountain, then turned up Thompson Canyon to view the Minnietta workings. On our previous trip, we had been able to view the area from the mountaintop, but did not explore. There were three large wooden shacks at the site, a number of other structures, and a large wooden ore chute and tram terminus a bit farther up the hill. The area above the houses was pock-marked extensively with rock walls, retaining walls, pipes, machinery, and a stationary diesel generator setup. There were also a half dozen or so rock walls in the alluvium to the south.

Judging from the map and the landscape, one could spend several days exploring the Lookout area. It is densely packed with remains, some small, some colossal. By no means am I through exploring Lookout!

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The author does not endorse or recommend venturing into tunnels and mines. Also, be careful along the road between the furnace site and the mines, for several shafts are found in the road; near the end of the road, a shaft has caved in, leaving a large crater.

WHY CHARCOAL WAS USED

HOW IT WAS MADE

The production of charcoal is common in Inyo and Mono, as it was in most areas of the west where there was smelting. Whether produced locally in small batches, or on a large scale as at the kilns on Cottonwood Creek and Wildrose, the use of charcoal was a common part of the smelting process.

The Cottonwood kilns tapped the forests of the Sierra for cordwood to serve the smelters of Cerro Gordo; the Wildrose kilns used the abundant pinyon on the slopes of the Panamint Range to service the furnaces of Lookout.

Charcoal is often a necessity in our times, and for a similar use. Our American tradition of the family barbecue would not be the same without charcoal briquettes. Maybe some of you have tried to barbecue with a few sticks of the cordwood meant for the woodstove or

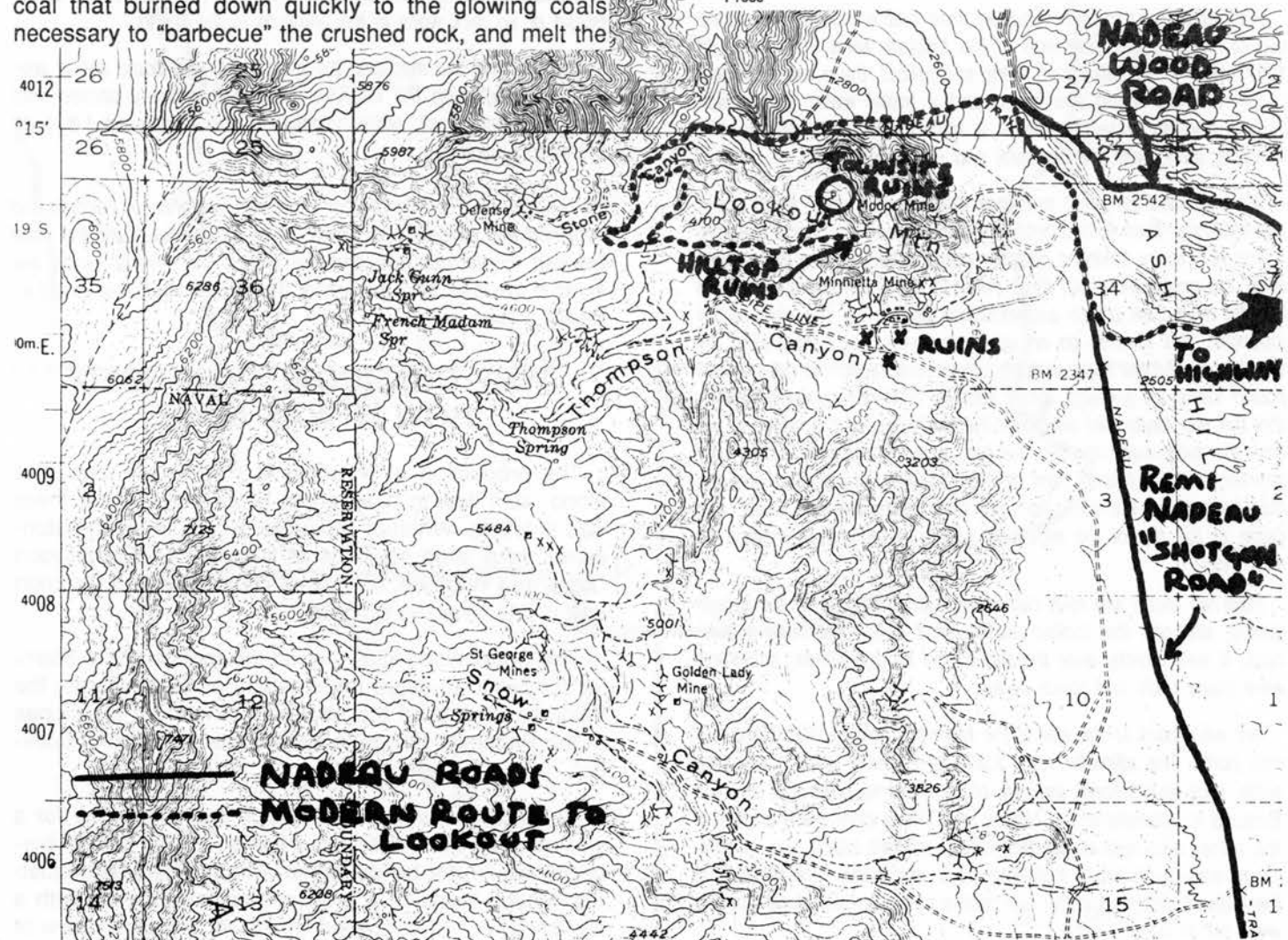
Another example of charcoal involves the same sticks of cordwood, and this time used for their intended purpose. If the wood is piled into the stove or fireplace and kept flaming, it will overheat, and produce unmanageable temperature inside the house.

The process of smelting ore is based on the same principle. The extraction of gold or silver from the waste rock involves crushing and heat. These precious metals melt at lower points than the other rock, but an even, long lasting heat is needed. In modern times we have other ways to create the heat, but back then, wood heat was the only way. A fire created with large sticks of cordwood did not produce a hot enough flame, even enough, nor long enough to smelt ore.

To produce the charcoal at Wildrose (and at Cottonwood Creek), raw cordwood was brought in. The logs were usually four feet long. This wood was stacked into the kiln (each kiln held up to 42 cords) and lit afire. Like our woodstoves, control of the burning process was necessary; and to accommodate that were vents placed near the bottom of the kiln, and at the top with movable ports. As with stove damper and bottom vents, these ports controlled the actual burning process.

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THE REFORMER



*Minaret Summit, 1951
Jim Gualtieri, driver*

by Marye Roeser

"We just got back from B-B-B-Bodie on the Reformer!" croaked the windblown but laughing guests as they straggled into the dining hall for evening dinner. The good-natured visitors were returning from one of the earliest organized bus tour trips in the eastern High Sierra. Camp High Sierra in Mammoth Lakes was a family camp operated by the Department of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles, and beginning in the 1930s had organized bus trips to points of interest throughout Mono County.

The "bus" was not exactly a standard, modern tour bus with adjustable seats and view windows. Actually, it wasn't a bus at all but a flatbed truck with add-on seats. However, the open air view was unrestricted and air conditioning was seldom needed.

The green International enjoyed a dual role. Besides hauling garbage to the dump every Friday, it headed down old Sherwin grade to Bishop for the weekly supply of groceries, crawling back up laden with enough food to amply feed one hundred guests plus twenty staff mem-

bers. During the other six days, the driver transformed it into a tour bus by bolting four long padded seats cross-wise on the flat bed.

Guests at Camp High Sierra, affectionately referred to as "gazoonies", toured the unique points of interest in Mono County from this high vantage point through sun, wind and summer rain showers. The bus was called The Reformer because "It shook the hell out of you!" The courageous bus drivers were usually college students or teachers who were free for a working summer in the mountains.

A favorite expedition toured the Casa Diablo geyser, the fish hatchery and Convict Lake where guests viewed the "hanging tree," and peered into the clear water to see the large trout lazily cruising the banks.

The next stop was Hot Creek for a swim and a very special picnic lunch. The driver parked The Reformer along the edge of Hot Creek gorge and the gazoonies and Camp High staff scrambled down the steep, rocky trail to the creek with its bubbling hot springs and geys-

ers. The staff laid out a picnic lunch of hot dogs, hard boiled eggs, potato salad, cole slaw and fruit. As Program Director at Camp High Sierra in the early 1950s, I was often the staff member who cooked the main attraction for our feast. We brought mesh onion bags and a ball of string as cooking utensils and our stove was a boiling hot spring. The eggs were packed into the mesh bags and carefully lowered into the boiling pool. The hot dogs were tied to long lengths of twine and anchored in the hot pool with heavy rocks to quickly cook. Lunch never tasted to good as when perched on a rock amidst the sulphur smelling steam, watching Hot Creek cascading by.

Swimming in Hot Creek, before the construction of the bridge for the movie set of *North to Alaska*, was always an adventure. Hot Creek has both hot and cold pools. We first had to plunge through icy cold water before swimming to the large hot pool on the west side of the creek. The bridge now allows people to walk across the creek to the large hot pool. After swimming and soaking in the warm water, it was always a chal-

lenge to urge those relaxed muscles back up the steep trail to the bus.

On one memorable trip, one of the guests strolling along the banks of Hot Creek casually asked, "What is all this parchment paper doing here along the river?" When I looked at the so-called parchment paper, I'm sure my face was as pale as the bus driver's, as we recalled the staff swimming party the previous, moonless evening. Newly shed rattlesnake skins lined the banks of Hot Creek; in the darkness, we had crunched over what we thought was dried, crackly grass at the edge of the creek before dipping into the chilly water. Silently, I vowed never to forget my flashlight again.

An all-day trip was conducted each week to Minaret Summit, the Devil's Postpile, and Rainbow Falls over the old narrow Red's Meadow dirt road. The generously termed "washboard road" had originally been built for wagons and still wasn't much wider in the 1940s and 1950s. It was a one-way road with few turn-outs. The driver of the vehicle crawling uphill had the right of way

Dorothy Russell (Fitzhugh) and Mary Russell (Roeser) cooking hot dogs in the hot spring. 1952.



and the downhill driver had to be alert for other vehicles, driving into the nearest pull-out when a car was spotted. Imagine riding on a bench on the back of the Reformer (with no seat belts) and gazing down into the deep canyon of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River! The guests returned after this trip well traumatized and ghostly in their coating of grey pumice dust, and were noticeably quiet during dinner. The road sometimes worried even the fearless bus drivers. Ben Bennett, a college student and bus driver/tour leader in the early 1950s, installed a pedal at the end of his bunk to calm his frequent dreams of having no brakes in the truck.

