

The Album

Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono

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

Vol. III, No. 1



Inside:

Lion hunter, part II
Old, old Mammoth
The "Red Apple" railroad
Scouting nostalgia
Camping out, 1908
Mono Inn
A Lone Pine ranch, 1919
and more

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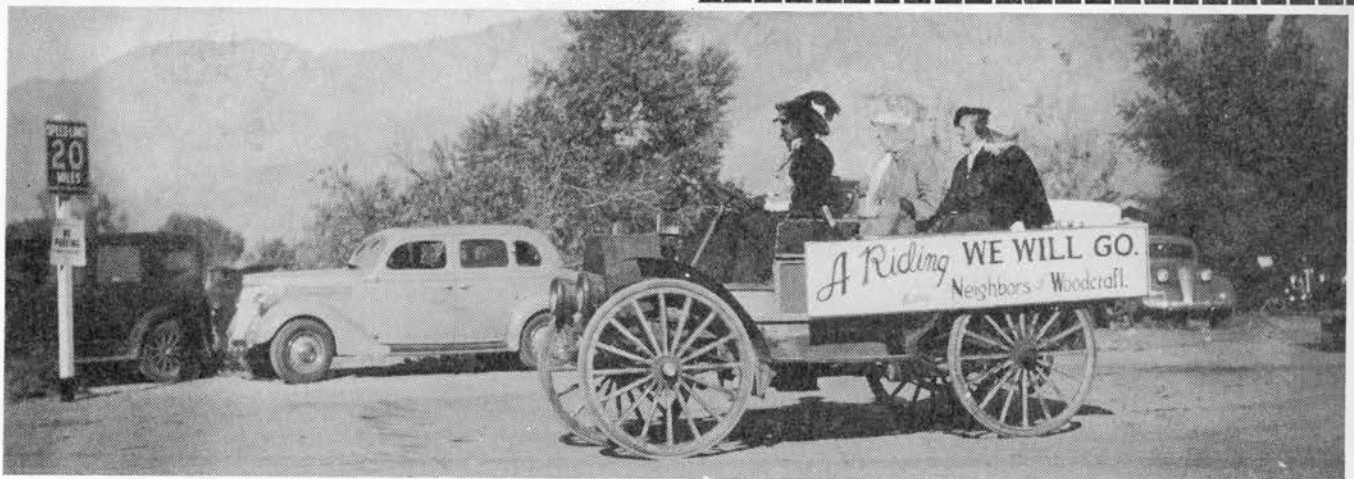
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THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono

January 1990

Volume III, Number 1

Published quarterly by Chalfant Press, Inc.

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Cover photo: "Charlie Tant, the last great lion hunter
(Part III begins on page 2). Photo by Harley Jenner.

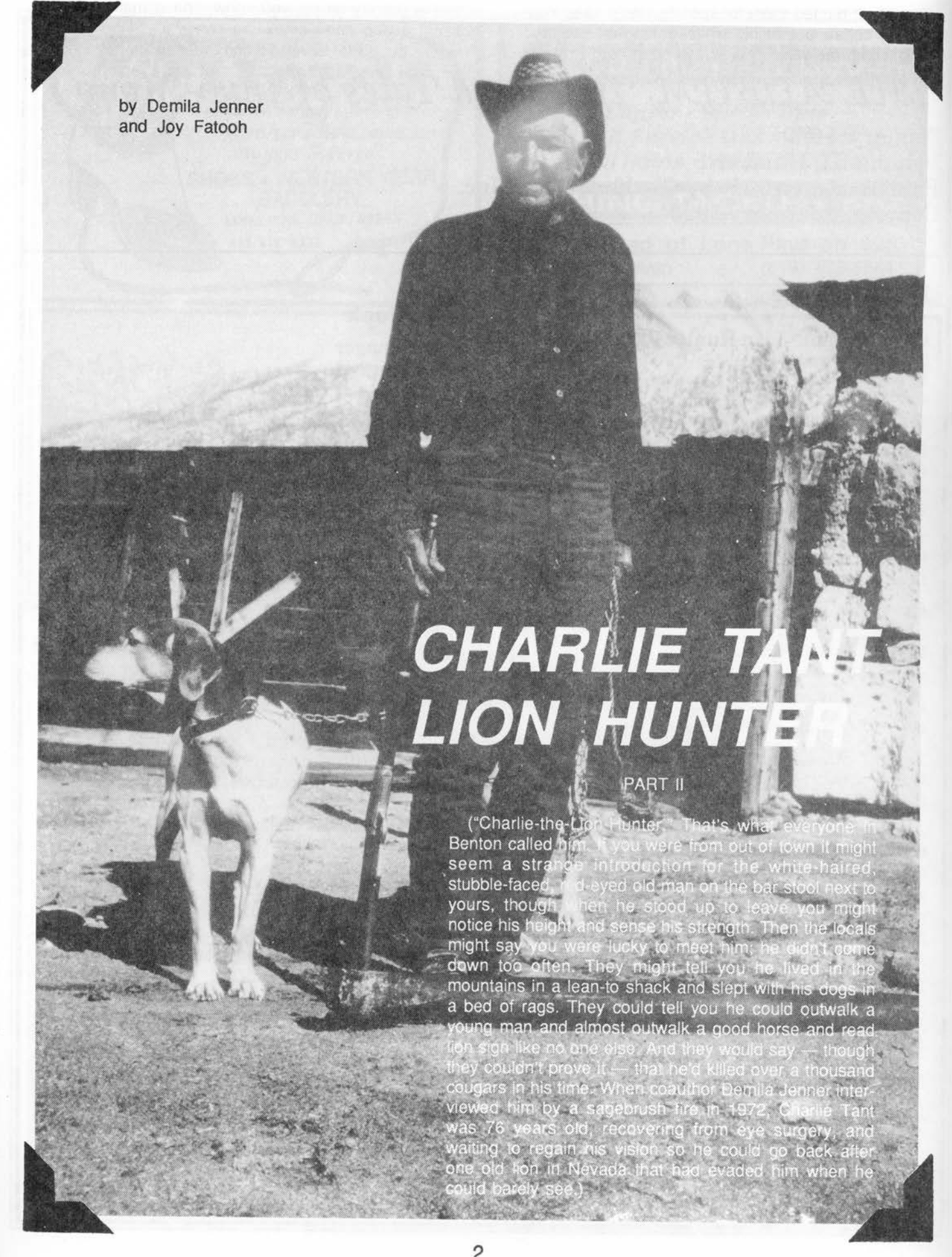
The Album, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono, is a collection of stories, history, and natural history of Inyo County and Mono County, in Eastern California.

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

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by Demila Jenner
and Joy Fatooh

CHARLIE TANT LION HUNTER

PART II

("Charlie-the-Lion Hunter." That's what everyone in Benton called him. If you were from out of town it might seem a strange introduction for the white-haired, stubble-faced, red-eyed old man on the bar stool next to yours, though. When he stood up to leave you might notice his height and sense his strength. Then the locals might say you were lucky to meet him; he didn't come down too often. They might tell you he lived in the mountains in a lean-to shack and slept with his dogs in a bed of rags. They could tell you he could outwalk a young man and almost outwalk a good horse and read lion sign like no one else. And they would say — though they couldn't prove it — that he'd killed over a thousand cougars in his time. When coauthor Demila Jenner interviewed him by a sagebrush fire in 1972, Charlie Tant was 76 years old, recovering from eye surgery, and waiting to regain his vision so he could go back after one old lion in Nevada that had evaded him when he could barely see.)

"I've never hunted them for sport," Charlie said, tossing black coffee out of his white enamelled cup and refilling it with red wine. "It's always been hard work for me. A living."

By then California had dropped the bounty and had begun regulating lion hunting, as Nevada does now; but it has always been legal for ranchers to rid themselves of a lion that threatens their stock. These lions — like the Nevada sheep killer — were Charlie's business.

"That lion's put one over on me too much," Charlie said. "He was killing ten or twelve sheep a night over there before they sent for me. Oh, it killed all last year, and my dogs took it off and one of them come in all chewed up. It was pretty rough, and I thought they got the lion too hot and it died. Sometimes if he's fat and running he gets too hot and he's helpless, you know. Sometimes they get the lion in the open and chew him up so bad behind, that lion would never make it.

"So I thought that's what happened, because he just cut it off and didn't come back, didn't kill no more sheep. But this year he come back again, the same one. He travels the same way, and I know by the signs, you know. Size of tracks. Same lion. Just one time he come back. I was real late a-getting over there and the track was six days old, but my old dog took the track and carried it on up to where he'd killed the sheep.

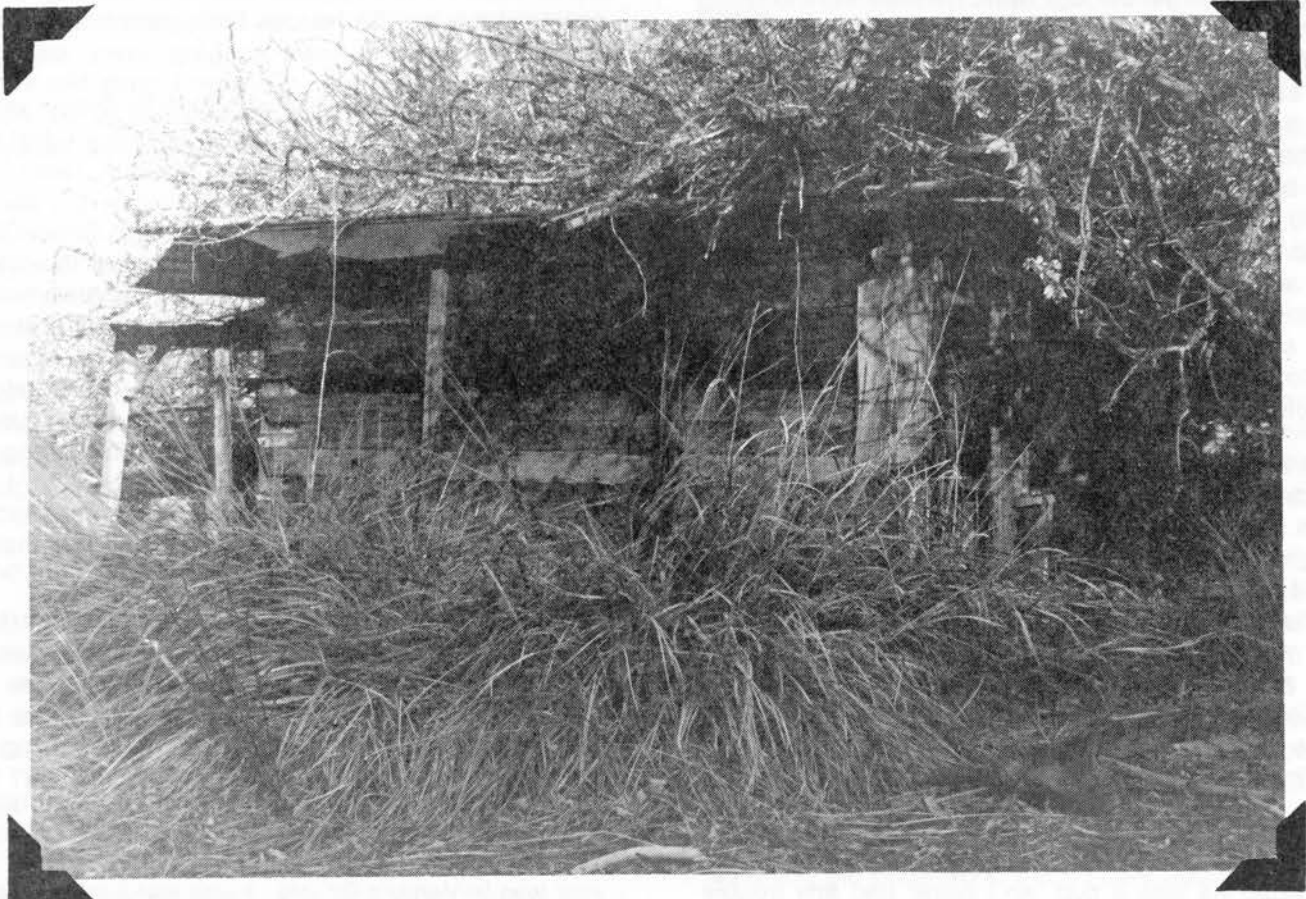
"They'd had sheep all over the country and sheep

tear a country all up, you know; sheep make so much scent a dog can't smell the lion track. I hunted two weeks out there, never did find the way the lion left, and so far I don't know if he's been back again. But he always did that: made a killing and took off through the open flats where there's no brush to hold the scent. If he comes back, I'll catch him . . . if he ever comes back."

That was an unusual lion, according to Charlie: most would follow the ridgetops. Charlie recounted tales of lion behavior, some of which contradicted commonly held ideas. Perhaps the strangest he ever observed was in Santa Barbara: "An old lion, I'd been tracking him for two days and hadn't caught up with him yet. I got close to one of my camps and I called off my dogs and went on it. Next morning I went back thinking I was a-gonna take up his track maybe ten or fifteen or twenty miles from there, but my dogs took his track right up the trail and I heard him jump and go to running for all it was out." Once the lion was treed Charlie discovered how it had spent the night.

"He'd killed a doe and then he'd just laid there; he'd taken a big feed. A coyote came along first; he killed that coyote and laid it on top of the doe. And then he laid there and two of them condors came along, and he killed them and laid them on top of the coyote. Maybe if one dog had gone up there not making too much noise he mighta killed it too."

Lions weren't always lone hunters, he said; he'd killed



Lion country and rabbit ranch photos by Joy Fatooh

two big old males, probably littermates, that always went after calves together, and he remembered three old females that always hunted together. More often it would be a female moving through the night with her two cubs flanking her, calling back and forth with bird-like whistles, flushing prey that she would kill. The blood-curdling scream people attribute to cougars was a myth, he said, "a story that got out about two thousand years ago and they made it stick."

He told how lions communicate by odor too, by making piles of pebbles, twigs or snow and leaving their scent. A good hunter could read those signs, as he had in Santa Barbara when he was accused of claiming to catch lions where there were none to be caught "They'd made a special study. So well, I come in there, and if I'd caught one lion it'd been all right, but I caught six in one month where they'd been in there a-writing it up."

Another time ranchers in Coleville sent for him after government hunters had supposedly left only two lions: "The lions was still just cleaning them out, eating the sheep over there. Some of the oldest, roughest-looking lions I ever caught." From mid-August until he was snowed out around Christmas, Charlie caught 23 lions there.

The hunters who failed had what Charlie called "short-run dogs." His own dogs had "en-durance" — as did he.

"Lion hunters is getting scarce, awfully scarce. They just don't like to get out and work. It's hard work to catch a lion. Lotta hunters, I just call them road hunters. They take the dogs and drive the roads and if they see a fresh track they put the dogs off after it; if they don't catch it after a while, they go back to the truck and look for a better track. If I put my dogs on a track they don't come back, they stay. I had a feller come up here, he wanted to tell me what to do: he said you drag a tree behind the car, and then go back the next morning and see if any fresh tracks were there. He said he'd guarantee me four or five fresh lion tracks a day. I told him you might show me one lion track, but my dogs won't be back to look for the others — they'll be going after that first lion."

It was rumored that Charlie's dogs were direct descendents of Ben Lilly's, but he said he'd been breeding his own line of hunting dogs since he was "a kid big enough to climb a tree" — years before he apprenticed himself to Lilly at 17. The best way to train them, he said, "is to take your pups when they jest big enough to follow you and git them in on a kill or two with the old dogs, and you'll never know you trained a dog. But if they been a-running foul stuff first, then you gonna have trouble with them." Foul stuff? "Anything that isn't lion. Anything they hit."

"I don't like to brag on my dogs," Charlie liked to say, but ask him about Buzzard Wing. "I had him with the old dogs when he was a pup, so I never had any trouble with him at all. He don't need any help in any way, find-

ing the track, catching the lion. And you can tell by the way he barks whether he's hitting a fresh trail or an old one: if it's fresh he barks faster." And there was old Rounder, and Queen de High ("She was taller than the first Queen"), and Hotfoot — "But I got doublecrossed out of Hotfoot."

"Old Leo, he was a lionhunter from down Southern California. He done more spitting tobacco than hunting, though, biggest tobacco chewer I ever knowed. I sold him old Queen de High for \$150. Another guy went to Utah and paid a thousand dollars for a hound and old Queen de High put that thousand-dollar dog in the shade, and all the rest of them dogs too. Run that lion for four hours and caught it all by herself.

"Leo stuck out his chest, took Queen de High up there in the canyon, gonna show the world. They always wanting to show up somebody else. But he'd got her so damn fat she couldn't follow him and she kept jumping off them ledges and pulled a ligament in her hind leg. Old Leo he come up here and said, 'I read an article in a magazine that said you were an honest guy. You sold me a broke-down dog and I think you ought to replace it with Jughead. If you don't I'll get you another kind of a write-up in a magazine.'

"Old Stuart offered him \$750 on the spot for Queen de High; he knew what kind of dog she was; but Leo wouldn't take it, and he'd just given me \$150 for her. I told him Sleepy, she'd be good enough for that country down there, but Jughead was a \$750 dog and he couldn't have her. So he took Sleepy down there and he come back with his jaws hanging down, saying old Sleepy'd been run over. So then I gave him Hotfoot. Turned out Sleepy wasn't runned over at all; next I'd heard she'd had a litter of pups. So you see, old Leo got Hotfoot for free."

Lion hunting was hazardous for dogs. Some Charlie had to sew up; others were killed. He told the story of one dog that took off alone after a big old male lion and treed it while Charlie and his other dogs were pursuing a female. The lone dog kept his lion treed for four days, and when Charlie finally got there the lion suddenly came down and took off. When Charlie caught up with him again "he just turned around and bit that dog right through the head and dropped him off the bluff. I went back later and he'd eat that dog, just left the head and feet and tail. He come down and eat that dog that had him treed for four days."

Charlie himself had no fear of lions. They didn't normally bother people, he said, although they weren't afraid of us either: "They queerious. They'll come right up to your campfire if you don't have dogs, come back and forth around while you're sleeping." But hunting held other dangers for him. "The most dangerous hunt? Well, I broke my leg out in the brush, you know, and had to crawl in.

"It was in Ventura County. It was awful rainy weather, and I was a-taking grub back in the mountains. I'd been

going up and down that bluff all the time, but the granite soaked up rain and when I started to go off this time, a big rock came loose and rolled over my leg.

"Easier to crawl uphill than down, but I got down to my truck. I was laying in my truck a-cooking, a feller who was fishing come up — he'd told his wife he suspicioned he ought to go up. He drove my truck into where I got my leg fixed. It was my left leg, below the knee. But I kept going all the time. They made me feed a hay baler with a cast on my leg in Santa Barbara. They had me right where they wanted me: war time, you know, and they short of help. Gathering cattle, too, with a cast on my leg. I couldn't put my heel down for, oh, seven or eight years, walked on my toe." He went to Arizona to hunt but found they'd abandoned the bounty; "so I went out and laid in the sand and the sun and then my leg got well."

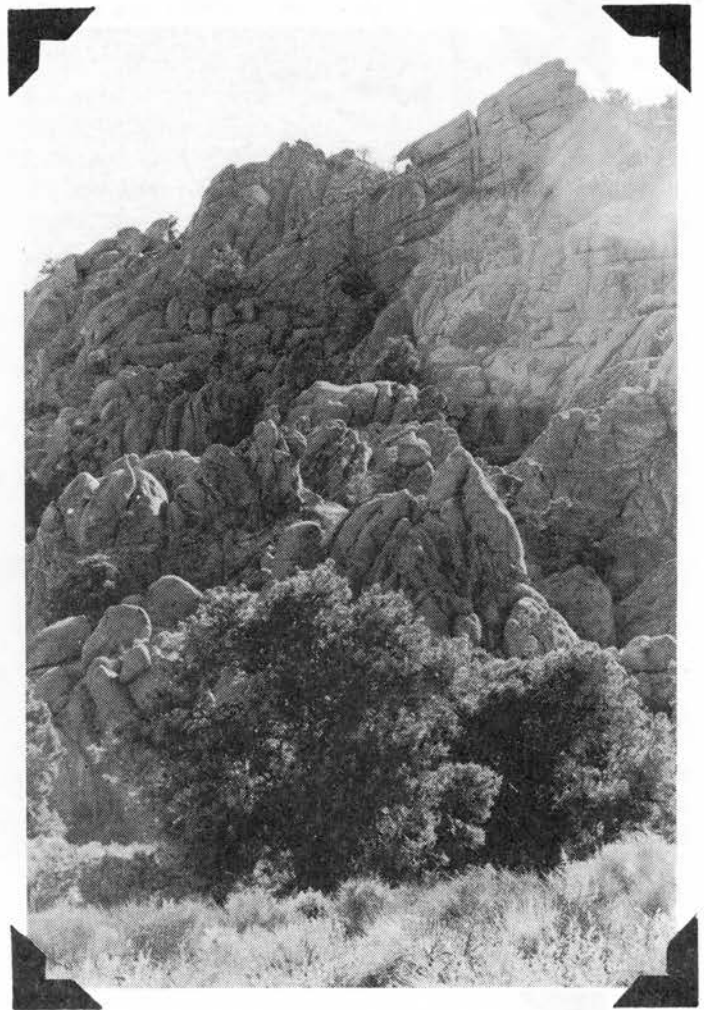
Another time, hunting in Santa Barbara, "I was going up the canyon a-pushing the brush back, staying in the draw, you know, and this here snake was on the side of the bank where the willows come out. They say they always rattle first, but he didn't; he bit me and then rattled. Oh, I tried to cut the bite out and bandage my hand; wrapped a string around my hand to cut the circulation off, and I guess I made a mistake doing that: my whole arm was just rotten there for a long time. I had three colts back in there and not a one of them really broke to ride, not a one I could saddle with one hand. I just stayed back in camp until it got well. I caught a lion with one hand and I had an awful time skinning that lion."

There wasn't much that would stop Charlie from getting a lion. He wasn't concerned about killing too many: "Lion'll travel. And lion increase. I've completely cleaned countries out where you couldn't find a lion track anywhere, and in eight years, seems like they'll be as thick as they ever was." One year, he said, he travelled every road in the Benton Range country with a Fish and Game man who was tracking migrating deer; they only found the tracks of two lions, and those were just passing through: "They come from the other side of White Mountain, them two lions. The Fish and Game boys and me, we caught one of them, the female; and the old male he just kep a-going straight on. He went clear to Yosemite Park.

"And the next year after that I caught thirteen."

That must have been back when the bounty was on. Friends of Charlie's used to claim he only killed the killer lions, the ones that took more sheep or deer than they could eat. It's doubtful that every lion between White Mountain and Yosemite was a bloodthirsty killer.

