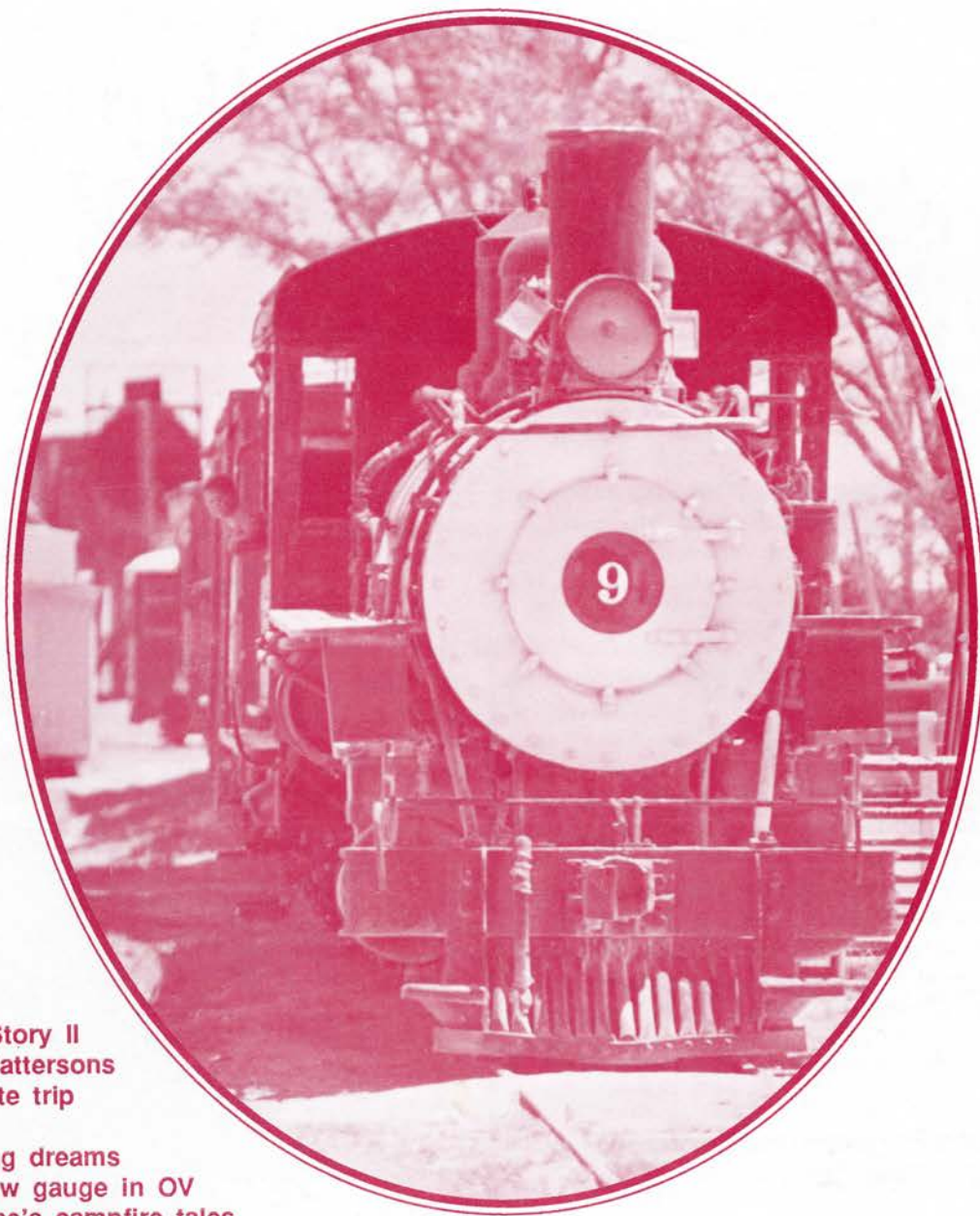


# The Album

## *Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono*

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

Vol. IV, No. 1



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Sherwin Story II  
Benton Wattersons  
A Yosemite trip  
Maggie  
Railroading dreams  
The narrow gauge in OV  
Leroy Cline's campfire tales  
and more



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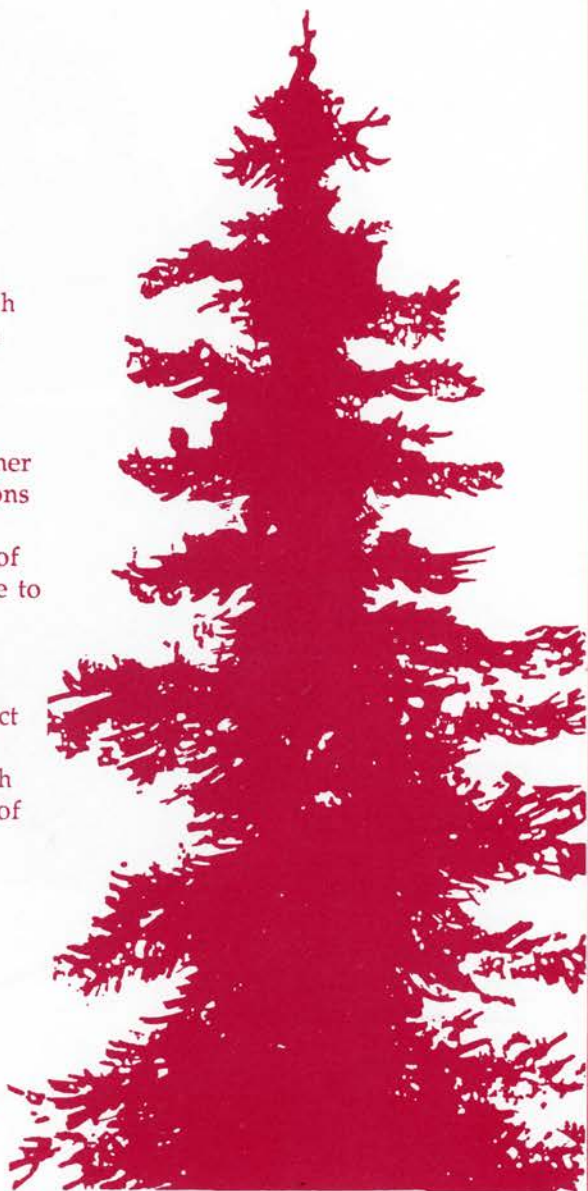
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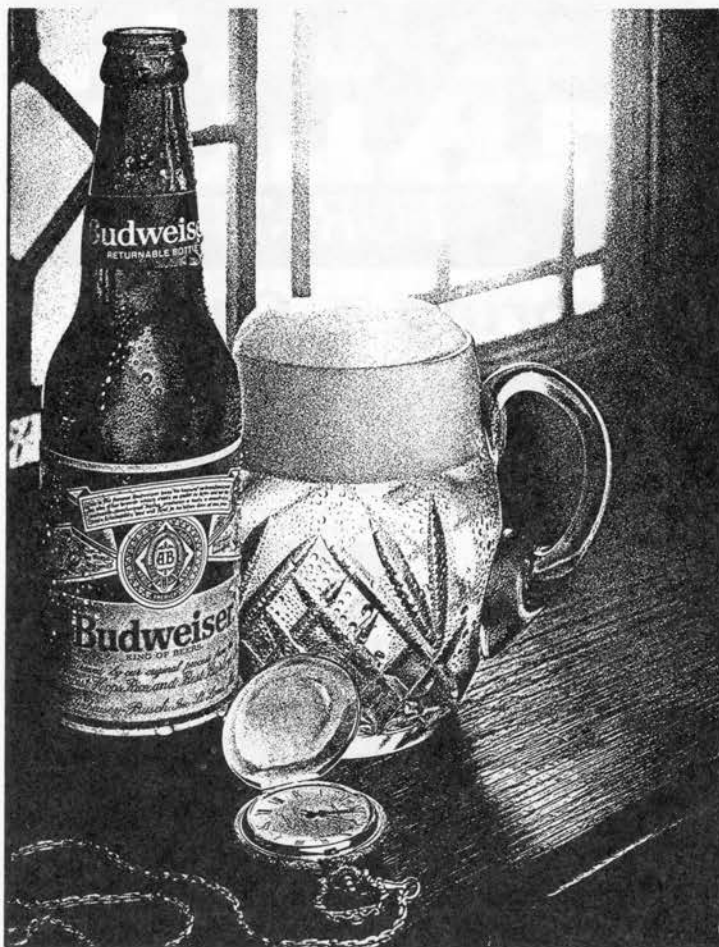
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# THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono

JANUARY 1991

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**Cover photo:** Southern Pacific No. 9 at its retirement home in Laws. No. 9 is one of the three engines that remained at the closing of the narrow gauge (No. 18 is at Dehy Park in Independence, No. 8 is at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City) Photo by David A. Wright, June 1989.

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.

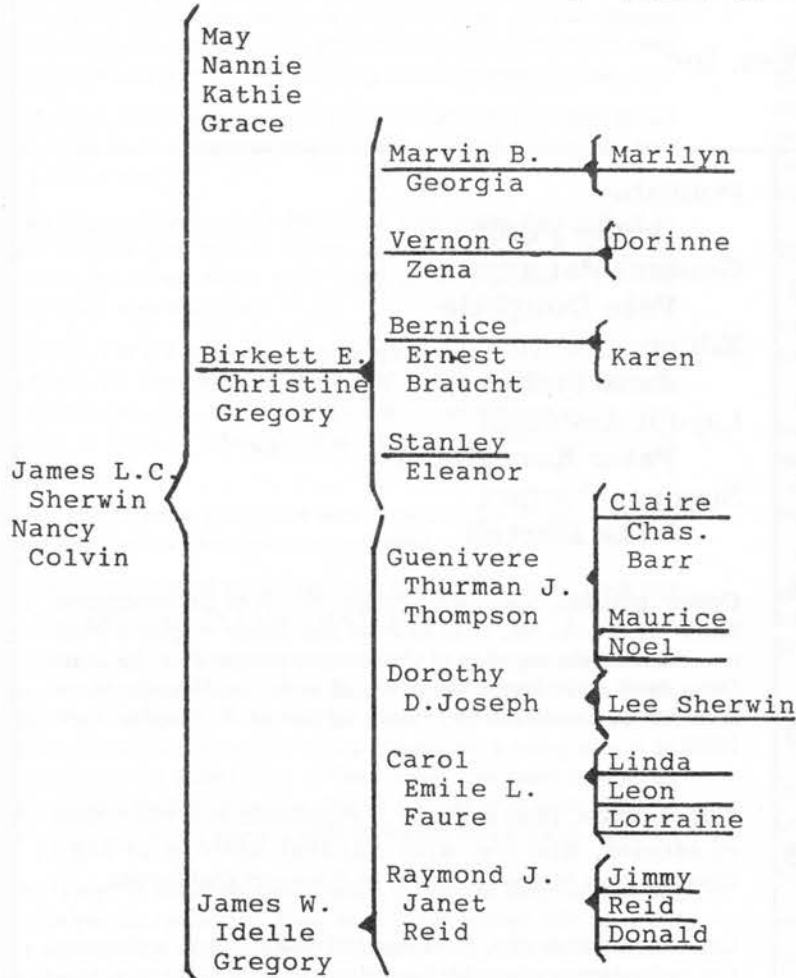
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# THE SHERWIN STORY

## Part II



*Idelle Gregory Sherwin*

An account of one of Inyo-Mono's first pioneer families, as recorded by Dorothy Sherwin Joseph and told to Louise Kelsey. Photographs by Louise, and courtesy Dorothy Sherwin Joseph.

James William Sherwin  
Born Sept. 24, 1974

Little Jim was the youngest child of the pioneer James and Nancy Sherwin family. Born at the ranch near the top of Sherwin Hill and being a rather sickly child he was left to his own devices. He learned at an early age to be self sufficient, to enjoy being alone, to love nature and not be dependent on anyone other than himself.

When he was five years old he made his first acquaintance with mining when his father took him through the Mammoth 40-stamp mill. The principle of the steam engine was carefully explained to him. Young Jim didn't like to see what he thought was an idle 16-foot wheel while all the others were pulling by belt at the load. After leaving the mill his father told him the principle of momentum and its ability to pull the steam engine past a possible dead center. The point learned that day served Jim well in later years.



From the mill they went to the tram line where the principle of gravity was explained, and the child was shown how the loaded cars were pulling the empty ones up the mountain to the point of loading. From there they went to the office on Main Street and Big Jim and his son listened to the talk of mining operations. The managers were anxious to impress Mr. Sherwin with the richness of the mines. They opened the office desk drawer and took out a piece of white honeycomb quartz which was full of gold. When they tapped the rock gently over a piece of paper, the gold fell out and they measured a full teaspoon. Little Jim, standing by, was very doubtful and that evening at the supper table, when the trip was discussed, asked his father why the people spoiled that pretty rock for them. Big Jim was a bit shocked by the question but even more so when the boy asked if he thought they would pour the gold back into the rock to show the next visitor. This was too much for his mother who proceeded to give him a lecture for daring to doubt people's honesty in such a way. Little Jim listened to the lecture but he never changed his mind.

It was a short time after that young Jim got his first suit of custom-made clothes and proceeded with his older brother, Birkett, to the photograph gallery to have a tin-type picture taken. Jim, having been teasingly called "Bug Eye," partially closed his eyes with the result that the picture had a sleepy look.

One morning after a big snowstorm the children were clamoring for skis, each giving good reason to claim the first pair. The father listened to them all, then decided to start with the youngest. By 4:00 p.m. Little Jim had his first pair of skis and immediately started to practice. He went down grade for about 100 yards easily enough, but trouble developed when he tried to go back up. His father let him wallow around for some time before going to his rescue, wading waist-deep in the snow to carry him back to the house.

After all were supplied with skis, Big Jim made a snowshoe sled for handling feed and milk. Nanny, the oldest sister asked for the first ride, a request that was granted. Early the next morning, while the snow was firm, she took her first ride which was successful, encouraging her to go higher on the hill for a more thrilling ride. She lost control, the sled struck a rock, and she was thrown headfirst into the woodpile, knocking her unconscious and cutting a large gash in her scalp. For a time it was feared she was not going to regain consciousness, but she soon recovered. However the accident spread gloom over sled riding for some time.

It was from the home in Round Valley that Little Jim received his first taste of public school. He rode eleven miles a day to school when the weather was too cold for work on the ranch. One morning his chore was to round

*Round Valley ranch*



up the horses which had wandered up to Swall Meadows. The horses were reluctant to return to the valley, and kept breaking back. He was riding at full speed when the pony stumbled and fell, throwing him headfirst against a boulder. The accident happened just as the sun was rising and nine o'clock when his consciousness returned. There was a large gash in his scalp and his head was drenched in blood, but his pony was about forty feet away, waiting for him to remount.

One windy Friday afternoon the teacher dismissed Jim early so he could get to Bishop before the storm broke. The wind was howling out of Pine Creek Canyon, the temperature dropping. When he was about one-quarter mile north of Pine Creek he saw his neighbor, Mr. Pettigrew, about half a mile ahead of him, riding full tilt for home. The sun was still shining and Jim saw a white flash of light to his right. The thought came to him that the man had lost his pocketbook.

Two Indians were riding not far behind him so Little Jim stopped to see if they had noticed anything, but they rode by without stopping. Taking note of the position of the flash between two bunches of willows growing on the stream bank, Jim rode on and sure enough, there, under a sagebrush was the neighbor's wallet. He looked through it and saw it contained a nice roll of currency, held in place by a rubber band. He rode over to Mr. Pettigrew's home, found him at the stable, and asked if he had lost anything on his way home. The answer was that he had lost every cent he had. Little Jim handed over the wallet and waited to see if it passed inspection. Mr. Pettigrew took a \$20.00 bill out and offered it for the service but Jim refused to take pay for helping a neighbor. The next day Mr. Pettigrew had a long talk with the boy's mother but he never knew what they talked about.

Early next winter a Mr. Noice and his partner from Mono Lake came by on their way to the lake. As the wind had been blowing for three days from the southwest, Mr. Sherwin told them they had better not go any farther as he felt sure a big storm was coming. They didn't heed the warning, but went on and were forced to turn back before reaching the top of Sherwin Hill. They stayed ten days with the Sherwins before finding feed for their stock. Noice's partner took charge of the stock while Mr. Noice made a pair of snowshoes (skis) and one bright sunny morning started for Mono Lake carrying three days rations for himself and his dog, and a small roll of bedding.

Two weeks from that morning Mrs. Sherwin was awakened by something scratching at the screen door. She looked out and there was a dog, but it didn't look like anything she had ever seen. She called Little Jim, feeling that he would know if it were Noice's dog as they had played together. He opened the door and called "Tag!" The dog tried to jump up on him, but was too weak. Jim fed him a little at a time until the others had their breakfast and made ready to go in search of Noice, knowing full well something had gone wrong. After a little coaxing with food, the dog took the lead, straight to

his master's body. Noice had apparently suffered a heart attack, cut his shoulder straps, and dropped his pack in the snow, probably telling Tag to watch it, which he had done faithfully for two weeks, never touching the food and keeping the coyotes back from his dead master's body.

In April 1890 young Jim's older brother, Birkett, turned twenty-one. He declared his independence and refused to drive the team any longer. Their father told Jim he would have to take over, but he also said no, he would have nothing to do with it as he was going out to work for himself. His father said he would have to turn over his earnings until he was twenty-one, but the boy refused unless some satisfactory arrangement was made for at least a little schooling. Big Jim had no more to say and soon after, the two boys went to Mono Mills and got jobs in the timber. The season was short there, so they took a contract to make shakes for Will Thorington.

The boys went into the timber north of Big Springs on Owens River, finding suitable timber, though it was high on the hill and they had to roll short sections of log down to level ground for working into the finished product. A snow storm blew in one day when it was Jim's turn to saw and roll the cuts down the hill. He went to camp for lunch, and when he returned, there on the log in the snow were the tracks of a large mountain lion. He had been crouching on a limb over Jim's head all forenoon — proof being the absence of any tracks in the snow leading to the tree. Jim said that even then he was considered too skinny for good eating.

*"Saw and roll"*



In May 1893, a friend, Mr. Logan, called John Mumford, Birkett and Jim together telling them he didn't want them to miss the mid-winter Fair in San Francisco so he was going to lend them each \$50 which they could repay when they got back. So with \$50 each, they took one pack mule and three saddle horses and started for Fresno via Rock Creek Pass. The first day the mule got



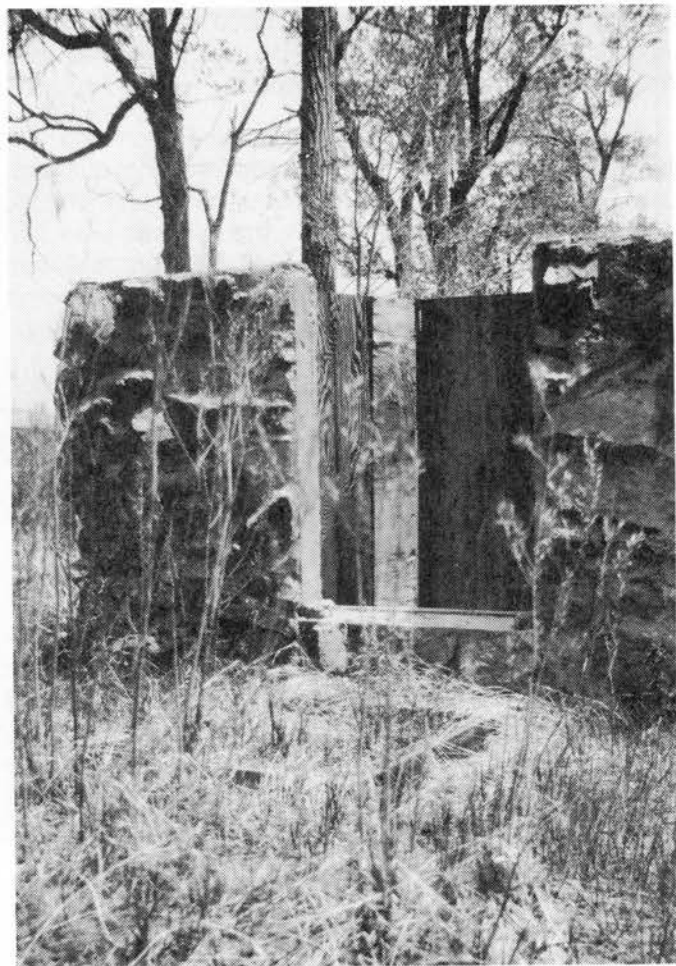
into a mudhole and sprained an ankle and when darkness came, was hobbling on three legs. Not wanting to keep her tied in that condition, they turned her loose thinking she would stay with the horses. Next morning there was no pack mule, so they had to take one of the saddle horses to do the packing, leaving one of the group on foot from then on. They took turns, the one on foot usually ahead.