The trip to Bodie was long but rewarding. After a stop at Mono Lake to walk down to the shore, taste the water and marvel at the thick band of brine flies at the water's edge, we were ready to tackle the road to Bodie. The guests, windblown, noses whitened with zinc oxide, and bandana scarves tied around their heads, endured the discomfort of an occasional summer rain shower. We bounced vigorously on the lightly padded seats and even sang popular songs along the way. "K-K-K-Katie" was a favorite since it seemed to blend with the bouncing and jarring.

By the time we reached Bodie, I'm sure the guests felt a certain kinship with the early gold seekers who had come by way of wagon or stagecoach. At Bodie, the caretaker for the Cain family who owned the town, opened up the buildings and museum for us to view and related tales of old mining camp days. We were able to step inside the jail and speculate on what kind of a deterrent it might have been to the "Bad Men of Bodie." Cattle grazed throughout the town and gazed curiously at the human apparitions wandering through their town.

The truck also functioned as taxi and shuttle bus, picking up guests who came to Mammoth Lakes via the Greyhound bus, and were dropped off at Casa Diablo on its Reno run. Casa Diablo was a colorful stage stop on Highway 395 in those days. The large one-room cafe, bar, and dance hall also sported a line of slot machines and frequently hosted on-going poker games.

A log cabin nearby, a remnant of former days, was an Indian trading post and gift shop. The Casa Diablo geyser shot 60 to 80 feet into the air, almost as spectacular as Old Faithful.

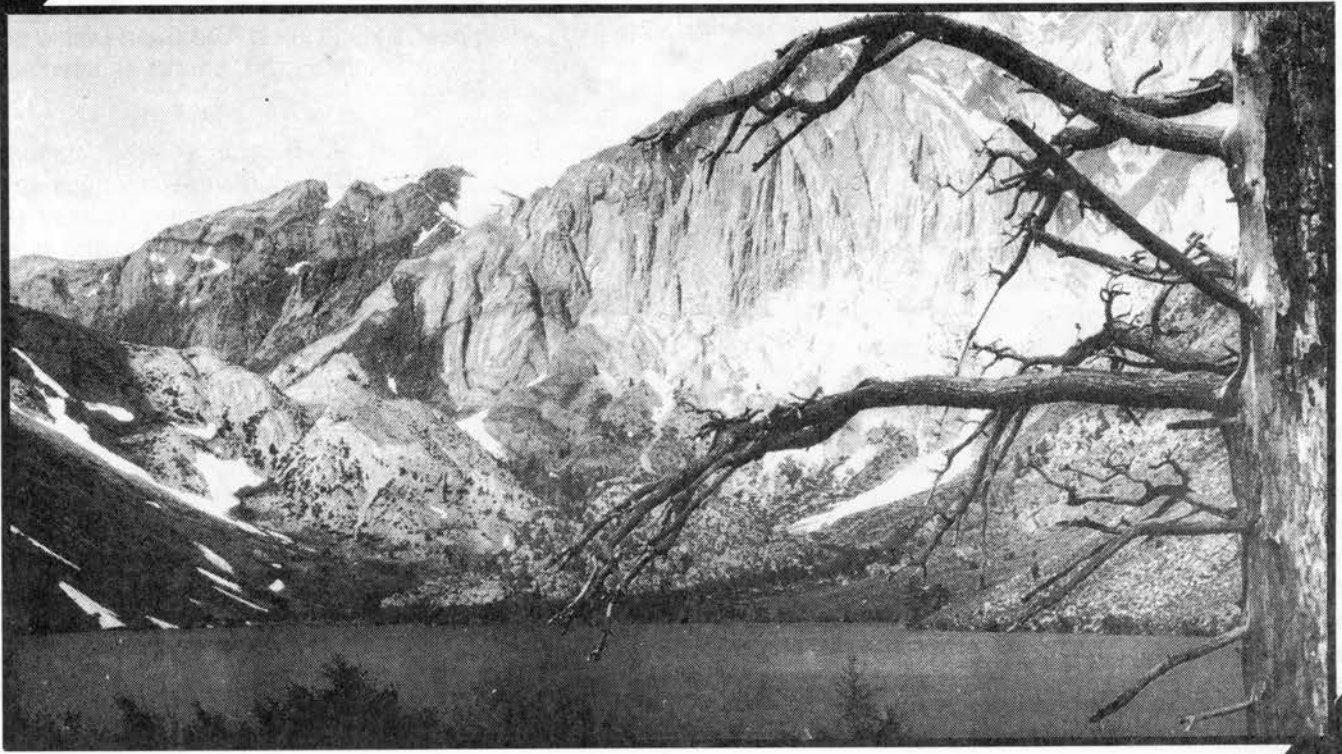
One Sunday, some elderly guests arrived unexpectedly at the bus stop. The truck driver was on his day off so the Camp High office clerk, Dorothy Russell (Fitzhugh), my sister, was recruited to pick up the guests. Dorothy had never driven The Reformer before but a quick lesson from the cook assured her that the truck drove easily. The trip down the hill to Casa Diablo was uneventful and Dorothy's confidence increased. She pulled up smartly beside the cafe, helped the four ladies attired in flowered summer dresses and hats, and one gentleman in his good suit up onto the bus seats. Nonchalantly, she started the truck and shifted into reverse, casually remembering the quiet comment that sometimes the truck was hard to shift into reverse. She struggled valiantly, eventually assisted by the elderly gentleman, but all to no avail. There seemed no way to go but forward so the bus with its load of guests bounced through the sagebrush, over rocks, past the geysers and eventually back onto Highway 395.

While riding the new shuttle bus down to the Devil's Post Pile this summer, I thought "This is really quite comfortable and pleasant, but not nearly as awesome as creeping down the old road hoping we wouldn't meet a car or, worse yet, another truck traveling up."

Today, the giant, deluxe tour buses ply Highway 395, cruising up the new Sherwin Grade, air-conditioning humming and tour leaders pointing out points of interest to visitors over the intercom. The elaborately painted buses have plush seats and even bathrooms on board. But I remember Jim Gualtieri, bus driver/tour leader in the 1950s, stopping The Reformer at Minaret Summit, jumping on the running board and waving his arm to point out the various mountain peaks while the wind attempted to blow his straw hat and his words clear to Mt. Ritter. ❀



The Reformer, with bus driver Fred Williams, parked in front of the lodge. Photo taken prior to 1940. Photos from Marye Roeser collection.



CONVICTS, A LAKE, AND A HANGING

Monte Diablo Lake, renamed Convict Lake, Laurel Mountain in background. Contrary to many stories, this is not the tree used by the convicts during the shootout. Louis Garrigues photo, 1935.

Eighteen year old Billy Poor checked his saddlebag, patted the message pouch and jumped onto his saddle. He was happy as he left the Sweetwater Wells Fargo station and headed north up the trail. It was the first Pony Express ride for Billy Wilson, operator of the route from Carson City to Aurora and Poor was confident he could make the twenty-two mile ride to Wellington on schedule.

Ahead of him on the trail were six of twenty-two convicts who had made a daring escape from the Nevada State Penitentiary in Carson City.

Their original plot had been carefully devised. Leander Morton and Charlie Jones had befriended a guard at the prison and reached an understanding with him. This "trustworthy" guard was to arrange to be on duty at a certain time. He would come into the prison cell, permit

by George L. Garrigues

himself to be securely tied after having accidentally left a stack of arms and ammunition within reach of the prisoners. At a point about a mile from the prison, friends of the convicts would meet them with horses, clothing and food. The convicts would separate and go in different directions. The railroad was not far, where a train would be held up and \$6,000 hidden at a chosen spot for the guard.

Then the plan was to meet with some of the other escapees at Silver Peak, Nevada after a winter of recuperation in the mountains near Bishop and Fish Lake Valley. They would rob the store there and murder all hands, securing a complete outfit of animals, provisions, clothing, blankets, Indian trade goods and about \$5,000 in cash. This would enable them to go southward, buying the Indians' favor and living with them.

They would go on to Arizona later in the spring, and then to a point on the railroad where Morton had it planned to rob two trains at the same time. They would retreat to the Colorado River, having previously stashed food along the escape route.

The first part of the original plot involving the cooperative guard was foiled when he was dismissed from his employment. The plot was revised and put into action on Sunday, September 17, 1871.

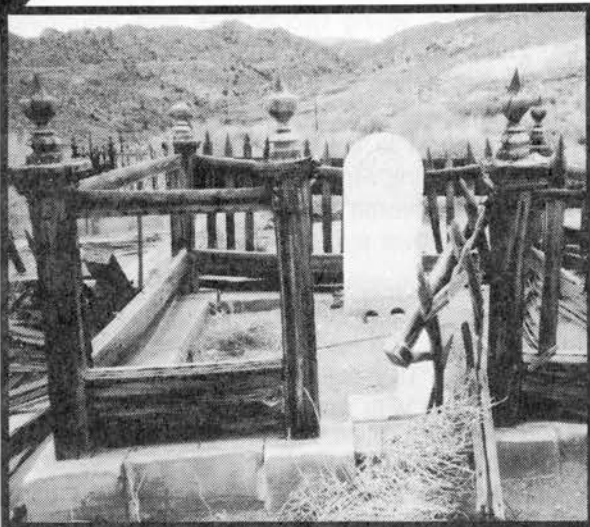
Twenty-nine of the West's most dangerous convicts surprised the skeleton weekend prison staff. They overpowered the guard in the prison dining room after dinner that evening, locking him in one of the prison cells. After cutting a hole in the ceiling, they crawled through the attic, came back down through the ceiling in the prison warden's living quarters and broke into the storeroom, obtaining arms and ammunition.

After a brief exchange with the warden and other guards, they seized the prison armory, stole Henry rifles, shotguns, pistols and ammunition. Twenty-two made good their escape and headed east and then south from Carson City. They split into smaller groups going different directions. Six (see box) continued south, robbing a Dutch charcoal maker of four horses and provisions and leaving the Dutchman securely tied up. They moved fast, stopping only for brief rest periods.

A posse led by Carson Sheriff Swift was just a few miles behind. Near Sweetwater, the posse horses gave out and another posse, led by Sheriff Atkinson of Storey County, took over the chase.

The convicts, avoiding the heavily traveled Aurora road, followed a circuitous route south. Near Wellington they slowed to check out a farmhouse. Morton said later

Grave of George Hightower, Mono County Sheriff, posse leader at Monte Diablo Canyon. Benton Cemetery. G. Garrigues photo 1990.