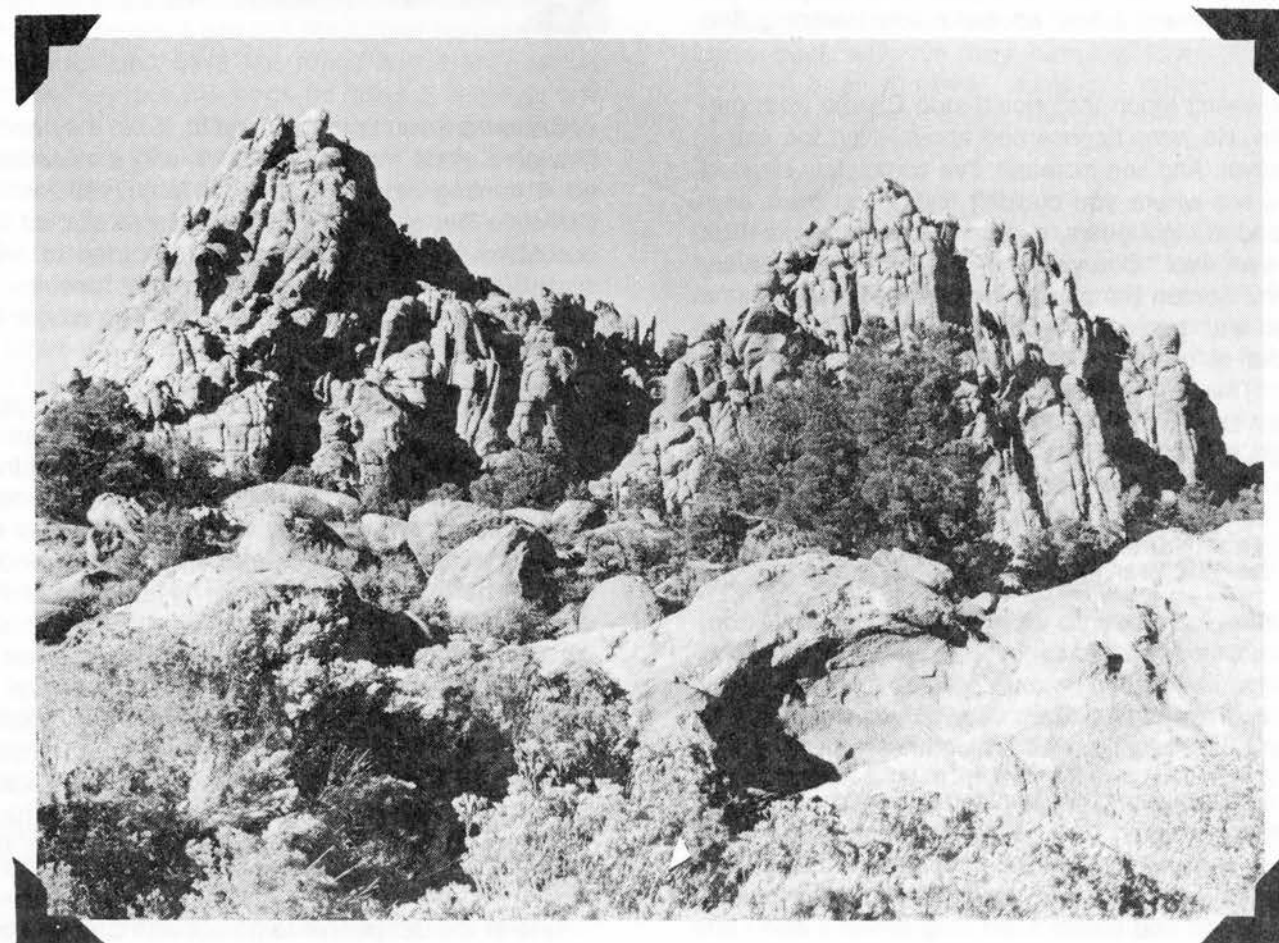
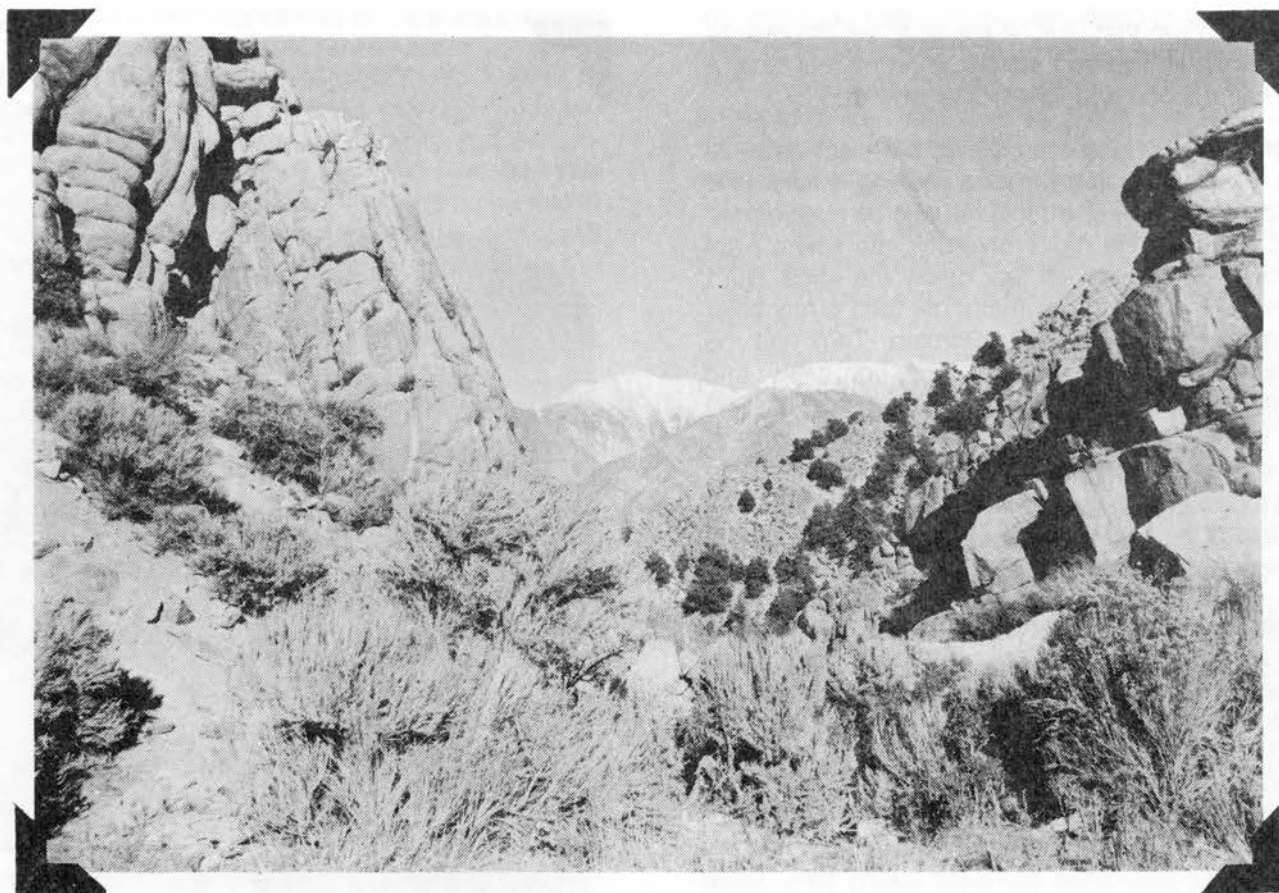
"I think Charlie had his own form of land ethic," Bill Bramlette says today. "The government had a bounty on lions; they were killing domestic sheep; and the values of the times were that you trap and hunt them. Lions were his bread and butter."



California's lion bounty ended in 1963, they became a regulated game mammal in 1969, and a moratorium on sport hunting extended from 1972 to 1986 while the California Department of Fish and Game studied the lion population. Since then the DFG has tried to reinstate sport hunting but has been blocked by lawsuits. Opponents say the studies are insufficient. The cougar has its defenders. Times have changed.

Lions did come back to the Benton Range, and meanwhile Charlie Tant died. Today Bill Bramlette is district ranger for the Forest Service region that includes Charlie's old hunting grounds; as head of the steering committee for a protected wild horse area, he reports that lions appear to be helping maintain unusually healthy herds. One researcher is studying the lions' effect on the horses' reproductive rates and their relationship with both horses and deer; his research assistants are lion hunters. Charlie Tant could have gotten along with some of them — like George Orisio, still hunting from muleback at 85. And he might not have objected to a hunt that ended with photographs, tests and measurements instead of death. As Orisio has said, "My biggest part of the enjoyment in a lion hunt is watching the dogs work. I don't care about killin' one."

One of the last people to go out with Charlie was Dick



Weaver, the DFG wildlife biologist in charge of lion studies from the time the moratorium went into effect until his retirement this year. "We were doing population studies and we decided to pick the brains of the old-timers," Weaver says. He spent two days with Charlie in 1972, looking for lion sign and learning where lions could be found.

"It was an interesting two days. He was an old man living in squalor by almost anyone's standards, and no longer able to keep up with his dogs — though he'd sometimes turn them loose just to hear them baying. He was well-known among other dog men as sort of a lion hunter's lion hunter. Everyone wanted to breed their dogs to his. Charlie had a thing with the dogs, almost like they could communicate. Few people have the kind of success that Charlie had.

"I don't think anyone could argue his knowledge of lions, lion behavior, lion sign. I've known a half a dozen people in my life with that ability to look at the ground and read it like a newspaper, to read sign no matter how faint. I'm a wildlife man, an outdoor person; I'd follow them and sooner or later I'd find a sign I could read; but they'd be traipsing along over a granite slab . . .

"When you go out you don't always find track, and then only one time in ten you put the dogs out and get a lion in hand. You can lose the scent on bare ground; there has to be a certain humidity; if it's too hot it volatilizes. But Charlie had the ability to visually find a track and start his dogs all over again. He was probably Cali-

fornia's equivalent to Ben Lilly."

There is no longer any call for a man who can kill a thousand lions. Charlie was master of his time and place, perfectly adapted to a vanished way of life, consummately skilled in a profession that — less than a decade after his death — the world scarcely needs. In Charlie's day a man struggled to adjust nature to fit his needs. Today we're trying to understand the balance of nature before it is altered beyond recognition.

There are those who argue that lions must be hunted to prevent their becoming a threat to livestock; and there are those who say even the small-scale hunt proposed by California's DFG will threaten the species. So far studies, like Charlie's observations, suggest that both may be barking up the wrong tree: if you kill a few lions more lions will take their place, as long as there are mountains and deer — and a healthy replacement population nearby. Ultimately it may come down to a personal choice against taking an animal's life for no good reason.

Charlie Tant was no sport hunter, as he said himself, and it was said of him that he would sometimes go hungry rather than kill the game around him. Nor were lions his enemy. They were his bread and butter, and maybe more: the worthy adversary against which he measured himself, the challenge that kept him coming back. ✦





MAMMOTH

From a Long Way Back

BACK IN TIME

by Louise Kelsey

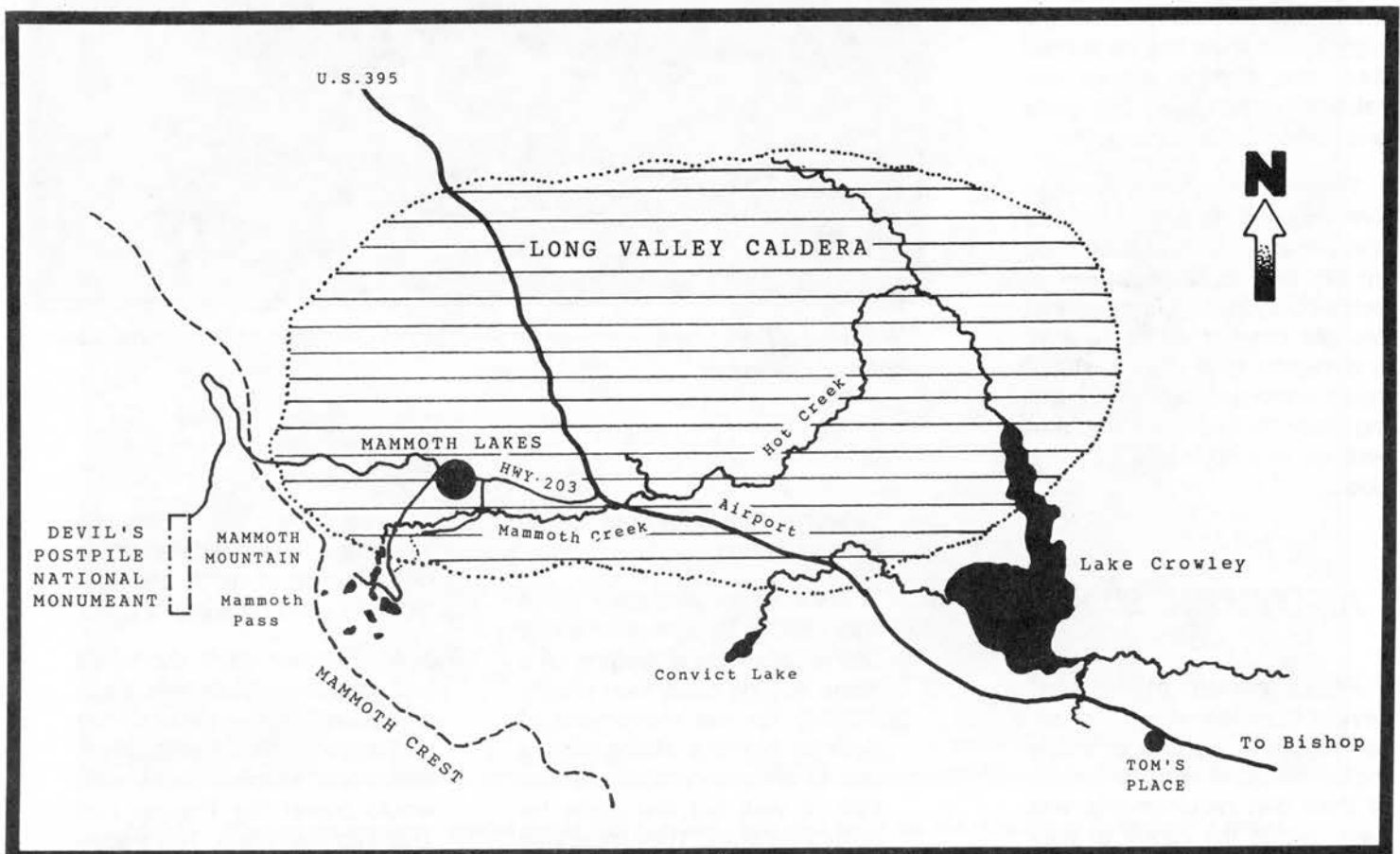
photos by Louise Kelsey

map and diagram by Bill Kelsey

If you want to take a look at OLD Mammoth think back 700,000 years or more to the time when earth forces put on a world class show. We're talking BIG here, like 200 times more grand than Mount St. Helens. But first consider the nearly unimaginable forces that sculpted the landscape as mountain blocks lifted and twisted to become the canyons of Convict and McGee. These palettes of stone-color worked their patterns 10 to 20 million years ago.

Beginning more than three million years behind mankind the great and the minor ice ages carved and scraped their way through the California mountain ranges. They dumped morainial debris in careless abandon at the mouths of Sierra's magnificent canyons.

Under all this the earth substance, the magma, was bubbling along in great style. Finally, 700,000 years ago, the molten mass reached the point of eruption and volcanic vomit blew ash as far as Nebraska. Lava flowed southward from the source to cover the tableland



with "Bishop Tuff." The caldera, when it collapsed, formed Long Valley and much of the Mammoth Lakes Basin.

Ice and fire, snow and wind worked with erosive forces that bit by bit created Sierra soil.

A STEP OR TWO FORWARD

With soil came plants, then animals, then the Ancient Ones, the hunters and gatherers. The only stories this culture left are in petroglyphs. These pictures and graphs and designs are a wonderful mystery because anyone who sees them can imagine his own meaning for them. There is no right or wrong. It is enough to savor the art-messages carved into a sometimes brutal land.

Man did live in this magnificent land long before the time of written history as we know it. Petroglyphs in caves along Mammoth Creek and lava of the high desert show that he hunted deer and bighorn sheep and rabbits, worshipped his gods and honored his hunters.

What an awesome land to live on — a land that heaved and shook; a land that belched up fire and liquid rock only to settle down into a warm hill that brought comfort on chilly days and nights; land whose waters could warm and soothe an aching body, or cook one so care-less as to step into a bubbling pool.

ANOTHER STEP

Paiute culture of the past several hundred years was not as migratory as that of many Indian tribes. The food source of their diet requirements was here, within the range of their



PETROGLYPHS - Images created by the Ancient Ones span centuries with their mysterious meanings.

seasonal camps for hunting and crop gathering.

Their killing range for game was limited to bow and arrow and aided by traps. Setting up a stone hunting blind, then silently waiting for the movement of deer or bighorn sheep was a test of a hunter's patience and skill. It was not the place for noisy little ones. They must stay

in camp to help with the gathering of autumn's seeds and nuts or the curing of rabbit and deer hides to ward off winter's cold.

As summer days shortened into fall, pinon nuts and trade obsidian were gathered for exchange with the Miwok, Mono and West slope Indians who would travel the Fresno Flat Trail into Mammoth. The trader-

traveler's shells and acorns were a welcome change of decoration and diet. Games and dances were another change from the challenging chore of hunting and the gossip-filled days of grinding nut and seed meal.

INTO THE 1800s

The gold rush of 1849 swept through the Sacramento Valley, over into Virginia City and down to Bodie. Even Monoville and Dogtown boomed. But roads from Bishop to Benton and Bodie passed right by the area that was to become Mammoth. Stages with their human cargo and freight-drawn wagons loaded with lumber and supplies had no reason or desire to

detour up into the beautiful country of the Lakes Basin . . . their sights were on gold.

As the mines played out the prospectors looked beyond the boomtowns. A story surfaced about a "Lost Cement Mine" and its vein of rich, accessible ore. Four prospectors, in search of the ledge, discovered a vein in Mammoth's Red Hill.

From 1877 to 1880 a whirlwind boom-bust created the three small cities in the Lakes Mining District. Mammoth City, Pine City and Mill City were centers of the District. Certainly everyone envisioned great wealth and a grand future! Certainly no one imagined that within three years hopes and plans would leave in the backpacks and suitcases of discouraged miners.

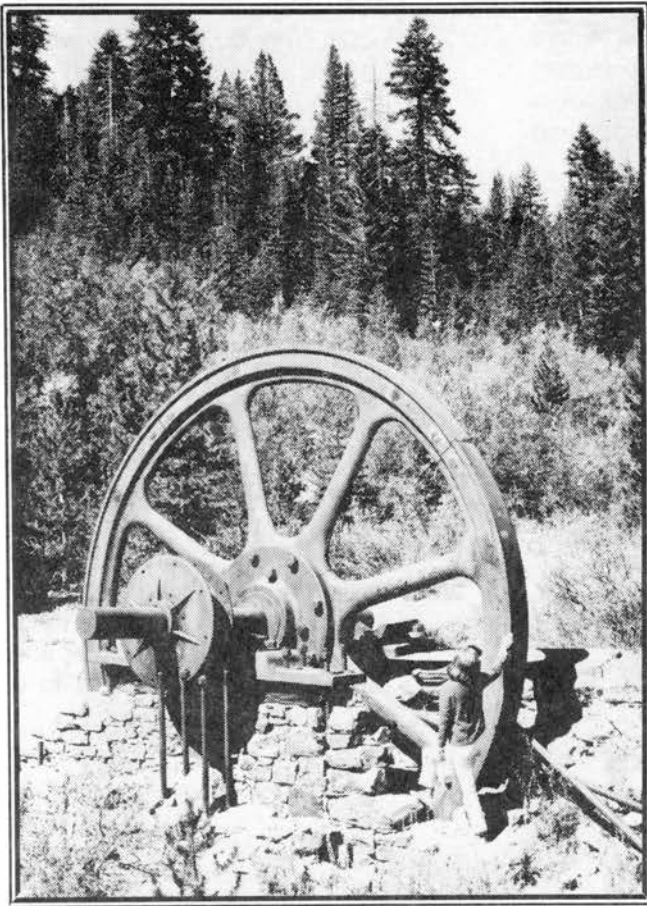
Within the three years not a great deal was done to build snug and secure homes or substantial, well-appointed stores. A quickly constructed, simple log cabin was a castle compared to the dugouts burrowed into the hillside, often with no window, an opening for a door and a pipe to carry out smoke. A saloon might be no more than a barrell of whiskey under a tent, but Mammoth City is said to have had twenty-two saloons and two breweries.

The miners' energy was channeled into developing the mines. A covered flume contoured the hillside to bring water to a 14-ton flywheel that powered the 20-stamp mill used to crush Mammoth's ore. Cords upon cords of lumber were cut and hauled for tunnel shorings, to cover the flume and to fuel

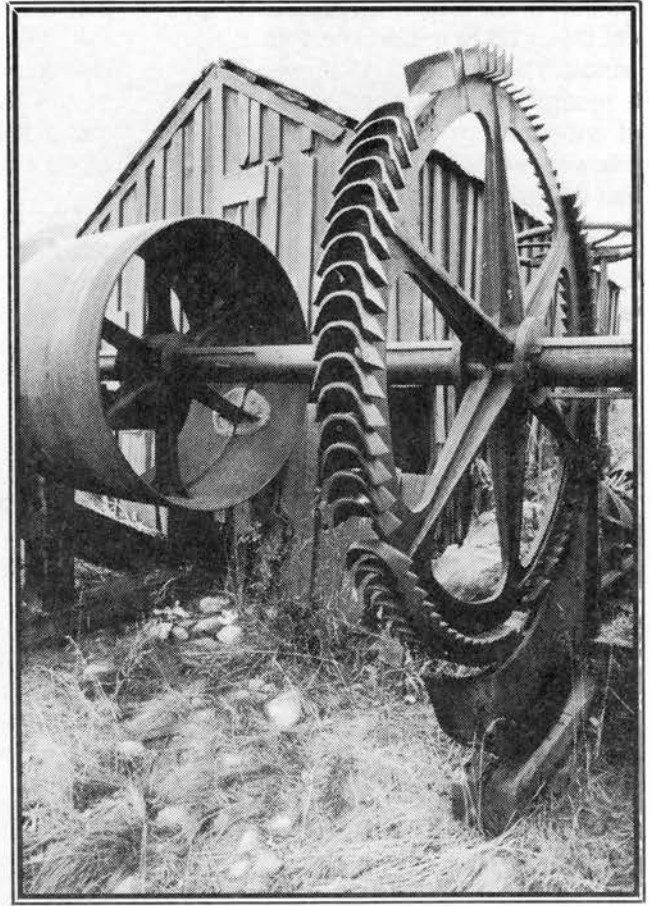


MINE - Rusted ore buckets, eroded walls and tumbled shale and talus are the remains of Mammoth's mines.





FLY WHEEL - A 14-ton wheel, hauled from Los Angeles and bolted together on site, turned the 20 stamps of the 1878 mill.