They reached Fresno and found feed for the stock, took the team to San Francisco, spent several days there and returned to Fresno on the train. Jim heard the conductor say, "Well, the strike is on," but he didn't know what it was all about. The heat in Fresno was intense, 100 degrees in the shade, and the stock soft and fat, so they didn't take on extra supplies, thinking they would get some in Yosemite Valley. When they got there they found they had left San Francisco on the last train before a big strike and the one store in the Yosemite was empty. They had to depend on their guns for food from then on. the first day they got a couple of grouse and the second day a deer, but before they could get to it the big blue flies were there. Jim took the animal to the creek and dressed it out while the others kept the flies off with willow branches. They weighted the quarters down to the bottom of the stream with rocks and left them there while they ate their fill of broiled liver. When they were ready to move on, Jim took the meat from the stream. To their surprise they were no longer bothered with flies and were able to take the meat home to Round Valley without losing so much as a pound.

When the boys got home they went to work in the harvest fields at \$1.25 a day and board for 12 hours work to pay off their debt to Mr. Logan. After that they tried to get a little ahead for schooling but the going was hard and time at school was short, so much went undone. Later, after Birkett had graduated, Jim did janitor work for the school for his tuition. He roomed with John Mumford who was then in the last stages of tuberculosis.

In 1896 Jim contracted to cut timber for Charles Wildasin at Mammoth, while Birkett went to Bodie and got a job in a cyanide plant. In 1898 Jim went to Bodie to drive team at South End. Being last man on the job he got the cull of the teams, one black and balky, the other "Mike," white and sickly, a combined weight of 3200 lbs. Mr. J.S. Cain, known as "The Big Boss," told Jim whenever "Mike" got sick, to go to Boone's Store, get a bottle of whiskey and pour it down him — adding that he was not telling anyone else how to cure the horse, or "Mike" would be reported sick every day.

During that summer Jim spent many evenings up at the South End cyanide plant where Birkett was in charge of night shift. He put in his time learning the work, hoping for a chance in the plant, but it didn't come until the following year. That was the turning point and it wasn't long before the plant was in his charge. While the South End was a hard place to work, it gave Jim a chance to learn the work from crushing ore to melting,



*A memory in the old apple orchard*

assaying, and shipping the bullion; from cutting zinc to its use in precipitation and its elimination and the smelting of the precipitates. Jim was resourceful in his work and took great pride in working out problems which were extremely difficult. One such was moving four 20-foot tanks and three 12-foot tanks down a narrow road in places only eight feet wide, along steep cliffs to a deep creek channel. Another was to install a phone by setting poles and stringing wire a half-mile to the telegraph line.

It was about this time that Jim went with Birkett to the Bodie Ranch to meet Birkett's girl friend. There he met Christine and Idelle Gregory and liked them both, but really thought Birkett had picked the wrong girl. It was but a short time after that the whole town was commenting and trying to figure out how two dance-crazy girls could fall for two fellows who never danced. That question was never answered.

On December 5, 1900 Idelle (Dell) and Jim were married at the U.S. Hotel in Bodie. The ceremony was hardly over when the band struck up and the younger kids, about forty of them, struck up their own tune on tin cans. The next morning when Jim & Dell took the stage for Hawthorne, the stock got mixed up in the empty cans. Things were lively for a few minutes, with people running out on to the street thinking there was another wedding on. The honeymooners traveled by stage to Hawth-

orne, then by train to San Francisco, by boat to Los Angeles, and again by stage to Bishop, travel that went from good to bad, and bad to worse.

In early spring they went to Bodie Ranch and Jim moved a small house from Aurora for living quarters. Jim continued his work in the plant; on September 11, 1901 Guen was born and they thought she was just about right. The next spring Jim left the plant to Birkett and took a job with the May Lundy mine as assayer and cyanide man. The work went well except for low temperatures in early spring and fall. As soon as roads were open, Dell and baby Guen joined Jim and they lived in a small cabin about a quarter mile from the plant. For Jim time passed rapidly but for Dell it was terrible. Jim ran the plant for two years and put it in shape. He left for another summer run and a few days after he left a snow slide took the plant across the lake scattering it among the rocks. It was never rebuilt.

The following winter Birkett and Jim worked developing the Casa Diablo mine, another hill of earth for the girls and the children. They put in a five stamp mill and a small cyanide plant, expecting to run while the spring runoff was on and also store some water, but alas! the Sierra blocked the snowfall and they got none — not even enough for proper house use.

Things were bad. The Lundy Plant was gone and Jim's job with it. Birkett got a job; Jim stayed on and got a deal on through a Mr. Taylor with a Chicago company. The company took an option on the mine and agreed to a minimum of sixty shifts per month at \$4 per shift in development work. They also agreed, reluctantly, that Birkett and Jim would do the work. The boys started to develop a tunnel from mill level. This was slow and tedious and an extension of time was needed, which was granted on easier terms. Shortly after, they drilled into a 40-inch vein of two-ounce ore. Had they made the hit one shift sooner it would have meant about \$10,000 more to them.

In May 1905 Dell, Guen and Jim made a trip to Bodie Ranch. Dell and Guen stayed on while Jim returned to the mine. On the 28th day of June another young lady made her appearance at the Ranch and, while Jim received favorable reports of her coming, it was not his pleasure to meet her until she was one month old. He insisted that when she looked at him and he at her, she turned in her mother's arms and held out her arms to him. At any rate, it was love at first sight for Jim and his daughter, Dorothy.

Later, after closing out all his interests in the mine, Jim bought eighty acres of the Hall Ranch southwest of Bishop. He rented this land for a time and moved to Berkeley where he built a small home and worked with builders in San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley. Times became bad so they moved back to Bishop, where he built a house on the ranch. He later sold twenty acres to A.E. Larson, then sold the remainder to George Clarke, auctioning off all the stock and house-



*James W. and Idelle Sherwin*

*Below: Nathan Gregory, father of Idelle and Christine who married Sherwin brothers James and Birkett*



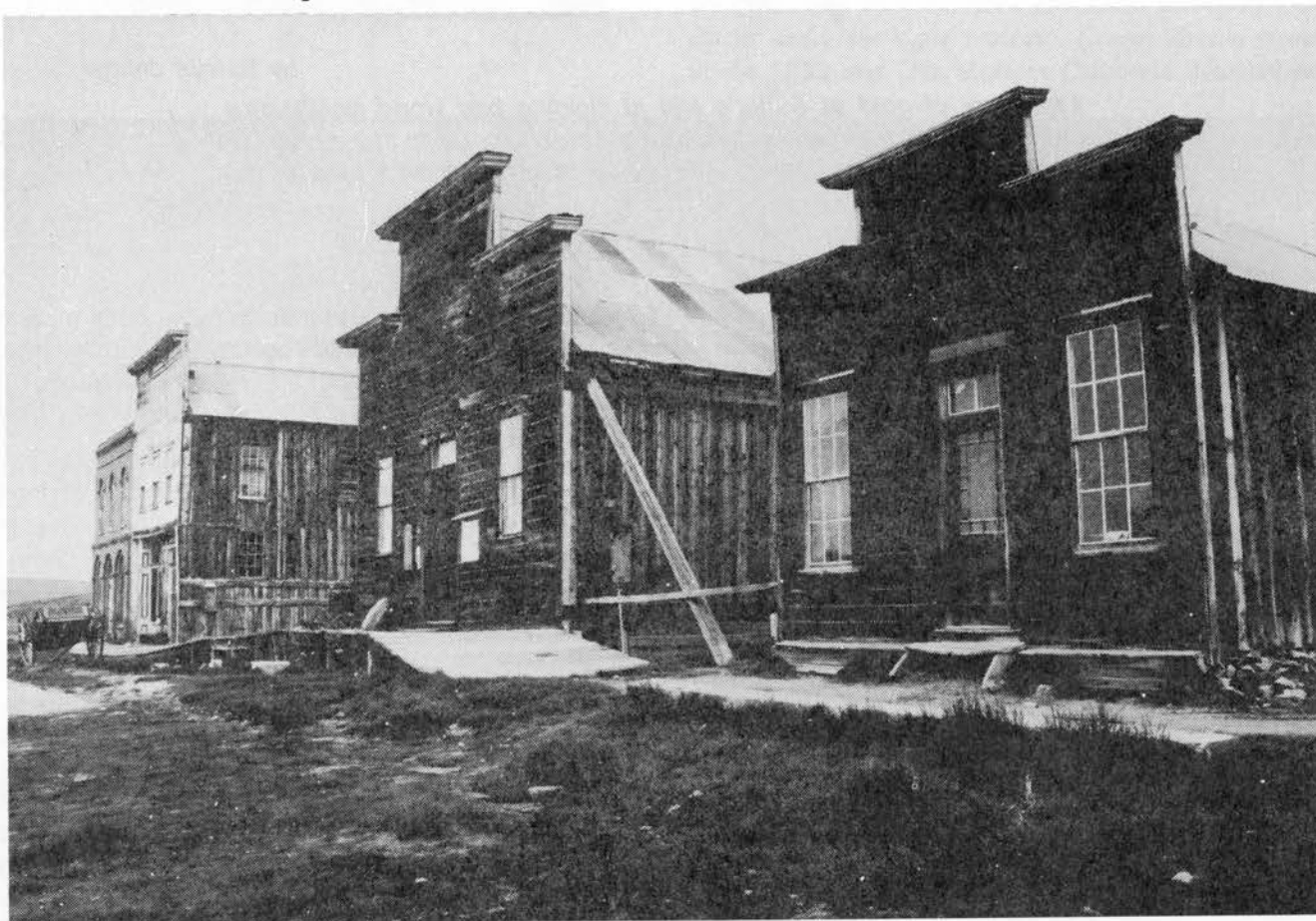


hold goods. The family again moved to Berkeley, by the way of Sonora Pass with spring-wagon and two good horses.

In Berkeley Jim became city inspector of sidewalks, curbs and streets, as well as regulating the shipment of quarry materials, seeing to it that nothing but first class material went on the first class streets. On Jim's second day on the job, the quarry superintendent told him he would make it well worth his while if he would pass second grade material as first grade for the Alameda. Jim told him he had made a mistake in his man; he took his orders from the city engineer. Later Jim was delayed enroute to work and when he arrived he found all wagons loaded and ready to pull out. He inspected the lead wagon and told the superintendent the material was not acceptable for the street. The man flew into a rage, ordering the teamsters to go ahead and they did, all that day. Jim reported to the city engineer that night, and was told to call for instructions in the morning. The next morning he was handed a note to the quarry superintendent and told to read it first. It was short: "Remove material placed on the Alameda yesterday, forthwith," signed W.F. McClure, City Engineer.

There was no more trouble along that line but the quarry was soon condemned, so they moved again, back to Bishop. The winter before their return was marked by another big event in their lives, the birth of their third daughter, Carol, in 1910.

*Bodie's Main Street today*



They bought Tanglewood, a mile west of Bishop. Jim worked at whatever jobs were available. As long as the children were growing up and in school he refrained from returning to the mines he loved. He spent one season on the Owens River canal, and one with the Bishop Creek Water Association where his resourcefulness in using photographs to prove his points saved the local users a great deal of trouble as well as a good amount of water.

In June 1915 their only son, Raymond, was born and their joy was complete. There was nothing within his power that Jim would not do for his children and his children's friends. It was a haven of delight to many a child raised in town for there was the family orchard and garden where they could help themselves, a novelty to many. The children of the two Sherwin families (three boys and one girl in Birkett's) were double cousins, and raised very closely like one big family. Their holidays were always cooperative affairs, leaving many happy memories of the years of growing up in this lovely, fertile valley.

Stalwart as the mountains he loved, Jim gave much to his children to be carried through their lives. His honesty, integrity and loving kindness to mankind and animals were his outstanding characteristics. ❀

**Next: the story of young Jim's daughter, Dorothy Sherwin Joseph, born in Bodie**



*Kate Gracey and James Watterson, both born in 1851 on the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea. After their marriage, the young couple came to America, settling in Benton, where Kate, alone, raised their four children to adulthood after James died of pneumonia at age 29.*

## THE WATTERSONS OF BENTON

by Demila Jenner

*"Discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill at Coloma had world significance because it started the first international gold rush, resulting in a redistribution of the world's population . . ." From an inscription on a map of the Mother Lode country.*

They did not come to the New World seeking gold from the ground, though the Wattersons of Benton did land first in Virginia City, Nevada, tail-ending the Comstock bonanza there. James Watterson, whose two older brothers, William and Mark, were already herding sheep in California, left his 14-year-old brother George lonely on the family farm when he married Catherine Gracey in Douglas on the Isle of Man in 1872. The newlyweds honeymooned on the high seas en route to join Kate's sister Emma Keig, and their brother Bob Gracey, who'd been in Virginia City since 1869, when the Gracey and Watterson families began "redistributing the world's population" — from the Irish Sea to Western United States, anyway.

Within a year, Kate was back on the Isle of Man — temporarily. When she became pregnant in Virginia City both she and James desired their firstborn to begin life on their ancestral island. Thus it was that Thomas G.

Watterson, who was destined to make quite a name for himself in Bishop and to "occupy" an empty grave on West Line Street, was born, as were his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, on the Isle of Man.

Kate returned with the infant Thomas to Virginia City, a steeply-hilled town populated in 1873 by 35,000 people who supported six churches and 110 saloons. There she and James parented two more children: Mary, born 1875 and James Kewley Watterson, born 1877, while James made an adequate living as bookkeeper and merchant.

Following the Demonetization Act of 1873, the United States suffered one of its periodic financial panics; Virginia City was declining and when Jimmie was a year old, the Watterson family decided to try fortune elsewhere. Though Aurora was already on the skids, they stopped there for a while; James became a U.S. citizen May 20, 1879 in the Nevada District Court, Esmeralda County. A



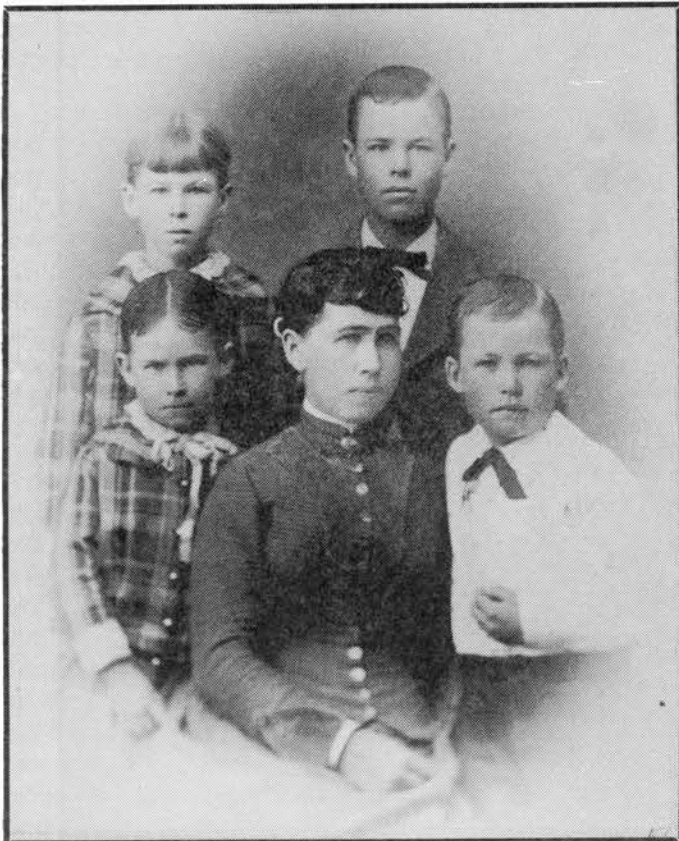
month later the family had settled, more or less, at Benton Hot Springs, hoping to partake of the "boom" that was expected in the silver mines of Blind Springs Hill. On June 12, 1879, W.W. Barnes, editor of *The Benton Tri-Weekly Letter* "a Democratic newspaper," noted that "James Watterson, Republican, is candidate for County Clerk in Mono County." Apparently residency requirements had not yet been enacted in Benton voting district.

Manxman James Watterson lost no time getting his feet wet in Benton politics; on Aug. 19, he was made a member of the Republican Party Central Committee and in the same issue Editor Barnes reported:

*"Last June James Watterson, Judge W.P. Robinson and some other enterprising gentlemen caused a dam to be thrown across the creek on the flat north of town so that citizens might enjoy a refreshing, invigorating bath in the warm spring. The Saturday following completion of the dam happened to be the day on which the New Constitutionists of Mono held their county convention and on the Sabbath morn following adjournment of that body, the dam was gone. Judge Robinson suspects vandalism, but we hesitate to believe that any party of reform would inaugurate its system of reformation by stealing the dam from a bathing pond . . ."*

The dam was rebuilt and again on Sunday morning it was missing. "Watterson said 'damn it' and Robinson said 'damn it' and the distinguished foreign proprietor of

*Kate Watterson with her four children. Clockwise from Kate's right: Grace, Mary, Tom, Jimmie.*

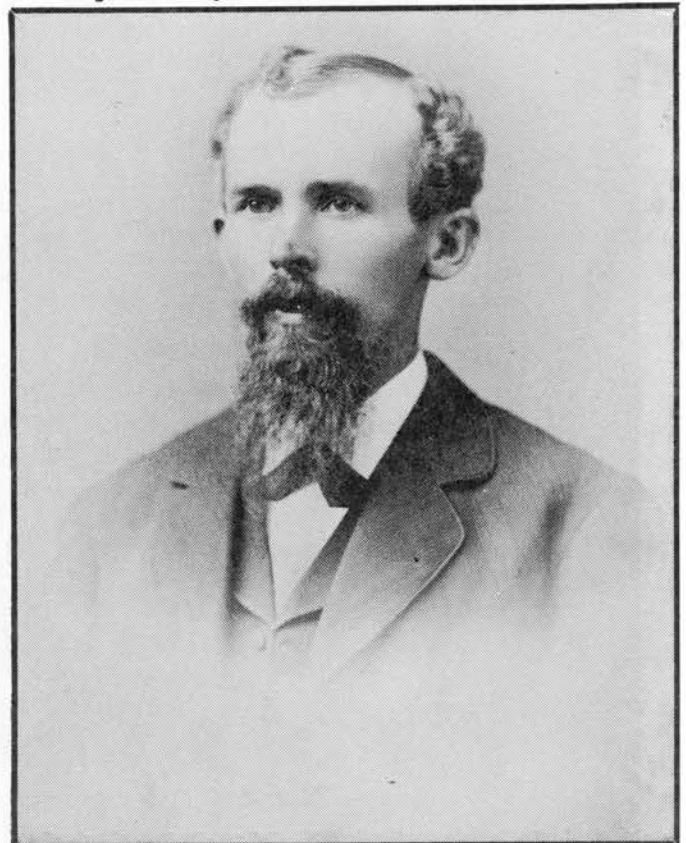


*the vegetable gardens in Lower Town said 'damn it, me heap catchee too muchee water now' — but the question is: Will they re-dam it? The creek, we mean."*

The editor had his fun with the story, but James' mind had to be elsewhere, for he had received word from the Isle of Man that his brother George, now 20, was on his way to Benton. In fact, James was instructed to meet George any day now at Benton Crossing, where Crowley Lake is presently located.