THE SIX THAT MADE THE TREK TO MONTE DIABLO AND THE OWENS VALLEY

CHARLIE JONES. Age 22, in prison for murder, having stabbed a man through the heart in a fight. He had worked as a teamster in western Nevada and Inyo-Mono and was considered extremely dangerous. He was one of the leaders of the escape attempt and thought to have escaped to the east and south of Owens Valley.

LEANDER MORTON. Age 27, sentenced to thirty years for mail robbery. Considered extremely dangerous, he was also one of the leaders of the escape attempt. He was caught, tried and hung near Bishop.

MOSES BLACK. Age 34, serving seven years for grand larceny. He was caught, tried and hung near Bishop.

J. BEDFORD ROBERTS. Age 18, serving eleven years for stage robbery. Reportedly from Long Valley, he knew the country. He was caught near Bishop and returned to Carson City.

JOHN BURKE. Age 23, in prison for manslaughter and jail breaking. He was familiar with the country also. Caught in Fish Lake Valley and returned to Carson City.

TILTON COCKERILL. Age 37, serving three years for train robbery, he was caught in Fish Lake Valley and returned to Carson City.

Believed to be the grave of Robert Morrison, Benton merchant and Wells Fargo Agent killed at Monte Diablo Canyon, Sept. 1871. Benton Cemetery. G. Garrigues photo 1990.



that he went ahead to see if the farmer lived alone or if he had a family. At this point, they met Billy Poor on the trail. Morton stated that he heard a rifle shot and in a little while Jones came up saying he was "fixed." He was leading the boy's yellow pony, wearing regular clothes and carrying Poor's boots.

Morton continued, "We made an exchange; I put on the boots, Burke put on my shoes and (Tilton) Cockerill (who previously had been barefoot) put on Burke's shoes."

Trial testimony given by J.B. Roberts told a slightly different version of the incident, believed to be more truthful.

Roberts was at the ranch in search of food about three-fourths of a mile away from the camp of the convicts. Seeing the pony rider go by, he hid in the corn field. After another twenty minutes digging potatoes, he returned to the camp. Soon Morton and Jones came down off the hill dressed in civilian clothes and Roberts thought they were strangers at first. They said that they were expecting to meet Capt. Dingman who had killed two convicts in a previous escape attempt. When they met Poor, Jones and Morton asked him where Dingman was. Poor told them he would be down on the next day's stage. Jones made a comment about "cooking his goose," and Morton replied, "You let the cat out of the bag."

Poor begged for his life, but "We didn't give him much time to beg, eh, Morton?" Jones reportedly said. They both shot him, took his clothes and dressed him in a convict's suit. They burned his head so "they would think he was some poor convict" when found.

John Burke spoke up; "I don't go a cent on such cold blooded murders as that; we will have the whole country after us. I am going to leave this crowd."

Morton told him to go ahead and go, but Burke wanted a Henry rifle and a horse, which Morton refused. Burke remarked, "You couldn't kill him with one shot; you had to shoot him twice."

"We both shot him," Morton said, "because I had offered to pull a trigger with any man."

Jones added, "I'm your man."

Farther down the road, they passed a house with a man working at a mill. Jones wanted to kill him also, but none of the others would agree. Morton was riding Poor's pony, got off to fix the saddle and accidentally left Poor's gloves by the road. He didn't discover the loss until they had gone another ten miles. He wanted to go back for them since they had Poor's name on them, but it was too far. When the Aurora posse led by Deputy Sheriff Palmer, which had taken over the chase, found the gloves later, it gave them a false hope that Poor was still alive and being held hostage.

When this posse became exhausted, Palmer sent a

note to Deputy Sheriff George Hightower at Adobe Meadows, telling him that six convicts were believed in the area and they were holding Billy Poor as hostage. Hightower's posse included Robert Morrison, Benton merchant and Wells Fargo Agent, who planned to be married in a couple of weeks, and about ten others. They followed the convicts' trail across Adobe Meadows, up Taylor Canyon to McLaughlin Creek and into Long Valley toward Monte Diablo. The posse believed the convicts were trying to find a way across the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Later reports indicate they may have been trying to reach Bishop Creek where Jones said he had friends.

The convicts' trail passed near the Alney McGee cabin on McGee Creek in Long Valley. He was an Owens Valley cattleman who summered cattle in Long Valley for the lush grass feed that grew there. He, his wife and small daughters, and Han Gunter were at the cabin about dusk when they heard a loud knocking at the door. They opened it to see the cabin surrounded by men pointing rifles, shotguns and pistols at them. Hightower explained the situation and asked to search the cabin. It was the first the McGee's knew of the escape.

The posse members were exhausted and hungry so they spent the night at the cabin. McGee cooked steaks and biscuits and made coffee for them and they slept on their saddle blankets. McGee and Gunter joined the posse the next morning and they followed the trail to the mouth of Monte Diablo Canyon where the convicts had made camp.

The convicts were hungry. Burke and Tilton Cockerill had gone up the canyon in search of berries. Jones disappeared, slipped away, presumably headed for his friends on Bishop Creek. The posse spotted Burke and Cockerill ahead and spurred their horses. They did not see the campsite in the willows where Morton and Moses Black waited and Roberts was still sleeping. The posse started past it on the opposite side of the canyon.

According to Roberts' story, Morton kicked him and yelled to "Get the arms." The convicts opened fire on the surprised posse, killing two horses and wounding two others. Then they headed for a big tree (see photo) on the south side of the canyon. Roberts stepped out into the open and was shot in the shoulder and foot, but managed to crawl to the tree. The posse retreated into the willows, sending Mono Jim, their Indian guide, on up the canyon with some of the horses. Morrison moved out from the willows trying to get into a better position.

Black saw him and remarked, "There's a brave chap; I don't like to kill him."

Morton said, "That's the kind to kill; then you won't have any trouble with the cowards."

Black started to cut off Morrison, but passed beyond him, until he heard the snap of Morrison's gun which had misfired. He immediately fired and Morrison fell. Black thought he was dead and started to get his rifle,

thinking it was a Henry. Morrison, only wounded, partially raised himself up, trying to steady his pistol to shoot but he was too weak. Black pointed his pistol and as Morrison exclaimed, "Hold on," fired, shooting him through the head.

Shots were exchanged for about another twenty minutes. Then the outgunned posse withdrew and the convicts, mounting some of the posse horses, started up the canyon, Morton leading. Soon Mono Jim saw them and thinking they were part of the posse, called "Three men, he stop in the willow; he got no gun."

Morton said, "Come on, show him to me; me shoot him." Jim ran at full speed down the hill directly to Black and while pointing over the neck of Black's horse, discovered his error. He started to run, crying out in a sort of a whining tone. Black shot at him and he fell to the ground. While lying on his side, Jim shot, disabling both the horses that Black and Morton rode. Morton then shot Jim in the eye, killing him and taking his horse.

Later the convicts continued south, following the old Sherwin Hill trail into Round Valley and then started up Pine Creek Canyon. They were still searching for a path over the Sierras.

McGee returned to Monte Diablo Canyon that evening, buried Mono Jim and retrieved Morrison's body. It was taken to Benton where he was buried in the Masonic Cemetery wearing his wedding suit — a wedding that didn't occur.

Monte Diablo was later renamed Mt. Morrison in his memory and the lake and stream changed to Convict Lake and Convict Creek.

Word was sent to Bishop that the convicts were headed that way. A posse, led by John Crough and John Clarke, was formed. Although they were poorly armed due to a scarcity of serviceable long range rifles at Bishop, they found the trail in Long Valley and followed it up Pine Creek. The convicts were pressed so hard they shot one lame horse; two others fell over a precipice on the steep canyon.

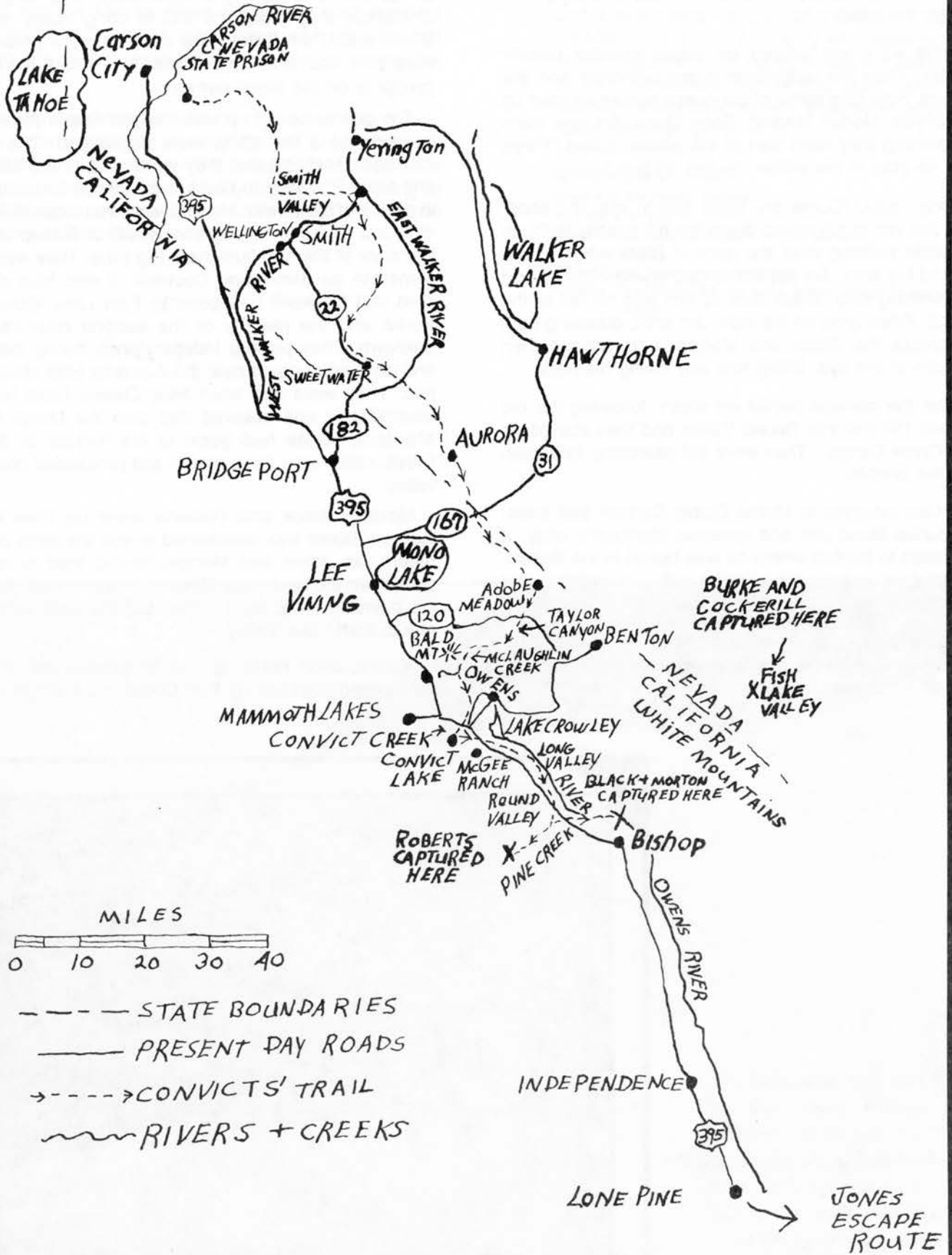
The posse caught up with the convicts in the rugged canyon and a few shots were exchanged. The posse members, realizing that they were outgunned, withdrew and sent I.P. Yaney to Fort Independence for assistance in man and gunpower. He followed two unidentified men mounted on fresh horses from south of Bishop until he lost sight of them at dusk near Big Pine. They were presumed to be Jones and Cockerill. It was later discovered that Cockerill had gone to Fish Lake Valley with Burke and the identity of the second rider remains unknown. They passed Independence during the night and were seen again near the Alabama Hills about sunrise. They were last seen near Owens Lake heading southeast. It was believed that after the Monte Diablo shootout, Jones had gone to his friends at Bishop Creek, obtained a fresh mount and proceeded down the valley.