PELTON WHEEL - This water wheel, six feet high, powered the Mammoth Mill at Mill City.

steam power. It is a tribute to the miners as well as a challenge to the imagination to consider the job of moving a 14-ton flywheel from Southern California to Mammoth — in sections — assembling it, putting a 20-stamp mill in place, and constructing a building over it, all the while mining the ore and attending to everyday chores of food and shelter.

Not every moment in a miner's life was work. There was never an abundance of women in mining camp towns, but those

in the Lakes Mining District could be sure of every dance being taken when lively tunes floated across the water from the dance platforms on Lake Mary. And any lady who had the time to make cookies or pies could be sure that any chore she needed doing would be done, and promptly.

Roads and trails had worked their way into Mammoth as the excitement of gold spread. Before the mining boom collapsed, the stage line from Bodie brought workers and sup-

plies to the little cities. The Sherwin Toll Road brought lumber and freight from Bishop. The 100-mile pack trail, termed the Old French Trail or the Fresno Flats Trail, crossed the Sierra from Fresno to Mammoth. The trail was forged by the Indians, then used by prospectors, sheepherders and freighters.

History reports a sad slump in Mammoth's story. The Mammoth Mine Company was a get-rich-quick operation. Owners played at being stockholders

(Opposite) CABIN - Remnants of a miner's home show that a small space enclosed by large logs met the needs of a worker in cold country.

(Opposite) CORDED WOOD - Abandoned wood, cut and corded, was sawed for the lake District's mines.

instead of miners. The veins did not prove up to the prospectors' hopes. The winter of 1880 was a record breaker when 28 feet of snow fell in December. The following winter a fire destroyed half the town. Mammoth's boom days were ended.

1889 brought a spurt of hope when Dr. Guy Doyle of Bishop had the Pelton Wheel hauled up from Mill City to his 10-stamp mill at Mammoth City. Unfortunately, there was still no "Bonanza," no "Lost Cement."

AND INTO THE 20th CENTURY

The 20th century entered — but slowly. The support systems for miners were ranchers and

farmers who supplied food for the three cities. After the miners moved on some of these men of the land stayed to become the pioneers of Mammoth and Mono County.

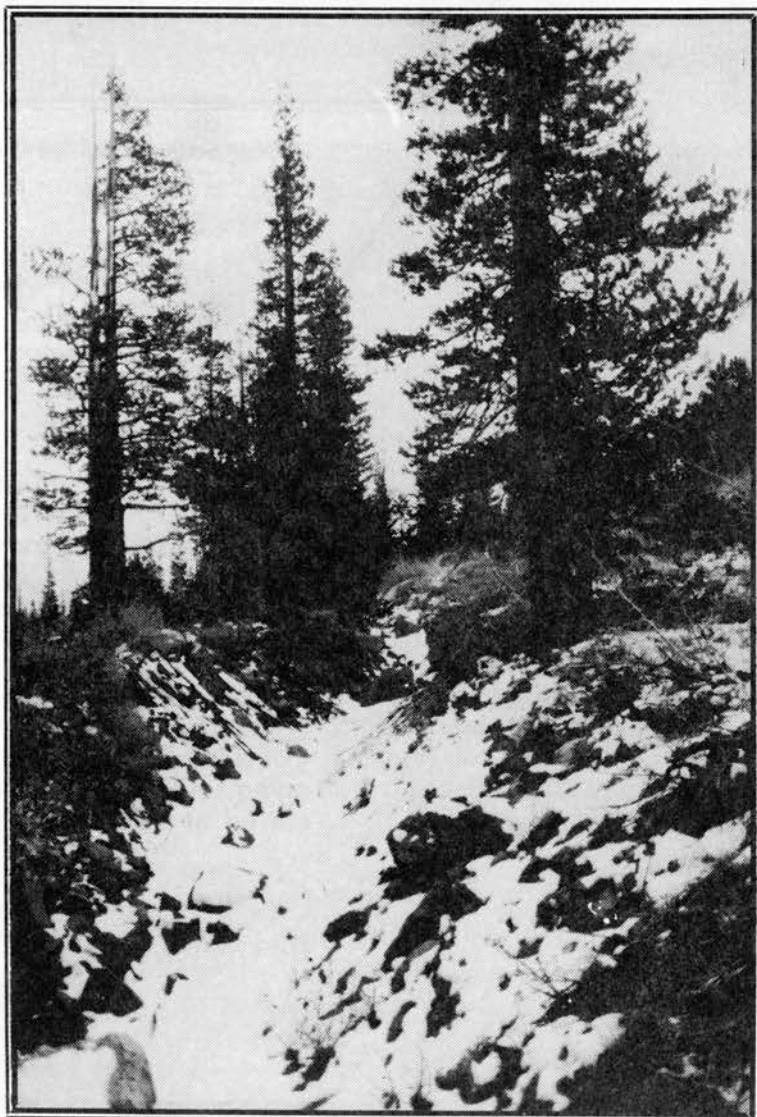
Old Mammoth in the Meadow, sometimes called "Mineral City," changed to accommodate a new way of life. Energetic young people raced up the dirt roads from Mojave, through Lone Pine, Independence, Big Pine and Bishop, then stopped to refresh themselves and get ready for the real test over Sherwin Grade and on into Mammoth.

And Mammoth was waiting with resorts and hotels. The Whites and Stanley Steamers were greeted by folks in Fords and Chevies who manned the

Wildasinn and the Summers Hotel. The Doyle Pelton wheel had been sledged down the mountain and now supplied power for the resorts.

In quick succession came Lutz Store and post office, a gas station and garage, cafe and saloon and the pack outfit.

Recreation became Mammoth's gold. It all began with fishing. As roads and transportation became less primitive, families joined the fun. Fishing expanded to hiking and camping and packing. Winters, however, were a quiet story, until the arrival of skiing. Downhill and cross-country skiing have lifted the "quiet" from winter and brought this vacationland to a four-season adventure. ♦



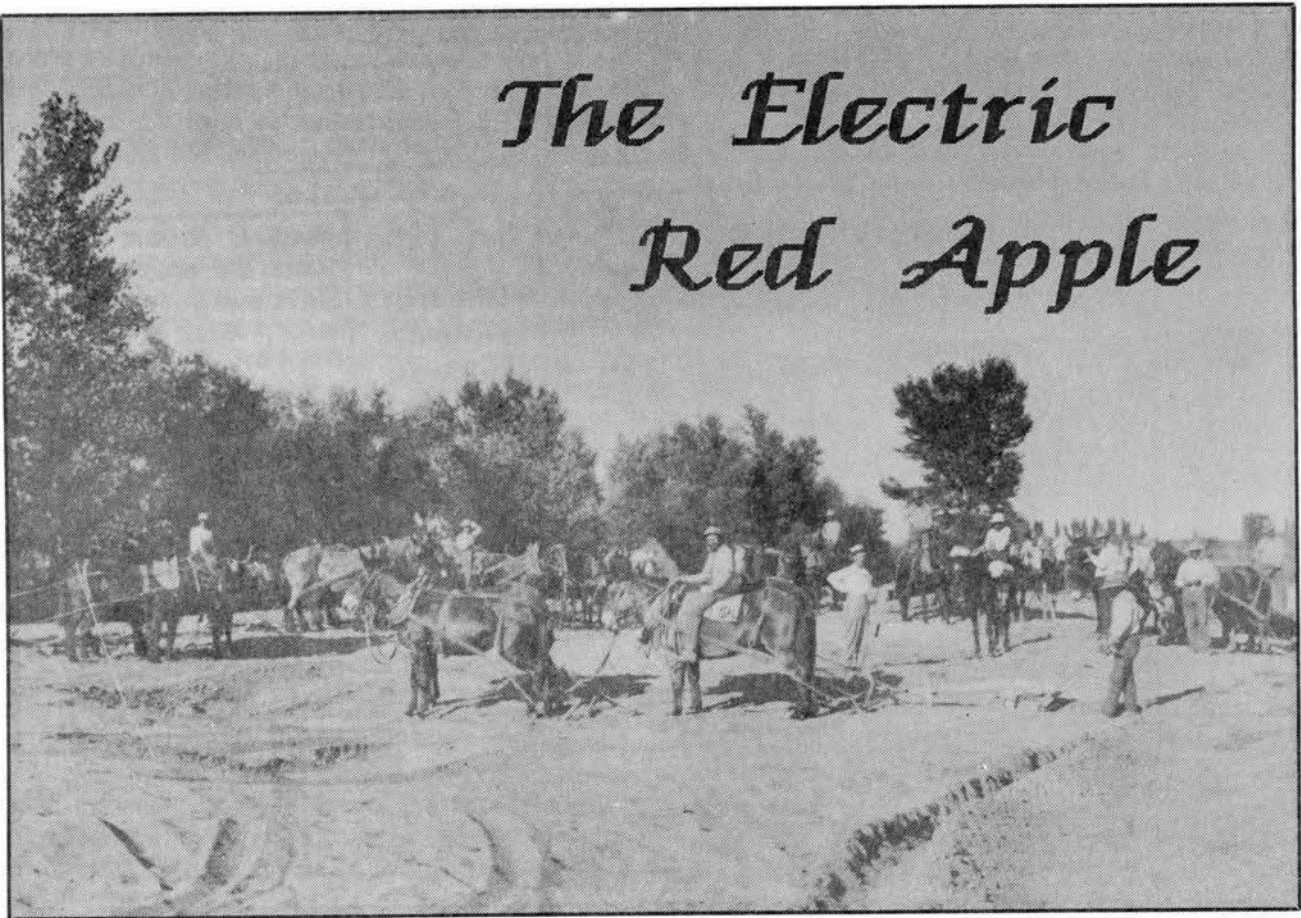
FLUME - This once-covered waterway provided hydro- power to Mammoth's mills.

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Young Volcanos

And some pleasant memory-chasing with Art Hess
and R.W. "Dick" Hulse.

The Electric Red Apple



Construction of the Owens River Valley Electric Railroad, June 1911.

Photo courtesy Laws Railroad Museum.

by David A. Wright

Do you live in Bishop? Good. Let's take a little trip to Laws. A piece of cake, right? Maybe, but let's change the rules a bit. You cannot have the car. Here is a nice sturdy buckboard and a team of horses.

Let's say it is summer. It is hot, and no breeze. What is that you say, you're unhappy about the dust kicked up by the horses? You don't like the flies they are attracting either? The smell . . . ? And the ride? Well . . . let's change the rules a bit and include some winter weather. The same old buckboard ride is still there . . . but now you are complaining about the cold, wind, and snow? And you want to know why we have to go to Laws? Because we have a train to catch, and it is the only place to catch it.

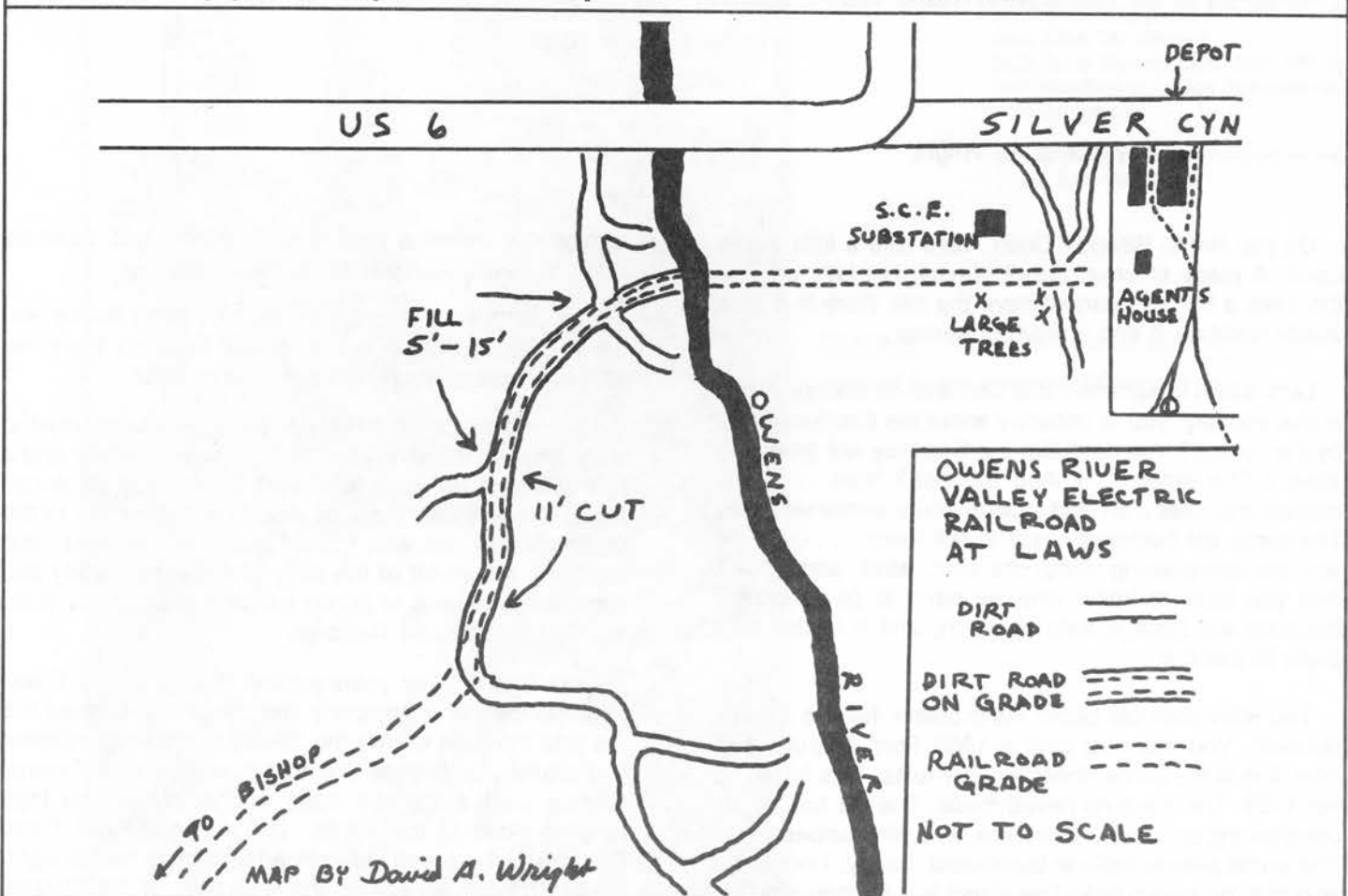
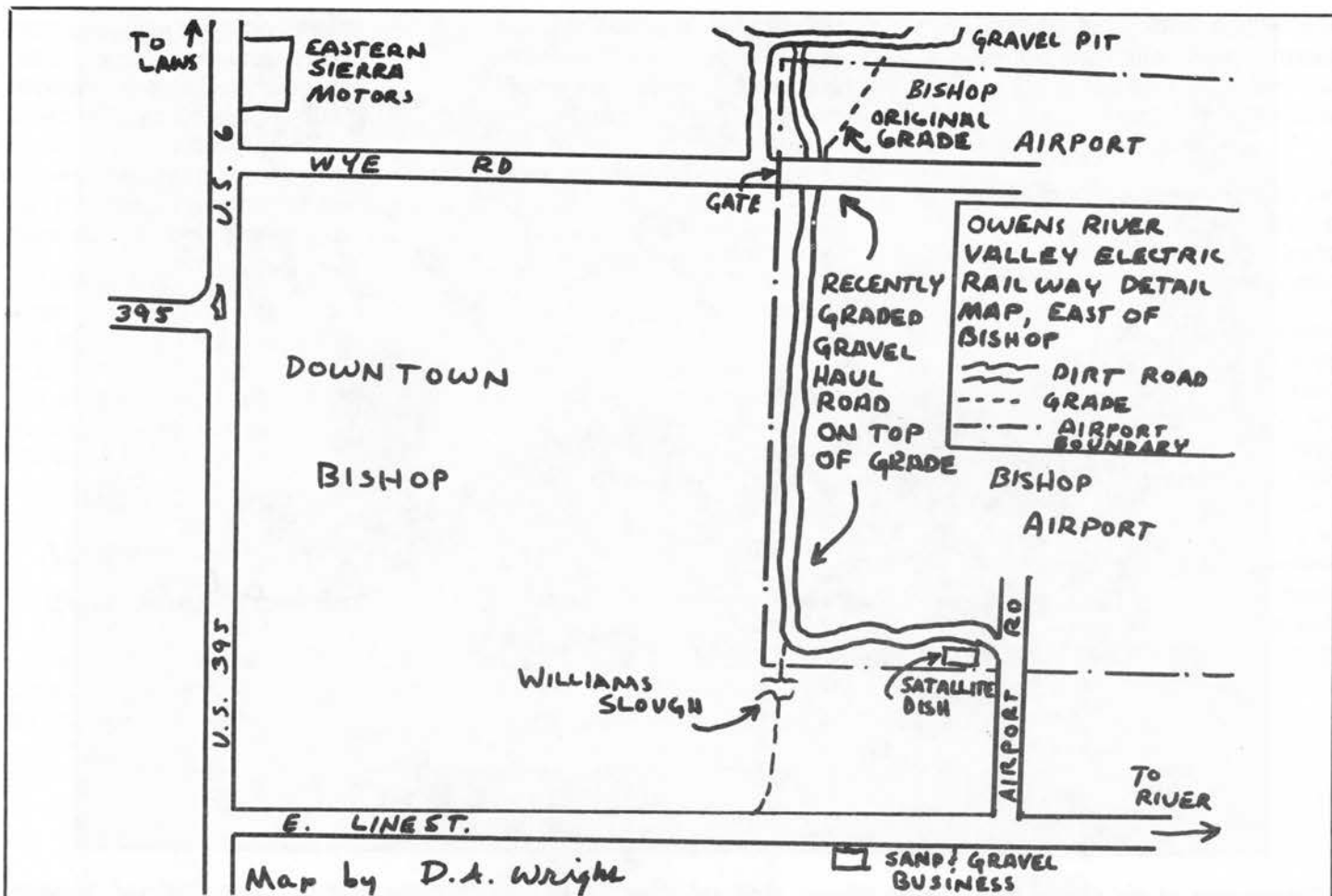
You want your car back? No problem, here is a 1911 Maxwell. You say you own a 1989 Ford Taurus? Not now, this is my game, these are my rules. This is 1911,, not 1989. There are no paved roads. The car has no air conditioning or heater. There are no cushy suspensions. The game pieces include buckboard, buggy, horseless, or horse, take your pick. The object is a railroad train for

comfortable traveling over long distances, and it can be found in Laws, four and a half miles away.

You don't want to play anymore? I don't blame you there. But you did get the point that the easy travel we take for granted today, did not always exist.

The citizens of 1911 Bishop, although accustomed to such arduous traveling conditions, viewed the four and a half mile gap between town and the railroad as a nuisance. Bishop was then, as now, the largest city in the Owens Valley. As with Lone Pine, Independence, and Big Pine, it was off of the path of the only speedy and comfortable means of public transportation in the area, the Southern Pacific Railroad.

More than twenty years earlier, the Carson & Colorado Railroad (the company that originally pushed the line into the area before the Southern Pacific purchase) had chosen to bypass the towns west of the Owens, staying east along the base of the White and Inyo ranges, close to the mines. The rich bullion of Cerro Gordo was the green the railroad financiers had in sight, not the garden variety on the west side of the Owens.



By the time rails reached the vicinity of Cerro Gordo, that town was almost dead. The railroad builders, who originally planned to push the line to the Colorado River, gave up below the town at the bottom of the Yellow Grade; the future site of Keeler. The rails stayed in place, but on the wrong side of the river.

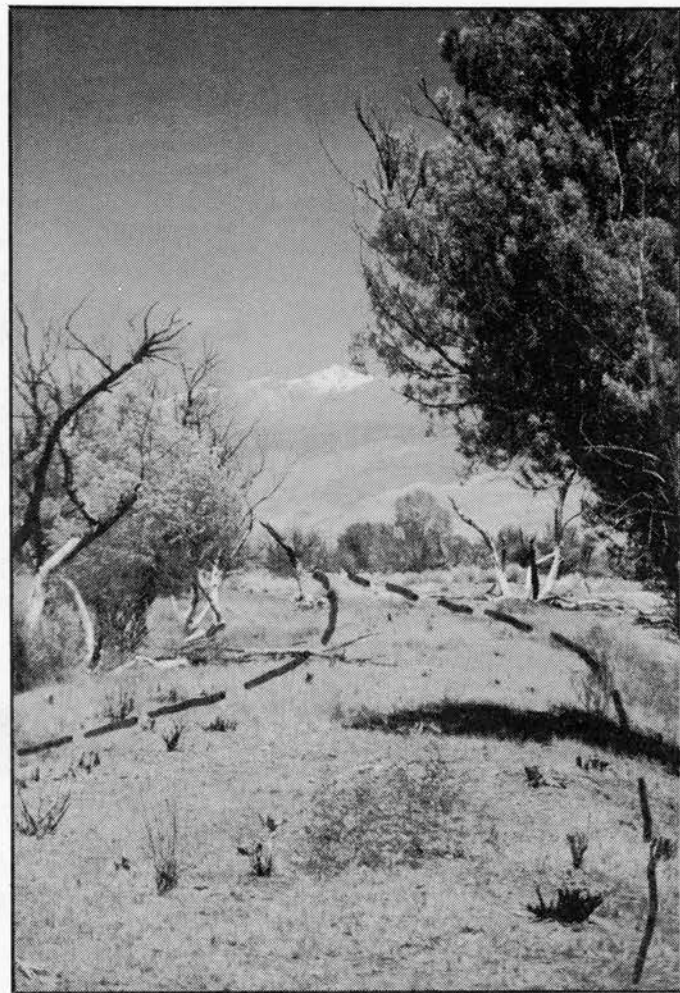
By the first decade of the 20th century, Bishop wanted the modern conveniences of the 20th century. Laws was only five miles away, and that span could be bridged easily by rails. Fuel was added to the fire by 1910, when Southern Pacific built their "Jawbone Branch" from Mojave to Owenyo, placing Lone Pine on rails to the outside world. During this time many conflicting facts surface regarding a railroad between Bishop and Laws, but for now, we will stick to those concerning one that came so close to reality that to this day there is physical evidence left to remind us of its near existence. It was to be called the Owens River Valley Electrical Railroad.

Shortly before November 1910, several individuals tried to finance a rail line to Laws, but failed. Among these were prominent Bishop citizens C.F. Wildasinn, Charles E. Johnson, White Smith (of the Saline Valley salt operations), and Omaha businessman George C. Carey. Johnson kept his franchise and formed a new company; on November 17, 1910, the Owens River Valley Electrical Railway was born. Its elected leaders were Harry Shaw, who owned the Owens Valley Bank, and H.N. Beard as general manager.

Early in 1911, the public was notified that a four and a half mile long narrow gauge route had been selected for an electric railway to connect Laws and Bishop, with plans to extend the line to Big Pine. Surveys were started in the middle of February. Offices of the company opened in the Johnson Building on East Line Street. Advertisements in the Inyo Register began to circulate, to build funds in the railroad and in a joint venture to develop a 1,300-acre apple orchard and further develop the Sunland District south of Bishop.