Mary Watterson Gorman: "Uncle George was a very young man when he came out to this country by himself. Remember, I told you he met Uncle James at Benton Crossing. It happened this way: my people had their sheep at San Diego in a very remote place and George found them. There was a pier where a boat would dock and once a week my folks went to this pier to get supplies the boat would leave at the pier for them. It was a day's trip from their sheep camp. Uncle George was waiting with their supplies at the pier and stayed at their camp just long enough to buy a horse and then started up toward Benton. He spent his first night at San Juan Capistrano and it was completely deserted; no, not even swallows. Nobody was there. The next night he went on; finally came to Darwin, which was very active those days. Bob Gracey had sent a map of California to the Isle of Man for him. From Darwin Uncle George sent word ahead when he expected to be at Benton Crossing, and Uncle James met him there, which was a remarkable thing, I think."

*James Watterson of Benton, husband of Kate, died at age 29 leaving Kate with three children and another on the way. Photos from Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.*



Remarkable might be just the word for young George. Weeks after reaching Benton, this legal appeared in the town's weekly newspaper:

Notice of co-Partnership  
WATTERSON BROS.

*Notice is hereby given that the undersigned have this fifteenth day of January, A.D., 1880, formed a co-partnership for the purchase and sale of goods and merchandise of all kinds and for the transaction of a general mercantile business in the Town of Benton, Mono County, State of California.*

Jas. Watterson  
Geo Watterson

*Benton, Mono County, Cal., Jan. 15, 1880*

The brothers took over the general merchandise store of J.B. Badger & Co., which already offered "the best assorted stock this side of the mountains;" in February the Wattersons advertised they had received "new and splendid stock of choice groceries direct from the great trade marts of the coast."

In March, James was appointed Benton postmaster.

*Kate Watterson's house and friends. From left: William Shimmin, Mary Watterson, Grace Watterson, Kate, Ida Russell and husband Bill, Ned Geary, Dr. Mathieu Gristwold, Johnie Somerville, Jimmie Watterson, Tom Watterson, Freddie Mercer.*

*Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.*

Benton census for 1880 (from data gathered 1879) indicated a full house: James, 28; Catherine, wife of James, 28; and Thomas, 6, — all born Isle of Man; Mary E., 4; and James Kewley, 2 — both born Nevada; their housekeeper Emma Keig, 32 (Kate's sister), and her five children, aged 9 down to 1 year old. Also listed: George Watterson, 20, single, b. Isle of Man, unemployed two months. Kate and James seem to have acquired quite an extended family for the abode Mary Gorman described as Aunt Kate's *little* house: "It had a sitting room, and sort of parlor, then a dining room and kitchen, three small bedrooms on the other side."

Three bedrooms for eleven people! Could be that such crowded conditions contributed to a frontier-type encounter James had with a Vermont farmer turned Benton justice of the peace, as reported in a Nevada newspaper:

*JP Nathaniel Daniels and Postmaster James Watterson, both of Benton, had a quarrel last week and both pulled their guns. There was no shooting, however. Again, the Benton newspaper did not see fit to publish the story. (True Fissure. Nov. 6, 1880)*





That "again" expressed the disgust felt by J.M. Dorner, editor of the Candelaria newspaper, who the month before carried an account of another Benton shootout: "All three men had six-shooters and all emptied their pistols" (and no one was killed!) "The men were only a few feet apart at time of the shooting, and the Benton newspaper was so ashamed of the bad marksmanship displayed that it didn't print one word about the affair. No arrests."

A couple of months later, the *True Fissure's* editor printed a story more to his liking:

**SHOOTING AT BENTON.** Last Sunday B.B. Alverson and George Watterson had a facedown in which Watterson was severely wounded. George Watterson had been out driving and as he drove to the watering trough in front of Alverson's saloon, Alverson ordered him away. Watterson complied but returned in a short time and announced that he was "heeled" and ready to fight. Alverson came out with a shotgun at sight of which Watterson tried to jump behind cover, but not before Alverson fired and struck him in the arm. The wound is so bad, slight hopes are held for Watterson's recovery. (*True Fissure*, Jan. 29, 1881.)

The Candelaria editor was obviously desperate to dignify a Benton gunfight with at least a potentially fatal wound, but the facts were George was not seriously hurt and nothing more was heard about the altercation. Which was just as well, for 1881 was to be a devastat-

ing year for the Wattersons even without a wounded George.

Though James had been in Benton less than two years, he was already entrenched in the town's business and political life, and Kate was big with their fourth child. Did he really need new frontiers? Fifty miles away by wagon there was Bodie, re-invigorated with discovery of Standard Mine's fabulous Fortuna vein. For sure the grass in Bodie was not greener than Benton's warm-springs-nurtured vegetation (Bodie cherished its reputation for having "the worst climate out of doors") but could Bodie not use another general store? James began negotiations and in September, he and another Benton entrepreneur drove to Bodie in a wagon. There, James developed pneumonia; instead of staying in a warm bed in Bodie, he insisted on returning to Benton and so he died in the wagon en route to his Kate. So determined was he to be there when she gave birth, that he didn't live to see Grace Darling Watterson born on Nov. 11, 1881.

When the shock of James' death reached the Isle of Man, Bob Gracey immediately wrote to his sister in Benton:

*Dear Kate: On this occasion with feelings of sorrow for your bereavement, I sit down to pen you a few lines . . . It is hard to realize that such a hardy, healthy young man as James could be struck down and cut off in such a short period of time. It seems too hard . . . We must bow to the will of the Almighty, although I cannot but*

Benton School pupils mid-1880s. Kate Watterson's children: top row, second left, Jimmie with brother Tom on his left; Mary in plaid dress in back row, Grace Darling in identical dress, middle row. Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.



*think He does not equalize His affections . . . Poor mother is fretting a great deal for your situation, but Kate you know how she was left and so you must try to bear up as much as possible under your sad affliction . . ."*

Kate did bear up — did she ever! James was buried in the Benton graveyard (temporarily, as it turned out) and Kate began cooking meals for Benton's miners. She took in a boarder: Miner William Shimmin, a handsome Manxman who had been with her and James in Virginia City. She bought a cow which she milked with her own hands to nurture her children; she planted a vegetable garden, watering it at night to keep Benton's hot springs water from wilting the plants. She entered her Manx-born Tom in Benton's school, and saw to it that through the years he, and in due time, his younger siblings, maintained 95-point averages. Later, she hired young Kate Arcularius from Long Valley to help her with chores her children were too young to do. She heeded the cautionary note in a letter from her brother, Bob Gracey, on the Isle of Man:

*Dear Kate: the Wattersons are beside themselves with grief (at James's death). They received Mark's and George's letters together on Thursday night, but I had broken the news to them two days earlier. I feel very bad, Kate, that I didn't happen to be in Virginia City when the sad news broke, as I undoubtedly would have been with you, but now it can't be helped. If I can be of any service to you in the world, do not hesitate to let me know.*

*George says he intends continuing the store business. Of course at this distance it is almost useless for me to offer any suggestions, but Kate, if you have to have a man, it seems to me Uncle John [Kewley] would be the man to follow a wagon; he's as faithful as the day is long . . .*

*Benton schoolhouse where Kate Watterson sent her children to be educated. Built by John A. Lyford, carpenter and millwright from New Hampshire and paid for by donations from Benton citizens, the building was dedicated in 1876 "on the 17th of Ireland," indicating the importance of the Irish contingent in Benton. Demila Jenner Collection.*



Kate picked William Shimmin to be her man in the store. Though he did not make a great success of it, Kate (and boarder Shimmin) continued for twenty-five years to live in her little house. She raised all her children to successful adulthood in Benton, and when they went to live elsewhere, they all turned out well.

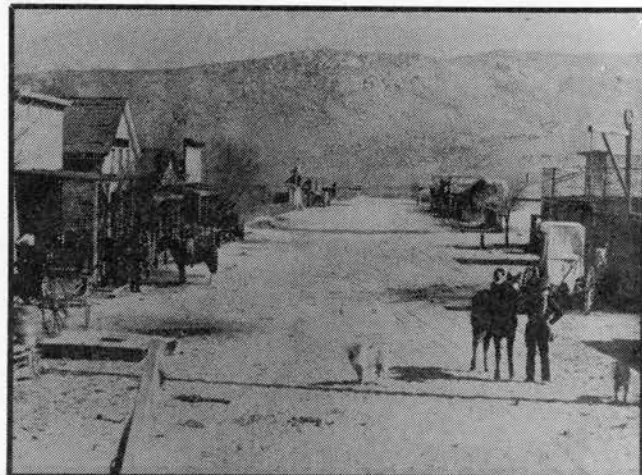
George moved with deliberate legal haste to don one of James's hats: National Archives records in Washington, D.C. indicate that George Watterson was appointed Benton Postmaster on Oct. 17, 1881. *The Bishop Creek Times* reported in March, 1882: "George Watterson, Merchant and postmaster at Benton was recently enjoying our sunshine."

In January 1885 Bishop's *Inyo Register* reported "Big Fire in Benton." Started on the north side of Main Street, it burned down Watterson's store, Lynch's saloon and boarding house, Kelty's boarding house and saloon, and Creaser's building: "They only saved the rest of the town by swift action in tearing down one or two of the old rookeries [read opium dens]." The story noted that George's store was the only building that was insured. Another case of a Manxman landing on his feet: George collected \$10,000 on the burned-out store.

By this time, George was Mono County Supervisor, at Bridgeport petitioning for a \$150 grant for cutting and grading a road through Hot Springs canyon to Benton Station: he got \$195 and gave the contract to Joseph M. Kane. In December, George took a steamer for the Isle of Man; Shimmin covered for him at the post office. He was supposed to return on the SS Oregon, which was reported sunk; George turned up safe, having transferred to the SS City of Chicago at the last minute.

Gradually, George began pulling up his Benton roots; in June of 1889, he put up a small mill at the lower end of Long Valley to work the ore from a mine in that sec-

*Benton street scene, fall of 1886, the year following the disastrous fire that destroyed Watterson's Store and several other business establishments. Univ. of Nevada Collection.*





tion. April 2, 1891, the **Bridgeport Chronicle** reported George was elected Bishop supervisor for Inyo County: "Watterson was formerly Mono County supervisor representing Benton district and was one of the best Mono County ever had."

About this time, Mr. and Mrs. William Symons of Goldhill moved into the Bishop area with their daughter Beatrice and her brothers. George was smitten with the young lady; his courtship of her included a trip on horseback to Yosemite by way of Benton. There they were joined by two of Kate's children, Mary and Jimmie, and by a friend of George named Billy Weiss, a native of Wurtemberg, Germany, who had come to Benton via Nevada mining camps. It was the first meeting of Bea Symons and Billy Weiss; fortunately, no member of the vacationing party had any inkling that death, in widely disparate events, would overtake both Bea and Billy in the same year. (Ed: this story to come in April.)



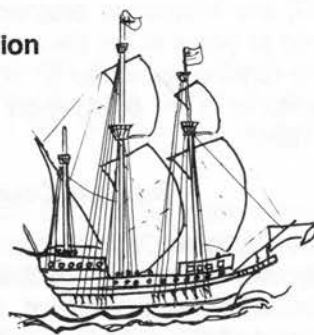
*Bentonites in Yosemite. From left: Jimmie and his sister Grace Watterson, his uncle George, Bea Symons, engaged to George, and William Frederick (Billy) Weiss, from Wurtemberg, Germany. Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.*

Kate's children were growing up and away from Benton, as well. At a Thanksgiving party in Benton, 1894, Tom gave a magic lantern show while his sisters looked on admiringly. Looking on with more than mere admiration was Katie Arcularius, who had become an ex-officio member of Kate's brood. When Tom left Benton the next year to take over the telegraph office in Sodaville, Nevada, he did not go alone: the younger Katie was now an official member of the family, Mrs. Tom Watterson, Kate's first "in-law." And here was one couple that really meant that "until death do us part" bit. Mary Gorman: "Tom and Katie never had children and were utterly devoted to each other. They were never apart until death separated them."

Mark Watterson, second oldest of the four brothers who came out from the Isle of Man, had become a big sheepman, married into Bishop's Cannell family and shuttled between Bishop and Watterson's McLaughlin

## ISLE OF MAN: The Bishop Connection

*Sketches by  
Clara Shaw Eddy*



Would you believe that King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table once headquartered at Castle Peel on the Isle of Man, and that the Holy Grail chalice graced its hallowed halls? Some archaeologists think so. And history affirms that Capt. Myles Standish left his estate on the north of the island to board the Mayflower; Fletcher Christian sailed from the Isle of Man to create legend aboard the good (?) ship *Bounty* whose Captain Bligh himself honeymooned on the island with his Manx bride.



*Castle Peel*

Following is a look at more recent Isle of Man expatriates who helped shape a bit of California history, including that of Mono and Inyo counties. These notes were gleaned by Demila Jenner from a series of her 1983 interviews with the late Mary Watterson Gorman, who was born and died in Bishop; she passed away July 9, 1990, at the age of 101.

*My parents, William Watterson and Eliza Quale, were born near Peel on the Isle of Man, where the Neb River flows into Peel Harbor, bringing down poison from the Foxdale lead mines. They married there in 1869; it was a double wedding. My mother's sister was married in the same ceremony to a man also named Watterson, though he was not related to my father. You see, there was no*

meadows near Benton with his bands of sheep. Item: "1887, the Watterson brothers took 6,000 sheep from Bishop to graze in the Benton area." In the midst of this sheep-running appeared an amazing story in the form of an editorial in the **Bridgeport Chronicle Union** for Jan. 27, 1894:

#### *Supreme Court Decision*

The Supreme Court on the 17th instant handed down its decision in the case of Saldumbere vs. Mark Watterson, affirming an order of Judge Virden in the Superior Court of this [Mono] county. This decision is a very important one to the ranchmen of this county, the actions having been brought by a rancher to restrain a sheepman from taking possession of the waters of a small creek three or four miles above his ranch, using them for watering his sheep and permitting his sheep not only to muddy the remaining waters, but to cause such quantities of sand and debris to be carried down on to the land as to destroy large portions of the crop of growing grass and vegetation. Judge Virden granted an injunction, restraining the sheepman from trespassing upon and using the water, which had been located and used for many years by Mr. Watterson and predecessors in irrigating his lands and the Supreme Court not only confirms the judgment, but makes the injunction perpetual. This decision should be very pleasing to our ranchmen who are troubled, more or less, every summer as Mr. Watterson has been.

Item: Jan. 21, 1897: "Mark Watterson and his nephew James shipped seven carloads of sheep to San Francisco." Item: Jan. 28, 1897: "Mark Watterson and John Kewley shipped 15 carloads of sheep to San Francisco." Question: Was Mark Watterson ranchman or sheepman? Whichever, he prospered and raised an interesting family before going back to the Isle of Man to die in the fullness of age.

Mary Gorman, 1983: "When Mark Watterson went back to the Isle of Man and died, about 1915, his youngest daughter Katherine married a Dr. Bingham; they had two children, one of them was Tom, who finished his law course at Oxford, practiced law and then was appointed to circuit court and later, a few years ago, he was appointed to the Queen's Bench and that position brings a knighthood with it. So he's Sir Thomas Bingham now."

In 1897, Kate's oldest daughter, Mary, visited her brother Tom and his wife Katie in Sodaville for four months, learning to be a telegrapher. She returned to Benton, but spent increasing time in Bishop with her Uncle Mark's family; in 1899 she began working in the Bishop post office, where her Uncle George, now married to Bea Symons, was postmaster and notary public. Later, when William Watterson's sons, Wilfred and Mark Q., started their bank business in Bishop, they also secured the contract for the Wells-Fargo office there and installed their cousin Mary Watterson as office manager. Mary's youngest brother, Jimmie, was already living in

transportation on the island and people from different villages didn't know each other. There were lots of Wattersons on the Isle of Man; still are!

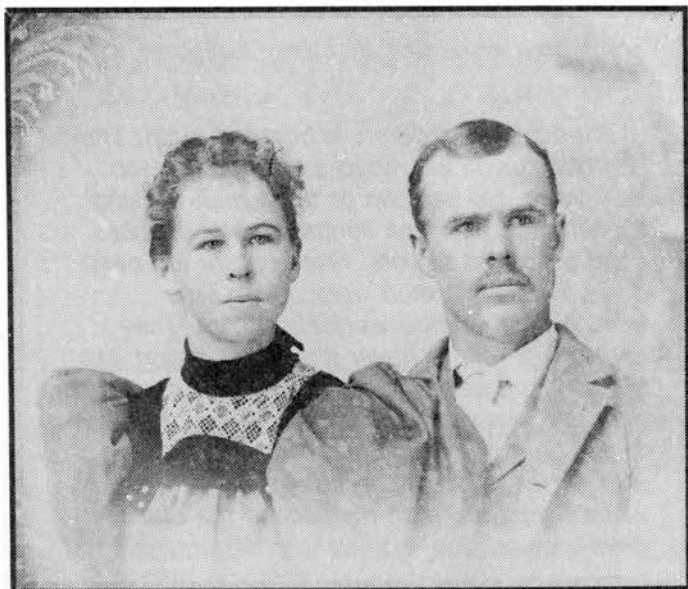
About three months after they married, my parents and my father's brother, Mark Watterson, came to California. They came by boat from Liverpool to New York, then down to Panama, where there was a little railroad across; then they took the SS Panama up to San Francisco, in June, 1869. From there they took a boat that went down the canals to Stockton, where they knew people who'd come from the Isle of Man. Very few railroads then, and boats went from San Francisco to Sacramento and Stockton.

The sheep business was just beginning in California but farms in the British Isles all have sheep. Farms on Man have names: the Wattersons for 20 years leased one in Douglas called Naquelo Beg. "Beg" means "small;" I've always wanted a place named Naquelo Beg. An uncle of mine did own land, but every year he had to give tribute to the church: a bullock, or something like that.

My father and his brother Mark became sheepherders in the Bakersfield-Delano area. My parents came to Owens Valley in 1885 and I was born in Bishop in 1889. An interesting thing: there's a place south of Bishop called the Rawson Ditch. An aggressive man who had money came out from Illinois and built it; that was one of the big irrigation arteries in those early days. C.B. Rawson's brother was the first man to drive a band of sheep by foot across from Kansas to California. My father used to say "I don't see how he did it." Driving sheep you go less than six miles in a day; oh my, yes, much harder than driving cattle. By foot, you see. I heard the other day about their driving sheep on horseback this year; first time I ever heard about it in this country. They always herd them in those big trucks here but this is a very wet year; I think that is why they're using horses this year. In Australia they use horses.

Oh, yes, there was lots of trouble between cattlemen and sheepmen. The cattlemen resented the sheep people. The Pipers who owned Fish Lake Valley were cattle people and oh, they had such feeling against sheepmen. It was terrible. That's the first time I ever experienced such animosity. I didn't know they had sheep trouble in Benton, though. Of course, Mary Austin shows in The Flock how destructive sheep are.





Mary Watterson, later Mrs. Archie Strong, and her brother Tom, who married Katie Arcularius. Photo taken in their Benton days, before the family moved to Bishop. Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.



Grace Darling Watterson, age 14. Grace was born to Kate in Benton about two months after the death of her husband James. Rosemarie Jarvis Collection.

Bishop, involved in the sheep business with their Uncle Mark.

The Benton Census of 1900 listed "Kate Watterson, 48, head of household; owns her house free of debt." In June of that year, the *Inyo Register* reported that Grace, youngest of Kate's children, not quite 19 years old, achieved the highest standing in Nevada State Uni-

Shepherders worked for a very small wage and their food; the Wattersons acquired their own sheep here because they got a percentage of the increase of the flocks they tended. Oh, they spent years driving sheep up and down California! For grazing, summer pasture, winter pasture. On foot, yes, with dogs and burros for pack animals to carry equipment, tents, everything. They accumulated fifteen years of flock increase, and they had seen how Owens Valley had plenty of water, not much chance of suffering such drought as they'd experienced in Bakersfield and Delano. That was before the Los Angeles Water Department made the same discovery about Owens Valley and began stealing our water for their swimming pools.