Morton, Black and Roberts went up Pine Creek Canyon. Burke was determined to quit the party of murderers like Jones and Morton, having tried to restrain them from the beginning. Several times he had declared his intention of going it alone, but Cockerill went with him to Fish Lake Valley.

Yaney, upon reaching Fort Independence, got five well armed men led by Fort Commander Major Egbert



Center: pine tree, now dead and fallen against south side of canyon. Possibly the tree convicts hid behind during the shootout. Author's Grandmother Eva (McGee) Yaney, showed it to him in his youth and pointed out holes in the tree made by posse bullets. G. Garrigues photo 1990.



and they made the return trip to Bishop in a fast seven hours.

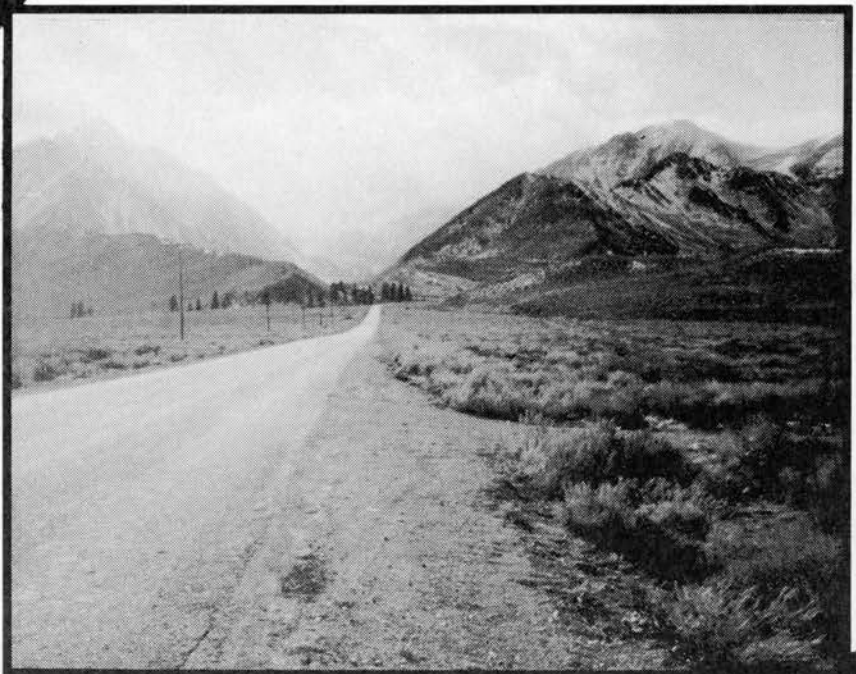
The next day, Morton and Black were surrounded by posse members, including a Mexican and some Indians, in the sand hills below Round Valley. After shots were exchanged, the convicts threw down their guns and raised their hands to surrender. The Indian mistook the motion and shot, wounding Black, the bullet creasing his skull above the left temple. The convicts were promised protection from citizen violence and were taken to the

Birchim place in Round Valley where they were fed. They had not eaten in more than five days. Morton gave a detailed story of the escape and following events, much of which, when confronted with the testimony of the others, turned out to be lies and untruthful finger pointing.

The posse resumed the search for Roberts. He had been wounded in the shoulder and foot and left behind by Morton and Black in Pine Creek Canyon because he



Close up of area in Monte Diablo Canyon, now Convict Creek Canyon, where shootout occurred. In background is Monte Diablo, renamed Mt. Morrison in memory of Robert Morrison, killed during the shootout. G. Garrigues photo 1990.



Mouth of Monte Diablo Canyon where shootout with convicts took place. Later renamed Convict Creek Canyon. Monte Diablo Peak (Mt. Morrison) in left background. G. Garrigues photo 1990.

couldn't keep up. The posse was eating lunch in the canyon when they noticed movement in the nearby bushes. They surrounded the spot and called upon Roberts, who had crawled some four miles down the canyon, to surrender. He did so, dropping his guns and saying:

"Boys, I suppose you intend to kill me; give me a cup of coffee and I'm ready."

They took him to Birchim's in Round Valley where the others were being held. When Morton was confronted with Roberts, who he thought was dead, he blanched, changing color for the only time during his captivity and death. According to the *Inyo Independent*, "The utter indifference and dare-devil bravery of the cold-hearted murderer, up to the last breath, was almost supernatural."

On Sunday evening, September 31st, eleven days after their escape, the three convicts, Morton, Black and Roberts were placed in a wagon under heavy guard for their return to Carson City. Near the present Brockman Corner where Pinehower's store was located, they were confronted by a band of organized, well-armed Bishop citizens. All was quiet until a voice asked;

"Who is captain of the guard?"

"I am," was the answer. "Turn to the left and go on."

"I refuse to do so!" came back.

Morton, who was sitting beside the wagon driver, spoke up: "Give me the reins. I'll drive after them. I'm a pretty good driver myself."

Roberts objected, saying "I don't want to go with them."

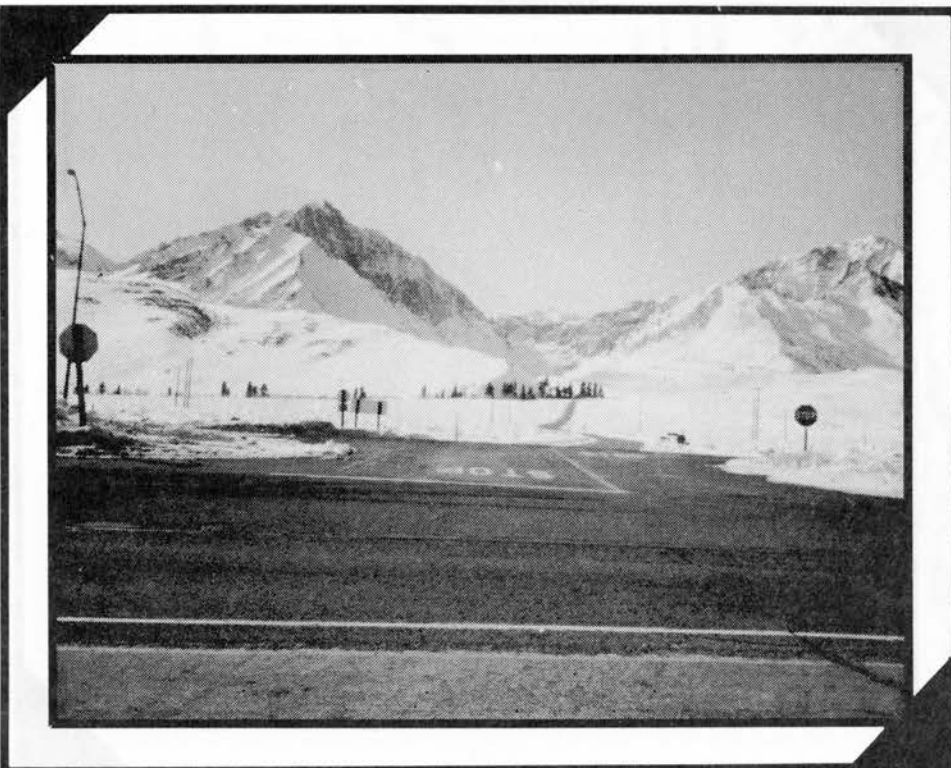
After a few minutes discussion, Morton drove the wagon to his own funeral.

They retired to a nearby cabin where the guard was ordered to "stack their arms." Black and Morton were carried inside the cabin. Roberts walked in with assistance. Lanterns were procured, a fire built and a jury consisting of all present except the guards was organized. Each convict had the opportunity to make his statement and each of the jury members was permitted to question the convicts which they did for nearly two hours.

The testimony of the convicts, at times contradictory, conflicting with unproven accusations, revealed much of which has been incorporated into this writing already. The answers to questions about what really happened during portions of episode will never be known for certain. The backgrounds and attitudes of these men, faced by death, raises doubt about some of their statements.

The jury vote on Roberts was split and it was decided that he should be returned to the guards. His youth and the absence of proof that he had sanctioned the taking of life saved him from death. He was remanded to Fort Independence for recuperation from his wounds and later returned to Carson City.

Black and Morton were ordered to be immediately hung. A scaffold beam was raised with one end resting on top of the cabin chimney, the other secured in place by a tripod of logs. Ropes were passed over the cross piece, a wagon parked beneath and nooses prepared.



Pine Creek Canyon where encounter with Morton and Black took place and where Roberts was captured. Mt. Tom on left. G. Garrigues photo 1990.

Hearing the preparations, Morton asked Black, "Are you ready to die?"

Black replied, "No, this is not the crowd that will hang us."

"Yes, it is. Don't you hear them building the scaffold?" Then, turning to Roberts: "We are to swing and I mean to have you hung with us if I can; I want company."

Black was carried out, lifted into the wagon and raised to his feet. Morton walked out of the cabin, calmly surveying the arrangements. He climbed into the wagon and commenced placing the noose over his head, asking; "Take my coat collar from under the rope — don't hang a man with his collar under the rope." He also asked that his hands be tied tighter so he couldn't reach the rope above his head.