Each share of stock in the railway brought the holder a bonus of one share of stock with the Aqueduct Lands and Orchards Co., which was a company owned by H.N. Beard. A promotional booklet entitled "The Big Red Apple-The Money Tree" soon was published, which prompted locals to dub the planned railway "The Red Apple Route."

By the end of March, surveys were completed. In June, it was announced that all rights of way had been acquired with the exception of one small portion across the Leary property. The route would cross fairly level land, with only difficulties being the crossing of the north fork of Bishop Creek and the Owens River. The western terminus was to be on South Main Street, where George Clarke donated enough land to build facilities suitably becoming to an operating railroad.

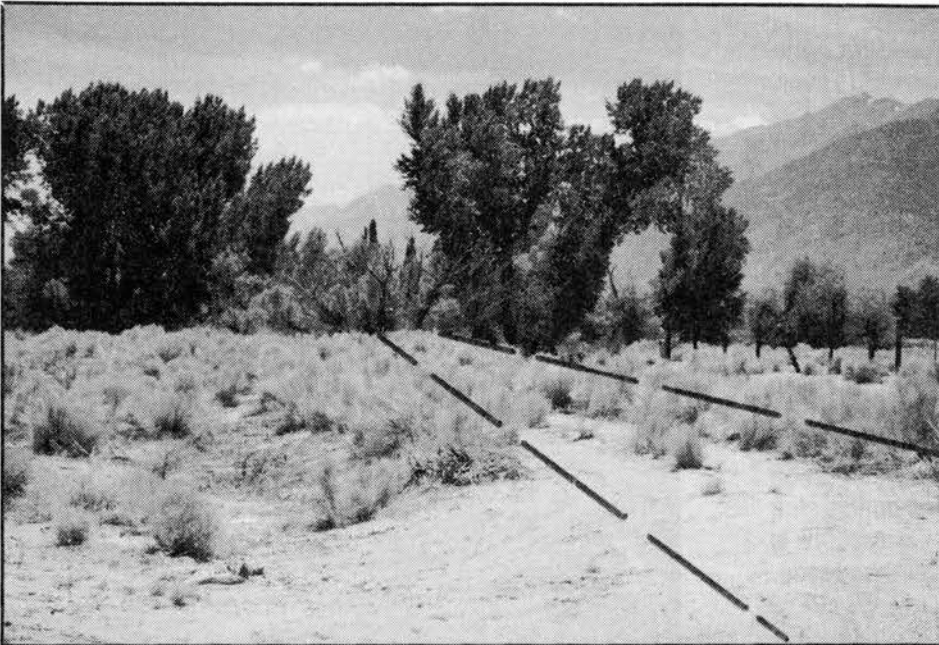


Grade as it leaves E. Line St. and swings north into Williams Slough, 1989. D.A. Wright photo.

On June 10, the contract to grade the route was awarded to Herbert Francisco and Neil McLean, McLean having had a hand in building the Tonopah and Goldfield Railroad a few years before. It was projected that the line would take ninety days to build and that grading would commence in ten days.

A celebration was planned. The Inyo Register proclaimed: "President Shaw will delve into the soil with a shovel decorated for the occasion (the shovel will be decorated, and not Mr. Shaw) and the first shovelful of dirt will be thrown into the winds . . ." On June 16 Bishop celebrated while businesses closed, automobiles paraded, orators boasted, and music filled the air.

On Monday, June 18, thirty two men and sixty horses tackled the difficult cut and fill across the Owens River; it was finished in a month. Four carloads of pipe arrived on the Southern Pacific for the thirty nine culverts required. Property was acquired at Andrews Spring in Black Canyon, White Mountains, for construction of a sawmill to provide timber for fencing along the right of way, using bristlecone as the main source of wood.



Grade as it exists, Williams Slough on north side. Tracks angle off of grade, which can be seen by the slight hump in the brush just to the right of the tracks.

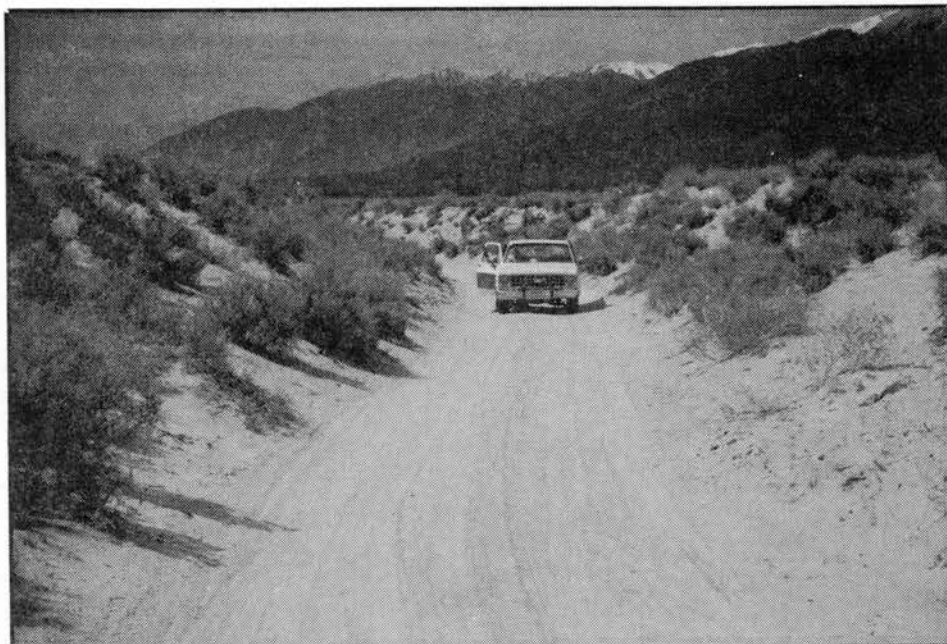


Grade as it heads north at the junction of Wye Road and the airport gate.



View to southwest of grade as it swings into the cut that dropped it to the level of the Owens River crossing. D.A. Wright photos.

Truck is parked on the grade of the cut, just west of the Owens River.

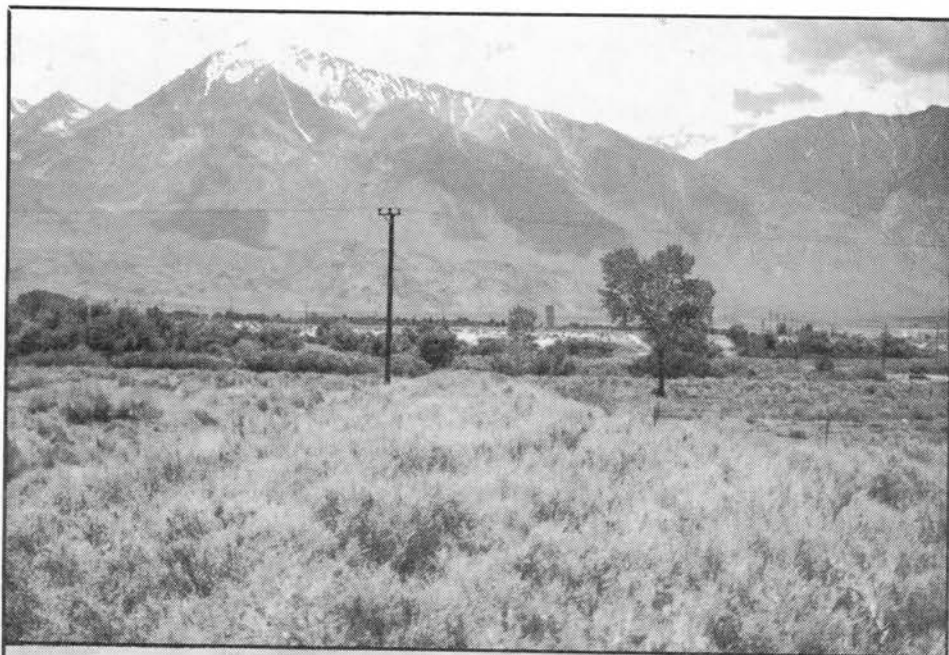


Car is parked on the fill at the mouth of the cut.



Truck is parked at the point where the grade crosses the Owens River, about one-half mile west of Laws. D.A. Wright photos.

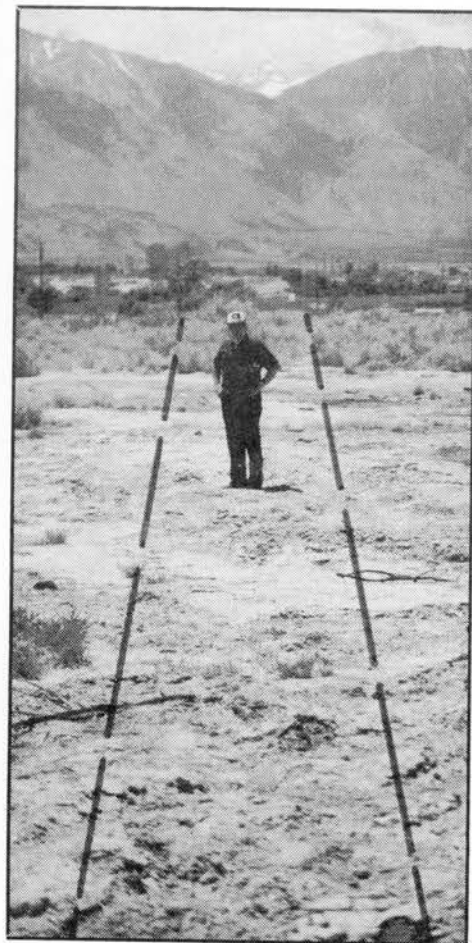




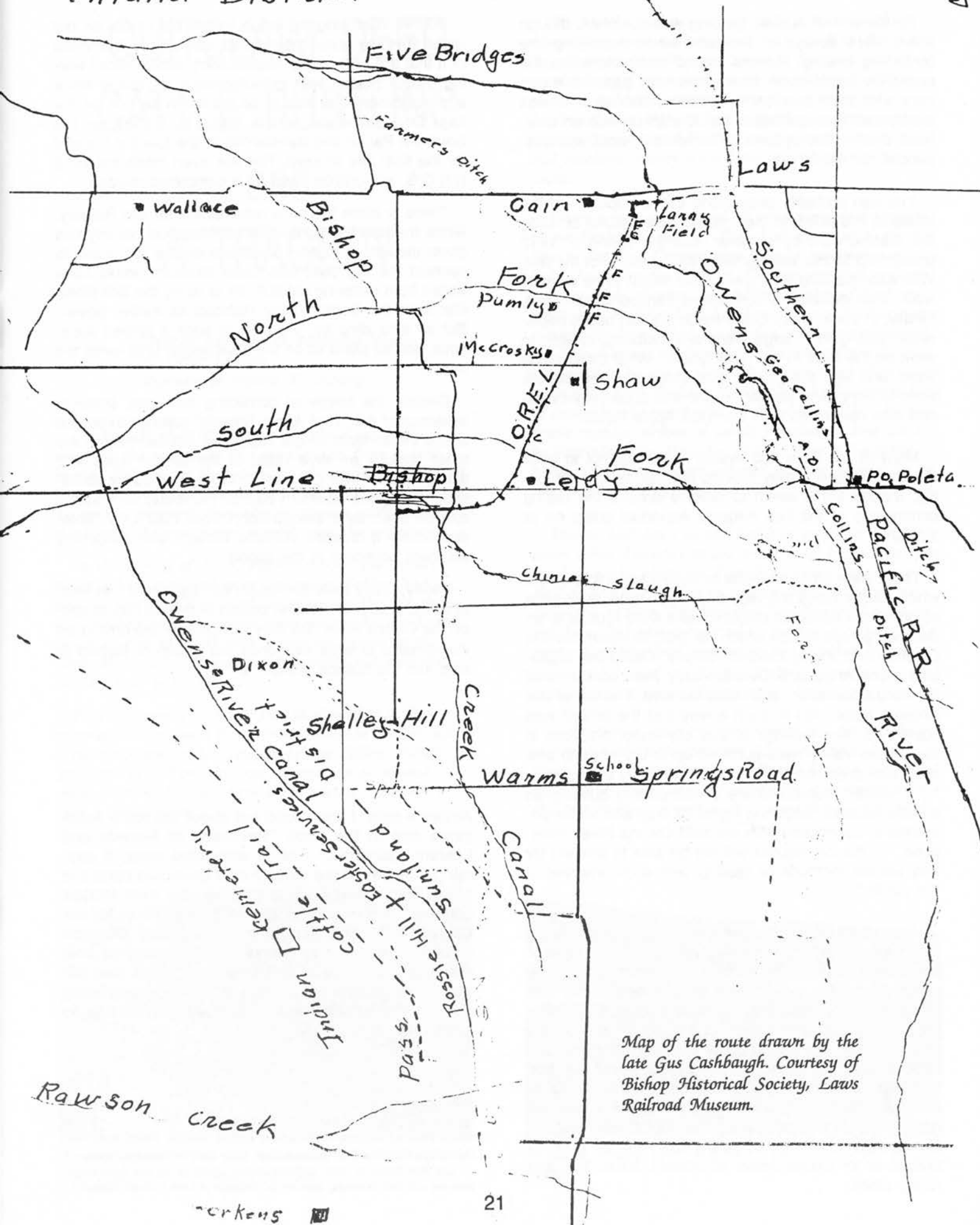
View west, of grade as it approaches Laws.



Sighting along the grade, into Laws, to the terminus of the Owens River Valley Electrical Railway. D.A. Wright photo.



Grade in a recently cleared field a few yards west of the fence at Laws Railroad Museum.



By the end of August, grading was complete, though there were delays at the sawmill in supplying the remaining fencing. Rumors started to circulate that the operation would soon commence with gasoline motor cars and then convert to electric, but soon it was announced that operations would start up with an overhead electric line system. In November, work was suspended for the winter.

You can probably understand the anticipation of the locals at this point. In their minds were visions of riding the electric cars by summer. But the spring of 1912 brought no further work or word on the future of the line. With each passing day, week, and month of no word or work, their dreams of convenient transportation faded. Finally, in June, Harry Shaw made the last public declaration stating that "large plans are maturing, looking to work on the road in the near future." What those plans were, and why the project was eventually abandoned, went to the grave with Mr. Shaw, and apparently everyone else connected with the "Red Apple Route."

Many of the facts and events in the attempt to build the Owens River Valley Electric are cloudy and confusing, though some seem to revolve around the raging controversy of the Los Angeles Aqueduct going on at that time.

There were other attempts to build a rail link to Laws, which further cloud the records. About 1906, during the height of the aqueduct dispute, there were reports of an electric railroad which seem, at first, to resemble the Owens River Valley Electric Railway. Capitalists organized a Los Angeles & Owens Valley Railroad Co., filed for electric operation, and made surveys. The city of Los Angeles responded in such a way that the project was squelched. The feelings of that city about progress in the Owens Valley were summed up in the wording of a resolution presented by a Los Angeles city councilman: "... certain individuals are contemplating building an electric railroad, acquiring rights of way and water privileges in connection with the said Owens River enterprise ... the city council will not be able to prevent tar and feather methods of dealing with such enemies of the public."

History tells us that all attempts to close the gap failed before they ever left the drawing board or, in the case of the Owens River Valley Electric, died prematurely. The reasons why the project was abandoned in the first place are also clouded by opinion and conjecture. Some reason that the large scale purchasing of land by the city of Los Angeles killed apple orchard plans and that killed investor confidence in the project. Some say that fraud within the railroad company left it without funds to continue. Others speculate that building the grade was not as easy as originally thought and extra expenditures to complete it left the company too little for building bridges or for motive power equipment, track, ties, and rolling stock.

Further confusing the issue, many old timers do not recall anything about the railroad; some have memories of it that are only vague recollections; others recall seeing orders placed with manufacturers for rolling stock and equipment that was to be placed in service on the line. One individual recalls riding to Bishop on the Southern Pacific and transferring to the Electric Railway for the final ride to town. The line even made the 1913 U.S.G.S. topographic map as a completed railroad.

There is often talk of a resurrection for the Railway. Since the late 1960s, the Bishop Historical Society has given thought to putting a rail line on the old grade to connect the city park with Laws Museum. Ideas have varied from restoring old S.P. #9 to using the Brill Motor Car from the Death Valley Railroad as motive power. But as time slips by, the cost of such a project escalates, and so plans sit on the back burner until funds are raised.

Despite the tangle of conflicting accounts, physical evidence of the "Red Apple Route's" stillborn existence is out there. Most of the route can still be traced, the most obvious on Wye Road at the airport fence and along Owens River just west of Laws, both easily accessible. Along the southern part of the route, faint traces can be seen as it swings north from East Line Street and where it crosses Williams Slough, just inside the southern boundary of the airport.

Today, many folks turn south off Highway 6 just west of Laws, onto a dirt road in search of the hot fishing spot on the Owens River. Do they realize they are driving on the remains of what was once the dream of Bishop to step into the outside world? ♦

Author's note: I first found out about the route some years ago in the book "Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California." I often wondered what, if anything, lies left of the route. I first stumbled upon the route accidentally while driving the Kerr-McGee company van to Bishop airport on Wye Road for the California Oil Fire School in 1987. In my research trips for this article, I have been amazed at how much of the grade is still intact; so much that the Historical Society would like to utilize the existing grade for much of their proposed tourist line to Laws.

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QUITCLAIM DEED CATTLE RUSTLING and A TRAGEDY

Another memory of Antelope Valley
by Victor Larson,
courtesy of Donna S. Strong

In the fall of 1872, Father bought a quitclaim deed for the meadows in Lost Canyon from a man named Dehart. At that time no government land had been surveyed and the settlers had squatters rights. To convey property they simply gave a quitclaim deed, and the purchaser moved onto the property.

In the spring of 1873, Father moved the family there, where we lived in a log cabin. Father had a herd of sixty head of cattle to graze on the meadows and milked about a dozen cows, where he put butter down in firkins until sold. I was an infant at the time. My brother Owen was two years old and sister Minnie four years old.

Lost Canyon was 7,000 feet in elevation and to approach it one had to go from Antelope Valley, up a twisting canyon to Little Antelope Valley, then a steep grade to Lost Canyon. It was ten or twelve miles from Coleville where there was a Post Office and a small store.



Topaz Lake and Wild Oat Mountain, north end of Antelope Valley looking toward Nevada.

The family had been there only a few months when three horsemen arrived, namely R.G. Watkins, Dan Barnett and Frank Cravens. Watkins was a constable and he served notice on Father to vacate as Barnett had a quitclaim to the property. It developed that Dehart had signed a quitclaim deed to both Barnett and Father on the same day and had received money from both and then left the country.

There was a great deal of wrangling and threats to get Father to vacate. They had planned to get the family out and Craven was to take possession and hold the claim for Barnett. Craven strutted around waving a six-shooter and telling Father if he knew what was best for him he should leave. Father never moved. He knew that possession was nine points of the law. Craven, a desperate character from Texas, was said to be an outlaw who spent most of his time riding for Tom Rickey. Tom Rickey had a large herd of cattle in the north end of Antelope Valley. Rickey made regular drives of small bunches of beef cattle to Virginia City, Nevada, at that time a booming town. His drivers were alleged to have picked up on the range more of other people's cattle than his own.

Father had been in the habit of going to Coleville every other Tuesday to get what mail there was. The mail came by stage on Tuesday of each week but Father had his orders to vacate, and he dared not leave the canyon. Mother was handicapped with us children, but she succeeded in getting a letter to the post office. She had written to her brother Frank Owens who lived in Washoe Valley, Nevada, to come at once as they needed assistance for awhile.

A day or so later Father missed two fat yearling steers. He felt sure someone (Cravens) had driven them away. Some time later Frank Owens arrived on a sorrel horse. Father gave him a description of the two missing steers with the markings, branded



Antelope Valley near Walker-Coleville area. Joe Pollini photos.

with a T on the left hip and a swallow-fork on the right ear.

Riding to Coleville making inquiries about the strayed steers, Owens met a rancher by the name of Lobdell who had quite a herd of cattle. Lobdell said he too was missing a fine fat cow. They learned that Rickey was gathering and working with cattle. It being late in the afternoon, Lobdell suggested that Owens stay overnight with him and they would look for the cattle the next day in the lower end of the valley.

After riding for some time among Rickey's scattered herds, they were approached by Rickey and his two men, Craven and Snider. None had seen any stray cattle but they persisted in following them through their search. Cravens at once became very abusive to Owens and among other things called him a "dirty little coyote." Finally riding behind Owens, he threw a reata around Owens' horse. Owens wheeled his horse and shot Cravens in the leg, a minor scratch.

Cravens swore vengeance, and being without a gun, he called on Snider for his. Lobdell warned Snider, but Cravens swore he would kill Owens the next time they met. To shorten the story, all of the cattle were found. Owens again stayed overnight with Lobdell and proceeded the next day to Lost Canyon.

Several weeks later, Owens was riding to Coleville to get the mail. Sheldon Frost, who was living along the road at the mouth of the canyon leading to Little Antelope, told me the following story.

"I was working in the garden, when Frank Cravens came along riding a black horse. He stopped and at once became very talkative. Said he had a debt to pay and was going to Lost Canyon and shoot it out with a dirty little coyote. He had been gone a few minutes when I heard a shot. I thought to myself that Cravens had gotten Owens, but soon a black horse came running down the road, and I knew that Owens had been the quickest draw at the sharp curve in the road where they met."

Cravens soon passed away. There was not so much as an inquest. Everyone knew it was a case of self defense. Not long after this, Father paid Barnett a small amount of money and both he and Constable Watkins became fast friends. Some years later the Lost Canyon Ranch was sold to Cochrane. ♦

FISH TAILS

Something new from George Garrigues.

When you hear "fisherman," you might conjure up an image — a guy wearing mangy clothes, muddy boots, a slouchy hat decorated with ornamental fish lures that wouldn't attract a starving sucker in the Owens River backwater. A guy who reeks of cow dung, strong alcoholic beverage, and mosquito repellent. A guy in front of a campfire at day's end, or bellied up to his favorite bar, or jammed in a slow moving R.V. headed south in front of a string of impatient seventy-mile-per-hour drivers with no passing lane in sight, but at all times a master of the tall tale.

"It was the spring of '75," he begins. "I was on the middle fork of Watchamacallit Creek and the water was running high. I'd tried every lure in my box without a hit when I glanced down and saw a tab on the ground — the kind that used to come off when you popped a beer. I looked at it and said to myself, 'Why not?'"

"I fastened it to a piece of ten pound leader and a number six hook, cast out into the middle of a little eddy and wham! My rod almost bent double . . .":

He continues on into the night, magnifying the details with every telling. Each time the fish grows an inch or two, the weight increases a pound or more. Conditions worsen; the turbulent stream roils; the temperature drops; the wind is stronger; the rain thickens, turning to snow; the mosquitoes grow numerous and larger.