I first visited the Isle of Man in 1913 at age 23 when I stayed with relatives on both my father's and mother's side. After Valentine Gorman, my husband, died in 1971, I went again, when I was 82. This time I was the guest of my cousin Eleanor Watterson, the second woman dentist ever to be qualified in England; she practiced for years in the heart of London. When I visited her she lived in the North of England and though she was born and raised on the Isle of Man, she was done with it and wouldn't even go back to visit it with me.

So a couple of years later when another cousin of mine in Inyo was taking a trip back to the Isle of Man I booked passage on the same boat, but this time I did not stay with relatives. I wanted to really see the island so I stayed in a hotel and got in touch with cousins who took me all over; I saw more in a month than my mother did in her whole lifetime. I even saw Naquelo Beg!

While I was there I met again a cousin, who was born in Bishop, whom I had not seen in more than fifty years. Her father was White Smith, who developed the Salt Works in Saline Valley and sold stock; it was 99% pure salt but even then they couldn't compete with getting salt from ocean water and the whole thing collapsed.

He married my father's sister, who came out from the Isle of Man in 1903 when she was 42. They had this one daughter Margaret who married a Scotch mining engineer and went down to Rhodesia in South Africa where he was engineer at a most peculiar gold mine; it went straight down into the ground at a place called Bulawayo. Art Hess was on a trip

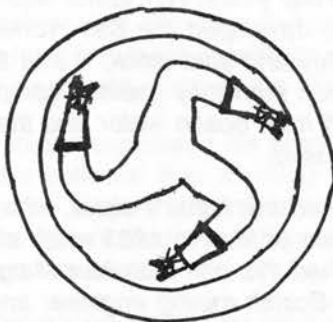
versity, and was awarded a scholarship. In 1902, Grace was made a member of the Mono County Board of Education, though a California State law denied her, as a woman, the right to vote for her school's trustees. Editor Chalfant commented in the *Inyo Register*: "Thus a drunken hobo can have more say in school matters than hundreds of thousands of teachers." July of 1902, Chalfant informed his readers that Grace Watterson, 21, "will teach the Riverside school this winter."

With all her children gone from home, with so many Wattersons now coalesced in Bishop, what was holding Kate in Benton? Mary and Grace had even bought her a house in Bishop, but they could not persuade her to move.

Mary Gorman again: "Well, Mr. Shimmin had just stayed on with Aunt Kate. I don't know if he had any income. When Mary and Grace got established in Bishop — Grace started teaching school in Bishop and Mary ran the express office before she married Archie Strong — they bought that old house and wanted their mother to move down. But where would Mr. Shimmin go if she moved? She didn't want to let Mr. Shimmin down. But she finally did move, and Mr. Shimmin went over to Tonopah, and later went to Los Angeles after Aunt Kate died, when Kate's son Tom was living down there. Tom looked after him, got him into a hospital and he died there."

But there was a deeper reason for Kate's stubborn refusal to move to Bishop: As long as the body of her husband lay in that hillside grave in the Benton cemetery Kate would cling to the little house where she had lived with James. When the Wattersons bought a family plot in the cemetery in Bishop and exhumed the body of James for reburial there, then Kate unhesitatingly settled into the house on West Line Street.

**NEXT: The Benton Wattersons in Bishop**

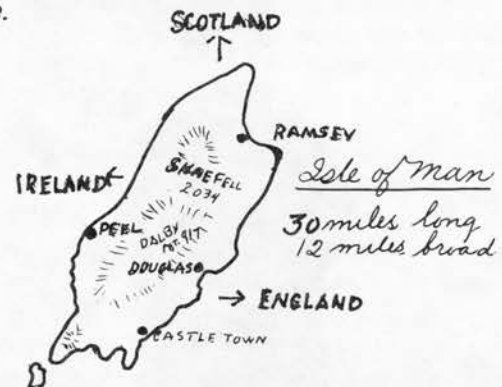


"Whichever way you may throw me I shall fall on my feet."

around the world and he visited Margaret there.

She had two children, a boy and a girl. The son grew up in Bulawayo and took up deep sea diving. He had two or three men working for him and they took contracts to find places good for outfall sewers. From one of the deep dives, two of the men were a long time coming back and he went after them. They came back but he never did. So Margaret lost her son in South Africa. Then her husband died and she went to the East Coast of Africa to live near her daughter. I'd stayed in touch with her all these years, so we met in Peel when I went there on my second trip after Val died.

The Isle of Man is a thirty-mile-long island in the Irish Sea about half-way between Dublin and Liverpool; it's a garden spot, simply beautiful scenery: it has mountains, glens, and of course sea coast, all around. Factory workers from Manchester and those towns vacation there; summers the island is full of tourists, but winter, fall and spring it's very nice.



Why would all those people leave the island to live elsewhere in the world? Well, those days it was hard to find work. Now they cater to "trippers" as tourists are called; and people are not as poor now as they were then. There were no public schools on the Isle of Man then, though the Wattersons were well-educated because their father's mother was an English woman who'd come to the island as governess and stayed to become my great-grandmother. So my grandfather was raised to be conscious of the value of education and taught his children correct grammar. He impressed on them that it was very important not to speak like other people did.

The national emblem of the Isle of Man is a three-legged man, armed and booted, whose motto is something like "Wherever you throw me, I will land on my feet." This certainly



seems to be the motto of the Wattersons; in fact, my cousin, Tom Watterson put the emblem on the door of his dry goods store here in Bishop. It is thought that Vikings who conquered the Isle of Man brought the emblem with them from Sicily. Of course, the island in a sense conquered the Vikings: after a hundred years of invasions, the soldiers, who did not bring their wives with them from Scandanavia, began to marry the women of the island and settle there. I have this book by a Manx author named Caine (Isle of Man, by W. Ralph Hall Caine, 1909) who writes: "The Northmen's invasion of our home gave us sturdy, manly physique, bigness of bone, breadth of chest, greatly increased height . . ." And down here he says: "Celtic life was impregnated with great and noble gifts: imagination, invention, bravery, initiative."

Seems to me, though, that Celtic maidens were impregnated in another, more traditional way. There is still today a law on the Island concerning "love children" that springs from a custom reaching back to maybe the Viking days. This law provides that when parents of a child born out of wedlock marry within a year or so of its birth, that child will be made legitimate if the mother was never "had" by any man other than the father. Custom extended the law to mean that all love children

who could be gathered under their mother's skirts at time of the marriage ceremony would be legitimate. No, I don't think any Watterson ever invoked that law. But who knows? Wattersons have been on the Isle of Man for a long, long time.

**Author's Note:** The dark side of the Watterson saga flared into headlines when Wilfred W. Watterson, president of Inyo County Bank and Mark Q. Watterson, its cashier, "owners of the Valley's wrecked banks," were charged with 43 counts of felony, including embezzlement, concealment of funds . . . (*Inyo Register*, Aug. 18, 1927); and on March 29, 1928: "The Wattersons are in San Quentin." Those two Wattersons were brothers of Mary Gorman. I asked Mary about it:

"That was a terrible business. My father was not involved in it except by name. When they established the banks, they didn't have to have much capital, just reputation and property. Well, my people had that big ranch and my brother Mark used my father's and mother's names as co-directors, but they didn't have anything to do with the bank. My father was never in business, and he died long before that all happened. It was a terrible, terrible thing . . ." ❁

*Gerckens Brewery and habitués, Benton, May 1888. Born in Germany in 1853, William Daniel Adolph Gerckens was Benton's foremost brewer for 20 years. Photo courtesy Lorena Edwards Meadows.*



Clarice Tate came to Big Pine in 1901 with her Canadian parents who were seeking a town where their children could begin their formal education. Clarice's account of her father's stage business and ranch, and of her mother's efforts in establishing a high school in Big Pine appears in the "Saga of Inyo County," published by Chapter 183 of AARP. She also shared some of her other memoirs in prior issues of "The Album." In 1920 she married Ira Uhlmeier, whose parents were also early settlers in Big Pine, and whose story may also be found in the "Saga of Inyo County."

Tom Uhlmeier was born in 1921 of Ira W. and Clarice Tate Uhlmeier in Big Pine,

California, where he attended grammar school and his first year and a half of high school. He finished high school in Lone Pine, went to the Colorado School of Mines and to the University of Nevada at Reno. He entered the Army Air Corps in 1942 and after a brief return to civilian life, went back to the U.S. Air Force, retiring in 1969 after 27 years of service in the South Pacific, Bermuda, Texas, Japan, California, Taiwan, England, Turkey and Hawaii.

Uhlmeier's civilian career then encompassed eleven years with Xerox Corporation. He is now retired again, busily pursuing his hobbies of amateur radio, writing and geneological research. Tom

and his wife are both amateur radio operators who use their skills to assist fire fighters, teach radio classes, serve on county and state disaster communications teams, and teach elementary students fire prevention and home safety.

The following two stories, one by Tom and another from his mother, recall treasured memories of their life in the Eastern Sierra. Mrs. Uhlmeier's touching recollection of Maggie Deep Springs Jim is especially poignant to those of us who remember visits to our mothers or grandmothers from these wonderful, loving women who overcame their own pain and sadness to love all children with endless loyalty. — Editor

# A YOSEMITE TRIP

by Thomas W. Uhlmeier

We were living in Big Pine in the spring of 1929 when Dad and Mom bought a new Model A Ford. I think it was their first new car. When summertime rolled around we had to take a trip. Mom was the planner and, since we had never been to Yosemite, that was to be one of the main points of interest. After a stay in the valley we were to exit to Merced thence to Los Angeles via the Ridge Route. Our motel would be our tent, our restaurant the cooking gear we carried, and our food would come from produce stands along the way, augmented by brief stops at local grocery stores and what fish Dad could catch from any handy stream.

Since we were our own motel/cafe, space in the Ford was at a premium and every inch counted. My allotted spot was in the back seat behind the driver, very close to the left window. My sister, Adele, was allotted the place on the other side. The rest of the back seat was reserved for

equipment needed to fulfill the motel/cafe requirement. In addition to the back seat area the left running board was equipped with a contraption that hooked to the front fender and unfolded along the running board to the rear fender, thereby adding about five cubic feet of room for additional baggage.

The first day of the trip ended at Lee Vining on the banks of Mono Lake. We camped there that night and were up early for the long drag over Tioga Pass. In those days cars weren't too good at climbing mountains and the roads weren't all that good either. Every five or six miles the road crews had tapped a spring to have water available for radiators that were wont to boil over in the high mountain passes. When we got to the park entrance at the top we were stopped by the park ranger and asked if we had any animals or guns.

"Any pets? dogs? cats?" asked the

ranger.

"No."

"Any guns? rifles? shot guns? pistols?"

"Hell! I don't even have a grease gun," Dad confessed.

With a chuckle and a wide smile, the ranger charged us the fee (about fifty cents), gave us our sticker, and told us to have a good time while in the park.

Back in 1929 the road system through the park consisted mainly of a single track with turn-outs to accommodate cars coming from opposite directions. The main road from the east came over Tioga Pass, through Tuolumne Meadows, with switch-backs down the north wall of Yosemite Valley. Camp Curry was the main campsite and a small plot was allotted for each car and another plot for camping. As I remember,





each campsite was a twenty-five foot square, with a fire pit, and one water faucet served four camps. I don't remember how many camps were served by one latrine. A whole bunch I would guess.

Privacy was non-existent. However, our camping equipment included two bed tarps. Bed tarps were the forerunners of sleeping bags, about six feet wide by twelve feet long and made of very heavy canvas. Along the sides were a series of "D" rings and snap hooks so that the tarp could be folded in half, "D" rings mated to the snap hooks and viola! a six by six bed cover with heavy canvas over and under. We decided to forego the luxury of bed covers for

*Top left: Adele and Tom watching a tourist feed a bear*

*Top right: Back in 1929 rangers were not so strict about getting close to the bears; some tourists took big chances.*

*Lower Left: Tom with his sister and cousin in the swimming suits they wore for their icy dip in the Merced River. Half the children in Big Pine had these suits from the Inyo Plunge, just north of Big Pine on the old road to Bishop. When George Warren, the owner, closed the plunge in the late 1920s, he gave a lot of the itchy, woolen bathing suits to any and all who might want them.*

*Lower right: Tom with his sister and father in Yosemite. A child from a neighboring camp is intrigued with Adele's all-day sucker. Sadly, Adele was fatally injured by an automobile in the school crosswalk in front of the old Hall's Hall in November, 1930, a year after this trip.*

the luxury of privacy so Dad strung up the tarps end to end and we had a canvas wall from the community faucet area, twenty-four feet along the neighboring border.

It was family tradition that Mom and Dad shared cooking responsibility, especially while camping. Mom always had to see that Adele and I were presentable for the day, so Dad naturally took over the cooking, and when he cooked breakfast we had flapjacks, flapped as no flapjack had ever been flapped. "Albers Flapjack Flour" with the picture of the old timer flippin' flapjacks was a staple in our camp larder. I think Dad posed for the picture.

Our first morning in Yosemite was made to order for Dad's flapjacks. He built a fire in the fire ring and while it was reducing to coals he mixed the batter. Our camp gear also included

a frying pan with a long stay-cool handle, just right for flippin' anything: eggs over easy, hash-browns, trout, french toast, anything to be turned over if it wasn't too liquid. Dad was concentrating on his hotcake mixing and didn't notice the crowd that had gathered at the community faucet to watch an expert flip flapjacks. When he did catch on to what was happening he shifted into high gear and really put on a show. Single flips, double flips, triple flips, all of them landing with a splat right in the center of the frying pan. When he had finished he turned, faced his audience and bowed, got his applause and we continued with our breakfast.

If you are not aware of the fact, I'll tell you now, it gets hot on the floor of the Yosemite Valley in the summertime. On such a day my sister and I decided it would be a nice thing to go swimming in the Merced River.

Another fact you might not know is that the Merced River is probably the coldest stream in the whole world. Our swimming session lasted long enough to get our feet wet and that was that.

The climax of our "Yosemite experience" was the trip to Bridalveil Falls. This was to be the last stop on our way out of the park. We stopped, walked the short distance to the observation point and, like all good tourists, ooh'd and aah'd with the best of them. My Dad reserved comment however. After looking for a long time, shading his eyes with his pulled-down hat, taking in every aspect of the tons of water making rainbows and the famous "bridalveils," he backed up, lowered his head, rubbed the crick of his neck and said:

"I'd sure hate to have to swim up it!" ❀

# MAGGIE DEEP SPRINGS JIM

by Clarice Tate Uhlmeier

To look at her one would say Maggie was a grouch. Children often took to the other side of the street when they saw her coming. Her dark eyes flashed from beneath a surly brow. She wore her wirey black hair parted in the middle, rolled irregularly on either side, then drawn into a bun on the back of her head. Rain or shine she never wore a headdress.

Her garb was the same year in and year out — a full dark skirt gathered at the waist on a band, with a tier or so of petticoats showing above heavy-duty men's shoes, a plain waist topped by a nondescript sweater. Somewhere in the loose folds of her skirt she had a pocket where she kept her money. A long calico apron was always a part of the

get-up, as that was handy in which to wrap bread, vegetables or other handouts she collected in addition to her wages at the end of the day.

Maggie was a Paiute Indian and in her day Indian women were called "squaws." To her her guttural "Huh," or "Ah," in answer to any question, when she chose to answer, one would be convinced she really was a grouch. But much of this was veneer, for Maggie had a heart of gold.

I was a small child when we moved to Big Pine and my Mother hired Maggie to do our weekly laundry. Bright and early she would arrive, on the day of her choosing, to build a fire under the large iron kettle in the back yard. The clothes sorted

and the fire burning brightly, she would come to the kitchen for her breakfast. She ate heartily and drank cups and cups of coffee heavily flavored with cream and sugar, with the smell of sagebrush smoke encompassing her.

Breakfast over, she would get out the tubs and go to work. Regardless of how big or how small the wash, it was always, "Too much, too much." Mother kidded her along and thought she was getting by, until it became apparent over a period of time that clothes were disappearing. Maggie's reputation for being a little light fingered was well known, so of course the first thought was that she was helping herself to things she needed. Then one spring day Father decided



to clean out a large bin attached to the back of the rock cellar used mostly for discarded chairs, stovepipe, broken tools and other junk, and there, tucked away underneath the discards were the missing clothes — mostly heavy pieces like men's heavy underwear, socks, overalls — items that had been hidden there perhaps a piece at a time. When Maggie said "too much," she meant just that and found her own way of doing something about it.

Maggie was Mother's washwoman for a period of over twenty years — through the stages of wash tubs, water-run machines, to electric machines. It was always "too much" at the beginning of the day, and at the end, "you gimme bread," but we learned to love and respect Maggie through it all.

There were the months one winter when my grandmother was ill. Mother would leave right after breakfast to take care of her. Father would take her and go for her at noon. My sister and I did some of the housework before school, but without ever being asked, Maggie formed the habit of stopping in on her way to town to finish whatever work was left undone. When Mother returned to prepare the noon meal she would find Maggie sitting on the back porch.

"He tired," she would say. "You gimme bread." Mother would give her dried crusts, cold biscuits, an occasional loaf of any leftovers from the cupboard she thought Maggie would like. Maggie would stow it all away in her apron, content with whatever it was. And that was all she ever asked for the service she had done. It was food for the family.

"Deep Springs Jim," or Jerry Bowers as the Indians called him, was Maggie's man, or had been. She had given him two sons, both of whom died at birth, so Jim took Maggie's younger sister Tina as his wife. Maggie lived on with the family, as was the custom, and helped provide for them. Tina had sons too, and Maggie cared for them as she would have her own.

There were times when she had no other job than the two days a week she worked for our family; however, she had one other source of income: gambling. It is said she was a whiz at pangingo. Gamblers often joined the squaws at their card games and found it profitable to place side bets on Maggie.

There were times through the years when Maggie was sent for from the camp. I particularly remember one day, as I was swinging nearby, an Indian boy galloped up, jumped off his horse and carried on a rapid conversation with her in Paiute. She turned to me and said, "He go," and with that "He went," dropping everything as it was, out the gate and up the road with a long-strided, springing trot. The next day she was back to take up where she had left off and it was not from her that we learned one of Tina's boys had been thrown from a horse. She was called upon in all emergencies at camp and was an efficient midwife.

Jim often stopped for her at the end of the day on his way home from town. My father liked to kid her about this and would ask, "Is Jim coming for you today in his automobile?" She would look at him with eyes snapping, claw in the air in front of her face with a quick gesture, give her "ah" and burst into a girlish giggle, coyly ducking her face behind her hand. There was a series of conveyances, but the automobile never came to pass. One was a buckboard. Maggie would climb onto the back with her feet dangling. Then there was the real surrey with finge on top, pulled by two slightly fractious bays. To the rear seat climbed Maggie. Occasionally Tina rode in front with Jim, but she rarely appeared.

Whenever my married sister came home for a visit, Maggie would stop by to see her. The conversation would go something like this:

"Hello Maggie."

"Huh," with a girlish giggle.

"How are you Maggie, purty good?"

"Purty good."

"You work lots?"

"No work, no work."

And so it would go, every word pumped from her.

Often when I came home from school Maggie would be sitting on the back porch. Her first question always was, "Where you Auba," meaning my sister Elva.

"She's at school, Maggie." If other members were away from home she would go on:

"Where you Mama?"

"At Grandma's"

"Where you Papa?"

"At the field."

"Where you Moto?" meaning my sister Myrtle.

"In Nevada."



*"My sister Elva whom Maggie referred to as 'Auba.' The styles of 1913 seem a little awkward for the rough country she seems to be in. She was eighteen at the time." Clarice Tate Uhlmeier.*

"Where you Po?" my brother Perl.

"He's working."

No matter how often or how far apart the times I found her there, the conversation would always end:

"He tired. You gimme bread." Her apron full she would start up the road toward the Indian camps in the foothills.