They were asked if they had anything to say. Morton said no, but then added he would like a prayer if there were a minister present. The minister held his hand and spoke a few words.

Morton said, "I am prepared to meet my God," then added, "I don't know that there is any God."

They shook hands with the man on the wagon. Another short prayer was offered and with the word, "Amen" the wagon moved away.

P.A. Chalfant, Editor and Publisher of the *Inyo Independent*, writing in the October 7, 1871 issue said; "Thus terribly ended the career of crime of two of the murderous prison-breakers, and never again shall their hands be stained with the blood of their fellow man."

Later, on October 14th, after interviewing Roberts as he recuperated in Independence, Chalfant wrote; "Roberts is quiet young — a mere boy — and while in the hands of such men as Morton and Jones, was little else than an irresponsible agent. His narrative throughout bears the impress (sic) of the whole truth, and all who have seen and heard him have no hesitation in accepting it as such." ❁

Author's Note:

Over the years much has been written and said about this prison escape. The story is often distorted in the retelling or from misinformation. This account is believed to be as factually accurate as possible.

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ANOTHER NOTE

Arthur E. Larson, youngest member of the Wood Larsons, has written several short stories concerning Paiute and Mono Indian friends. Here he recalls another aspect of the Monte Diablo (Convict) Creek Canyon story. Photo and vignette courtesy Donna Strong.

Along in 1872 a bunch of convicts escaped from the Nevada State prison. Among them was a man who had sworn vengeance on the judge and jury that tried him. He swore if he ever got out he would take vengeance on them.

One of the jurors who tried this fellow was an Express rider carrying dispatches from Bodie and Aurora to Carson City, Nevada. When these convicts escaped, this Pony Express Rider heard of it and knew that his life wouldn't be worth anything if he met up with these men on his ride so, thinking that all would be well if he sent his son in his place, he sent the boy who was about 16 or 17 years old to ride his route between Sweetwater and Wellington.

About half way in the ride these convicts met the Pony Express and shot the boy, put him into a pine tree and set fire to the tree (this being along in the evening) just below the Sulphur Springs ranch of Robert Wiley. They came to Wiley's place and demanded supper. He realized who they were, however I don't think he knew any of them personally. He turned the house over to them, did his chores and came back and got their supper. Wiley's family was away at the time.

The escaped convicts went south and into the Owens Valley country where a number were captured and at least three hung.

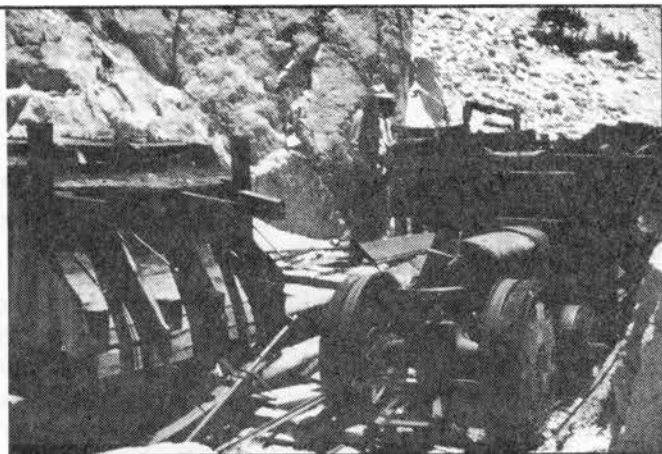


Arthur E. Larson, c. 1900

SECOND LAKE DAM

by T. Eugene Barrows

DWP tractor-locomotive with flanged drive wheels. T.E. Barrows photo, Aug. 15, 1956.



In the early days of settling Owens Valley and bringing it under cultivation, farmers in the vicinity of Big Pine found the stream flow of Big Pine Creek sufficient for their crops in the early part of the summer, but the flow dwindled off before crops matured. As irrigated acreage increased, more water was needed than was supplied by the normal creek flow.

To obtain more water for irrigation farmers looked to the lakes at the head of the creek to augment dwindling summer supplies. They found their answer at Second Lake where it was feasible to tunnel through solid rock and tap the lake many feet below its surface. In 1895 this was done and a control gate was built in the tunnel. By using the gate they could control the outflow of lake water.

To add to the capacity of the lake a low dam was built and a spillway cut in solid rock at the south end of the dam to take care of spring overflow. With this arrangement the control gate could be adjusted to release water from the lake and insure sufficient irrigation water after the normal creek flow slackened off during the summer.

This irrigation system was acquired along with the other property and water rights, by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and plans were made to build three hydro-electric plants on Big Pine Creek. To increase the potential output of these plants plans were also made to raise the height of the dam at Second Lake. By May 1925 these plans were in full swing.

There was no road to the farmers' dam at Second Lake and the terrain was rough and steep. To build and maintain a road would be costly and of little use after construction of the proposed dam. It was decided by Department of Water and Power officials to use mules, the usual mode of mountain transportation in those days, to transport the necessary material and supplies to build the dam.

The largest and strongest mules to be found were obtained and fitted out with pack saddles, panniers and all necessary equipment for all types of loads. Some pieces of machinery were too heavy and unwieldy for a single mule. To transport such loads two mules were used in tandem. Their pack saddles were flat on top and each fitted with a bolster that could pivot. To these bolsters were

attached side rails about two feet apart, extending from the front mule to the rear one, with enough distance between mules to allow a load to be suspended from the side rails between them. The load, being suspended from both side rails, was more stable and not so apt to sway as it would have been if suspended from a single rail. Any swaying of the load was dangerous and could throw the mules off balance on the narrow trail. If one of the tandem mules lost his balance both mules and their loads would plunge down the mountainside with disastrous results, which did happen on occasion.

The pivoted bolsters permitted the mules to negotiate the numerous sharp curves of the trail. Some of the heaviest and most difficult loads consisted of two tractor-locomotives which were disassembled for transportation to the dam site. Each unit consisted of a Fordson farm tractor fitted with flanged heavy iron wheels instead of the usual tractor wheels. This was done so they could run on a track of steel rails. Tandem mules not only transported these unwieldy parts of machinery, but carried the long lengths of pipe, lumber, rails for the railroad track, and other heavy loads.

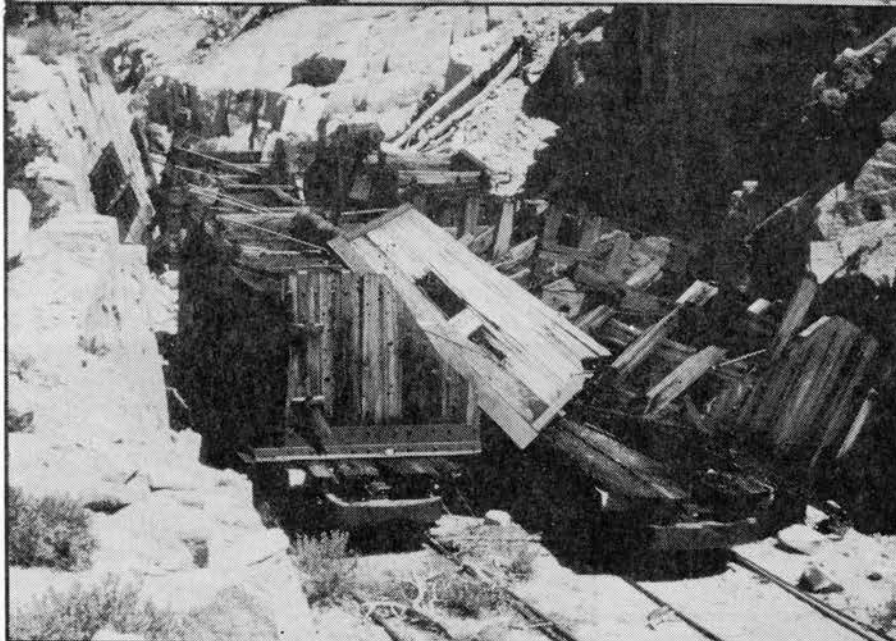
A camp had to be built, with quarters for the men, a mess (or cook house), blacksmith shop, and necessary storage sheds. As the elevation is close to 10,000 feet at Second Lake, winter conditions can be severe.

An air compressor was brought up piece by piece, reassembled and housed so pneumatic drills could be used in drilling rock. Blasting powder was stored in a room hollowed out of solid rock some distance from the camp for safety. A cut had to be made through solid rock in order to lay track from the dam site to where slide rock was available for material to build the dam. About a mile of track, including switches and side track, was laid.

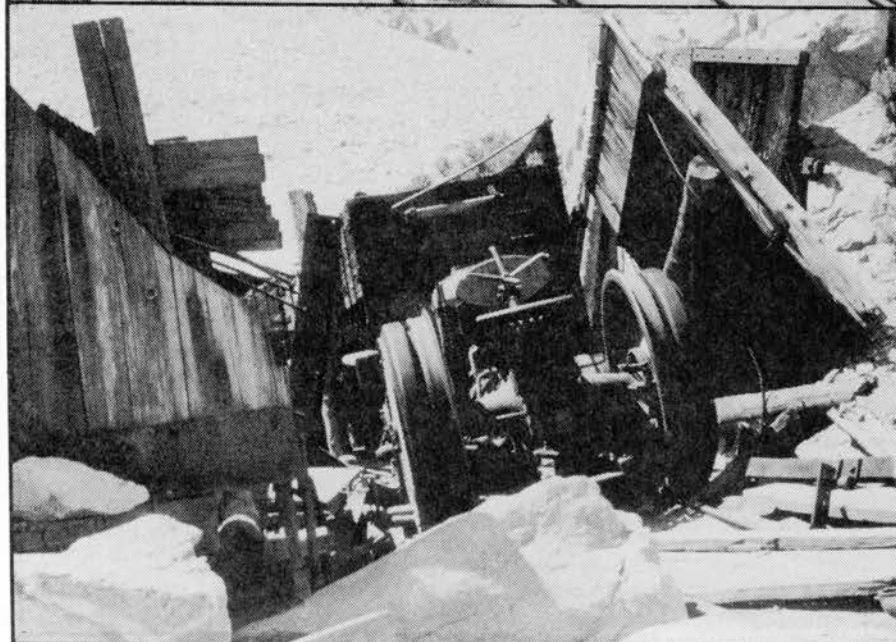
The rolling stock for the project consisted of two Fordson tractors converted to "locomotives" so they could run on the steel rails. The running gears of the cars used to transport rock were of iron frame on metal wheels flanged to run on the tracks. The beds of these cars were made of two inch planking reinforced with metal; they were side dump cars. Switches in the track permitted one tractor-



DWP work crew at Second Lake dam to clean up debris.