This is NOT what "Fish Tails" is about. It IS the factual narration of adventures and observations while wetting a line in the Inyo-Mono waters. My fish haven't grown an inch or gained an ounce over the years. If the weather was good, it still is good. If the weather was bad, it's no worse now. The trail isn't any longer or steeper, the water isn't any deeper, the bait is what was actually used and the fish still taste the same. I want to emphasize that what I relate is strictly fact. I have called upon my conscience to be 100% accurate even though this may sound like the beginning of another fish story.

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.



TROOP 259

by George L. Garrigues

I couldn't wait until my twelfth birthday. I would finally be old enough to join Boy Scouts. Days of listening to older boys talk and laugh about meetings and activities would be over. I could be a part of it also. Emotionally it was about on the same level as getting my first driver's license or graduating from school, or voting for the first time. Now I would be able to wear the uniform, go on the camping trips, march in the parades and have a part in all the other fun. Except it wasn't that simple. I soon found out I had to pass a multitude of tests first.

I felt out of place as I entered the old Inyo County Bank building on the corner south of the Union '76 station for my first meeting. Everyone was acting like he knew what was happening. I didn't, but I found a couple of friends who were also new to scouting and we stood there waiting. Soon Scoutmaster Mel Homfeld asked us to take seats and I noticed the older boys all seemed to have designated seating areas. My friends and I found empty chairs in the back of the room.

The meeting began with the Scout Oath followed by the pledge of allegiance. The Oath was new to me and I mumbled my way through it pretending I knew the words. Recitation of the Scout Law followed and by then I was completely lost, but it wouldn't be long before these rituals would become meaningful.

The scoutmaster told those of us new to scouting to gather at one of the corners of the room, where we were joined by an older scout who explained some of the customs of the troop and scouting. After we passed our Tenderfoot tests, we would officially become Boy Scouts. He told us to read our handbooks, memorize the Oath and the Law and *be prepared* to recite them at the next meeting. He showed us the scout salute, sign and handshake. He pointed out the insignia and various parts of the uniform, stating that we couldn't wear one until we became Tenderfeet. More important, though, we had to earn the money to buy our own uniforms. Our parents couldn't help us. We had to mow lawns, dig weeds, shovel snow or whatever for the money.

Then he tossed each of us a short piece of rope, asking: "How many of you can tie a square knot?"

I thought this was going to be easy. I tied my knot and held it up to show him.

"That's good," he said. "Now pull on the ends of the rope."

I did and the knot slipped right out.

"You tied a 'granny knot.' Try again."

He went on to the next boy with the same result. Then he stopped. Saying it really was quite simple, he showed us how to keep the rope ends on the same side instead of crossing them.



SCOUT SALUTE

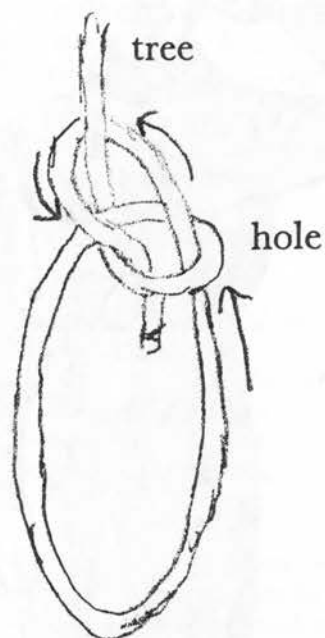
"Now try it."

I did and the result was different. Regardless of how hard I pulled, the knot did not slip, it only became tighter.

He continued, showing us the clove hitch, double half hitch, slip knot and others which were easy. Then he came to the bowline. He made it look simple also, but I couldn't get it right. He said the book showed how to tie it and to try to figure it out by the next meeting. I tried and tried and was able to tie it only about one time in ten. And the next meeting he let us in on the secret.

"It's like this little story," he said. "The rabbit came out of the hole, went around the tree and back in the hole."

That knot has not bothered me since and I've used it many times.



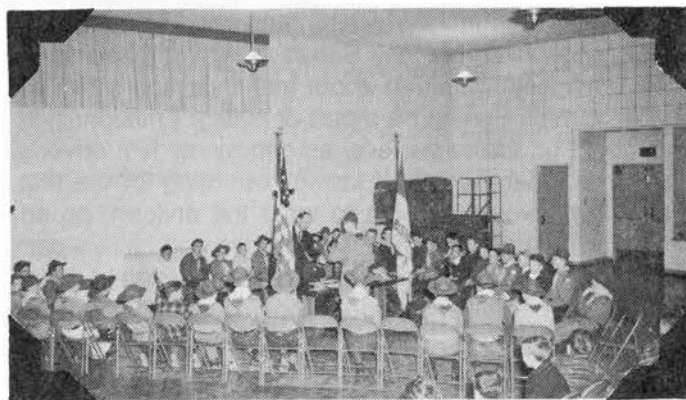
BOWLINE

My first Court of Honor was especially exciting. I had mastered the Tenderfoot requirements, as had several of my friends. We met with our parents, members of the Scout Council, Scoutmaster Homfeld and all the boys in Troop 259. After the regular opening ceremonies, the lights were dimmed, candles lit, and we were called forward with our mothers. We saluted the scoutmaster and the council with the Scout Salute, raised our right arms in the Scout Signs and very solemnly dedicated ourselves with the Scout Oath:

"On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

Our mothers pinned the Tenderfoot badge on each of our shirts and we were welcomed into scouting by the scoutmaster and council.

I found it difficult to concentrate on the rest of the ceremony. Now that I was a Boy Scout, all I could think about was how was I going to earn the money to buy my uniform. I went to sleep that night repeating the oath over and over.



TROOP 259 Court of Honor. Lee Crosby being awarded Eagle Scout rank by his father, W.A. "Bob" Crosby. Circa 1942.

Succeeding meetings were busy. We spent considerable time working on tests for our next rank, and were given the rudiments of outdoor living, preparing for the next camping season. I was assigned to a patrol now — the Wolf Patrol. We had our call, the howl of the wolf, and sat together at meetings. We competed with other patrols in tests and community projects. The spirit of belonging to a group instilled a special cohesiveness and loyalty. Members of the Bishop Rotary Club, our sponsoring organization, Art Hess, Willard Wade, Bob Crosby, Tom Tomlinson and others were always there to instruct and guide us. Their dedication set an example for each of us to follow throughout our lives.



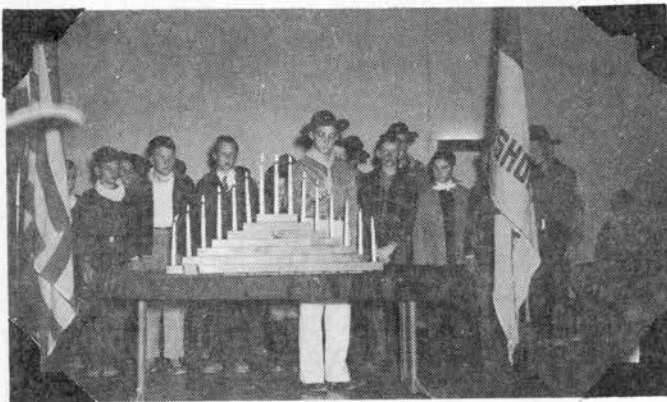
Elma Crosby admiring son Lee's new Eagle Scout Medal. Seated behind: Tom Tomlinson, W.A. Crosby (Lee's father) and two others (Scoutmaster Mel Homfeld, and unknown). George Crosby, seated at left. Circa 1942.

The occasional parades in Bishop now took on added significance. We always participated, happily wearing our uniforms. We marched in formation by patrol, each proudly carrying its own flag, behind two scouts carrying the American flag and the Boy Scout flag. It was a great honor to be selected as one of the flag carriers.

One parade in particular stands out. Perhaps I should say parades. It was Memorial Day and our leaders had agreed to an ambitious schedule for us. We boarded a borrowed school bus early in the morning and rode to Long Pine where we fell into line for their nine o'clock parade and marched the length of Lone Pine's Main Street. Our bus was waiting like a mother hen when we reached the end and we were whisked to Independence, where we joined their two o'clock parade and repeated the routine.

It was a warm day and, wearing our heavy uniform shirts, we were feeling the effect of the heat. We tried to cool off and rest on the way to Bishop and our third parade. We arrived just in time to find our assigned spot and start marching. By then only the thought of the American Legion Post's promised ice cream treat at the end kept us going. Down Main Street we marched again, to the Legion Hall where we stood in ranks while the flag was raised, and listened to what seemed like incessant speeches. Finally they were over and we collected our treat, hot and tired but happy, and proud to have been a part of the community's Memorial Day.

Other activities kept us well occupied. Homecoming-Labor Day was the big holiday of the year at that time. The main attraction was the rodeo and Troop 259 had its part. We operated the soft drink concession, selling drinks from a booth and in the grandstand during all of the shows. We used old wooden "Coke" crates with a strap that went around the neck and tied to the handles. All the drinks were in heavy glass bottles and carrying full cases up the steps to the top of the stand had us dragging by the end of the day. We did it cheerfully in true scout spirit though, because we knew that funding for the whole year's activities depended on how many bottles of pop we sold.



TROOP 259 Scout Candle Lighting Ceremony, led by Scout Lee Crosby. New Tenderfoot Scouts (standing, left to right) unknown, Marvin Nelligan, Percy Snow, George Clarkson, unknown, and Scout Gerald Covington.

Some of the tests for advancement became challenges and the bicycle test was one. We were required to pedal a certain distance with full camping gear, camp out overnight and return the next day.

Dick Morrison and I decided to take this test together and selected Keoughs as our destination. The thought of a nice swim before cooking dinner at a campsite by one of the ponds was enticing. We carefully lashed our equipment on our bicycles and departed like a couple of guys off to see the world. We decided to ride out Sunland Avenue, taking the back road to avoid highway traffic. This went well until we hit the end of the paved road by Rossi Hill.

Pedaling our balloon tired, single speed bikes with an extra forty or fifty pounds of gear along the sandy, rocky road became more difficult the farther we went. We knew we had to turn back to the highway at Wilkerson and only the thought of that easy downhill ride kept us going. When we finally reached the turn, we gained speed like run-away trucks on Sherwin Hill as we headed down. We soon were going too fast to control our bikes.

Dick ran out of the car rut and hit the sandy shoulder. His bike stopped almost immediately, Dick flew off and camping gear scattered along the road and into the brush. I managed to stop within a couple of hundred feet and walked back to find Dick skinned up, but not otherwise injured. We spent the next half hour gathering equipment and reloading. Proceeding more slowly after that, we reached the highway and went on to Keoughs. We stayed on the paved highway on our way home the next day.

One test, instituted by Scoutmaster Homfeld but not in the book, was called "cooking." We were required to cook him a complete dinner in our homes as part of our First Class requirements. We were to purchase the food, prepare it, serve it, eat it and clean up afterward. I decided on meat loaf with scalloped potatoes and practiced on my family. They thought it was satisfactory so I invited Mr. Homfeld and started worrying about how things would turn out. As it was, everything went the way it should and my guest said he enjoyed the excellent meal.

I was banished to the kitchen, with the door closed, to wash the dishes while he sat in the living room and talked with my parents. This disappointed me because I wanted to join them in celebration of passing another test; sometime later I found out the real reason. It was the scoutmaster's way of being invited inside our homes so he could talk with our parents. He wanted to know them and perhaps recruit more adult help for the troop.

Another interesting experience was the fourteen mile hike test which I did with Donald Bush. Fourteen miles was a long walk and we carefully made our plans. We decided that Paradise Camp would be our destination;

even though it was sixteen miles away, we were confident we could reach it. There was a telephone there so we could call our parents for a ride home and it would be a pleasant site to wait for them.

We made a list of what we needed to take on our expedition: clothes we could shed as the day warmed, plenty of drinking water, and lunch including a five-cent piece of round steak from Joseph's Market.

The day arrived bright and clear, normal summer weather. We started at dawn, crossing fields in high spirits, reaching Little McGee Creek, our pre-selected lunch stop, right on schedule. We built a small fire and, while waiting for it to burn down, cut our steak into small squares, skewering them on a willow stick a la brochette. We had miscalculated the amount of time it would take for the coals to be ready and our meat to cook, but we enjoyed the food. About an hour behind schedule, we extinguished our fire and cleaned up the area.

The afternoon was long and slow, our boots growing heavier with every step. We rounded Mill Creek corner knowing we still had a long way to go. When we reached the county line in late afternoon we were relieved to see a sign that said fourteen miles to Bishop. At least we had gone our fourteen miles, even though we still had two more of uphill hiking ahead.

As we stopped for a drink from our nearly diminished water supply and a brief rest, we looked out across Round Valley to see an immense cloud of dust. A huge whirlwind had descended Pine Creek Canyon and was headed directly toward us. Within minutes it approached, spinning tumbleweeds and pieces of brush mixed with dust, dirt and even small rocks. We fell to the ground, covering our heads with our jackets. When calm returned, we watched the twister continue up the mesa, creating havoc as it went.

We started walking again, following the highway now and dreading the last two miles. Our legs ached, our feet were sore and it felt as if our boots were made of lead. We had only gone a couple of hundred yards when a car went by and then stopped. It was driven by Allie Shively and, after asking what we were doing, he generously offered us a ride the rest of the way. I looked at Don and he looked at me. We both said "okay" at the same time and almost knocked each other down getting into the car.

One of the fringe benefits of being a Boy Scout was to be a luncheon guest of the Bishop Rotary Club. Rotary had sponsored the troop since 1929, as it still does today, providing leadership, guidance and financial assistance when needed. Our scoutmaster selected two scouts once a month to attend a Rotary meeting with him. I anxiously waited my turn, not only for the good lunch and the opportunity to meet with important local businessmen, but also to get out of school for an extra hour.

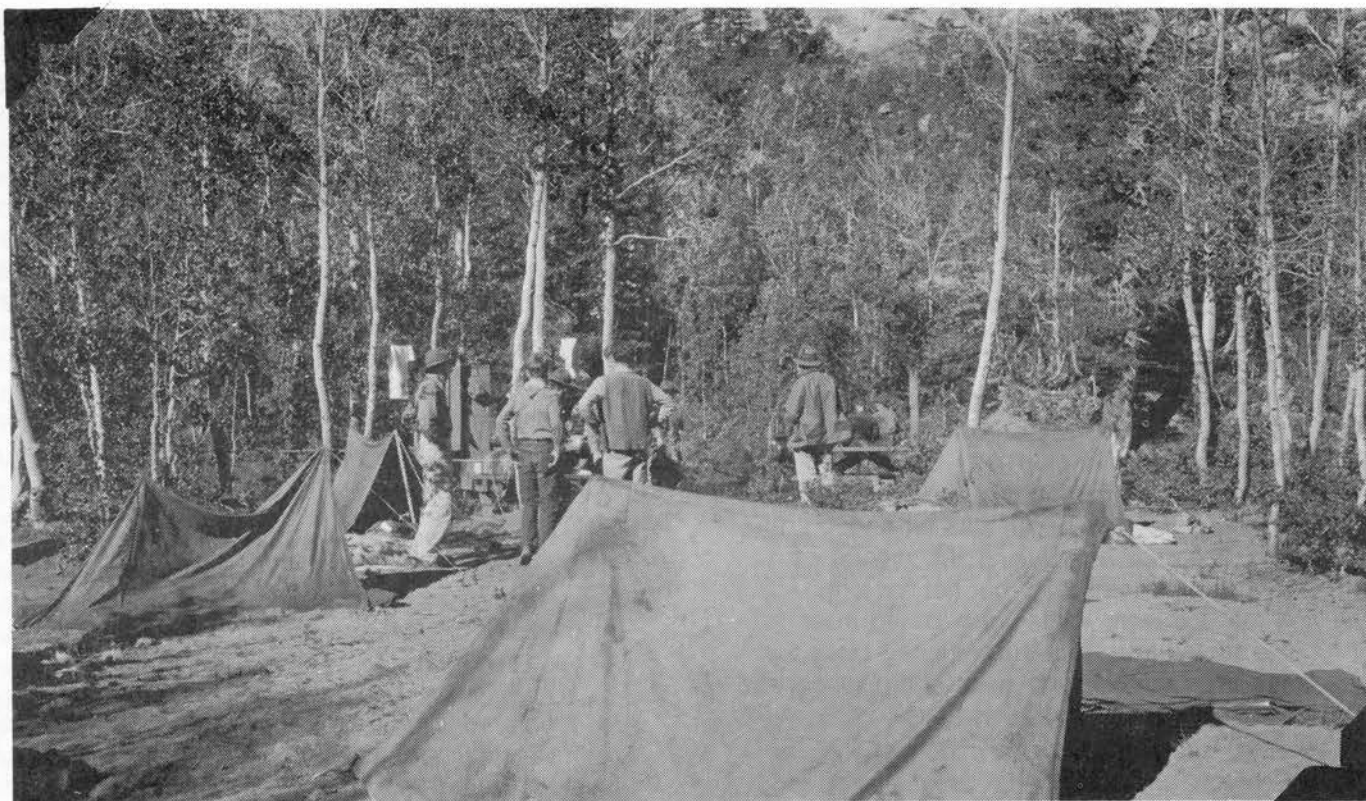


SCOUT SIGN

My day arrived and I eagerly put on my uniform and went to school. The luncheon at the Kittie Lee Inn was good and I thought the antics of those grown men were hilarious. Tom Hughes "borrowed" the president's gavel and secretly slipped it into Bill Chalfant's coat pocket. When the meeting started, the president couldn't find his gavel and made all sorts of threats about the so-and-so who had it. Tom was Sergeant-At-Arms then, as he was for many years. He went around the table, waving the worm can used to collect fines and giving everyone a mean look. When he reached Bill's chair, he stopped, leaned over and patted Bill's pocket. Reaching in, he pulled out the gavel and held it up for everyone to see. Bill looked as surprised as a child caught with his hand in the cookie jar. The president made a comment about wanton thieves, fined him twenty-five cents and started the meeting.

Our camping trips were enjoyable occasions. We were given the chance to put many of the things we had talked about at our meetings into actual practice. Sometimes under somewhat adverse conditions, sometimes in almost ideal conditions, each outing was a valuable experience. There were many, but a few stand out.

One of the first in which I participated was at the meadow on the south fork of Bishop Creek. It was early May and though the days were warm, the nights were still quite cold. It was my turn to take the "build a fire with only one match" test. I diligently cleared a large area of weeds, sticks, pine needles and everything combustible. Then I made the circle twice as large as I had been instructed. I carefully built a teepee in the center using dry sticks and twigs, remembering to leave a door for inserting the match. I added larger twigs as the teepee grew and then made certain I had a good supply of small branches and larger sticks to use as the fire burned. The scoutmaster watched intently, saying



TROOP 259 demonstration on how and how not to pitch a pup tent. Scouts enjoy lunch while discussing the situation. Circa 1940.

nothing. When I was ready, I turned to him and he nodded, handing me my one match. I struck it on a rock and gently inserted it in the doorway of my teepee. The twigs caught fire and soon I was adding larger and larger pieces of wood. The scoutmaster, still not saying a word, turned and walked off. I was perplexed, but the fire was burning like an eruption of Mount Etna so I decided that I must have passed the test.

The next morning was clear and cold; a heavy frost covered the ground, trees, bushes, sleeping bags and everything else like a light blanket of snow. As I crawled out of my sleeping bag, the scoutmaster called to me and explained that to pass the test I had to build another fire. All the twigs were damp, frost covered, and I knew that getting them to burn was going to be difficult. Then I remembered that under such conditions, I should split a piece of larger wood, make splinters from the dry part in the center and use them to start my teepee. It worked and soon my second one-match fire was roaring. I added more damp wood and, as it dried in the flames, I watched the steam escape. This time the scoutmaster said, "Very good, you've passed the test."

It was on this outing that I learned how to stay warm at night. The first night my feet were cold when I crawled into my sleeping bag and, in spite of three pair of socks, they stayed cold all night. The next evening after dinner, as we gathered around the campfire, I noticed some of

the old scouts placing flat rocks close to the fire. A simple inquiry and I placed a couple of rocks with theirs. At bedtime, we dug small holes under the foot of our sleeping bags, placed the hot rocks in the holes, covered them with several inches of dirt and crawled into our bags. I was soon removing my extra socks and slept warmly and soundly all night.

Another camping trip was really a competitive camporee. All Boy Scout troops in the Owens Valley gathered at Taboose Creek. We set up our camps by individual patrol, each being judged in various phases of camping and outdoor lore. Most of us learned new or better ways to live in the outdoors.

The activities ended and we prepared to climb into the truck for our ride back to Bishop. The scoutmasters and judges made their last inspection tour of the camping area. When they returned to the parking lot, they called the leader of the Bear Patrol. He was told to get his patrol and finish cleaning up their campsite. One of them had left a tiny piece of chewing gum wrapper on the ground and the whole patrol was penalized. Since that time, I have always been careful to leave a campsite looking as if no one had been there.

One summer we had a joint camping trip with a troop from Southern California. We thought it was a great idea. We would show those city boys what real camping

in the outdoors was. We did teach them a few things, but we learned also.

We hiked to Parker Lake between Lee Vining and Grant Lake. The next day several of us climbed over the ridge to Walker Lake because the fishing was supposed to be better there. We still weren't catching many when some Indians came up the trail. We watched as they prepared to fish near us. One of them took a small field mouse out of a box he carried, fastened two or three large fish hooks to it and looked out over the lake. Another one brought him a small chip of wood. They waited until a fairly strong gust of wind came, then placed the mouse on the chip and floated it on the water, where wind soon carried it out toward the center of the lake. When they decided it was far enough, they gave the line a strong jerk pulling the mouse off the chip. It swam around frantically, but not for long. A big splash and the line went tight. We watched in amazement as they reeled in a trout that weighed close to fifteen pounds. We decided we were out-classed and headed back to our camp at Parker Lake.

When we got back, we discovered everyone was excited. Three of the scouts from the Los Angeles troop had been missing since early morning. We were organized into search parties, each with an adult leader. We reviewed whistle signals — three short, repeated, means help; two long, repeated, means return the signal and head for camp; long and a short, turn right; and so on. We started searching in various different directions.

We looked painstakingly for almost two hours, finding no clues of the missing boys, until we heard two long blasts of a whistle. We acknowledged and headed back to camp. When we got there we discovered the missing scouts had returned on their own to tell of following the stream down to a big lake. They had fished for several hours using all kinds of bait and couldn't understand why they didn't even have a bite. Their skeptical looks showed disbelief when we told them that trout couldn't possibly live in salty Mono Lake.

Our fishing hadn't been much better, so on the last day several of us asked permission to start down the trail early to try for some fish to take home. We found a good spot and I started pulling in tiny Eastern Brook about as fast as I could put a line in the water. They had reproduced so prolifically there wasn't enough food and they were very hungry, and they had grown so slowly they were mostly head and tail. Before long I had a limit of twenty-five and could have put them all in a quart jar. I was so hungry I built a small fire, cooked them good and crisp, and ate them bones and all for lunch. Then I caught twenty-five more to bring home.