After I was married and moved to a home of my own, at least once a year I would expect a visit from Maggie. Always she came to see each of my children after they were born. There would be a bang on my back door accompanied by a "Yoo Hoo," and there she would be. The time she came to see my first baby he was having a spell of colic. He had cried and cried until I was distracted. She offered to take him and I gladly handed him over to her. She held him in her arms cradle fashion and with a series of violent jerks, accompanied by a quick "Ch! Ch! Ch!" he was soon asleep. I've tried the same but don't seem to have the right technique or the charm, whichever it takes.

The baby in his bed, she would sit down and start:

"Where you Auba?" and on we went through the familiar routine. This over, she would sit a few minutes then rise, saying, "Mebbe so he go." With a filled apron, she went.

My daughter and my father died within a month of each other. Shortly after the second funeral there was a bang on the rear door, with the "Yoo-hoo." Maggie had come to pay her respects.

She came in and sat down on a kitchen chair.

"You girl. Too bad, too bad. You papa. Too bad. Good man!" No higher tribute had been paid them than these sincere words from this silent woman. She sat a few moments then started, "Where you Auba?" We were off once more, and after this the usual "Mebbe so he go."

The last time I saw Maggie was shortly before we moved from Big Pine. News traveled fast among the Indians. Came the familiar bang and "You hoo." She came in and sat

down.

"You go?"

"Yes, Maggie, me go."

"You no come back?"

"Oh yes, Maggie, me come back to see my Mama. Me see you sometimes." There was a pause and her dark eyes darted here and there.

"Where you Auba?" The same routine once more. The momentous questions asked and answered, she rose.

"Mebbe so he go." With apron once more bulging away she went.

Maggie came to a violent end, beaten to death by a liquor-crazed Indian. The fellow who did it was one who had stopped in at my home with my son many times after school, on his way to the camps, sometimes playing for hours in my yard and crawling behind my kitchen range to get warm.

This was Maggie as I remember her; Maggie Bowers, known as Maggie Deep Spring Jim. ❀



*Edna Allen with Louis and Ida Stewart, well known and respected Paiute couple. Both were younger than Maggie but would have known her well. Taken in 1970 in front of their home at the Indian Camp west of Big Pine. Clarice Tate Uhlmeier.*



# Railroading

## Dreams



*Keeler, Nov. 18, 1955*

*Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum*

*words and images dedicated to a railroad I never knew ...*

*by David A. Wright*

*Photos by David A. Wright, except as otherwise noted*

I was alive when the whistles of the last narrow gauge railroad east of the Rocky Mountains were still heard in the Owens Valley, but I never heard them. I was much too young to go see the source of the sounds in the sagebrush east of Owens River on my own. By the time I had learned of the Carson & Colorado, I was fifteen, and the railroad had been dead and gone for eleven years.

The more I read about the narrow gauge, the more I yearned to see it. That day would come upon my graduation from high school in 1974. I

had a choice of spending the entire summer on a ranch, high in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado with some relatives I didn't know, or having the car for a week to go where I wanted. I chose the latter.

During my high school years, I had fueled the fires in my heart with the lore of eastern California and Nevada ghost towns and the skeletal limbs of ghost railroads that served them. The Explorer had been in his pupa stage all those years, had now been born, and needed to spread his wings.

My father and I spent a couple of days making sure the family car, a 1964 Rambler, was in shape to stand up to the rigors of sagebrush bashing, while my mother prepared and packed enough food and goodies to last out a week of teenage gluttony.

Three hours after leaving our Mojave desert home, I caught my first sight of the Carson & Colorado I had so yearned to see! Here I was in Keeler, fourteen years after the last train signaled the trainmaster and rails had been taken up! The station and depot were still there, the raised

bed still easily discernible, heading north out of town!

The next day, I drove northward along the southern end of the line, between Keeler and Manzanar. I walked over the remains of Owenyo that warm summer day of 1974. At that time, there was more left at the site to explore through. But then, as now, I was depressed by how swiftly the desert wind erased the once busy community. On that day, fourteen years after the trains left, I was left saddened. Fourteen years later, on a warm spring morning in 1988, I visited the site again, and again walked away dispirited. On a cold winter day in February 1990 I walked through the site and once again was left with the same feeling. Maybe it's the yearning to have been born a generation or two earlier, to have seen these sites while they were still in operation, or just to have seen them before the decades of the despoiler after the late '50s.

Driving northward along the line from Owenyo back on that day in 1974, gazing at the grade as I slowly moved along I spied what I thought was an old bottle. I stopped, got out of the car, and walked over to it. Just short of the bottle, I twisted my ankle on something sticking out of the ground: I had found the first of my collection of C&C spikes. The bottle was a contemporary Budweiser bottle.

Since that time, I moved to the Eastern Sierra and began to search the remains of the Carson & Colorado Railway. From Mound House, Nevada to Keeler I have visited, driven along, walked, and searched the grade, station sites, sidings, spurs, ghost towns, and other sites along the right-of-way. I have walked through the only tunnel on the line at Montgomery Pass, pondered the immaculate rock work of the embankments wherever the grade traversed unstable and uneven ground, and pined to live back in the days when the railroad was young, to experience first hand the sights, sounds, and smell of sagebrush, the thundering steel belching out clouds of wood smoke as ore cars rolled along the



*Above: The Carson & Colorado Depot at KEELER was converted into a private home shortly after abandonment by Southern Pacific*

*Below: Site of Jiggerville (Boland), the true terminus of the C&C; also the site of Inyo Development Co. Keeler is in the background.*



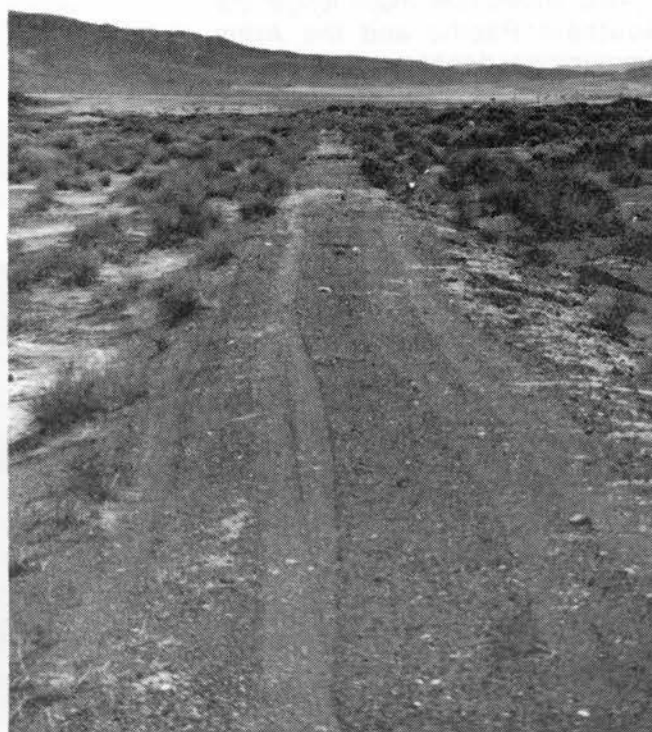


*Right: Ties and spikes still lie on the ground on part of the MOCK SPUR, which branched off the main line a few yards north of the present junction of Hwy. 136 and Dolomite Loop Road. Glasses and a bit of refreshment provide scale. March 1988.*



*Below left: Rails still stick out from under HIGHWAY 136 at the junction of that road and the Dolomite Loop Road. This is one of three places that narrow gauge rails are still to be found on the ground. February 1990*

*The empty mainline toward Keeler, at the junction of Highway 136 and Dolomite Loop Road, February 1990*



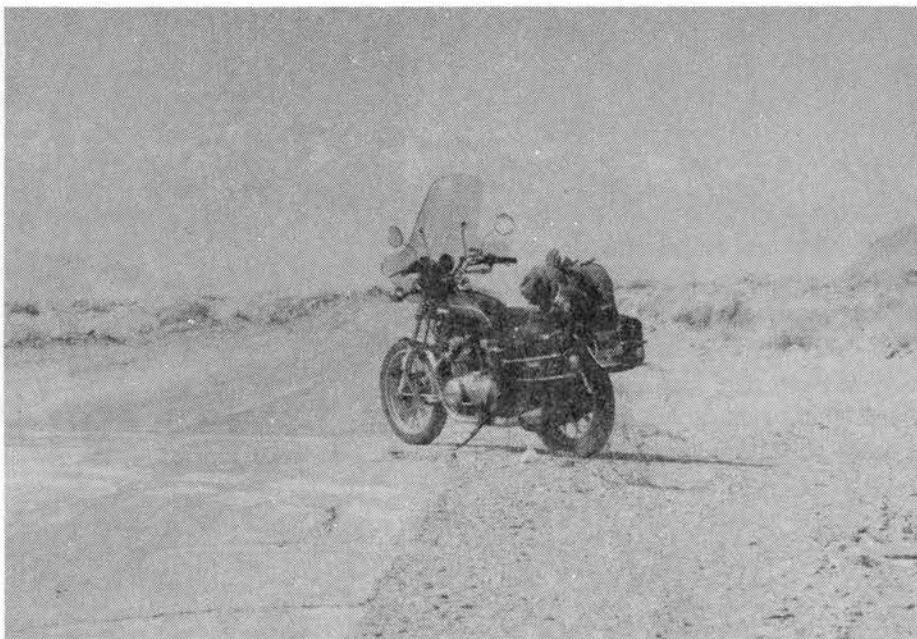
diminutive rails of narrow spacing, hauling precious cargo from Candelaria, Montgomery City, Benton, Blind Springs, Cerro Gordo, Aurora and the many mines in between.

The Southern Pacific started to abandon sections of the railroad in 1905, and continues to this day. 1905 marked the year that Hawthorne, Nevada, was bypassed and left off of the main line; in 1932 the rails on the Candelaria, Nevada branch were pulled up. In 1934, the northernmost section between Mound House and Churchill had its rails removed. The grade between Tonopah Junction and Benton, the most spectacular part of the entire route, up and over Montgomery Pass, was abandoned in 1938 and the rails were taken away in 1942. In 1943, the line was again shortened when the Laws to Benton segment was chopped off. Thirty years ago, in 1960, the rest of the narrow gauge was left to desert winds and memories.

Only one section of the original C&C remained for years afterward, that of the section between Churchill and Mina, Nevada (though in standard gauge form). When I drove through the area in May of 1990, the rails from Hawthorne to Mina were gone, fresh tracks of the equipment used to remove them left behind.

Who knows how much longer the Southern Pacific and the Army ammunition depot at Hawthorne, which uses its services, will keep alive the last remaining vestige of the railroad (Churchill to Thorne) that turned up the desert soil with horse-drawn Fresno scrapers back in the summer of 1880. But as far as the narrow gauge through Inyo, thirty years have gone by since the rails were doffed. Mono's share of steel rail has been gone for two score and seven years.

There is so little left, yet the experience of walking along a path of history is rewarding if one is willing to explore a little off the beaten path. Just three days before writing this, I was thrilled to find, during a refreshing afternoon thundershower, the foundation of a stone marker that noted the boundary of California and

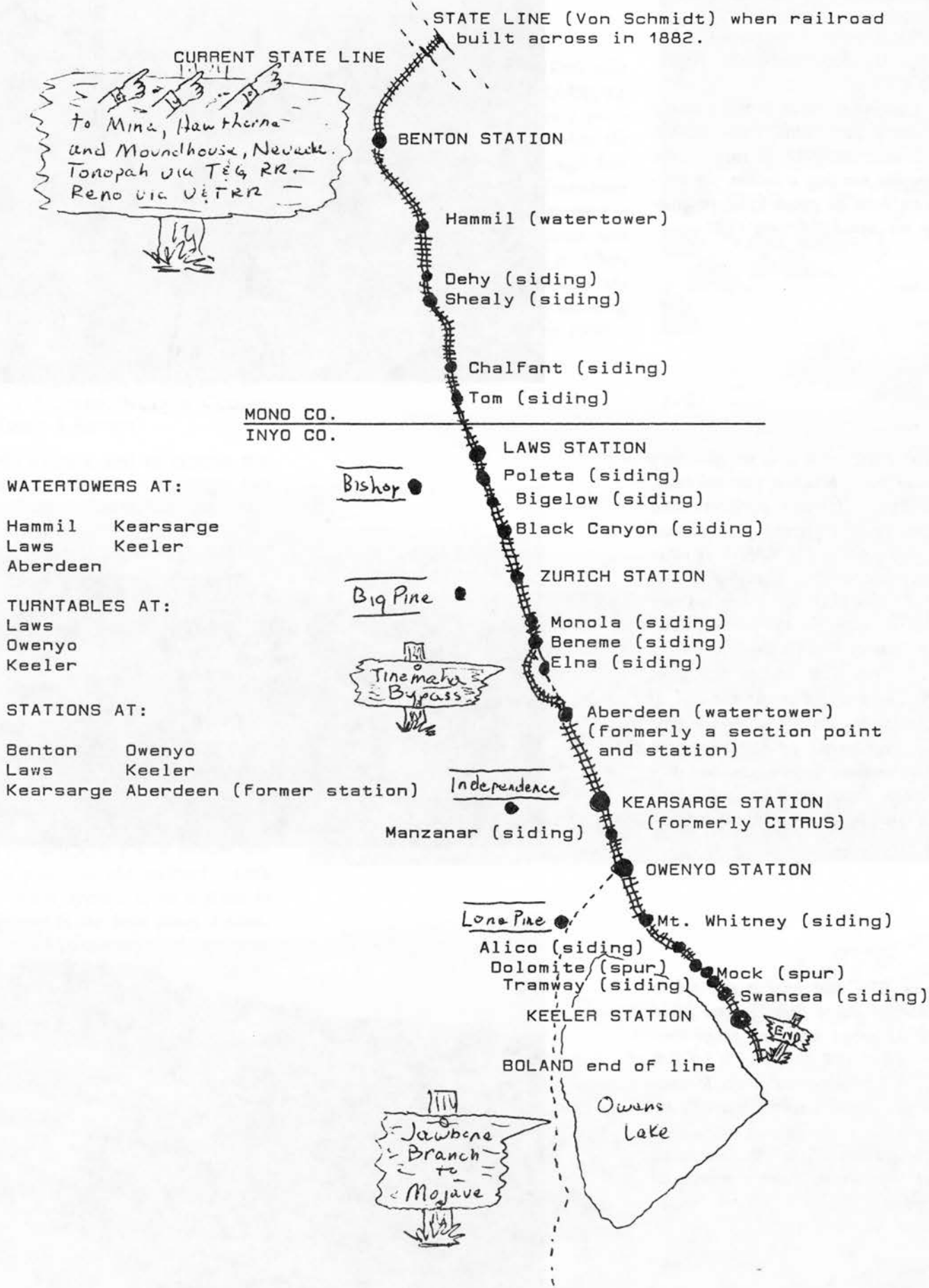


*Above: My motorcycle sits on the former rail crossing of MOCK SPUR as it crosses the Dolomite Loop Road. Railroad crossing warning markings painted more than thirty years ago are still found on the pavement. Bike carries sleeping bag because I was just off graveyard shift and, hating to waste exploration time sleeping, I can nap later, somewhere in the sun. March 1988*

*Another place that rails are still on the ground can be found on the DOLOMITE SPUR. These rails and the crossing marks on the road are still found where the spur branched off to service Dolomite. March 1988*







*Top: Looking south at former crossing with once busy road from LONE PINE to OWENYO. (I suppose the county has not had a reason, for thirty years now, to patch killer potholes along the way.) February 1990*



*Center: Look. Can you see the busy junction point between two railroads, with two different purposes and equipment of different proportions? This is the site of OWENYO. It takes a sharp eye to spot anything in this photo, and a sharp eye when walking within its space on the parched land. If you cannot find Owenyo, just drive out the Lone Pine Station road from Hwy. 395 and follow to the end of the pavement. The site stretched along the former grade of the standard gauge "Jawbone Branch" and the narrow gauge for about a half mile, both north and south of the end of the pavement.*



*Bottom: This was once a site where the narrow gauge literally was lifted above its proud standard gauge cousin; the ORE TRANSFER TRESTLE. The narrow gauge locomotives would pull a row of ore cars up the trestle, under which would be spotted ore cars of the standard gauge trains. The bottom dump doors would be opened, filling the cars below. Owenyo, February 1990*





Nevada. It is prominently displayed in the classic photo of the first train pulled by woodburner #6, the "Hawthorne," into California in 1882. Its location is a third of a mile inside Nevada now, but when the road was built through the area, it was the official von Schmidt division point for another decade. A few feet away, I found another spike to add to my collection.

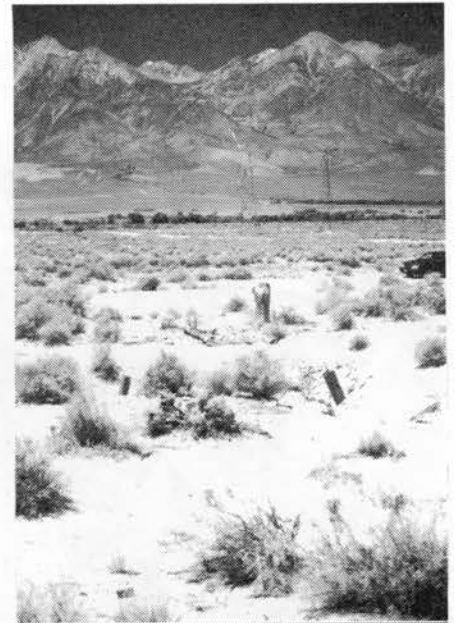
My photo and spike collection has grown over the years. They are permanently displayed with their counterparts from such other railroads as the Eureka & Palisade, Nevada Central, Yellow Pine, Tonopah & Tidewater, Tonopah & Goldfield, Bullfrog & Goldfield, Las Vegas & Tonopah, Virginia & Truckee, Nevada Copper Belt, Bodie & Benton.

I still explore and re-explore the line and its remains. I no longer live in the Eastern Sierra, but can reach the tail end of the line from my home, an hour-and-change southeast of Keeler. The grandeur of the countryside, the quiet, and the unexpected to be found in Carson & Colorado country moves me, and suits my dogs who explore with me. You can find me out there walking the grade with my camera and dog; driving along it or on it with my pickup; or even gingerly piloting my new car along its dusty grade.

*Center: The grade (in foreground) just north of ABERDEEN, a station and section point in the railroad's early years. What appears to be a grade in background is the berm along a water ditch which patchworks the area, once nourishing the grasses that still grow here. July 1990.*

*Bottom: Foundations of the water tank at ABERDEEN, once important as the only water between Keeler and Laws. Faint traces of concrete are all that show a few buildings were once here.*

*To look at it now, there is little clue that CITRUS (later KEARSARGE), east of Independence, was once proposed as county seat of Inyo. When the railroad was constructed through here in 1883, the citizens of Independence were dismayed enough to attempt a petition to move the courthouse here and build a town around it. There was a small settlement around the railroad buildings for a time, including businesses and a saloon. July 1990*





Top: The bridge that carried the line over the OWENS RIVER to bypass TINEMAHUA RESERVOIR. The railroad originally went north along the east side of the valley, but in the '20s, when Tinemaha was built, a detour was forced, merging back into the original line north of the lake's anticipated high water mark. My dog, Reno II, who had never walked a railroad bridge before, slipped between the ties and took a bath in the river. I, who was so busy laughing at Reno II, stepped back onto the rotten lumber walkway and joined him. Camera, zoom lens, and recorder managed to survive the baptism. July 1990.