Rock cars loaded with material to be destroyed.



Material at Second Lake dam to be destroyed. The rear of a DWP Fordson tractor-locomotive can be seen. Note the flanged drive wheels. T.E. Barrows photos, Aug. 15, 1956.

locomotive to haul and dump a "train load" of rock while the other was being loaded at the rock slide.

Work had not progressed far when strong opposition to the rock-filled dam arose, and the project was abandoned in favor of one to be built on the Owens River in Long Valley.

In time, most of the material at Second Lake was moved out, but heavy things, such as the tractor-locomotives, rock cars, rails, and reinforcing iron were left behind. The buildings were all done away with except one small building used by hydrographers and other Department crews on snow survey, checking the dam or operating the gate in the tunnel, cleaning the spillway or debris in spring, or other maintenance work.

One hydro-electric plant had been built and went into operation July 29, 1925 on Big Pine Creek at the mouth of the canyon. It was designated "Big Pine No. 3" on the original plan, but No. 1 and 2 were never built. It is still known as Big Pine No. 3 Power Plant, and is still in operation. When the stream flow slacks off, the gate in the farmers' dam is slightly opened and adjusted from time to time as necessary to keep the plant operating with a full head of water. The gate is closed during spring run-off and the lake fills again.

In the early 1960s the Sierra Club and other conservationists put pressure on the Department of Water and Power to get rid of the material left behind at Second Lake, except for the patrol cabin. A crew was sent up with a team of mules to collect the objectionable material, some of which was burned in the ravine.

The wooden bodies of the mine cars and other combustible material, the metal parts, and the locomotives were piled on the railroad tracks in the cut. The combustibles were burned and the sides of the cut blasted down, covering the metal material.

As years went by, weather began to expose the metal buried there, and the rails were still in place, so again pressure was put on the Department of Water and Power to get rid of the debris.

In 1976 the Department of Water and Power and the Ecology Corps, with the aid of a helicopter and crew, went to Second Lake for a final clean up. The Ecology crew gathered all the objectionable material and with a cutting torch reduced the large pieces to smaller, more easily handled pieces. The locomotives were cut apart instead of being disassembled. Everything was weighed and put in piles to be picked up by the helicopter.

The helicopter base was set up on a flat place near the road, a few miles up the Big Pine canyon, where the debris was dropped and loaded by a crew onto Department of Water and Power trucks. This was also the helicopters' fueling station.

After fueling, the helicopter returned to Second Lake where the Ecology crew had a load of material weighed to

the exact pound that could safely be carried. The helicopter hovered over the weighed load and a dangling cable, about 25 feet long, was attached to the load with a hook, then away it went to the base site. There it hovered as the load hit the ground and a man unhooked the cable for the return trip. They brought out a load every 12 minutes. The weight of each load was increased to the weight of fuel used on the last round trip, until it was necessary to refuel. Then the load was readjusted to compensate for the full tank.

At all times the Ecology crew at Second Lake, the helicopter crew and the crew at the base site were in radio contact with each other, talking back and forth during the air lifts. It took only three ten-hour days to lift the leftover debris out of Second Lake dam area, and it was done without a mishap. This was quite a contrast to the way all the material and supplies were packed in on muleback.

The Department of Water and Power donated the parts of the locomotives, some of the rock car metal parts, and some of the rock drilling equipment to the Eastern California Museum, trucking them to the Museum equipment yard. ❁

Helicopter with load of road rails from Second Lake. T.E. Barrows photo, Oct. 6, 1976.



Fish Slough Shorty

by Emilie Martin

*photos from McMurry's
courtesy of Bruce Bell*



Fish Slough nestles in a large flat next to Owens River, midway between the White Mountains to the east and the towering granite monoliths of the Sierra to the west. Fish Slough Shorty's place covered roughly an acre of sage brush and sedges growing near a stream sheltering microscopic pup fish in a marshy area.

Both Shorty and Boots, who tells the stories of Shorty, are gone now. Shorty died long ago. Boots, a mere 60ish, passed on one bleak day in October of 1988. Just a month before, Ray Milovich had insisted that Boots be interviewed to recount the shootings at Fish Slough.

It all happened when Byron Alexander Myers, who operated under the handle of Fish Slough Shorty, lived on the fringes of Bishop.

Men took their names from places they lived, work they did, or some outstanding physical characteristic, back in the good old days. Shorty is not to be confused with Fish Slough Johnson, from whom Shorty bought the remote acre surrounded by government land in 1939. Boots, really Loyd Heedick, was like a son to Fish Slough Shorty. Boots' Dad had introduced the two in the early '30s.

No one was certain if the shootings took place in 1948 or '49 or maybe '50 or '51. Boots remembered it was fall when Pete Mills came from Bishop Creek to stay with Fish Slough Shorty. "Pete brought his pack saddles and gear from his mill and stored it at Fish Slough Shorty's place. And he brought his little black Cocker Spaniel with him. She was

pregnant and soon multiplied to nine to ten pups.

"Well, Shorty loved dogs, but all those little puppies running around inside his house bothered him. And Pete drank all his coffee. He stored the food he brought over in the sheds," Boots recalled, "and didn't share any food with Shorty.

"Some of the guys had been drinking at Shorty's place. Pete Mills had gone to town; Shorty got sobered up after everyone left. I guess he was sorta mad at Pete. Anyway, around midnight, Pete comes back and Shorty hears a commotion out in his yard.

"Shorty got his saddle gun and went outside, clad only in his drawers, thinking he heard a bunch of drunk Indians. He started shooting. Old Pete grabbed his gun out of the back of the big Buick sedan he drove and shot Fish Slough Shorty. It was a flesh wound in the chest, Pete drags him inside, lays him in his bed and goes to town.

"He told the police he shot Shorty, maybe killed him and tells them to send an ambulance to Fish Slough. In the meantime old Shorty comes to and decides he needs a drink. So he drives into town, hoping to meet the authorities at Five Bridges Road, but they missed. After the ambulance and police don't find anyone at Shorty's place, they drive back to town. Parked along West Line Street near Black's store, they spot Shorty, still only in his drawers.

"They took Shorty down to the the airport, where the hospital was. I think he stayed at the hospital a cou-

ple of weeks.

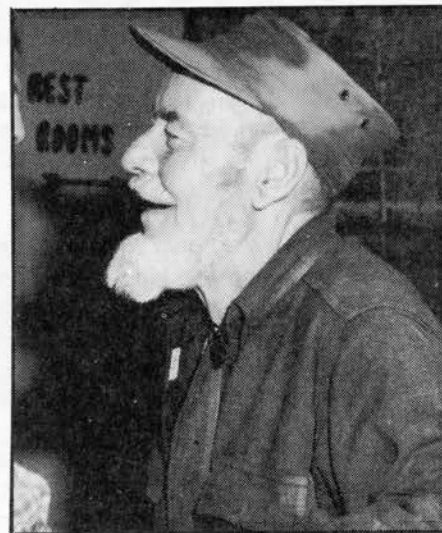
"They patched up the squabble. Shorty made Pete pay for his hospital bill before he could get his stuff out of the sheds. I knew him better than anyone else. I was like a son to him. I asked 'What happened out there, Shorty?' after it was all over," Boots remembered.

"The son of a *&#! ambushed me. He got me on my blind side, and it was dark out there," Shorty told him.

Boots and Ray Milovich remembered Fish Slough Shorty as "a colorful character. He looked like Cookie the actor," Boots said, referring to Elisha Cook. "He wore dime store glasses and the bows were always breaking. His blue eyes peered at you. And his bib overalls fit right up under his chin."

Shorty was not your run-of-the-mill miner who worked all summer and

Below: Pete Mills



spent the winter holed up in town, keeping the local bars hopping. He moved to Bishop in 1937 after the Great Depression. Boots learned that Shorty once owned three plumbing stores in Pomona, West Los Angeles and Brawley.

"The crash got him. He was selling valves for 20 cents on the dollar," Boots said.

"Once we were in town together and some guy came up and said, 'Byron is that you? I want to talk to you.'"

"Shorty is the best plumber ever hit Southern California," the visitor told Boots.

Shorty told Boots about growing up in New York and swimming in the Hudson. "He was a real smart fellow. When we weren't drinking, he took his books off the shelf and taught me about plumbing," Boots explained, "but all he would ever say was 'I got tired of Southern California. So me and the dogs moved up here.' He loved his dogs. He'd collect leftover bones from Safeway to feed his dogs, and any strays that happened by.

"He had a Rube Goldberg contraption rigged up next to his bed so he could open the door at night and let a dog in or out without having to leave the comfort of a warm bed."

Milovich once ran a gas station at the north end of Bishop near Wye Road. "One time at the station, some visitors asked if we had any interesting characters living around here. About that time, Shorty and his friend, Jack Naples, drive up in this 1918 pickup truck he owned," Milovich recalled.

"He must have known what the city folks were looking for. He put on one heck of a show for them. First he saw they had a tiny white Chihuahua, so he gave it the biggest bone he had in the back of this truck.

"Then as he's ready to leave, he tells Jack to crank up the old truck. 'Contact, Jack,!' he hollers. Then

'Hold the phone, Jack,' and goes to the front of the truck and fiddles with a few wires. Then it's 'Contact Jack,!' again and they crank the truck and drive off — probably laughing at the show they put on."

Another encounter at Shorty's place was dubbed The Battle of Fish Slough by local wags. Milovich and Boots remembered that local gentry had a great time awarding Skin Head Arnold the Royal Order of the Yellow-Hearted for this escapade.

One sunny day local bar owner Ray McMurphy was having a bad time with his early morning clientele. Three guests were drinking too much and getting too boisterous, to McMurphy's way of thinking. To keep the peace, he drove them all out to Fish Slough Shorty's place hoping the three troublemakers could drink and be rowdy without disturbing the town-folks.

Skin Head Arnold, Phil Eastman and Curley Foley arrived at Fish Slough as Bill Patton, called the General, and Shorty were having a peaceful drink.

Shorty was keeping company with Dixon Lane Queen, the sun was get-



Byron Alexander Myers operated under the handle of Fish Slough Shorty.

ting warm and it was the time of day when they usually headed out to the canal to take a dip. Dixon had changed into her swimming clothes and the rowdy visitors could not keep their hands off.

Shorty got mad and went for the 12-gauge shotgun with the 24-inch barrel. Shorty had a hardwood floor in his cabin, and a hardwood ice box as well.

When he went for the gun, the three merrymakers made a break for the door. All three had trouble getting out the door at the same time. Shorty shot down at the floor and the birds-hot ricoched off the hardwood.