The big event of the year for Troop 259 was an excursion to Death Valley. We looked forward to and prepared for this outing throughout the whole year, making it during Easter break, until Pearl Harbor curtailed such travel. Most of us rode in the back of a big truck with the sleeping bags, pup tents and other bulky gear. We were accompanied by a couple of passenger cars and a pickup truck that carried the cook crew, food and cooking equipment. Our route took us over Montgomery Pass where our first stop was at one of the turnouts near the top.

The scoutmaster shouted, "Everyone out, gather firewood. There won't be any where we are going."

Once a good supply of pinon wood was loaded, we proceeded to Tonopah, whooping and hollering through town, whistling at the girls and acting like a bunch of monkeys showing off in a zoo.

We entered Death Valley from the north, passing Scotty's Castle, and making our first camp at Mesquite Springs. My tent partner picked the bottom of a sandy wash for our tent. Having been warned strongly about sleeping in a dry wash because of possible desert cloudbursts, I tried to talk him out of it, but had to compromise with a location along the side of the wash. I didn't sleep very well that night. I kept waking, listening to the wind in the mesquite bushes sound exactly like a wall of water coming down the wash. I'd go back to sleep as soon as I realized it was just the wind, only to wake every hour or so hearing the water again.

We toured the valley the following days, visiting many popular sights and some not so well known. We inspected the Devil's Golf Course and stopped at Bad Water to touch the lowest point in the United States. I remember looking up with awe at the sea level sign high on the side of the valley, trying to imagine what it would be like to be that far beneath the surface of the ocean.

Our leaders didn't want to take us to Dantes View. Excuses ranged from too hard a pull for the truck to the fear that one of us would throw a rock and hit someone at Bad Water. They were also afraid to turn a bunch of rambunctious boys loose to stampede over the paying tourists at Furnace Creek Ranch.

Our next camp was at Bennet's Well where the setting was quite different from Mesquite. The bushes were larger, the ground rockier and there were no dry washes to worry about. The water was tolerable and long cool drinks soon sated our dry throats. Washing the grime of the day's hot travel in the back of the truck was refreshing. We were as hungry as bears coming out of hiberna-

tion and the food was good. The view of the sun setting on the Amargosa Mountains was as striking as watching it on the White Mountains from Owens Valley. The process repeated itself the next morning on the snow tinged Panamints.

The last day, we made the trip to the rim of Ubehebe Crater. One year, Col. Nicols, who often drove his car with us, had brought along three or four green avocados in a paper bag on the floor in the back of his car. In his cranky way, he said that they were his favorite fruit and warned everyone riding with him to be extra careful of that bag. We could almost see his mouth watering in anticipation of eating those avocados, but they were bruised beyond recognition after several days of bouncing around bumpy roads with a bunch of Boy Scouts jumping in and out of the car many times each day.

As we approached the crater, going back and forth on the switchbacks climbing to the top, we noticed someone had taken a short cut coming down, cutting across one of the loops and over the loose pumice to the road below. The Colonel saw the tracks and said, "If they can do it, so can I."

He spun the steering wheel hard and headed up the crater in the tire tracks. As soon as all four wheels were off the pavement, the car was buried beyond the hub-caps in loose ash. He jumped out of the car muttering an oath under his breath. The rest of us laughed and got out also. The truck was ahead and had stopped on the next switchback. About twenty Boy Scouts climbed out and lined up all around the car. We picked it up, turned it around and gave it a push downhill. Back on the pavement, The Colonel drove on, not having much to say for the rest of the day.

Camp that night was at Stovepipe Wells — not the resort, but the old well out in the sand dunes. The food truck had gone ahead to set up camp. When the big truck arrived, it carried a bunch of tired, very dirty and thirstier than usual Boy Scouts.

As we jumped out, we asked the early arrivals: "How's the water?"

They shouted, "It's the best of the whole trip."

We knocked each other down racing for the pump. With our first mouthful we knew what they meant. It must have been ninety percent sulfur and we all benefited from the lingering effects for several days.

We had a great time playing King of the Mountain on the dunes, rolling the fresh, ever-changing, windswept hills of sand. It was a fitting climax to three long days in Death Valley.

The next morning, food and firewood supplies exhausted, we drove over Towne's Pass, giving Lone Pine, Independence and Big Pine the same treatment Tonopah had received earlier in the week.

In retrospect, fifty years later, much of what I learned through scouting and Troop 259 has remained with me. The camping lore and respect for the outdoors, the ethical principles, the community service concept, the patriotic regard and the fellowship of working with others toward common goals became lifetime guides. The names and faces are not important. What they shared with me is. ♦



TROOP 259 Camping, lunch time. Art Hess and Scout John Tomlinson at far left. Others unknown. Circa 1940.

A Night Above Fifth Lake

by Clarice Tate Uhlmeyer



Crevasse, Palisades Glacier.

Mendenhall Collection.

Camping today is not like it was early in the century. There were no Forest Service camps with ready-made tables and benches, no cemented grills, no water piped in for convenience, and no allotted sites. One found an appropriate place beside a stream and made the best of it. Some big rocks were rolled

together where kettles could be placed with fire beneath, a few flat ones if possible to hold the coffee pot and other utensils. Some boughs were cut to make bed rolls a little more comfortable. Groceries were left in the kayaks (pack saddle bags) for protection against small rodents or rain, but conveniently near

the fire site. Next a pile of wood had to be gathered, and this was plentiful. Pack and saddle animals were hobbled and turned out to the lush pasture.

One thing there was for sure, and that was space. Everyone who wanted to, cut a willow pole, attached a piece of fishing

line with a hook, and hit the stream. Native trout were plentiful. There were no fish hatcheries in this county; no need, as there were no tourists.

Those meals cooked over the campfire, those nights under the open sky with the pure mountain air, the smell of the tall pines, and the sound of the rushing creek with its tumbling rocks are something never to be forgotten. No matter how early one awakened there was always another at the campfire with a steaming cup of coffee.

When I was eleven my whole family (except my father) went on just such a trip up Big Pine Creek above Second Falls. Some walked, some rode, and some shared a horse; we called that "ride and tie." One would ride a way, then tie the horse at an allotted place for his partner.

We had company that summer; the year was 1908. Mother had taken two teenage youngsters for a month. Their parents lived in Goldfield and wanted the children to have a vacation. Knowing father well they had asked if they could send them to Big Pine to our home and

mother and father willingly consented. Their names were Elsie and Irving Truman. Elsie was fifteen and they had only been with us about a week when two of her teenage admirers came over from Goldfield on a buckboard drawn by two burros.

There were six of us. My mother and brother Perl, my fifteen year old sister Elva, and my married sister Myrtle, with her husband Jack Myles, and I, along with the four from Goldfield made ten who went on that camping trip.

It was late afternoon when we arrived at our destination above Second Falls, a place known then as Camp Mirth. There were tall tamaracks, a large meadow beside the creek which ran wide, smooth and deep for several hundred feet and so clear that one could see the trout dashing from place to place. Fresh from the snow, the water was icy cold.

Camp was set up in short order and the stock put out to pasture. No one lingered long after supper was over, for it had been a hard day. Three days later we looked across the

creek and there were two more weary travelers, each on a burro, and leading one were my Aunt Clara and cousin Dorothy who had camped along the way and were a little late arriving. Aunt Clara was a portly woman and practically all one could see of the burro was its ears as she tried to persuade him to enter the water. Burros do not take to water naturally so to get their three animals across the stream took the combined effort of the whole camp, pulling, shoving, lifting, and prodding with sticks. Finally it was done and the drenched newcomers were heartily welcomed.

The grown folks did an awful lot of cooking for that hungry crowd but the kids all pitched in gathering wood, washing dishes and generally made themselves useful in addition to hiking, fishing, climbing rocks, playing games on the meadow and quite a lot of water fighting.

One morning as we were finishing breakfast Douglas Robinson, from one of the lower camps, came by to say he was going to climb the North Pali-sade Glacier and would anyone like to go. No doubt he was



C. Uhlmeier photo

more than surprised at the response as everyone answered, "yes!"

We each grabbed a few cold hotcakes or fish to eat on the way, some thought of light jackets, and some took none, so eager were we all for the opportunity. Douglas was well versed in mountain climbing as he had taken pictures all through that area and had been on both palisades before. He took the response to his invitation in good part undoubtedly thinking many would tire out early on the trip. In that he was mistaken.

It was no short climb to the foot of the glacier and everyone stuck it out until then. Most of the crowd was far up on the ice before my mother and aunt arrived at the foot. They sat down, assessed the situation, and decided to go back, calling their decision to those of us who were on the snow. My dog Tippie had a hard time making up his mind to go on or to go back, and finally decided that Mother and Aunt Clara needed him more.

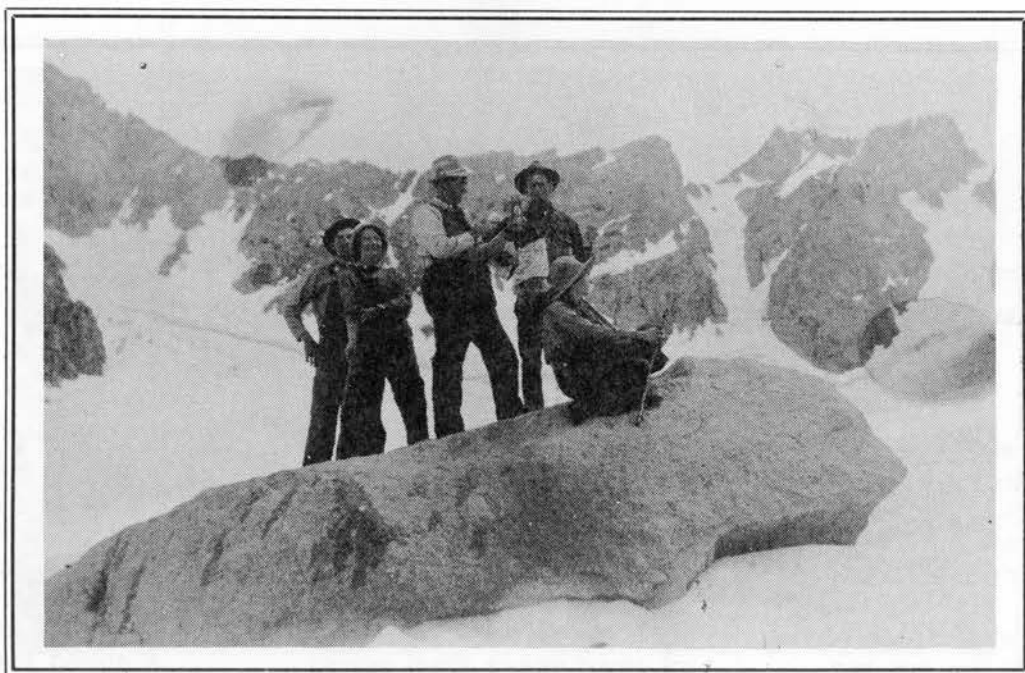
We had long since eaten the little lunches we had brought with us, so we were getting pretty hungry and with the cold and light wraps or no wraps we were pretty uncomfortable. But all were still eager to reach the top. It was hard going over that icy surface, but luckily there were no crevasses. I recall that Myrtle gave me her jacket as I was one of those who had not brought one, and occasionally either my brother or brother-in-law would give me a hand over some particularly bad spot. The eleven of us were spread over perhaps a quarter of a mile with the two boys from Goldfield and Elva and Elsie bringing up the rear. At long last we reached the crest.

Douglas called a conference. It was late in the day and he said it was about equal in distance to go back the way we had come or to go on down the other side. His choice was to go on down, as we would be off the ice soon. The adults agreed for him to choose.

Going down was easier but

we had to be careful of slipping. It did not seem too long before we came to some enormous boulders. Far beneath us we could hear water rushing to the lakes. At some places we could jump from one boulder to another; at other places we had to crawl down and up again. Finally below us we could see a lake and by then it was nearing dark. Even though it was moonlight the men decided that the best thing to do was to find a place where we could spend the night rather than risk an accident.

Fifth Lake is on the chain of lakes that feed each other and the waters go on down in Big Pine Creek to Big Pine. A place with a high bluff at our backs and space enough in front for a fire was right in our path, so there we stayed. We were high above the water, very tired, cold and hungry. In short order plenty of wood was brought to the site and a roaring fire going. At least we could rest and get warm. I was soon asleep, cuddled up beside my sister.



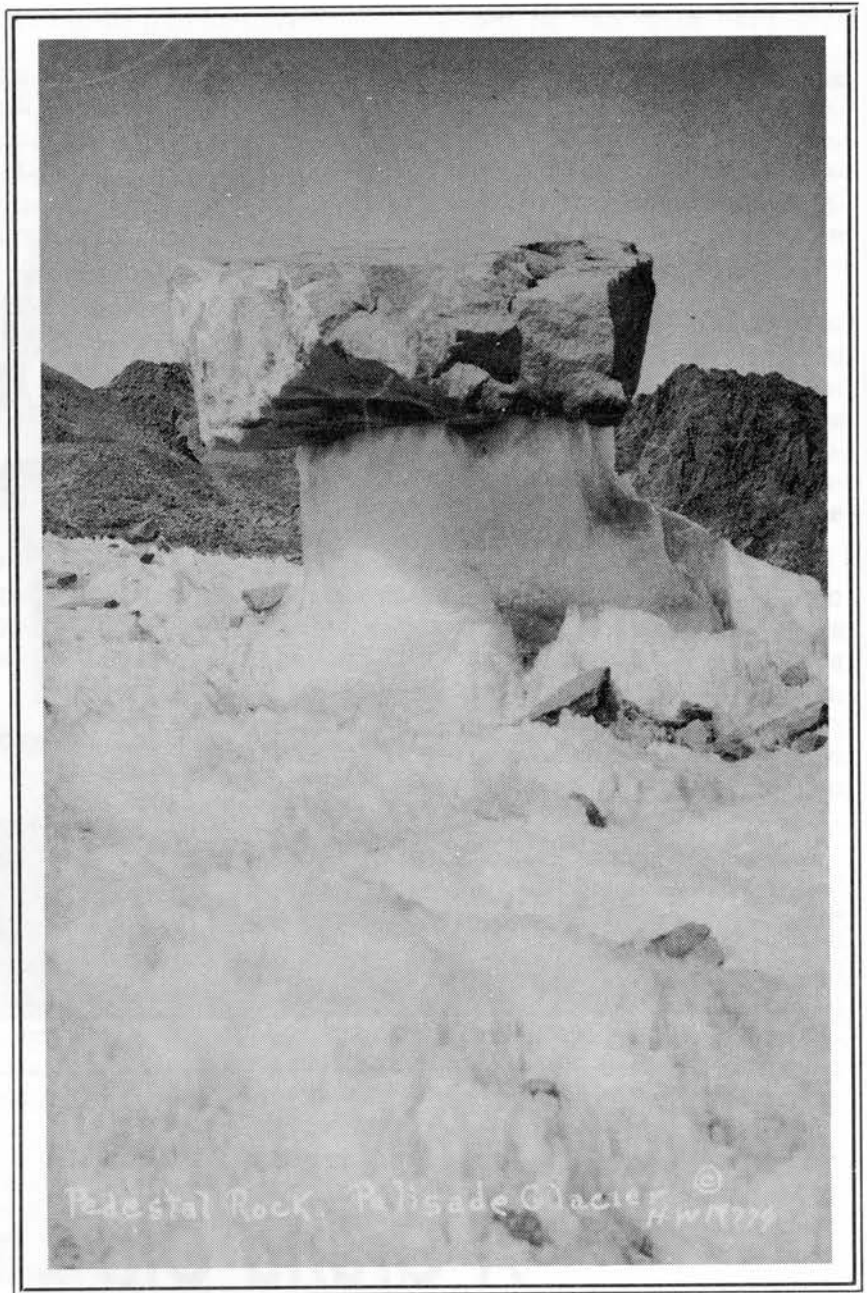
Ira and Clarice Uhlmeier on left, with friends on Palisades Glacier. C. Uhlmeier photo.

Occasionally I would awaken and all the conversation was about food. The grown folks slept very little.

As soon as daylight came we put out the fire and started down toward camp. Hardly had we started than we heard a shot. My brother had carried a rifle so he returned the shot. The whole canyon was out looking for us, as there were many camps. The first person we saw was an old friend, on my pony Poodle. People had gone in various directions but this man had followed the sound of the shot. At First Lake was a surveyor's camp and a huge pot of coffee, of which everyone eagerly partook from the same cup; nothing ever tasted so good.

Mother and Aunt Clara had returned in good time the day before and when we did not return the whole canyon had been alerted; no one knew whether we had met with some mishaps. Word was carried ahead that we were safe and on our way, and when we arrived at our camp, breakfast was waiting. We in turn were happy to know that Mother and Aunt Clara had arrived safely, and I was more than delighted to find a special welcome from my dog Tippie. I had also worried about him.

Years later I returned to Fifth Lake and found the remains of our old campfire, bringing back memories of that whole exciting experience. ♦



Pedestal Rock, Palisade Glacier. Mendenhall Collection.



MONO INN

A Grand Old Lady

by Barbara Moore

The history of the Mono Inn is as intricately entwined with the dream of a health resort and goat farm on Pahoa Island as are the branches that entwine the many venerable poplars and black willows that stand guard over the Inn today.

The McPherson family, who built the Inn, established Mono County roots that go as deep as those of the trees. Although they came into the Mono Basin after the turn of the century they left a distinguished legacy.

Wallis D. McPherson, Sr. came to Mono County from San Francisco in 1909, employed as an engineer with the Rush Creek Mutual Ditch Company which planned to build ditches to carry the water from Rush Creek to Wofford Springs to irrigate the farm lands in the Mono Basin. The ditch project was never completed, but dur-

ing McPherson's employment with the company he, like so many others then and since, found the island in Mono Lake fascinating. This fascination gradually extended to the recognition that Pahoa had economic possibilities. He eventually homesteaded 160 acres on the Island, and obtained a Desert Entry, through the Desert Land Act of 1877, for an additional 470 acres on which he built a seven-room home for his family. Hopes

'This is the original spelling of the Springs. Mono Basin residents pronounce it as though it is spelled "Warford" and some local historians spell it that way. Current map spelling is "Waford." The Springs are located on the northeast side of Mono Lake. The distance from Rush Creek is considerable, perhaps the reason why the ditch was never completed.

of building a health resort, and raising goats in the Island's disease-free atmosphere for goats' milk, which was commanding the handsome price of 90¢ per pint, were dashed when the financier of the project, Mr. O.F. Brant, President of the Title Insurance and Trust Company, died from a sudden heart attack in Bakersfield in 1921 or 1922.

The family lived on the Island from 1917 to 1921, moving ashore when it was time for young Wallis² to start school in the old one-room Mono Lake School where one teacher taught ten grades to fifty children.

The original Inn property consisted of 135 acres extending from the present location of Highway 395 to the lake shore which was then at the doorsteps of the cabins that still remain below the Inn. Highway 395 was a county road in 1921, running just past the cabins and below the site of the Inn. John Mattly had a post office about 200 yards to the north, and Lee Vining was still a prospector's name, not yet a town.

To serve as a base for the proposed health spa and sanitarium on Pahoa, a 100-room hotel was planned for the on-shore property. The present Inn building was built in 1921 to be a cook house and day room for the construction crew hired to build the hotel. The untimely death of Mr. Brant, and the ensuing lengthy litigation to settle the estate, resulted in McPherson's gaining title to the Mono Inn property. The hotel was never built nor was the dream on Pahoa consummated, but the crew house was altered and opened in 1922 as an inn, with guest rooms on the upper floor, a store on the first floor, and gas pumps in front when Hwy. 395 was re-aligned to its present location.

In time, to replace to original summer tent cabins, other buildings were added, including six motel units on the north end, four of which burned in the mid-1960s. The two remaining units are still in use. The site was advertised in flyers as Camp Mono — with **NO MOSQUITOS**³ — and was open only in the summer, although no winter traveler who sought help was ever turned away.

The Mono inn became a favorite overnight stopping place for travelers, particularly those who rode the "overland stage" from Yosemite to Tahoe, a motorized eight-

passenger White Motor Company touring car. Guests also included vacationers who came to enjoy the scenery and fish the Eastern Sierra lakes and streams. Famous personages such as Wallace Berry, Charles Bickford, and Raymond Hutton were frequent visitors, blending in with other guests as one does in an out-of-the-way place.

Venita and Wallis, Sr. separated in 1926 and dynamo that she was, Venita continued to run the Inn, joined every imaginable organization (perhaps so that their meetings could be held at the Mono Inn) and with the help of Wallis, Jr., whose assistance was somewhat limited by time spent away at school and in the Army during World War II, built the Inn into THE gathering place of the Eastern Sierra.

Mark Twain had written in "Roughing It" that Mono Lake "lies in a lifeless, treeless, hideous desert . . . is guarded by mountains two thousand feet higher whose summits are always clothed in clouds. This solemn, silent, sailless sea . . . is little graced with the picturesque. There are no fish in Mono Lake — no frogs, no snakes, no polliwogs — nothing, in fact, that goes to make life desirable."

This, if course, upset the Basinites who felt Twain's words were blasphemous. To rectify the damage this bad press gave to the Mono Basin, Venita decided there had to be some event to attract visitors between the 4th of July celebration in Bridgeport and the Rodeo in Bishop. So began Mark Twain Days in 1929. The festivities were held below the Inn with boat and swimming races on the lake. There were even horse swimming races, and on shore, sack and foot races with everything leading up to a sumptuous evening BBQ, good old country fun that eventually attracted more than 4,000 people and significantly dispelled the notion of a "dead sea in a lifeless desert."

In 1940 the Western Region Championship Outboard Regatta was held on Mono Lake. Today the lake has receded, the marina and the cabins below the Inn are far above the water. The muddy shore discourages water sports of any kind, and the reason Mark Twain Days was started, and where, is generally forgotten.

The Mono Inn went through several remodels to accommodate guests and the parties of all kinds that took place there — card parties, baby and wedding showers, meetings — and became a very special gathering spot for everyone in the basin.

The first remodel took place in 1949 when the bar was built. The next remodel was a few years later when the porch overlooking the lake was enclosed to enlarge the dining room, and a stone fireplace was added.

After World War II the Wool Growers Association used the Inn as headquarters and had annual meetings

²Wallis R. McPherson, born in 1914. His father was Wallis D. McPherson so junior would be incorrect, but both Sr. and Jr. will be used for proper identification.

³No-see-ums didn't exist then either; probably introduced later by sheep, but ask any Basinite which is worse, the bite from the tiny no-see-ums or a mosquito, and you'll get quite a verbal answer.

there. The Inn became a cantina for both sheep growers and herders as they gathered frequently to dine, sing and folk dance. Musicians also came up from Bishop for sessions that became impromptu entertainment as the guests joined in, gathering around the old square Antisell grand piano purchased by Mr. McPherson, Sr. in the 1920s from James Cain of Bodie. At Bodie the piano had been used in the Miners' Union Hall. Prior to that it had graced the Piper Opera House in Virginia City, arriving in Virginia City via the Horn to San Francisco, continuing its journey via freight wagon. A few years ago this famous, well-traveled piano took a final and inglorious journey when it was removed from the Inn, in many broken pieces, and taken to the dump.