Center: OWENS RIVER BRIDGE, looking south. The river had cut out the far bank and left the end of the bridge hanging over the water. The point where the TINEMAHUA BYPASS broke away from the original line is a short distance past the river. So is the "Enthusiastic Explorer Express," the car I gingerly guided along the grade into a soft alkali hole. July 1990



Bottom: the grade of the TINEMAHUA BYPASS as it gently curves around the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power housing at Tinemaha dam. July 1990



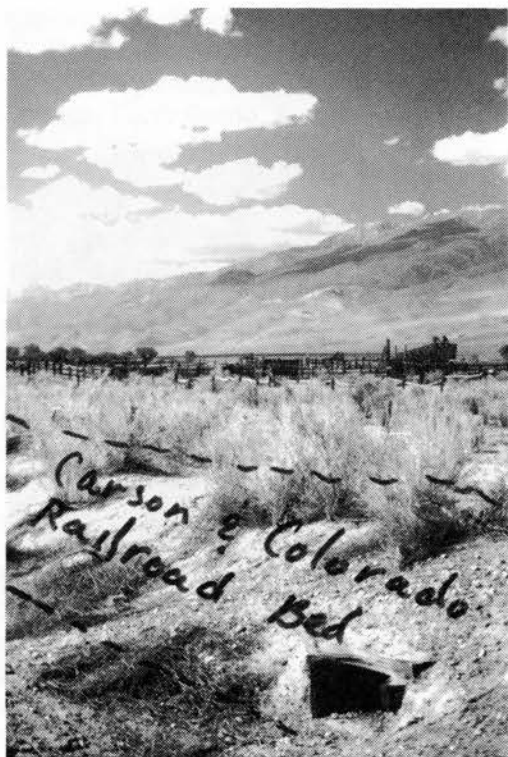
*Reno II urges me to come explore the grade as it squeezes between the end of POVERTY HILLS and TINEMAH RESERVOIR (or is he thinking he wants to drink the reservoir dry?). July 1990*



*Don Oliphant of Trona gazes at some nice trout lollygagging around in the water below the bridge crossing the canal south of BIG PINE. This remnant lies alongside Hwy. 395. Watch out for that train Don! June 1989*

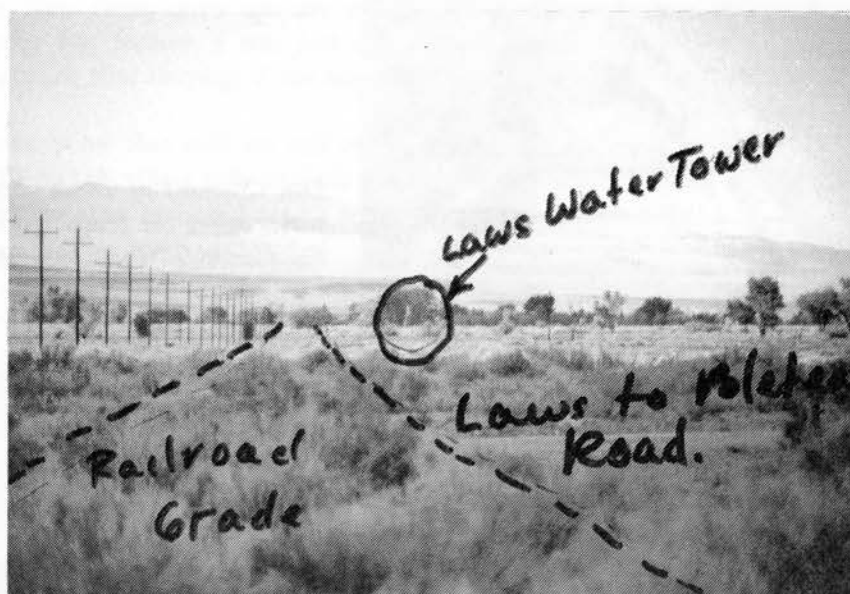
*ZURICH STATION east of Big Pine must have been a busy place, judging from the size of the concrete foundations here. The grade leaves the site north of the loop road on the east side of the foundation. View is eastward toward Big Pine and the Sierra beyond. July 1990*





Site of POLETA out on East Line Street, past the White Mountain Research Station. June 1989

Looking northward from POLETA to LAWS. June 1989



View from the loading platform of LAWS DEPOT to the Sierra, Buttermilk country, and Basin Mountain. June 1989





*The roadbed runs below this old mining structure in HAMMIL VALLEY near the Zack Brothers Ranch. This part of the railroad, north of Laws to Tonopah Junction in Nevada, was abandoned in 1939, the rails torn up in 1942. July 1990*



*The route as it entered a short canyon below BLIND SPRINGS HILL, just south of BENTON. July 1990*



*Reno II explores the grade just north of BENTON (in background). July 1990*



*Top: The grade as it runs along US 6 north of BENION. The State Agriculture Inspection Station is in the background. July 1990*



*Center: Looking northward from CALIFORNIA/NEVADA state line into Nevada. But there was once a bit of California left. When the railroad was built through here in 1882, the von Schmidt boundary was the official boundary recognized by the two states. At this point, California extended a third of a mile further. The current boundary was surveyed and became official in 1899. July 1990*



*Bottom: Compare this photo with that of Engine #6, the "Hawthorne," posed at the state line with passengers and crew around the engine and a STONE MONUMENT marking the border. +A beer can sits on the foundation of that marker in the lower left corner, indicating the von Schmidt state boundary, now one-half mile inside Nevada. July 1990 ❁*





*Owenyo, looking north, 1947.*

*Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum*

*First train crossing California/Nevada state line.*

*Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum*



# The Narrow Gauge Railroad of Owens Valley

by Beverly Webster

*Photos by Bill Webster*

April 29, 1960 marked the end of a railroad saga spanning eighty years when the "Slim Princess," the last operating narrow gauge train west of the Rockies, made its final run between Keeler and Laws in the Owens Valley.

Then owned by Southern Pacific, this railroad had changed names several times, helped to build fortunes for a few farsighted, enterprising, some not-too-scrupulous, individuals, brought a transportation system and new industry to the Owens Valley, and become a significant part of the Valley's history. I cannot say whether you could set your watch by this little train, but it was a familiar sight puffing along the eastern side of Owens Valley at the foot of the White and Inyo mountains. From 1880 to 1960 it hauled freight, and until 1932 it also provided passenger service to the people of the Owens Valley who wanted to travel to San Francisco, Los Angeles, and more faraway places across the country.

It all started when the line was incorporated as the Carson and Colorado Railroad in 1880. The man considered by historians to be the brain behind the new railroad was William Sharon, whose character history books do not treat kindly. Most chroniclers of that period make it clear that Sharon's financial manipulations crossed the boundaries of propriety even for those years. He was president of the Virginia City branch of the Bank of California, California's oldest bank. Evidence is strong that Sharon, working with William Ralston of the bank's headquarters in San Francisco, had questionable dealings during the Comstock

bonanza that resulted in losses to many San Francisco investors who had bought their worthless stock. After disclosure of the stock schemes, Ralston resigned his bank post.

Although it has never been determined that he committed suicide, it seems more than coincidence that Ralston, a known strong swimmer, drowned while bathing in one of his favorite haunts near the Golden Gate on the day of his resignation. Regardless of his unorthodox business deals, Sharon somehow escaped blame at that time and managed to inherit a substantial amount of Ralston's property, including the Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Sharon had played a significant role in development of the highly lucrative Virginia and Truckee Railroad. As he saw his business ventures tied to the fortunes of the Comstock Lode fading, however, he turned to mining possibilities further south in Nevada and to another railroad. After Ralston's demise another major figure in post-goldrush San Francisco, D. Ogden Mills, took over his duties as president of the Bank of California. Sharon proposed to Mills the building of a narrow gauge railroad continuing south from the terminus of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad at Mound House, Nevada, to tap into the mines being developed in southwestern Nevada.

Sharon's most convincing arguments to Mills for the railroad were that it would be inexpensive to build and maintain and it would be a money maker. It would be narrow gauge and utilitarian, and, used

largely to carry freight, the railroad would have no need for ornate rolling stock such as that on the Virginia and Truckee. Sharon also saw that using cheap Chinese labor to build it would be another way to save money. Convincing Mills that this small railroad would be a sure source of financial profit from the southern mines, Sharon succeeded in getting his approval to start construction.

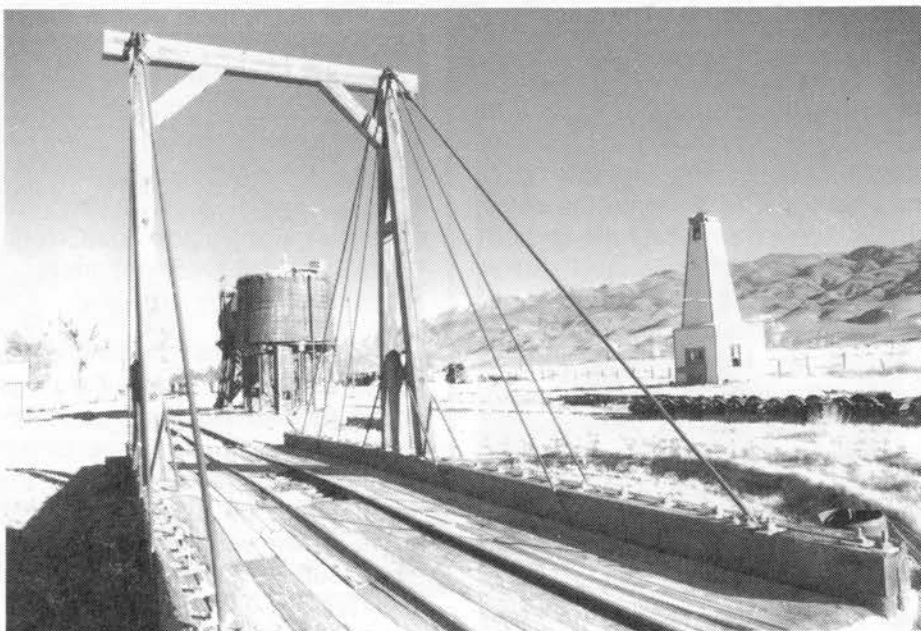
At that time Mound House, ten miles east of Carson City, was an important railroad center on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, the short line that served the silver mines in the Comstock Lode. The Carson and Colorado Railroad would continue south from Mound House on the Carson River and travel along Nevada's western border to Ft. Mojave on the Colorado River in Southern Nevada. The two rivers provided the railroad's name.

Ground breaking and laying of the first rails took place at Mound House on May 31, 1880. A year later tracks had been laid as far as Hawthorne, a distance of one hundred miles. During that summer of 1881, however, the proposed route to Nevada's western mines was changed when in addition to the Cerro Gordo Mine near Owens Lake more rich lodes were rumored to be locked in California's Eastern Sierra Nevada. The Carson and Colorado would go into California and tap the business created by these mines.

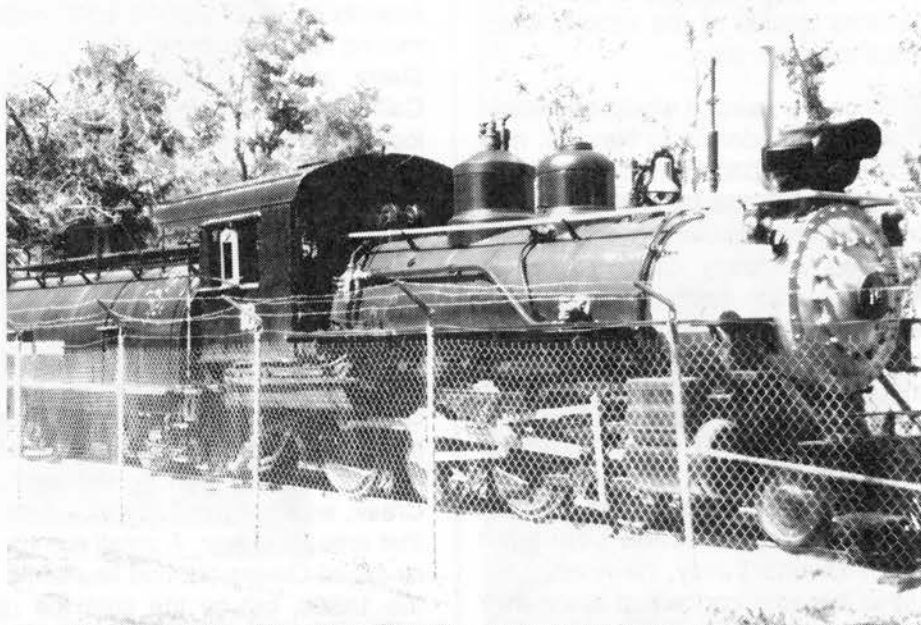
The revised course introduced new challenges to the builders as they had to abandon original plans for level alignment and devise strategies to cross Mt. Montgomery Pass from



*Turntable, water tank, and pump house at Laws Railroad Museum, Laws, CA. Pump house and turntable are from original town of Laws.*



*Engine #18 is displayed in a small park in Independence, CA. Engine #18 is a Baldwin 10-wheel, 4-6-0 locomotive, built in 1911 originally for Nevada-California-Oregon Railroad.*



*Depot at Laws Railroad Museum, Laws, CA*



Nevada to California. The pass was over 7,000 feet, 2,700 feet higher than the original route. The eastern ascent with grades from 2.3% to 2.77% required building trestles and considerable cutting through rocky mountainsides to navigate the steep climbs. To help negotiate the western descent into California construction crews bored a 247-foot tunnel through the rocky mountainside just west of Mt. Montgomery station. Building the railroad over this mountainous stretch took a year, and the first train arrived at Benton in California in January, 1883. Travelling this section of the Carson and Colorado continued to pose problems throughout the railroad's life as extra engines had to be added to pull the loads over the summit, and trains often became victims of the snow's fierce force over the pass.

Since the railroad would operate in California in addition to Nevada, new incorporation papers had to be filed. Thus in 1882 the narrow gauge line became the Carson and Colorado Railroad Company, Second Division, for the section operating in Nevada and the Carson and Colorado Railroad Company, Third Division, for that operating in California.

By March, 1883 tracks had been laid as far as Laws, and regular train service in that town started on April 1. As rail construction continued down Owens Valley, however, residents became concerned since their towns were being bypassed. The population centers had grown on the west side of the Valley while the railroad travelled down the east side closer to the mines, and the townspeople had to travel considerable distances to use the train. Eventually, horse-drawn stages from the established communities met the trains, thus alleviating the problem to some extent. In 1911 and 1912 there were serious prospects that an electric railway would connect Bishop and Laws, but this project never materialized.

The narrow gauge reached Keeler, then called Hawley, on the north shore of Owens Lake in July, 1883, and at this time Mr. Mills decided to take a look at the railroad he was building. After a tortuous trip from

San Francisco, most of it in the hot, lone, dusty, uncomfortable, utilitarian passenger car of the narrow gauge line, he arrived at Keeler and made his famous comment: "Either we have built the railroad three hundred miles too long or three hundred years too soon." The Carson and Colorado Railroad, Third Division, therefore, ended permanently at Keeler.

Despite Mr. Mills' feelings about the Carson and Colorado, the coming of the railroad did bring benefits to Owens Valley. It ended the isolation of the Valley residents and their dependence on slow, very limited horse-drawn vehicles. They had a north-south rail connection and most importantly a link through Nevada to the nation's main east-west line. Availability of a railroad encouraged mining exploration in the Eastern Sierra, and, as is always the case in California, speculators in land development prospered.

Many of the stations along the new railroad line soon became towns, of course some more important than others. As a result of the railroad, Laws became a thriving distribution center for the Valley, transporting mining supplies, ore of various kinds, cattle, farming equipment, agricultural products, and passengers, mostly miners. Laws, then called Bishop Creek, was not the first settlement in that area, however. A small community called Owensville had flourished in the 1860s, but by the time the railroad came through all trace of a town was gone. In about the same location before Owensville the first cabin in the Owens Valley had been built in 1861 — "at the big bend of the Owens River."

The Carson and Colorado's daily mixed train became known as the Slim Princess. The mixture included a mail and baggage car, a passenger car, a variety of freight cars, and a caboose. A trip from one end of the line, Mound House to Keeler, took two days, with an overnight stop at Candelaria, Nevada.

In 1890 one of the more famous shipments of the Carson and Colorado from the Owens Valley was two hundred cars of marble, from the

Inyo Marble Works just north of Keeler, destined for San Francisco. The marble was to be used in construction of the ornate D.O. Mills Building that today remains a landmark in that city's Financial District and a survivor of the 1906 and 1989 earthquakes.

Business continued to be good on the narrow gauge until the early 1890s when mining traffic in Nevada declined and the nation's economy took a downturn. Expecting to improve the railroad's financial picture, the owners in 1892 again reorganized to incorporate the separate divisions into one company called the Carson and Colorado Railway Company.

Due to a recasting of players in this country's railroad-building epoch, the Carson and Colorado underwent a major change in the year 1900. Early that year Collis P. Huntington, head of Southern Pacific and last of the Big Four responsible for building the transcontinental railroad, purchased the Carson and Colorado for \$2,750,000 from the Mills estate. Huntington, unfortunately, died later that year and was not to know what an opportune purchase he had made for his company.

The new leader of Southern Pacific, Edward Henry Harriman, was a railroad tycoon from New York and father of Averell Harriman, one of America's more famous statesmen of the twentieth century. When he took over Southern Pacific, E.H. Harriman already controlled Union Pacific Railroad and for a few years enjoyed the power that the joining of these two railroads brought.

Harriman saw the Carson and Colorado as instrumental in the expansion of his railroad empire throughout the West, mainly using it to connect Reno with Southern California. A silver boom in Tonopah, Nevada, and a gold rush in Goldfield, Nevada, however, pushed the newly acquired narrow gauge line into a prime position and diverted Harriman from his original plans. For a few years the Carson and Colorado had a monopoly on shipping mining equipment and supplies into the new Nevada mines along with materials and merchan-



dise for the towns that sprang up. And from the mines it brought out the silver and gold ore to be refined. These boom times for the railroad lasted about ten years.

To garner maximum profits from the new Nevada bonanzas, Mr. Harriman saw the need to streamline transporting freight from the narrow gauge Carson and Colorado to the main Southern Pacific line at Reno. The narrow gauge picked up the ore at Tonopah Junction, where it had been brought from the mines by mule trains, and carried it to Mound House. There it again had to be transferred, this time to the Virginia and Truckee standard gauge cars, one more slow, cumbersome, and expensive operation. Because of the transferring between narrow and standard gauge and reliance on the short-line Virginia and Truckee, traffic moved slowly and unloaded cars caused major congestion at transfer points. In 1904 the Carson and Colorado became standard gauge from Tonopah Junction to Mound House, which eased the situation somewhat, but Harriman still had to rely on the Virginia and Truckee as connector.

His solution was the Hazen Cut-Off, a 28-mile standard gauge line from Hazen, some forty miles east of Reno, connecting with the Carson and Colorado at Churchill. It would bypass Mound House and eliminate the Virginia and Truckee altogether.

In the meantime the narrow gauge Tonopah Railroad had been built from Tonopah to connect with the Carson and Colorado. This short line soon became standard gauge, and by 1905 shipment of ore from the mines to the main Southern Pacific line could be made all on standard gauge. Mina became an important railhead with the standard gauge cars continuing on the Tonopah Railroad to the Nevada mines and traffic going west into California transferring to the Carson and Colorado's narrow gauge cars. A third rail had been added to the nine-mile Mina to Tonopah Junction segment to accommodate the narrow gauge train.

The railroad that now included the Hazen Cut-Off became in 1905 the

Nevada and California Railway, which it remained until 1912 when it took the Southern Pacific name.

One of Harriman's promises when he took over Southern Pacific had been to connect the narrow gauge Carson and Colorado with the main Southern Pacific line to Los Angeles. Not until the beginning of construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct did work on this link finally start. This massive project that would ultimately bring water of the Sierra to parched Los Angeles needed a railroad to transport equipment and supplies to the Owens Valley, and the powers behind the undertaking pressured Southern Pacific to build a rail line.