"The shot got Eastman in the butt, Curly Foley in the back and Skin Head Arnold in the bottom of the feet. He must have been running pretty high. It darn sure scared them and they couldn't leave fast enough," Boots observed.

Poor Dixon Lane Queen panicked. She borrowed the General's new pickup truck and drove off in terror, still in her swimsuit. The truck lost its right front wheel, the law picked her up and put her in jail for driving drunk. "Sheriff Merrill Howard bought

her a bus ticket and told her he never wanted to see her in Inyo County again," Boots said.

When questioned by the police, Shorty maintained his innocence. "Shorty told me later that he took his hardwood chair and broke a leg off it. He told the police 'One of the guys broke the chair over my head. I got out my shotgun to protect my castle,'" said Boots.

Only once Boots felt the wrath of an angered Shorty. The two of them had gone to Bishop to buy some groceries and somehow got separated. "I was worried about him, so I went out to his place. Don Thurston had brought him home. When he saw me, he went to his gun cabinet, picked up a club, and thumped me on the head a good one.

"I'm bleeding pretty good. I wonder what is happening here. So I go into town and into the Rainbow to tell my friends what happened. I'm still bleeding pretty bad and say 'Someone stop this bleeding.'

"So the bartender, with one eye on the Johnny-Come-Lately at the end of the bar, says 'Let me fix you up, Boots.' He goes and gets a big stapler and bangs it against my head like he is closing the wound. And he wipes off the blood and puts a bandage on my head.

"The new guy goes next door and tells the story about how the bartender sewed up my head. The story was all over town before long," Boots said.

"Back in those days, if you got something on somebody you'd rub it in good," Milovich recounted with a wry smile, explaining how it used to be out at Fish Slough Shorty's — and Bishop, for that matter. ❀



Dixon Lane Queen and Fish Slough Shorty whooping it up at the pub.



Seriously Enough...

by Jane Fisher

The most outstanding memory of my childhood is that it was a deadly bore. My brother, sister, and I came along between swashbuckling ancestors on one hand, and space pioneers and the sixties subcultures on the other. No matter how we plotted and planned and waited, Adventure never came our way.

Dad and the aunts and uncles on his side grew up in Kansas, where there were pawpaws, huckleberries, rivers, and all manner of Tom Sawyerish goings on — running away to live in the woods, floating rafts down river — just the kinds of fun for which we would have been blistered, had there been such a wood or river available.

Mama's family pioneered the Owens Valley, and when she was a girl there were ponds, lakes, and reservoirs for swimming and boating. Our generation was intensely preoccupied with the business of water. We spent every stolen moment hunting up anything wet and more than ankle deep, be it mud or irrigation ditch — with small success. The reservoirs were dry, the ranches languishing, the streams diverted into the Los Angeles aqueduct. We soaked in our tin tubs and tar barrels, sulking and dreaming of better days we had not known.

A great source of entertainment was lost with the coming of television. Stories that began "When your grandma was a girl . . ." or "When we were kids . . ." provided a fine sense of who we were. We considered ourselves bypassed by historic continuity, but we always knew we were the spawn of Great Adventurers.

Whenever a child sighs with boredom around here, it gets a shot of *The Olden Days*. "Your great-grandfather Col. Charles Schaefer, whose family left Prussia in the days of oppression, ran away when he was just a tad and made his way down the Mississippi River to New Orleans," Dad would begin, his captives of the dinner table not daring to ask to be excused for fear of nomination to dish washing.

Before long we were entranced, vicariously living the life of the boy who lived with Geronimo and was called "White Eyes," who was taken back by the army and sent to school at a Mission, where he fell in love with a beautiful descendant of Montezuma and Cortez. We wept when she married his friend, rejoiced when the friend died a hero's death and left his lady in Charles' care, to become our great-grandmother. We swelled with pride on his appointment as United States Counsel to Mexico, negotiator with Geronimo, and designer of the city of Wichita, Kansas.

We asked again and again for the story of Charles at 17, going to Fort Pickens to join in the Civil War, striding into the Battle of Gettysburg to lead near-sighted General Dangerfield Parker from the fray when he lost his glasses, with both sides stopping the fight to cheer. We sighed, took our turn at dishwashing, and crept into our chilly sheets to dream of heroic deeds for which we would be known someday. It was pretty hard to think of something appropriate.

"On the other hand," our maternal grandmother would say, with extravagant dignity and no little competition with Dad's side of the family, "your mother's grandfather was a sea captain who sailed his ships around the world in search of pearls and spices."

Wow!

"Yes indeed. His brother and his sister's fiancé' were lost at sea near the Canary Islands, so your great-grandfather Walters came to San Francisco to make a new life." Ah, what more could be asked than to be lost at sea near the Canary Islands. Whatever they were. We wondered if he was a pirate, too, but it was not the sort of question one put to Grandma Walters.

"And he was not Johnny-Come-Lately, like certain other people," Grandma would sniff. "He came to Inyo County in the 1800s to help fight the Indians." We didn't see much point in that. The Indians were our friends and the only wars we had with them were in choosing up best players for Run Sheep Run and baseball. We wished he had stayed at sea so we could sail around the world in his ships instead of being landlocked on our homemade pirate raft out in the gulch.

Then there were the wonderful "When Mama Was a Girl" stories. Dad was so proud of her that these were his favorite stories to tell. Mama just listened with her secret smile as they grew better and better. "Why, when your mother was just a little girl she had this beautiful horse, Daisy, that carried her everywhere, even into the backcountry when her dad took the cattle to summer pasture. And she wasn't afraid of anything."

Well, neither would we be, if someone would just see to it that we had a horse, for heaven's sake. We weren't even allowed to sit on Daisy — possibly because she was thirty years old and retired before we were hair-high to a stirrup. Nonetheless, we longed to mount our own faithful steeds, gallop off into the mountains swinging a rope and shouting "H,yah! H,yah!" after obdient herds of cattle. The sawhorses by the wood pile were darned poor substitutes.

How we longed to live on the cutting edge of life! We slid down the back of the claw-footed bathtub, collecting slivers of peeling enamel in our backsides. We toured the old outbuildings looking for hidden treasure or wild animals. We climbed up to the seats and treehouses grown deep into forks of Japanese locust, apple and walnut trees, searching for any remnants of Mama's or Uncle Bud's secret notes. We went through the attics, cellars, trunks and cupboards looking for something. Anything.

Not much escaped our busy little noses, except Adventure.

A short while back, our littlest girl slouched through a litter of computer games, Barbie villages, Playdough restaurants, fully equipped castles, totally furnished doll-houses, skates, electric cars, complete artist's furnishings, and a video library, to fling herself against my chair. "Gram," she sighed, "Will you take me to Aunt Debbie's to watch the fish in her new fish tank?"

"Sure," I said. I know how it is to be a bored kid. ❀



Rock Creek near Tom's Place

FISH TAILS

by George L. Garrigues

Even though many years have passed and I've gained a little weight and lost a lot of hair, the memory of my first trout is still vivid. The excitement and thrill of catching my first fish without any assistance is indelible in my mind.

My dad took one of his rare days off from work and loaded the family in the car. We were off on a picnic-fishing expedition up Rock Creek Canyon a few miles above Tom's Place. I had just reached my sixth birthday and had been given a used telescoping steel fishing rod with an old reel and cotton twill black and white striped line. I had been fishing previously quite a few times and I think my dad had given me the pole just to keep me out of his hair so he could do the serious fishing. When not in use, I collapsed the rod, but kept it rigged up with the leader, split shot and hook attached to the line.

Being an eager six year old, it took me only a matter of a minute or so to extend the sections of the pole, bait the hook with a big juicy worm and run the short distance to the stream. One of the first places I looked, right in front of me, was a large rock with water cascading around both sides of it. The fast moving water eddied below the rock forming a nice hole that looked like a natural spot for a fish to be hiding.

I dropped my line into this hole and let it sit there for a couple of minutes. Nothing seemed to happen. I decided that there weren't any fish right there and that I might as well try elsewhere. I started to pull my line out of the water and there was something tugging on it. Much to my surprise there was a securely hooked rainbow trout at the end. I ran to the car, with the fish still wiggling on the hook, where my dad was still setting up his rod. He wasn't even ready to fish yet. He gave me a sort of indifferent look and didn't say anything. We fished the rest of the afternoon and no one caught anything more. My one little fish was the catch of the day.

When I got home, I was still so excited I ran around the neighborhood with my seven inch rainbow (maybe I should say six inch rainbow) showing it to everybody. Anyway, over the years many more trout were to follow. Consequently many more stories will follow whenever Editor Jane has a little space to fill. Keep your eyes peeled for the next Fish Tail that might come twisting, turning and splashing out of the water.

If that doesn't tell it as an honest fisherman would, I don't know what will.

If you have a favorite fish story that meets these requirements contact me, c/o The Album. Please be sure names and places are spelled correctly, dates are accurate and include your phone number in case we need to contact you. "Fish Tails" will appear in The Album on a space-available basis. This should be fun for all of us.



More from "Grandma" Kinney's Household Collection

In the second issue of *The Album* we gave you recipes from a venerable household bookkeeping journal belonging to the Ernie Kinneys. "Cheap Cake" and "Doughnuts" drew requests for more old-fashioned recipes. Here you are, along with a page from the journal showing what J.N. Summers was able to buy for \$37 back in 1909.

MINCE MEAT (Florence)

4# meat
8# apples
6# raisins
6# currants
2# citron
1# suet
1 qt. boiled cider
2 glasses currant jelly
1 tablespoon salt
1-1/2 gal. syrup
cinnamon, allspice, cloves, nutmeg

(There are no directions. Just put it all together and bottle it in sterilized jars. Don't bother counting calories or cholesterol. Mama used to add a slurp or two of brandy on the top just before sealing. — Editor)

POTATO CAKE

1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 cup cold mashed potato
1 cup chocolate
1 cup milk
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup raisins
4 eggs
1 teaspoon each cinnamon and allspice
1/2 teaspoon cloves
2 teaspoons baking powder
3 cups flour

Beat sugar and butter to cream. Add eggs, then potato and milk. *(That's all the directions. Cooks knew what to do.)*

MOCHA FILLING

1/4 cup butter creamed with 1 cup powdered sugar, 4 tablespoons strong coffee, 2 tablespoons ground chocolate, 2 tablespoons vanilla. Beat all to a smooth paste and put between layers of cake.

ORANGE FILLING

Juice of 1 orange, 1 cup sugar. Boil until it threads. Pour over two tablespoons of thick cream with a little cream of tartar mixed in it. Put on layers of cake.