Venita had help running the Inn from Jack Preston, a jack-of-all-trades, who came to work for the family in 1919 when they lived on the Island. He was raised in Bodie, worked as a cowboy at the Conway Ranch prior to joining the McPhersons and stayed with them for over 40 years.

Even with Jack and young Wallis' help there was always too much to do and too few hands to do it, yet the energetic Venita found time to successfully campaign as the first woman Mono County Supervisor. She was instrumental in the paving of Highway 167 (the Hawthorne Road), and was on the school boards that accomplished the building of the first high schools in both Lee Vining and Coleville. She ran, but was defeated for State Senator. Had she won, she would have been the first woman to serve in that capacity.

In early January 1932 snow had been falling for several days and there was no way for the Basinites to get out, nor could supplies be brought in. Besides food shortages, several medical emergencies had occurred and there was an imminent birth. Venita, who had been pleading with the State for snow removal in Mono County, called Governor James Rolph in Sacramento at midnight, and tearfully explained the predicament. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, he ordered his crews out. The route the Basinites took to Bishop during the emergency went south of the Lake, over a road no longer used, called McPherson Grade⁴, (which was lower than Highway 395 over Deadman and presumably would have less snow) to Highway 120, where they met the State plows sent to rescue them. That episode began State snow removal in Mono County.

Somehow Venita even found time to package and sell

⁴McPherson Grade is indicated as an unimproved dirt road on the Cowtrack Quandrangle map. It is located between Simons Spring and Gaspipe Spring where it joins Highway 120. McPherson Grade was named after Wallis Sr., not Venita, as so many people think, since it was a road built for the uncompleted ditch project.

Mono Lake salts, which she called the "Salts of Mono," good, so it is said, for all ills both external and internal besides being effective as shampoo. The salts were sold through mail order all over the world, as well as in drug stores throughout California.

After Venita's death in 1961, Walls, Jr. and his wife Virginia, who he met in Colorado while serving with the 10th Mountain Division during World War II, tried to run the Inn with managers. With a family of three children to support and send to school, the seasonal ups and downs of the Inn didn't generate enough year-round income, so Wallis went to work for the State Division of Highways (now Caltrans), and discovered that running an Inn as an absentee owner was an unsatisfactory way to do business. As a result, the Inn and ten acres surrounding it were sold in 1974.

Until Highway 395 was built over Conway Summit in 1922, supplies for the Basinites came first by team and later by truck from Minden, Nevada via the Bridgeport Canyon Road, the main route into the Basin in the early days. Hammond's Store, now Tioga Lodge, stocked everything needed that wasn't grown by the local farmers who tilled the fertile soil.

The scars of the original highway can be seen from several spots as one drives south from Conway Summit on the high speed four-lane highway completed in 1962 to replace the narrow, dangerous roadway. The new road had a significant effect on the Mono Inn for it changed driving habits and destinations, and the Inn was no longer a convenient stop for gas or an overnight stay.

Money was always elusive in the Mono Basin so just about everything was tried to lure tourists to stop and part with some of it. Wallis, Jr. started excursion boat trips to Pahoa in the late 1940s, continuing until the boat was wrecked in a wind storm in 1950. For \$3.00 the tourist got a twenty-mile boat trip with a one hour, one mile guided tour of the island. A glamorous movie extra from Hollywood once took the boat trip, arriving in a fancy silk print pajama ensemble and high heels. During the walk on the island she got her feet muddy and as she tried to wash the mud off after the boat got underway on its return to shore, she fell overboard. The dyes in the print of her pajamas ran, with all colors blending into one, and the silk became transparent. That was one trip when almost everyone got more than his money's worth.

Although the lake level has dropped due to diversions, causing many on-shore changes that discourage water activities, through the years nature also has affected lake levels. Wallis remembers the filming of the movie "Fair Winds to Java" in 1952-53, when a large quake occurred in Tehachapi and Mono Lake's level dropped eight inches in a week. A few years later, after a quake in Fallon, the lake dropped eighteen inches in a few days, leaving his boat docks high and dry.

For a short time in the 1970s the Inn was closed but the cabins were rented on a fairly permanent basis. These residents heard strange sounds in the night, and even claimed to have seen matches lit by nothing. Shadows appearing on one of the rocks at the side of the fireplace seemed to take on a ghostly image, and the many cats who found haven in the nooks and crannies of the old building occasionally screeched and leapt straight up into the air for no apparent reason. The ghost of Mono Inn is sometimes referred to as "he," but those who knew her say it was Venita lamenting the closure of the Inn she had worked so hard to maintain.

The Inn is now open under new ownership. The old trees still stand guard, and the ghost has disappeared into the unknown.

Alexis W. Von Schmidt, who entered the area in 1856 to conduct the first survey locating the Mt. Diablo base line across the Sierra to the Nevada state line, said, "The scenery altogether is the most beautiful that I ever

saw." If Mark Twain had seen it that way perhaps there would have been no need to establish Mark Twain Days. And who knows — if Mr. Brant hadn't died, maybe the 100-room hotel would have been built, and a health spa would be attracting visitors to Pahoa where they could soak in the hot springs and wash things down with goat milk. However, an important piece of Mono Lake's history *does* continue to carry on. One can still savour the spectacular sunsets from the dining room of the Mono Inn, perhaps with more than a little nostalgia for dreams that went awry, as they recollect the many things accomplished by the McPherson family. ♦

REFERENCES:

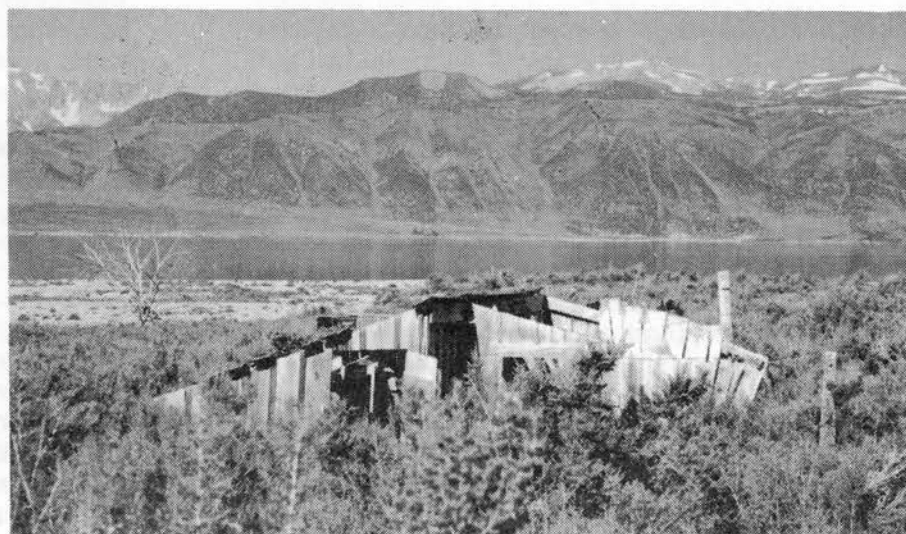
Wallis R. McPherson, Virginia McPherson, personal interview
 Thomas C. Fletcher: *Paiute, Prospector, Pioneer*
 Mark Twain: *Roughing It*
 Lilly Mathiew La Braque: *Man from Mono*
 Margaret Calhoun: *Pioneers of Mono Basin*

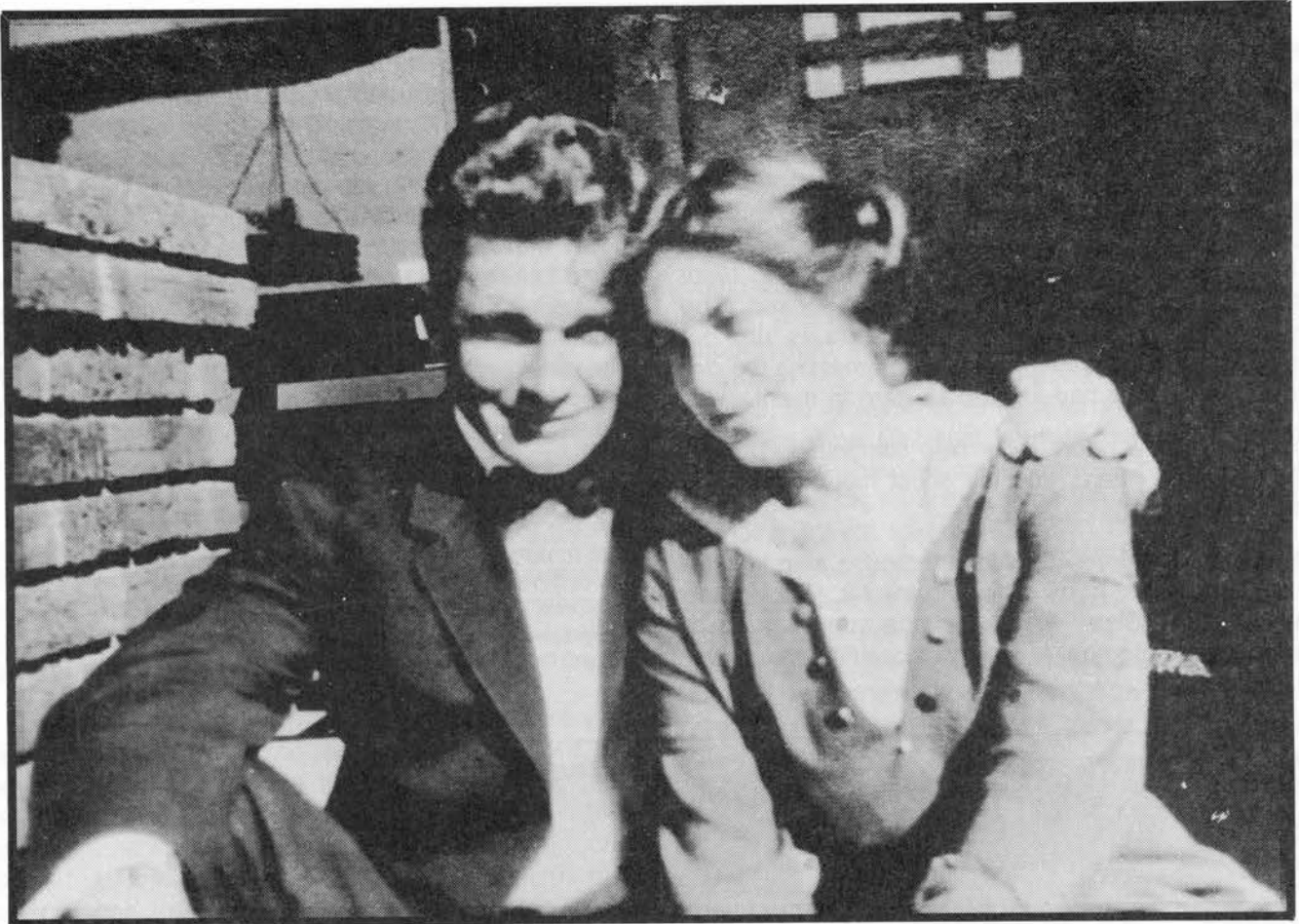


West side Pahoa, looking east

*Old McPherson house and
 buildings on Pahoa*

*1986 Photos courtesy L.A. Dept.
 of Water & Power*





Lena Fay and Paul Tooker, shortly after their marriage, a few years before they came to Lone Pine. Photo courtesy Paul Tooker, Jr.

RANCHING IN THE ALABAMA HILLS, 1919

by Lena Fay (Raeburn) Tooker
edited by Beverly Webster

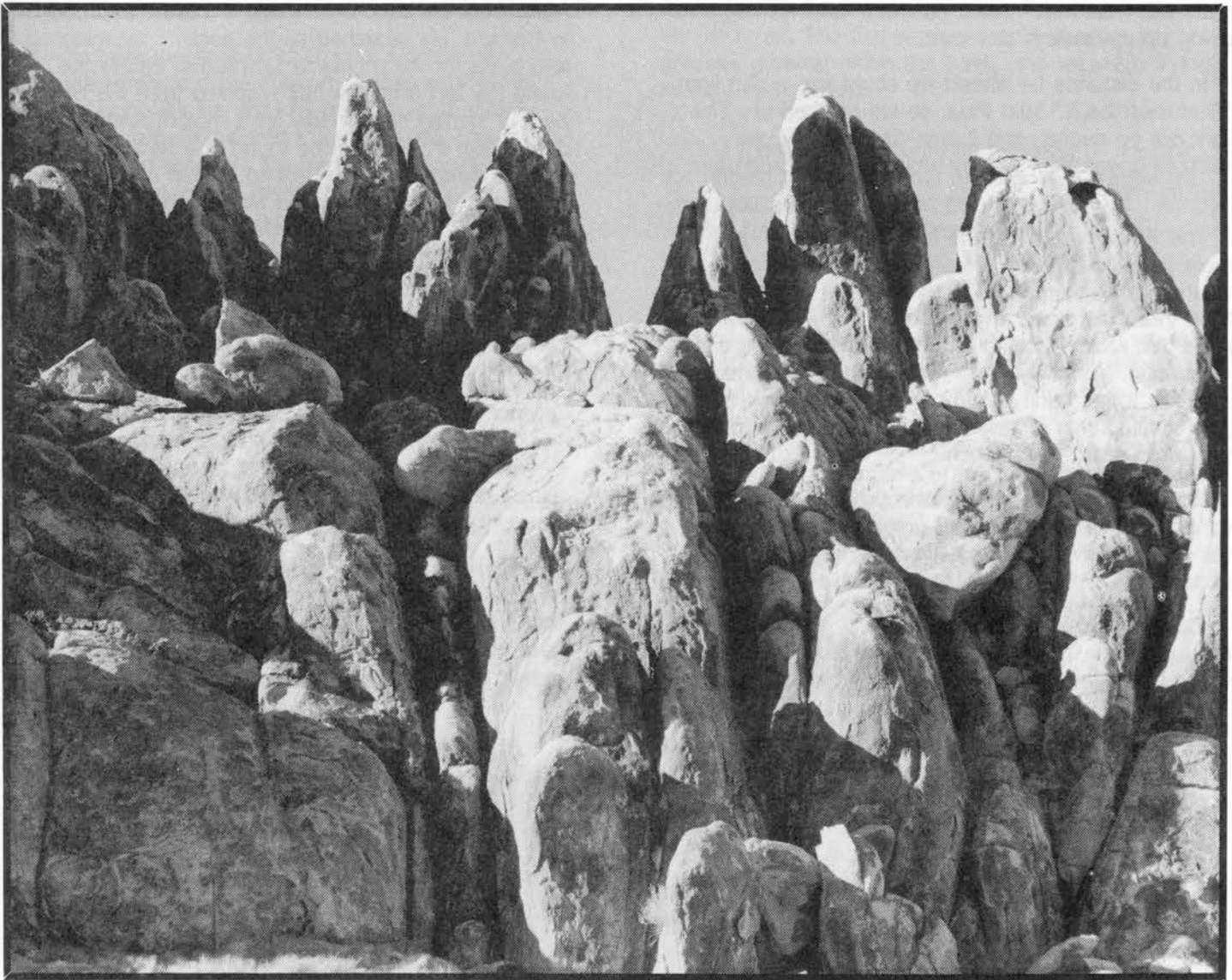
Since I have spent considerable time in the Owens Valley in recent years, a friend mentioned he had lived in Lone Pine for a short time many years ago. His parents had moved there from Hollywood in 1919 to "ranch" but soon moved back to Los Angeles since his mother was expecting another child. He showed me an account his mother had written about the stay. I felt it was too interesting to remain in pencil on a fading tablet, typed it, edited it slightly, and here it is.

Lena Fay (Raeburn) Tooker was born in Los Angeles near present-day Union Station. Her son, Paul Tooker, Jr., now a resident of Elk Grove, California, is the three-year old in the story and filled me in with some details on his mother's life. Although she

called herself a city girl, having grown up in Los Angeles and Santa Monica, she enjoyed nature and the outdoors. As a girl, she was an avid beach goer and hiked frequently in the Santa Monica Mountains. She was game for anything and loved to explore.

Her adventurous, pioneering spirit comes across in this story of her several months of ranch life in the Alabama Hills shortly before the movie industry moved into the area to make Western films. She wrote about these experiences when she was in her seventies and reflects at the end of the tale on the water problems that had besieged her beautiful Owens Valley. She died in 1975 at the age of eighty-three, and, although she never returned to the Lone Pine area, she had a very special love for it.

—Beverly Webster



Rising golden in the sun, the Alabama Hills have provided the setting for many movies. Photo by Bill Webster.

After World War I my mother, stepfather, my husband Paul, two small children, and I moved from Hollywood up to Lone Pine in California. Mother had traded an apartment house at the beach for a ranch up in the Alabama Hills. Why, I don't know, as none of us knew anything about ranching, cattle raising or sheep herding, which was the setup. Also, there was a bee colony and equipment for straining the honey and marketing it.

To move, the folks took the two children with them on the train, along with the furniture. Paul and I were to drive the Model T loaded with a crate of ducks which we thought would help on the ranch.

The first night we made it to Palmdale. The next afternoon we were nearing Lone Pine over a washboard road. The folks had arrived a day earlier by train and were moved in, so all we had to do was find them. The place was four miles from town, across

a creek, and up, up a sandy, winding road. The little Ford was doing its best, the ducks were noisy, and it was getting dark. We followed the tracks of the truck that had taken the furniture and family up the day before, so we thought. After much chugging and pushing and urging the car to go just a little further, we had to give up and leave it where it was for the night. We would come back in the morning and haul it up with the horses.

So, after seeing that the crate of ducks was secure and dividing our last bit of sandwich, carrying our jackets and a gun, we started up the road hoping to find "the place" before it got too dark. The truck tracks became dimmer as we plodded along, and we were not sure they were the right ones.

Soon we heard voices and I said to Paul, "Let's ask directions." There was a turn across the creek. The people were on the other side of it. But he said, "No,

can't you trust me?" I said no more, and we kept going up the sandy, dim road.

In the distance far ahead we could see a dim light. "That must be it," said Paul, so we trudged on. The light got no nearer, and it was dark. Finally, we realized it was best to stay amid the sagebrush and wait for morning.

The Alabama Hills at the foot of Mt. Whitney is a most beautiful place. For centuries and eons silt has washed down from the east side of the mountains and filled in an immense area between a row of enormous up-ended rocks tumbled about and forming a low ridge miles long. In between the rocks and the mountain range is a flat, sandy plain cut up by deep rocky, dry gorges filled with impassable rocks and covered with greasewood and sagebrush.

There was plenty of fuel for a fire to warm us and as a signal for the folks. But how to start the fire was the problem. We were not scouts. There were no matches.

Paul had gone to Canada at the close of World War I in the Peace River area to look for a homestead for us and had just returned a few days before we left

Hollywood. He had his mackinaw that he had bought in Canada. He searched all the pockets for matches and paper or something to light a fire. Finally, he found the last letter he had received from me before he had started home. Now for a match! And again deep down in a pocket he found one half of a match and the head end, too. He had broken it to use as a toothpick. He carefully piled fine brush and leaves and, tearing the letter in shreds, he prayerfully struck the match. It caught! And we had an immense glowing fire in no time. We scurried around and brought in piles of greasewood and sagebrush which grows to tree size there in that area. We were safe and warm for the night.

Soon we heard calls and saw lights coming from the south where we had come from. We could hear their voices clearly. But in trying to reach the folks we discovered there was a great dry wash between us. We went back to our fire and waited 'til dawn.

In the morning we retraced our steps back down the road to where it turned off and crossed the creek. That was the way to our "ranch," and the couple living there near the creek were living in a large cave formed by the huge rocks of the Alabama



The Ford that carried Lena Fay and Paul Tooker to Lone Pine; Paul Jr. sits on the hood. Photo courtesy Paul Tooker, Jr.

Hills—naturally air-conditioned and comfortable.

A mile from there, up and around a grade, we found the ranch and the children. It was a beautiful, welcome sight. As we entered the gate and walked down the long lane towards the house, we saw the water tank and windmill, the barn and a small milk house. We went in and there before us was a lovely sight. The milk from the night before was in several large shallow pans. The cream was golden and thick as leather, the most beautiful and delicious-looking sight I had ever seen.

After breakfast the two men hitched up the team and went after the Model T and ducks. Soon here they came with the team, the car in tow which was a very good way to get around in that sandy, silty place.

It was an entirely new way of living for us. We were ignorant of a lot of things, but we did our best and enjoyed the beautiful views. The house was comfortable, and from every large window there was a beautiful picture. On moonlight nights from the front window we could see Owens Lake glimmering in the moonlight. From the west window was Mt. Whitney, rugged and always cloud-veiled at the top and a snowstorm brewing.

We had trouble with the old-timers who considered all the area as open range for their cattle. The fences we put up would be cut in the morning and all the cattle loose on the range. One night we corralled the neighbor's cattle and slept out in the shed next to the corral. In spite of that, they let the cattle out during the night.

Immense herds of sheep pastured there, and it was the light at a sheep camp we had seen miles away that first night when we were lost.

The ranger and his family lived up near the foot of Mt. Whitney. They had a nice vegetable garden watered by mountain water, and their refrigerator was a snow house. They went up the mountain and brought down snow and packed it into a snow house.

There were several families scattered miles apart. We took turns visiting each other and took potluck.

The only means we had of going was by gravel wagon as the car could not go up the sandy roads and through the sagebrush. To places nearer, we rode burros that were on the place.

During the summer we went fishing up Tuttle Creek which was several miles from the ranch. There were plenty of grasshoppers and worms, and by cutting willow poles we set about fishing. Dad cut a pole for Paul, Jr., three years old, and set him down on the bank of the stream. And just as we would get to a good place, Paul would call out, "Daddy, I got a fish."

And sure he did. He caught more fish than any of us, eleven in all. The fish were evidently feeding in the grasses growing along the bank, and we were trying in the deep places.

One morning we thought that instead of hitching up the horses and driving that big awkward wagon we would just put the children on the burros and hike up to fish. Dad had found or made two pack saddles for the burros and padded and tied each child on good (one three years and one nineteen months). Just before we were ready to start the burros got loose, and it was a long time before they would let us catch them. They kept just out of reach. The children were safe but had a rough ride.

As summer wore on and deer-hunting season drew near, two railroad friends of my stepfather asked us to make a deer camp for them. My being pregnant did not hinder me from going. Paul and I were anxious to make a trip up in the mountains. There was only one mother burro and her baby on the ranch. We packed the burro with food and blankets, and set out. We walked and walked following trails, leading the burro, the baby following close behind. We found the deer trail that crossed the creek through tall tules and soon came to a granite slide and game trail up the side of the mountain. The trail zig-zagged up this slide, and we had to drive the burro as it was difficult going. It took rough handling to make her go, but we finally made it and came to a broad solid trail. Looking back down the valley was a beautiful sight, but we were anxious to go on. There was a broad place, with many large rounded and flat-topped rocks, which seemed to be showing just their tops with spaces in between.