In May of 1908, then, work finally began at Mojave on a standard gauge railroad north to connect with the narrow gauge Nevada and California Railway. This route, too, was not without its share of construction problems. Cutting east to avoid Red Rock Canyon, the tracks had to cross El Paso Summit near the community of Searles. Here Southern Pacific constructed a 4,340-foot tunnel, a project that took the better part of a year. In October, 1910 the 143-mile Southern Pacific branch known as "The Jawbone" connected with the narrow gauge Nevada and California Railway at Owenyo, near Lone Pine,

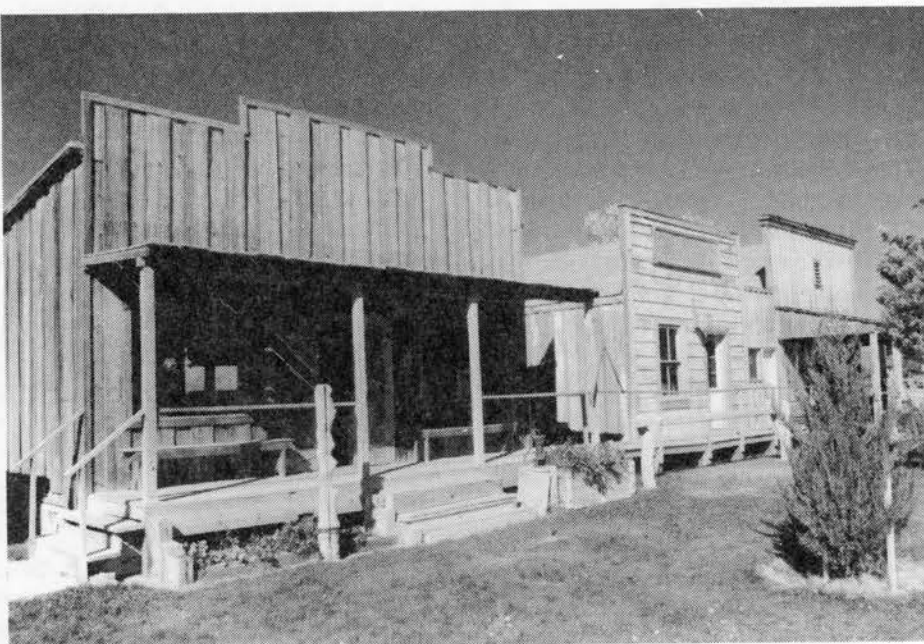
finally offering people of the Owens Valley rail transportation to Los Angeles.

As the link between the two lines, Owenyo became an important passenger terminal. It was a one-day trip from Los Angeles to Owenyo where through passengers stayed overnight to catch a train the next day. Then for several years during the 1920s an overnight sleeper ran from Los Angeles to Owenyo, thus avoiding the overnight stopover at Owenyo. There was service six days a week from Owenyo to Laws and three days a week from Laws to Mina, Nevada, where passengers transferred to the standard gauge train to continue to the main line at Hazen.

In his monograph "The Slim Princess" John Hungerford states that 1924-29 was the heyday of the narrow gauge in Owens Valley. "It was not uncommon for 1,000-1,800 carloads of sheep and 400-500 carloads of cattle to be shipped out in a season."

It would seem that the transportation system of the Eastern Sierra was complete with rail service both north and south and connections with the transcontinental lines. Nothing is static, however, and as California's highway system improved Owens Valley

*Buildings on the main street of Laws Railroad Museum, Laws, CA*



became part of that network, and automobiles and trucks had easy access to the Eastern Sierra. As had been the case with railroads in so many other parts of the country, this railroad slowly lost out to trucks and cars as its freight and passenger service gradually declined. Passengers became so scarce on the Mina to Laws run, historical accounts say that during summer the train often stopped at Walker Lake for the crew to swim when there were no riders to enforce schedules. Passenger service in the Owens Valley was finally discontinued in 1932.

1932 to 1938 saw the closing of sections of the railroad in Nevada, and in 1943 the line from Benton to Laws was shut down. By 1950 the only operating service of the narrow gauge railroad was the 71-mile segment between Laws and Keeler, with mining products continuing to be its main freight. Southern Pacific finally received approval to abandon this last section in 1960, and although the final run from Keeler to Laws was April 29, 1960 the Laws-Keeler branch of the Southern Pacific officially terminated on April 30.

During their lifetimes the Carson and Colorado Railroad, Carson and Colorado Railway Company, Nevada and California Railway, and ultimately Southern Pacific Railroad operated a variety of equipment as they converted from wood to coal and finally to diesel. To keep costs down, the Carson and Colorado usually used equipment inherited from other railroads, and Southern Pacific brought in more equipment from its other narrow gauge lines after it took over. Three Baldwin steam engines, however, did yeoman service for years — SP Numbers 8, 9, and 18. In 1954 a narrow gauge General Electric 450-horsepower diesel replaces the steam engines, but Number 9 was kept for backup. Number 8 is now on exhibit in Carson City, and Number 18 is in Independence.

After closing down the Laws-Keeler branch Southern Pacific donated to the City of Bishop and Inyo County Locomotive Number 9, some box cars, a caboose, the turntable, the water tank, and a piece of

track, the nucleus for today's railroad museum. Building on what Southern Pacific had left and the remains of a set for a Steve McQueen movie made soon after the railroad's departure, members of the Bishop Museum and Historical Society determined to keep Laws a going operation. On April 1, 1966, exactly eighty-three years from the date the first train came through Laws, they dedicated the museum.

Buildings from other parts of Inyo and Mono counties have been brought in to complete the set, all done by volunteer labor. The buildings are filled with period furniture and artifacts of the turn of the century when Laws was a vital railroad town. The depot with its baggage room, passenger waiting room, and the station master's workroom gives a feeling that soon the train will be coming.

The town of Laws is named fittingly for one of the Carson and Colorado's old-timers. Robert Laws was superintendent of the construction crew when building of the railroad began at Mound House in 1880. A former Central Pacific roadmaster, he had a long career with the Carson and Colorado, and later when Southern Pacific took over he was kept on as Superintendent of the railroad.

Although the narrow gauge's roadbed sans rails can be seen most of the way down the Owens Valley, most of the towns that were created by the railroad have disappeared. At Owenyo and Kearsage weeds and sagebrush have taken over. The depot still stands in Keeler, although it has been converted to living quarters. Across the street from the Keeler depot is a plaque announcing that this was the "end of the line" for the Carson and Colorado Railroad. Except to the trained eye of an experienced railroad detective, signs that this was where the steam shop for the rail line was located with all the attendant activity are gone.

As the narrow gauge flourished for a time and has now vanished, the people of power whose dreams were tied to the railroad have also disappeared from the scene. The men who bought and sold legislators like shoes

and whose voices caused people to tremble are silenced — Huntington, Harriman, Mills, Sharon, Ralston. Except for Huntington, they are known to few today, and evidence of their enterprise in western Nevada and Owens Valley is mostly gone.

At Laws, however, some of the memory of the Slim Princess has been preserved. Today over 20,000 people from various parts of the world visit the reconstructed railroad town. Here they can climb aboard the old steam engine, ring its bell, and become engineer on Engine Number 9. ❀

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# IN A FAR AWAY VALLEY

## *A Record of Service in the Home Mission Field*

*by Margaret Gilmore Phillips*

### 1935

*This story is written in loving tribute in the memory of the Rev. William N. Price who passed away July 10th of this year [1935] after a life time of service on the home mission field.*

*The last quarter of a century was spent among the Paiute Indians in a little mountain valley on the east side of the Sierra-Nevada range. It was here that the author came to know and admire Mr. Price. His exceeding modesty made it almost impossible to learn of his past work; but through his devotion to the cause, he was led to explain details which were of great interest in piecing together the story of his life.*

*In addition to his mission work, Mr. Price did considerable writing for religious publications. When his home burned three years ago (1932), he had completed a large part of a book of religious allegory. The manuscript burned, and the writing had to be begun all over again. Until his last illness, he continued the effort to recall by sober concentration passages which had first been the result of happy inspiration.*

*Mr. Price was born April 4, 1868, in Ebenezer, Tennessee.*

On a Sunday afternoon of fall, October back in 1910, a tall, slim Tennessean quietly entered the gambling tryst of the Paiutes. About 150 Indians lounged about, most of them playing, others looking on. A couple dozen women were the most active gamblers.

The white man spoke to one of the Indians. This brave introduced the Rev. William N. Price to the gathering. Because of the novelty, he was allowed to speak. Here was something new, and the curious red people were ready to listen. In telling the story of this moment, Mr. Price likened himself to Paul of Athens, where the seekers after something new were his audience. The calm sincerity and graciousness of the man found response in the more thoughtful. The half-hour's talk (through an interpreter) made a favorable impression; then the gambling went merrily on. But the missionary had a promise to meet with them next Sunday.

This was the Rev. Price's introduction to the field in which he was to spend the remainder of his life. He had ridden horseback over the ranges into a mountain valley, cupped between the High Sierras and the White Mountains, cut off from the rest of the world except for a

narrow pass to the south and one to the north. This Owens Valley, made famous by Mary Austin as "The Land of Little Rain" was the home of the Paiute Indian. It was a land of sagebrush, irrigated ranches, miners and Indians.

Coming as a missionary of God, Rev. Price had looked over the field, and decided to stay. Entirely without knowledge of the Indian life or language, his problem was how and where to begin. As far as spiritual matters were concerned, the Indians were still running wild. From rough miners and cattlemen, they had learned the white man's vices, but they were untouched by the better example of family folk. The missionary came on the Indians out of a clear sky, as he himself once expressed it.

In his quiet way he made the acquaintance of several Paiutes, and he learned that on Sunday afternoon they met in a certain "dive" to gamble and carouse. There, he decided, was the most effective place to introduce himself. That this gentle, earnest man should have delivered his first sermon in the new field in such a place enhances his memory with a glamour like that of the courageous early days of Christianity.

For four weeks he went each Sunday to this favorite hangout of the strongest and boldest of the tribe, to tell them of Christ. The gambling element began to realize the missionary's opposition to what they stood for. The crowd became divided as, for the first time the question of right and wrong in this degenerated life was raised for the Indians.

After the break, services were held out of doors, half-a-mile away. Only the interested attended, while the others stayed at the gambling dive. For a year the outdoor services were held in all weather — sun, rain and snow; and the temperature varied from the hottest of desert sun to howling icy blasts from the shadowing mountains.

The missionary's real work had begun. His was far from being a "Sunday job." Through living, as well as through preaching and teaching, this man offered the word of God. His home was built in the midst of the reservation about three miles from the little town of Bishop.

Mr. Price was about forty when he took up this work

in a virgin field. Deciding to stay, he sent for his young wife to come up from the mining camp mission at Knowles, California, where they had been working before. She brought their little boy of three and the baby girl. Even today Owens Valley remains in many respects as nearly a frontier community as may be found in the breadth of the continent, and a quarter of a century ago it must have been a raw land indeed. This was the place in which a cultured girl, a North Carolina school teacher, had to build her home.

Home and church grew up together. After six months of open air services, it was decided that the time had come to organize a church. A day was chosen for the service of organizing and the receiving of members. Announcement of the ceremony was made a week in advance, and on the appointed day a crowd gathered.

Nine charter members of the Paiute church stood for baptism, and also others not yet ready to come into the membership. The crowd was curious, not reverent. Six men, then women and children moved to stand in the "thin red line" of Indian folk who presented themselves for the first baptismal service.

The rites of the sacred ceremony were too much for the Indians' sense of the ludicrous. Some of those who were baptised laughed as the water was poured over their heads. The courage of the nine was tried, as in a Roman arena. The missionary went away from the meeting in depression, feeling guilty of sacrilege. He went home and asked God to forgive him for the service.

Only a man of sympathy and delicate insight could succeed in such a field. Mr. Price was understanding enough to grasp the Indian background. In talking long afterward to an old Indian who had become a Christian, the missionary asked if the Paiutes had known about God before he came to tell them. The Indian answered, "I have always known him. I no call him God, but Big Man. My heart always say, 'There is a God'."

One day this old Indian took the missionary a pile of rocks and said, "When my father go hunting, he come stand on top of these rocks with a handful of sagebrush twigs and call on the Big Man to help him take deer when he go hunt him in the mountains, and he throw off the twigs in his hands, each one a sin."

Thus the Indian expressed his primitive sense of sin, for the hunter believed that anything wrong in himself would hinder his prayer. The Indian hunter must "throw away his sins" before God would be with him to help him take the deer, his food.

For the generation which had grown up just after the turn of the century, all faith was dead. They could not accept the old legends of the tribe, and their skepticism made them equally cynical of the white man's faith. The missionary could translate the beliefs of the old Indians

into the richer story of Christianity, and satisfy the soul hunger that came with modern disturbances. Children could be trained in the Christian way, but it was a long and patient fight to win any of the young adult generation.

Gradually, the church membership grew. As the weeks went by the missionary found the first recruits still standing. He baptised new converts in other parts of the valley. A camp meeting at Bishop brought sixteen accessions and a strengthening of the church. Within a month the war dance came. Half the Christians fell. Most of them repented and returned. At the end of the year, the church building was erected, a little one room frame structure.

The field was scattered from Independence, forty miles south, to Benton, as far north, with five churches in this area. For the first five years, Mr. Price visited his various congregations with a pony team, caught wild and broken to the buckboard. In this vehicle the five day trip to Independence and back was regularly made. Services were held at each church once a month.

Big Pine Paiutes, sixteen miles down the valley, were the hardest to capture. They had been prejudiced against the Christian way by medicine men who maligned the missionary, but the work took hold when a clever young Indian from the government school of Carlisle started a Sunday school.

Holidays were found demoralizing, especially Sunday baseball. The meeting was held at the same hour as the game, however, and the church member made his choice between them. The custom of grace at table was adopted, and the men would prophecy in the congregation if given the opportunity. Staying qualities of the Indian Christians are superior to those of the whites, Mr. Price learned.

In the early days the Indians interrupted the service to ask the missionary to read the Bible more. "I like hear him paper more," was the plea. When the missionary took up the lesson subject with his big chart pictures, each Indian would go promptly to his place, all the women on one side of the church and the men on the other. Custom strictly forbade sitting among the opposite sex at service. After the hymns and benediction, the group would sit down again for a social hour.

While the missionary was carrying the word up and down the long field, his wife was working at home. One Sunday evening, before the house was finished and while the family were still in temporary quarters, an Indian and his wife came to Mrs. Price to request a Bible lesson. Those two sat and listened to the message as it came from the interpreter. The next Sunday seven came and sat on carpenters' saw horses in the kitchen of the unfinished manse. By the next Sunday there were nineteen and the group moved into the dining room where the floor had been laid. For more than twenty years Mrs.



Price conducted the lesson each Sunday, seating as many as seventy-five red men and women in her dining room.

This home had an influence of serenity and charm. From surroundings but little more than desert, one came upon a spot of orchard and shade trees, roses and lilac bushes and green lawn. The ever present mountains over shadowed, white topped, with shifting purple shadows. Because of the personality of a family and the surroundings they created for themselves, this home had an indefinable air of peace. It saw its full share of activity, nevertheless, for another boy and girl were born after the family moved into the valley, and all four were reared there.

While these youngsters were growing up the whole personnel of the work changed. From the day that the nine stood for that first baptism, more than sixty deaths have occurred in the membership. The present members are mostly young people who have grown up in the church, for the old ones who joined in the early days have passed on. Their stories are the most touching in the missionaries' work. When Mrs. Price went to see old Sallie, she found her poverty stricken, gathering a few twigs for a fire that she might make a little gruel out of a handful of flour — all that she had. Mrs. Price gave her some clothes, got her on the government ration list and spoke to her of the Jesus road and the Father's house of many mansions where we "No more get hungry, nor cold, nor sick, nor feel bad and never die any more."

Through the interpreter old Sallie answered, "That is a beautiful story. I would like to go there. Here I am sometimes hungry, sometimes cold and all the time lone-

some. All my family long time gone."

She was baptised and united with the church the Sunday following. Six months later, on Easter Sunday, she passed out of the squalid little wickiup here on earth to enter her mansion above.

For the old Indians religion and nature were closely associated. Uncle Jack Shaw took the missionary out one night at church before anyone else had arrived, and pointing to the planet Jupiter, a little south of the zenith, said, "You see him star? Him right there twelve years ago when I started to be Christian." As it takes Jupiter twelve years to make his circuit, it showed that the old Indian was a close observer of the heavens.

Originally there were perhaps 1200 Indians in the field, and about 700 now remain. About 300 names have been entered on the church roll, and many tribe members come indirectly under church influence. For the automobile Mr. Price had the warmest praise, contrasting the territory he could cover in his Ford with that which he could reach in his old buckboard. Services which in the early days had been conducted at Bishop once a month were in later years held every Sunday, and the five-day trip to Independence was made in an afternoon.

When he spoke of his fear that some day he must leave the field, Mr. Price considered the most disappointing feature of his work the fact that it was not possible to develop leadership among the Indians. They did not want responsibility for themselves; their sense of social obligation was not developed.



The cost of bringing the work this far had been a dear one. To rear four children on an Indian reservation must have been a struggle. The home was without lights, plumbing, gas and the modern conveniences so generally considered indispensable. Three years ago, October 1932, while the family was attending a Sunday School Convention in Bishop, they were called from the meeting to be told that their house was afire. Reaching the reservation they found that the house had burned to the ground, only the piano being saved. All furniture and clothes, personal possessions and the keepsakes of years were gone. The fire had burned itself out and there was nothing more to be done. They went back to the meeting.

Friends responded generously and the Prices soon had another house in which to live, but a strange house could scarcely be "home" as was the one in which they had lived and worked for so many years. Throughout it all, the missionary and his wife remained serene and ready in their service to God. Mrs. Price read his "poems" of accounts due and paid when called as treasurer of the conferences, and traveled in his Ford from end to end of the valley, preaching and teaching.

Early in January of this past year he was told by a doctor that an immediate operation was necessary to remove a malignant tumor. He recovered sufficiently to be up and around, but was unable to resume his responsibilities in the mission field. Mrs. Price assumed the full task and carried on the work. The doctor offered little encouragement, frankly saying that the cancer would break down again in a few months, yet a vain hope for his recovery lingered in the hearts of his family. After another operation in May, he endured eight weeks of the most intense pain without once complaining. He thought not of himself, but of his family, upon whose hands he was an invalid. In July, 1935, a third operation was performed in a last attempt to save his life. Racked with suffering he was unable to stand the shock. Thirty-six hours later the spirit of this great man passed on to be with the loving Father whom he had served so tirelessly during his sojourn on earth.

The same beautiful faith that he gave to his Indian people was Mr. Price's in life and death. Some time ago he told the story of "Old Sam" who had been coming to the mission services, but apparently with no response in his heart. On his death bed Old Sam whispered, "I see fine white house, green fields, flowers . . . ."