STRAWBERRY FILLING (Loretta)

1 cup strawberries, washed, 1 cup sugar, white of 1 egg. Add berries to sugar. Beat all together and spread between layers of cake.

TAFT CAKE

2 cups flour
1-1/2 cups sugar
2 level teaspoons of soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
3 tablespoons chocolate
1 tablespoon corn starch
pinch of salt and sift all together
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup currants or raisins
1-1/2 cup apple sauce
1-1/2 cup melted butter
beat well and bake 1 hour

PICKLED PEACHES (Edith)

Boil together for 15 minutes 1 qt. cider vinegar and 1-3/4# sugar. Tie in cheese cloth 1 doz. whole cloves, allspice and cinnamon bark, 1 salt-spoon mace and ginger root. Peel peaches, place in crock and pour hot vinegar over them. Let sit for two days, heat vinegar again and pour over. Will keep indefinitely.

CREAM PUFFS (Florence)

1-1/2 cups of hot water
1/2 cup of butter

Place on stove and let dissolve and when boiling sift in 1 cup flour. Stir until it thickens and then remove from stove and let cool. When cool stir in 6 eggs one at a time, then drop by spoonfuls into pan. Bake 45 minutes. Be sure to get done or they will fall. This makes 20 puffs.

LAYER CAKE (Mrs. Blaisdell)

1 cup sugar creamed with 1/2 cup butter. Add 3 eggs well beaten and beat all together. 1 cup milk, 2 cups sifted flour with 1 teaspoon baking powder. Beat well, flavor to taste.

FRUIT CAKE (Nevada's Gem)

4# sugar
2-1/3# butter
4# flour
4# currants
4# raisins
1# each lemon peel, orange peel and citron
20 eggs
1 cup syrup
1 cup cold black coffee
1 gill blackberry brandy
1 gill Port wine, if desired
1 tablespoon cloves
1 tablespoon allspice
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon mace or nutmeg
4# English walnuts

Cream butter and sugar, then add eggs well beaten, then flour, 1 teaspoon soda dissolved in a little warm water. Then add other ingredients and stir well.



In this editorial column, we want to introduce some of our writers. In the last issue, we tried to cram everything possible about Beverly Webster into the available space, failing to explain what was going on. We should have cut back the photo above the column. In fact, "we" probably should have cut my throat. (See letters to the Editor).

We proudly present Louise Kelsey, whose expert photography and delight in the history and people of this area we want in every issue.

Louise first came to the Inyo-Mono Sierra as a teenager, spending her summers with Lloyd and Sybil Summers at Old Mammoth when the whole town, including Lutz Market, the pack station, garage and Forest Service Ranger Station, existed between the turn where Old Mammoth road crosses the creek and the site of the Snow Creek office.

Louise moved to Bishop as a young woman, having left U.S.C. in favor of living in the Owens Valley and working for her father as a dental assistant. She made off with his lab technician, Bill, and they bought a home on the Rocking K Ranch, where they raised a son and a daughter, Clay and Kate. The Kelseys established a thriving photography business (Kelsey's Sierra Studios) and she became known as "The Postcard Lady."

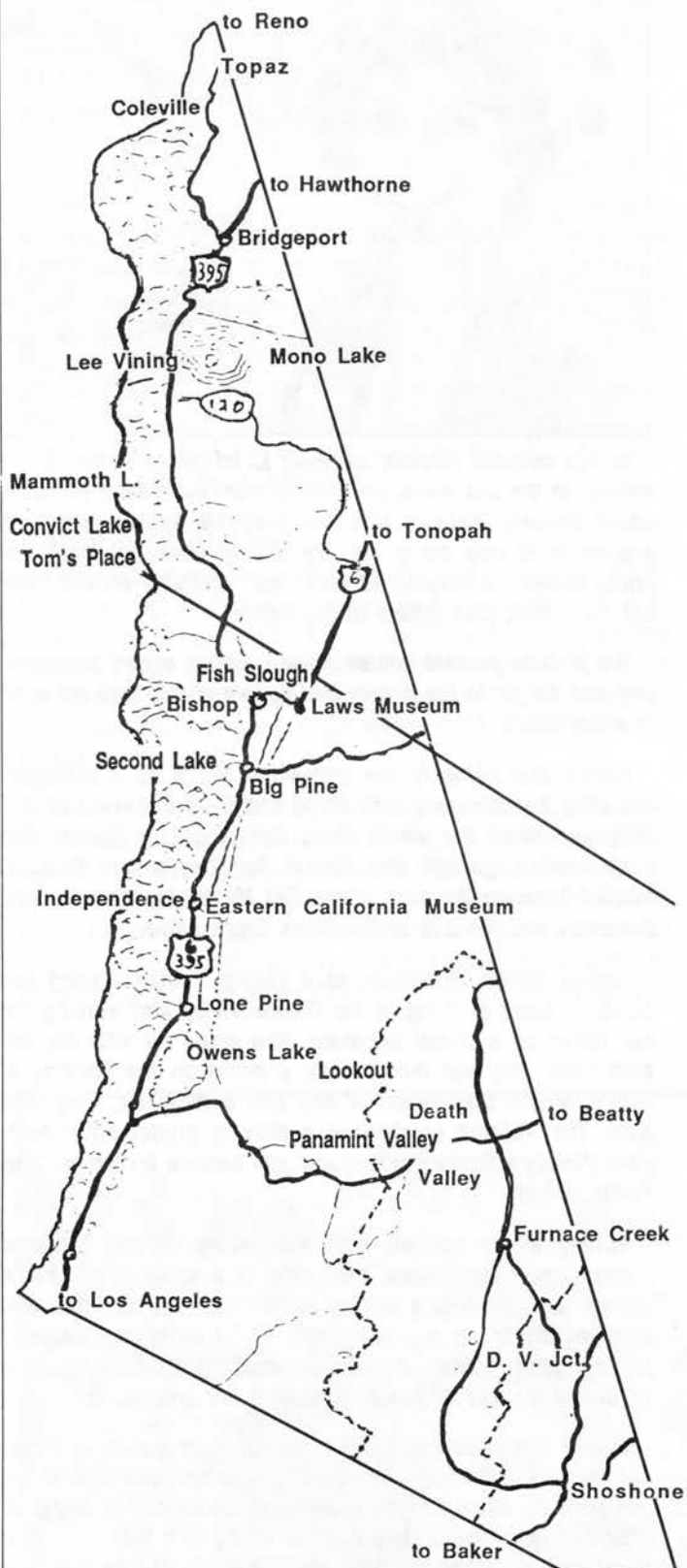
Writing was a spin-off from storytelling. Stories centered around family adventures, expanding to a series of children's stories. Louise studied writing under published authors, and photography in an apprenticeship of 30 years as "second" photographer to Bill, 10 years of postcard photography, and an untold number of years illustrating her articles.

Louise has produced articles on the High Sierra for travel publications, local newspapers and magazines, and now writes and edits the Mono County Vacation Guide as well as being an important resource for THE ALBUM. Along with building a new home at Swall Meadows high above Bishop, she serves as a Director on the Mono County Chamber of Commerce Board and the Library Advisory Board, and maintains working memberships in such community organizations as the Mono Arts Council, Southern Mono Historical Society, and, as she modestly tells it, "etc., etc., etc."

J. N. Summers July 1969

July 1 To June Bill	20 51
2 1 Egg 30	30
3 5" Beef 80	35
4 3" Beef	20
5 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	70
6 17" Beef	100
7 1 Egg 30 Butter 30	60
8 1 Egg 30 Roll Butter 60	100
9 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	325
10 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	25
11 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	36
12 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	60
13 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	70
14 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	35
15 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	70
16 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	45
17 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	50
18 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	250
19 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	5
20 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	20
21 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	70
22 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	37
23 1 Egg 30 1 Roll Butter 60	00

MONO COUNTY



INYO COUNTY

Letters to the Editor

OOPS!

Through the efforts of my friend, Beverly Webster, an account written by my mother, Lena Fay Tooker, appeared in your publication of Vol. III of THE ALBUM. I should like to express my gratitude to you for having published it in full and for including my mother's pictures as well as the pictures of the area by Bill Webster. The publication of the article represents the culmination of a most persistent effort on the part of Mrs. Webster.

It is regretful that the picture above her bio was that of another person unknown to either of us. If, at some future date, you have the space to print a correction, I would be extremely grateful . . . **Paul A. Tooker, Elk Grove, CA**

I was very pleased to see the finished article in January's issue of THE ALBUM. Your magazine was certainly the right place for the story . . . (Paul Tooker) said every time he opens the magazine he can hear his mother talking. That alone made the effort worthwhile. Incidentally I would imagine some young lady is a bit miffed to have her picture above my biography . . . **Beverly Webster, Bakersfield, CA**

That was the editor, trying to sneak everything about Beverly into a column, without enough explanation. "We" admit the picture is six years old, we admit signing "Jane" at the bottom didn't constitute good identification, and we love Beverly's "young lady," but how we hate to admit that dark-looking hair in the photo is really more silver than brown! As soon as we get used to it, we will have another photo taken, hoping you will come to know your editor as a friend, and send your stories, too, to THE ALBUM.

THANK YOU

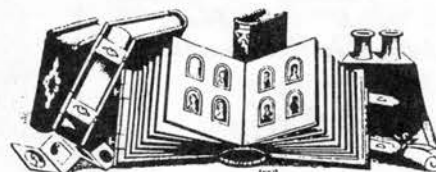
I am getting a gift subscription for my daughter, Kathleen, as she is always "borrowing" mine and I don't get it back. She uses it for teaching her youth group about the wonderful Sierras. It's like her second home in Bishop. She also latches onto my Bishop paper . . . **Elbert C. Anderson, Arcadia, CA**

I really enjoy THE ALBUM as I was raised in Mono County (June Lake and Lee Vining) so I recognize a lot of names and places . . . **Dorrance Howard, Ridgecrest, CA**

Please renew — it's a nice way to spend an afternoon, reading THE ALBUM . . . **June L. Clark, Tarzana, CA**

Your ALBUMS are so wonderful. I wish to order gift subscriptions . . . **Ashee Noren, Big Pine, CA**

Ashee Noren has published her own charming recollections of her late husband, U.S. Forest Ranger Al Noren, whose efforts brought Edmund Schulman here and lead to the establishment of White Mountain Natural Area and the Ancient Bristlecone Forest. The book is available at Chalfant Press.



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Independence, 1888, two years after a fire that destroyed Main Street. Photo courtesy of Omie I. Mairs.

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