We searched around further up the stream and early in the evening we thought we had better stop among the rocks. We unpacked our sack and left it on a flat rock. Paul took the burros down to a grassy place and hobbled them. Taking his gun, we began looking for a good deer blind or camp. Further on there were trees and grass, and it was a lovely place to be. We came upon the ideal place. Across the creek, which was not more than fifteen feet wide, was an open place about a half acre in area covered with deer grass. We could see that the tops had been eaten and knew that was the spot. We made our bed beside the stream. Paul cut branches and we spread our blankets there before dark. Then we made our way back to where we had left our knapsacks to get our supper.

As we neared the rocks, the place looked different, and our knapsacks were gone. What we found was that the burros had hobbled up and had eaten all of our supplies by nuzzling the knapsacks off the rock and along the ground between the rocks, leaving a line of flour in the dust. All our food was gone — potatoes, sugar, everything but tea, which they

couldn't get open. We tied them up securely this time and went supperless to our lovely camp beside the stream.

Next morning we had hot tea for breakfast. Then, being in a hurry to get home, Paul tied the gun to the pack saddle — on the right side — and we set off down the trail. The burros knew they were headed for home and kept a good distance ahead of us, stopping to nibble at bunches of grass. Paul and I nibbled at elderberries which were plentiful and enjoyed the wonderful day, knowing we had made a good camp. Soon the trail narrowed and Paul saw the gun sight might get banged, so he decided he had better change it. But the burros always kept just out of reach, starting ahead before we could catch them, until finally the bank got low enough for me to climb it and run ahead and stop the burros and change the gun to the other side.

In a few days when the hunters came up we told them that we thought we had found a good place and described it. They went up that same day. The next afternoon they were back again, each with a deer. They had wakened and seen several deer across the creek, feeding. Without moving from their beds, they reached for their guns and each got his deer.

I could go among the bees safely. When it was time to gather the honey, the men with their bee hats and smoker brought in the frames to the cheesecloth-covered honey house, the here the separator was. One noon while we were at lunch it caught fire from a small oil heater used to heat the knives used to uncap the frames.

As autumn came on, the weather grew colder and windier. The windmill whirled and pumped water 'til it overflowed the tank, and in the morning icicles were hanging in sheets and festoons of glistening ice all over the tower. A new sight for us Southern Californians.

I had to do the washing in the most primitive way — outside fireplace and washboiler. One evening I went out to bring in the clothes. There was a faint glow all around, and it looked like there were ashes drifting down. I wondered where they came from, then I realized it was snowing — my first snowfall. I was thrilled to be experiencing all the things I had read about. The clothes on the line were frozen stiff, so I left them 'til they thawed next day.

Another day while we all were in town, a sudden storm came up. We raced home knowing that the dumb sheep out in the pasture would panic and head into the storm. The men hunted and found them and saved some, but we had frozen sheep hanging high on the water tower for a long time. Coyotes had

feasts. Sheep need a few goats with them to keep them out of trouble.

Having lived close to people and used to having a morning paper, telephone and milk delivered, I thought this ranch was a lonely place. Our nearest neighbors were a mile away, down by the creek. When I would hear the chugging of an auto, straining and trying to get up the grades and through the sand, I would run and climb to the top of a fence cornerpost to see if the car was coming our way, so anxious was I for company. Some would come by if they could get that far, and ask how far a car could go up the road. "Well, some cars can go farther than others, so just keep trying," I would say.

Then, looking toward the mountain, I would see clouds of dust rising above the sagebrush and knew some shepherd was moving his flock or maybe some traveler might come by to ask the way.

We had some turkeys, too, but they roosted so high in the barn and trees we couldn't do much with them.

There was a reservoir fed by Diaz Creek which flowed through our place, and there was a large plot of wild roses thick and beautiful, fenced to keep the animals out. Around the house and inside the fence, several apple trees had been planted. When the apples began to ripen to a beautiful red I learned they were called "Delicious," and they surely were.

It was at the ranch that I learned about closing gates. An open, unfastened gate was just what the cattle were looking for and seemed to have a sixth sense as to which gate was open.

One time the two children and I were alone there for two weeks while my mother and stepfather went to Los Angeles on business. I had the cows to milk and the other animals to care for. The folks left a big gun with me for protection and to shoot any coyotes that might bother the sheep. One morning I heard a commotion among the sheep which were in a pasture down a lane. I ran for the gun, which was almost too heavy for me to hold steady enough to aim and fire. But I tried and came near enough to the coyotes, or whatever they were, so that they never came back.

As the summer passed and my time was nearing, it was agreed that Paul should go back to the oil fields and earn some real cash. So we left that beautiful place and wonderful way of living for a much more familiar existence, and may be too soon as it was not long after that the movie companies began making their Western and Indian movies, invading that area.

At that time there was still plenty of water in Owens Valley. The gardens in the town of Lone Pine were flourishing, one especially, I remember, of not more

than an acre. It was intensively planted with every kind of fruit and vegetable that would grow there. There was a high, beautiful grape arbor built over steps leading to a cool cellar under the house. The arbor was loaded with bunches of big blue grapes, and the owner of that garden was a happy man.

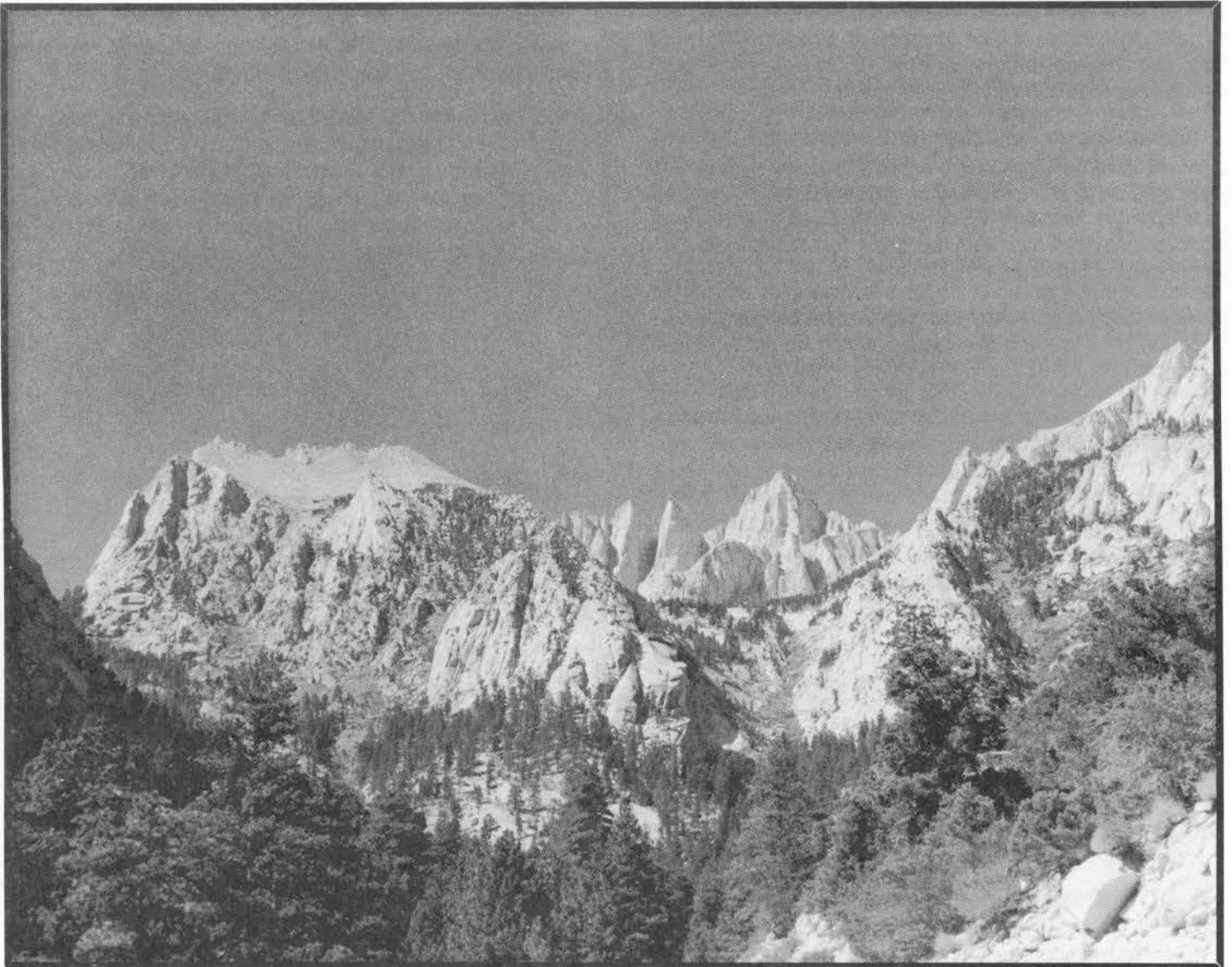
But I wondered for how long.

As the use of the water began to be restricted and flourishing gardens and crops had to be denied the life-giving water, the valley became a desolate place.

But Southern California was thriving and had to have more water — no matter from whom — for all of

its thousands of automatic washers, dishwashers, and swimming pools. And much of it is absolutely wasted thoughtlessly by thousands, yes millions, of people who have no idea where the water they enjoy using comes from or how dearly the people of Owens Valley are paying for it.

With new prospects of water from the North, it may be possible to return to the Owens Valley people the water which is rightfully theirs, because California needs the reclaiming of that productive valley. After man's depredations of that good land to wage water wars, the earth still remains to be reclaimed to produce again and again for the benefit of mankind. ♦



Mt. Whitney rises behind the Alabama Hills.

Photo by Bill Webster.

SCRAPPLE STAYS ON

Genevieve Arcularius Clement's old-world recipe for scrapple triggered some taste buds and pleasant memories. We've received delighted comments and mouth-watering memories of breakfasts taken at oilcloth covered kitchen tables beside benevolent wood stoves, where coffee sizzled and scrapple came doused in pure maple syrup, accompanied by fresh eggs and home-made bread with sweet butter.

John Drake sends us his version, interpreted for those of us who are cholesterol watchers. Railroad buff and world adventurer, John says, "I heard of San Francisco's (earthquake) in Tashkent, Uzbek, USSR. Guides were concerned we'd worry. Tashkent was destroyed by an earthquake in 1966. I was just recovering from being 'invited' to a KGB office (not police, or army) for allegedly taking pictures of RR facilities in Bukhara. Not that day, but the day before, and in 1978 — but the KGB office is across the tracks from the RR office.

"My interest in the USSR stems from knowing emigres as a little kid, learning of piroshki, kasha, smelina, etc. from age four. About the same time I discovered 'scrapple.' A 'Mormon' Pennsylvania Dutch gave me a simpler recipe which I've adapted for the health-anti-cholesterol-conscious."

Apparently John's heart remains at home because he took the time to send this recipe, which he calls "Health Scrapple??"

Slowly blend 1 lb. turkey sausage and ½ lb. braunschwager into cold water to make ½ to 1 gal.

Bring to boil and simmer. Let sit overnight in a cold place and skim off fat.

Bring back to boil. Add stone ground corn meal if available — or our usual (hominy grits) yellow corn meal until mixture *begins to thicken*.

Take off fire, correct seasoning with garlic, sage, black or red pepper, salt to taste, and blend/stir. Put in loaf pans and let cool.

Slice thin and:

- 1) dredge with flour and fry in bacon fat (or)
- 2) put on cookie sheet and brown in oven/broiler

Serve with eggs, syrup/honey/jam.

And there is this that I begged after a wonderfully satisfying breakfast with Alice and Tom Little (The Elusive California-Nevada Border, January and April 1989 Albums). Alice calls it "Indiana Scrapple."

- 1 lb. sausage (preferably Farmer John, not hot, and be sure to check date for freshness)
- 3 cups boiling water
- 1 cup corn meal
- 1 cup cold water

Seasonings:

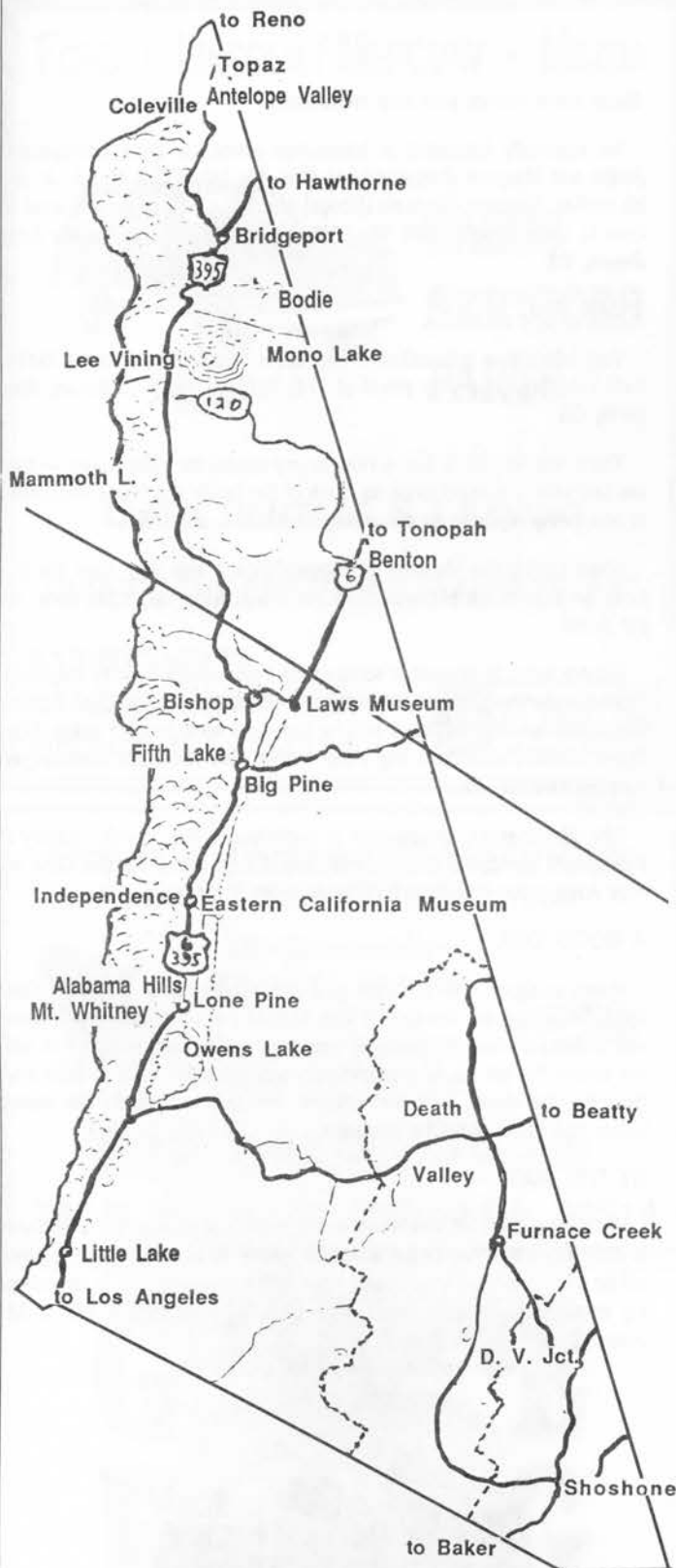
2 tsp. Spice Islands Fines Herbes and a pinch of Oregano, to taste.

Render fat from sausage; add boiling water and mince the meat to small pieces in blender. Add corn meal, cold water, and seasonings. Cook on low heat, stirring often, for about 45 minutes.

(This makes the basic loaf — after that you can pat it, pack it into loaf pans, or shape it any way you like, slice, then fry, broil or bake, and smother in syrup, honey, jam or eat it as is. I like it best in thick slices, fried until the outside is slightly crispy . . . excuse me, I believe I'll take time out here to go to the kitchen).



MONO COUNTY



INYO COUNTY



Beverly Webster, who discovered the story about ranching in Lone Pine's Alabama Hills in 1919, lives in Bakersfield, CA. Beverly stopped at the Chalfant Press offices last autumn, found THE ALBUM, and told us about a journal she had seen, written by the mother of a friend.

"She (Lena Fay Tooker) wrote her story when she was in her seventies, on a simple pencil tablet," Beverly said. "Her son, now in his seventies, but who was three in the story, showed me the story and I found it fascinating. I typed it and edited it slightly for clarification, but mainly it is in her own words as she remembered and put them on paper.

"Although her stay in the Owens Valley lasted only a short time, her account is so lively and upbeat about her life there and her impressions of the area, I think others would find it interesting, too."

Beverly is a native Californian, her mother's people having helped found Santa Cruz. She graduated from UC Berkeley, worked for a travel agency, then received a commission in the US Navy. Her naval career took her East where she married a New Yorker, also a naval officer, who had been recalled for the Korean War. At the end of his tour, they moved to California where he went into teaching and she stayed home to raise their family of seven children, all of whom have graduated from college. They are now settled in Bakersfield, where Bill Webster is a professor of school administration at CSU Bakersfield.

"Western history is our special interest," Beverly says, "and we have done considerable travelling to photograph and research different areas for our writing."

The photos of Mt. Whitney and the Alabama Hills in the story on page 40 of this issue were taken by Bill Webster. The family photos belong to the son, Paul Tooker, Jr., who says the Ford on which he is photographed ended in a wreck travelling up the San Joaquin Valley soon after the picture was taken.

Beverly is a freelance writer and has been published in *California Journal*, *Sacramento Magazine*, and *Sierra Magazine*. She and Bill have written a book, *Bridges of Sacramento*, published by the Sacramento County Schools Office. The periodical *Forum* published their account of their trip to Brazil.

— Jane

Letters to the Editor

CORRECTION

I received the two Albums and the check. Thank you. I'm so glad you enjoy the stories.

I likewise enjoy "The Album." The story about the Arcularius family was so interesting to me. I knew Genevieve well when I lived in Bishop; also members of her family. The Arcularius Market was our favorite place to shop.

One error regarding my Uncle Vic. He was not my father. My father was Arthur Shirley.

I liked the format you have in "The Album" and the fine paper you use. I was particularly pleased to see the picture of my Grandfather Wood Larson on the cover. **Donna Shirley Strong, Napa, CA**

In a few more months, when I become perfect, I intend to apply for editorship of the National Geographic. In the meantime, I hope Mrs. Strong will forgive the mix-up and send more stories of the lovely Antelope Valley.

INFORMATION, PLEASE

Oct. 22: My husband and I are 48-state truck drivers and we were delighted to finally have the opportunity to drive through Bishop. Bishop is my husband's birthplace and his parents, grandparents and great-parents lived in Bishop and surrounding areas.

During our recent two-day visit in Bishop we visited many places and looked into family history . . . also had difficulty finding any records of the one-room cabin homestead in Bishop. My husband was born in 1948 in the old hospital by the airport. The new hospital on W. Line St. is directly across the street from where the log house homestead stood. There stands the Church of the Nazarene now, where the log house used to be.

We were told that the log cabin was the property of the city. We would like a picture of the log cabin; have tried the Laws Museum and Church of the Nazarene's archives for a pre-construction building picture. There are no archives at all at the church. We tried the Library and the Chamber of Commerce. Because of the size of our semi-tractor-trailer, we couldn't go much farther than that . . . If you happen to have a picture of the cabin or know how to get one, we would gladly pay for a reprint. Any help would be greatly appreciated. We anxiously await a letter from you about the log cabin picture . . . **Leonard and Cheryl Browne, Salem, OR**

Help! Does anyone have such a picture? We asked Dave Babb, the helpful historian at DWP, but he hasn't had any luck either.

More on the Brownes:

Dec. 7: Thank you so much for your quick response . . . Yes, it is unbelievable that photos were never kept on an area so FULL of history! I am still gathering stories and old photos, but will try to compile something for (a future) issue of THE ALBUM . . . Also please keep me on your mailing list for future volumes . . . **Cheryl A. Browne, Salem, OR**

And from Leonard Browne:

Any assistance would be appreciated. My great grandmother was Amelia Barlow (Patterson) McLaren, from Bishop. My grandmother: Emma Evelyn Patterson Smith, wife of Prince Lyle Smith, Sr., both of Bishop. My mother: Betty Evelyn Smith Browne, wife of Leonard Archie Browne, Sr. . . . **Leonard A. Browne, Jr., Salem, OR**

Some more names you may remember:

I'm especially interested in information about my great grandparents Josiah and Margaret Dodge of Lone Pine. My father, Gus Marsh, Jr. and his mother, Margaret Elizabeth (Dodge) Marsh, as well as myself, were all born in Lone Pine at 305 West Willow Street. **George Marsh, Long Beach, CA**

THANK YOU

Very informative publication. I read cover to cover, probably a lifetime first! You should be very proud of THE ALBUM! **Terry L. Ackart, Hesperia, CA**

Thank you for Vol. II, No. 4 Here is (my check) for 1990 issues — they are just what is needed since so much of the family and home information is now being replaced by advancing the tourists and DWP.

When visiting the Museum in Independence it was very clear the pictures we saw of the pioneers were not available as they once were. My pet peeve.

We are trying to remember some of the farm houses and the neighbors. I found some thoughts you might enjoy — "The Way Things Used To Be." This is the way I feel. Thank you for the good work you are doing. Continued success to you. **A Big Pine Native, Eva Ketcham Maltzberger, San Bernardino, CA**

Mrs. Maltzberger, whose logo is a circle entitled "Family History is Fun!" sent along the poem, "The Way Things Used To Be," and we may have room in a future issue to print it for you.

A GOOD IDEA

Here's a clever way to renew your subscription: **May Blaisdell, Oakland, CA** just cut out that part of THE ALBUM mailing envelope with name and address sticker and notice of expiration sticker, and mailed it in with her check! We got the idea immediately and she didn't have to write anything but the check. Fast and efficient. Be sure to look for the sticker before you throw away the envelope.

BY THE WAY

We don't publish full addresses, in the interest of privacy, but if you wish to correspond with any of the writers of articles or letters to the editor, we will be glad to forward your sealed letter, which you may mail in an enclosing envelope to Chalfant Press, P.O. Box 787, Bishop, CA 93514, Attn: Jane Fisher.



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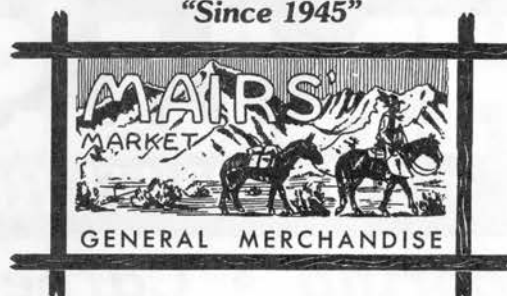
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