"No doubt in his secretive Indian way he had believed," Mr. Price explained, and on the border land of the two worlds, saw over into the promised land the 'fine white house' the Lord has prepared for him." ❀

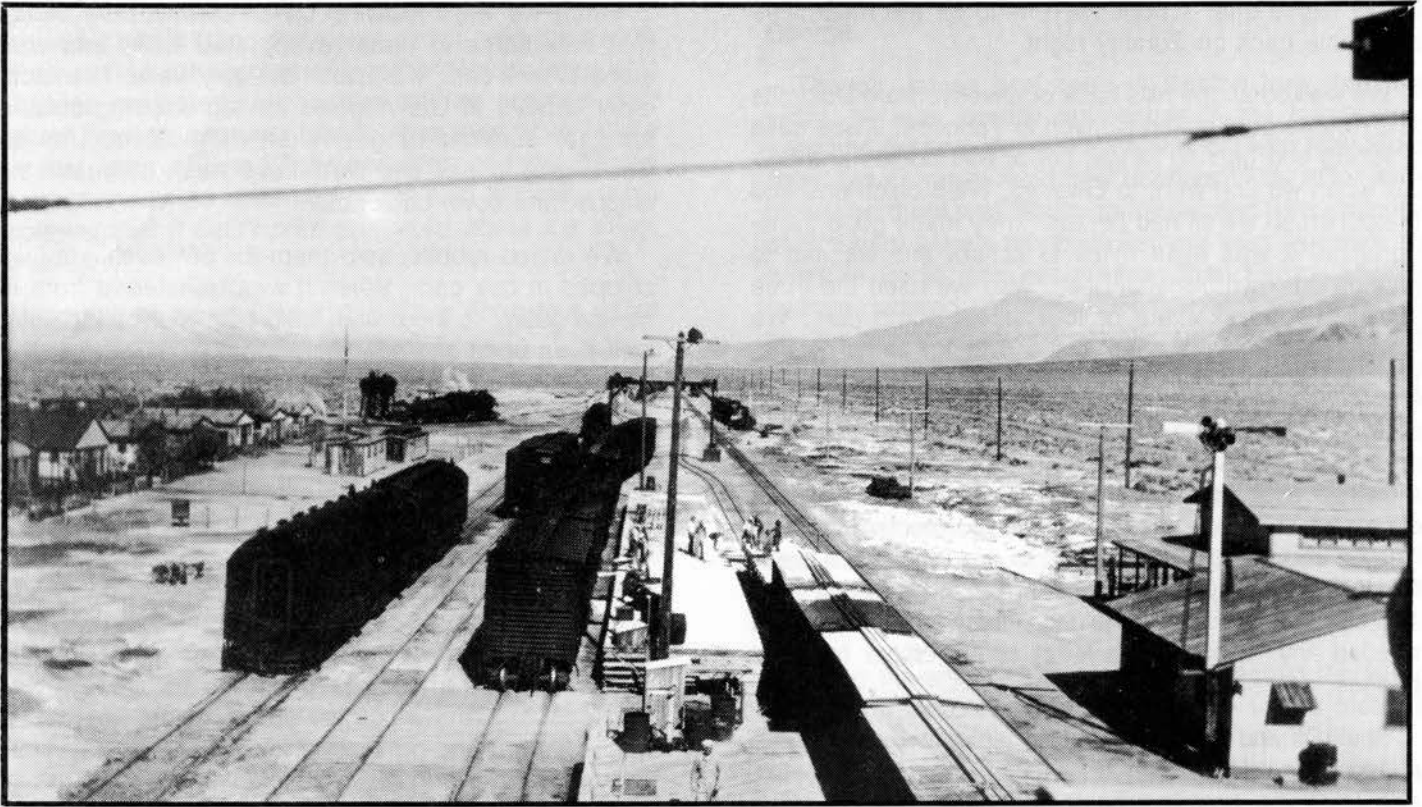
In researching family history through the service of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, **THE ALBUM** editor met Jessie Durant, who was researching her own Native American ties. She remembers her mother, Daisy Mallory, working for the Dr. Doyle and Dr. McQueen ("Dr. Nellie") families in 1916-1918.

"Dr. McQueen was a jolly person as I remember him," she says. "Vivian McQueen Peoples and I kept in touch until her death."

We thank Mrs. Durant for sharing this manuscript with **THE ALBUM** readers. The late Margaret Gilmore Phillips was always encouraging to young writers; her late husband Curt, of Phillip's Camera Shop, preserved photos of area citizens and his file is now lodged at Laws Railroad Museum. Chalfant Press booklist includes "Desert People and Mountain Men," by their son Fred M. Phillips.







*Owenyo, where the broad and narrow gauges met (1929).*

*Eastern California Museum photo*

# **LEROY CLINE TELLS IT AS IT IS**

*by George L. Garrigues*

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*...interrupted only occasionally by his wife, Luella, whispering, "Tell him about..."*

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"It's been a good life here in the valley. I've done everything I wanted to and more. Always had a good place to sleep and plenty to eat. No one went away from our big dining room table hungry and there was always room for another plate. I've done a lot of things and I wouldn't change anything if I had a chance to do it over again."

Leroy Cline was talking and he continued almost non-stop for more than two hours, interrupted only occasionally by his wife, Luella, whispering, "Tell him about . . ."

Leroy was born in Whittier and came to the Owens Valley while he was still a small child. The rest is in his words.

"My dad was a cowboy and ranched near Manzanar. He rode for Frank Butler, Harold Eaton and other cattlemen. He also rodeoed. He had four brothers: Asa, Vas-ey, Jim and Huston. He was the youngest. His mother, to show her disappointment at not having a daughter, named him Pleasant Andrew Jackson Bell Cline.

We lived at Owenyo when I was growing up. I have a lot of pleasant memories from there.

When we moved to Owenyo, all it had was a store with one gas pump, an eating house and a rooming house. Everyone living there was Mexican, right from Mexico, so we grew up talking Mexican — it was our main language. The Mexicans would come to our place for American food and we'd go to their place for Mexican. Two Mexican kids, Mauro Martinez and Balamoro Chavez, my brother Bill, and I all ran around together.

Friday nights after school, we'd head for the mountains and come back on Sunday night.

We walked all the hills back of Owenyo from Dolomite and Kearsarge, Lubken Canyon to Taboose. It was quite a fishing and hunting range. Lot of wild horses and burros when we first went to Owenyo. We'd catch one and break him so we all had horses. They made good transportation. It was eight miles to school and we had to provide our own transportation. Also we used the three wheel railroad skeeters or four wheel pump cars. We would grab one and head to the river for some fishing, put the car on a siding and come back the same way. The railroad people didn't care.

Wages were low — 49¢ an hour — but the railroad furnished everything. Our housing was two box cars on stilts separated with a built-on room connecting the two. They brought water in by tank car and ice twice a week for storage. They furnished coal by the gondola load and stored it in bins. We helped ourselves whenever we needed any. There was a lot of scrap lumber from old bridges, and so on.

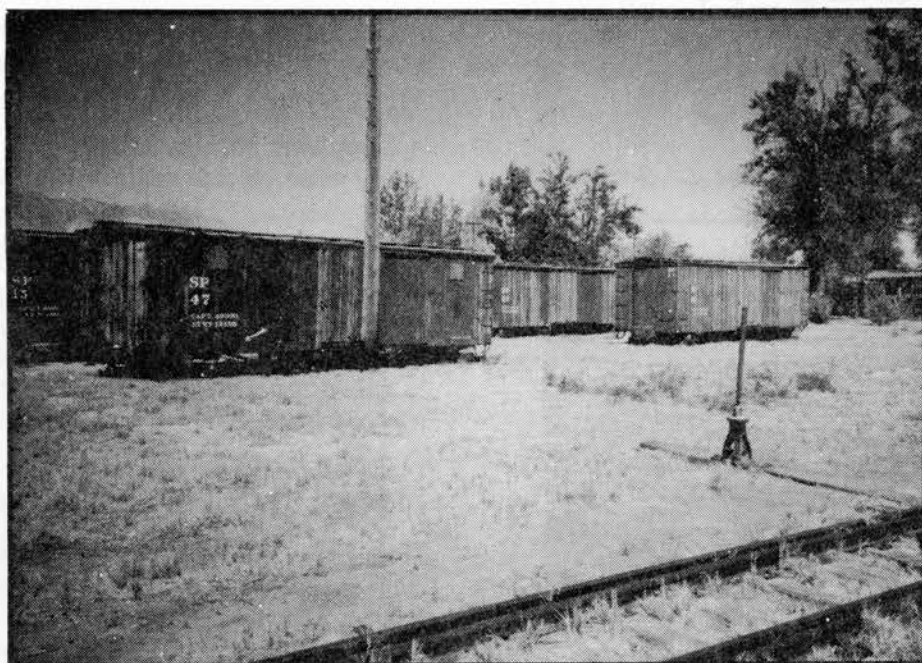
Shell Oil and Standard Oil had tanks at Owenyo. The railroad had built a trestle on a little hill to make transferring from the broadgauge to the narrow easier. One train could go on top and just dump into the other. Gas was unloaded by gravity feed. No electricity; we used kerosine lamps. Everyone had free train passes so we could ride anywhere we wanted. Most of our trading was done in Los Angeles. We'd send down a big \$50 order to Ralph's Grocery and get enough to last a month. They'd ship it back to us on the train. We got our clothes at Clark's Dollar Store. Shoes were \$1.30, shirts and pants 50¢, gas was 13¢ a gallon.

When we were growing up at Owenyo, we thought that milk came in cans (evaporated milk) and water came in tank cars; we didn't have any wells. Then some dairy farmers in Los Angeles started shipping cows up here for summer range. When they calved, my dad would grab a pail and we'd have fresh milk until they shipped the cows back south.

We raised rabbits, sold them for 50¢ each. Hay was shipped in box cars. When it was transferred from the narrow gauge to the broad, we'd take four burlap sacks, split them open and sew them together in a big square. Then we'd lay the bags on the ground and rake all the loose hay leaves and stems left in the cars onto the bags, sew them back up, and wheelbarrow them home. We would have a stack of free hay half as high as our house and wouldn't have to buy any until the next spring.

Sheep were all trailed through here then, not hauled in trucks as they are now. The sheepherders would lose quite a few when trailing and the trainmen would watch along the rails for lost sheep. They'd tell us kids when they saw any and we'd stay out of school, take an old Model T Ford and go looking for them. One day by the railroad bridge north of Lone Pine we found about eighteen loose sheep. We ran them down, roped them and tied them with pigging strings, but there was one I couldn't catch, he was too fast. I went home and got the .32-20 and got him too.

My sister had a 1928 Buick convertible and we would also rope from it, especially down by the Cinder Road and Little Lake. Got four or five almost every night. One sheep was bedded down; I was sneaking up on him and about the time I got there, he jumped up and took off.



*Box car village at Laws Railroad Museum, similar to Owenyo Village, Leroy's residence in the 1920s. George L. Garrigues photo*



Just as he reached the top of the hill, I threw all the rope I had and he jumped at the same time. I caught him in mid-air!

There were two trains a day into Owenyo, one freight train and the other a combination consisting of the engine, a mail/baggage car, chair car and a pullman. We used to play on the broadgauge locomotive. The engine watchman liked to fish so he showed us how to grease it, fill the water tank and fire it up. When we got out of school and he was through switching cars around, he'd take the engine to the wye and let us do his work while he went home. When we had it ready to go, we'd call the train crew.

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## *All we could do was keep the (Death Valley) road passable all summer.*

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When they built the Tinemaha dam, they brought a big steam shovel in on the broadgauge. It was too big for the narrow gauge so they built a special railroad bed for it to Tinemaha. They'd lay two rails, move the car with the crane ahead, pull up the rails behind, lay them in front and move the crane one rail closer to the job. Afterwards Inyo County took over the roadbed and used it for a county road.

They also installed large overhead racks with block and tackled for transferring heavy freight. One of the cornerstones for the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City was cut at the quarry in Round Valley, put on the narrow gauge, transferred at Owenyo and taken to Salt Lake City. In those days Spark Plug (Champion Silmonite) shipped through Owenyo from their mine in Chalfant Valley. All the soda ash from Keeler went by rail also. Lime from a mine east of Big Pine was used in the soda ash process at Bartlett, Keeler and Cartago.

Pop Fuller, an old engineer, was about ready to retire. A couple of days before Thanksgiving there had been a lot of rain. The train started out south, but they were afraid of washouts below Lone Pine so they sent the crew back to Owenyo. We had them all for Thanksgiving dinner. Later the track walker said the road was clear so the train took off. They were still afraid of washouts. Tomire, the fireman, was looking ahead about halfway to Ash Creek when he saw what looked like a washout. He looked out to the other side of the locomotive and saw that it was. Pop Fuller was hard of hearing and when he realized the track was washed out, he hit the emergency air and put the locomotive into reverse. The

train couldn't stop in time. Tomire jumped and hurt his back. The tender landed on top of the engine, the baggage and mail car on top of the tender. The chair car ended on top of the baggage car and only the pullman stayed on the track. Pop Fuller was killed. The mail clerk and the baggage tender were talking in the chair car or they would have been killed also.

Fuller's grandson was staying with us when the train wreck happened. I lost track of him for years. When I was hauling out of Keeler Talc Mine, one day Lyncho Valdez, mine manager, said, "Do you know a guy by the name of Fuller? He was driving for Harris out of Victorville. You missed him by twenty minutes." I managed to get in touch with him and a few years ago he and his wife came here for a visit, the first time we'd seen each other since grammar school.

I started school in Owenyo, moved to Lone Pine for the second grade (Mrs. Spainhower was my teacher), then back to Owenyo in the boxcar schoolhouse. Graduated from there and then went to high school in Lone Pine. There were three teachers at different times: Miss Linsey, Mrs. Burrough and an old man named Newton. They taught all the grades. Newton treated us all alike, boys or girls, but you alongside the head with a ruler, but he ran the school.

My brother Bill had an old Log Cabin Syrup can shaped like a cabin. He'd cut the end out of it and would build a fire inside and the smoke would go out the chimney. He was up by the sand dunes back of the school and didn't hear the school bell ring. Newton got him by the ear in front of the class and pulled on his ears shaking his head and said, "Willie, hear that bell now?" Then he'd swat him with the ruler. Bill finally heard the bell.

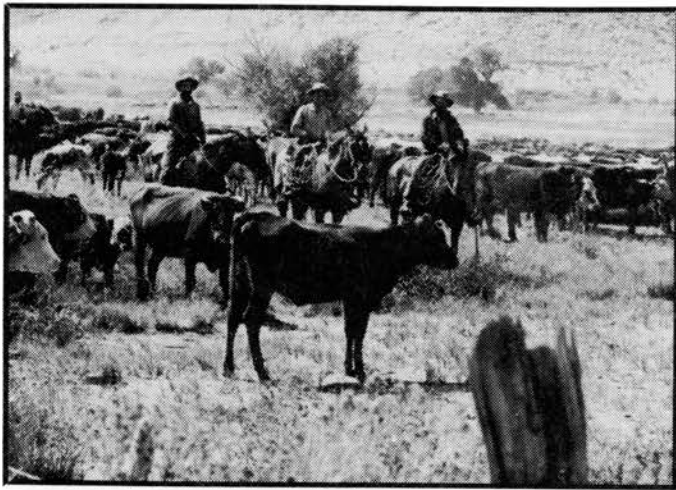
I left high school about '28 or '29; never graduated. I got to the fourth year four times and times were pretty hard so I quit to go to work. I worked for the railroad and then for the state highway. State would work you until they ran out of money, lay you off, get more money, call you back. I was put on probationary time in Death Valley in 1935.

I worked for the State Highway when the road to Death Valley went into Darwin. Then they put the new road in to Panamint Springs. We moved from Darwin to Panamint Springs and then went to Death Valley Junction for two-and-a-half years; took care of eighty miles of road. There was a big rainstorm; the state took all the equipment out. All the crew was sick with sunstroke. It left two of us from Lone Pine, the whole crew. Wouldn't send anybody else in, said it was suicide. All we could do was keep the road passable all summer.

At Death Valley Junction the T&T railroad was still running from Crusara to Beatty. They ran the Blue Goose, the gas electric car now at Laws.

There was lots of mining in the area. Charlie Brown, later Inyo County Supervisor and State Senator, was at Shoshone then. We played baseball year around — Shoshone, Baker, Tonopah, Goldfield, Beatty and the CCC team. The Greenwood Bar in Beatty gave us a case of beer for every homerun. Everyone went for the long ball and we'd have a big party afterwards. Charlie Brown put on a big party on the Fourth of July. Lots of beer on ice, wouldn't let anyone touch it until after the game. We played ball down there in all that heat, then when the game was over, we had a big party, beer, barbecue. It was some nice times over there. Everyone got along good. Parumph had only a winery at that time, no farming, just mesquite bushes.

There were a lot of frogs at Ash Meadows. We used a light — gas lantern — at night. We'd shine the light on them, reach over and get them behind the ears, put them in a sack, chop the head off and eat the rest. They tasted like chicken. There were a lot around Shoshone too, but they got pretty smart. They'd take off from the water and head into the mesquite bushes.



My sister married George Brown of Olancho. He had a ranch there; he later sold it to Mitchell. In the early days he had sheep with Frank Pellissier which they ran up to Adobe Meadows near Benton. They would start lambing in January-February. One year there was real bad weather and they lost everything in the cold. George also had 160 acres south of Cartago next to the Cabin Bar Ranch. He ran cattle into Monache Meadows.

The ranch was an old stage station with a building made from adobe that had survived the 1872 earthquake. George's dad came from Maine in 1873 and drove fast freight from Olancho to Cerro Gordo Mine. He told of hunting on Owens Lake, never saw so many ducks and geese. They had a blind near Cartago. One day he had an old double barrel muzzle loader. There were a lot of ducks on the water, but not enough. He took a nap in the sun and woke up to much noise by many more ducks. He fired one shot on the water, the second when the ducks took off and had six barley sacks of ducks from the two shots.

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*"Some of these days, George Brown, Indian go on warpath, take whole country back."*

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The Indians had their reservation to the west of the ranch between the aqueduct and the ranch reservoir. They had wickiups around it. George Gregory, an eighty-year-old Shoshone Chief born in Darwin, led packs for us when we went into the mountains. He liked to hit the bottle when it was available. Get a few nips, come down to the ranch and pick on George Brown. He'd shake a finger and say, "Some of these days, George Brown, Indian go on warpath, take whole country back." Brown would laugh at him and Gregory would get mad. He'd never been out of the valley, only as far east as Death Valley, Little Lake on the south, Bishop on the north and the mountains in the west.

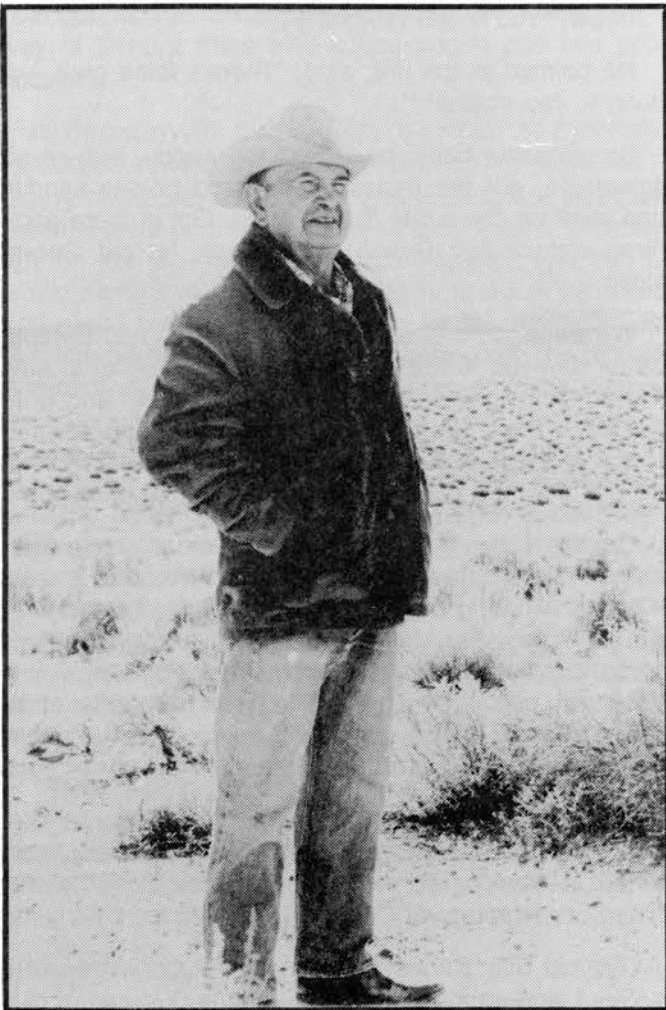
Other Indians had been to Los Angeles and one time they took Gregory there. The left him for half a day sitting on a bench watching people. When they came back, he was well shocked. A week later he came down to the ranch. George Brown waited, then finally asked Gregory, "When Indians gonna take country back?"

Gregory looked at Brown, shook his head and said, "George Brown, no takem back. Where people come from? Sat on a bench." He drew a square in the dirt. "Me sit here, people this way, this way, this way," pointing in all directions. "Just like ants. No takem back."

Brown was good to the Indians, always giving them a hundred-pound sack of beans, a quarter of beef and more. It was a good time, good experience.

George had 300-400 head of cattle which he ran into Monache. The spring range was from Cartago on the west of the aqueduct to Dunmovin. The end of May to the middle of June, we'd go into Monache, start gathering to come out about the first of September. We'd bring the last batch out by October; it was getting pretty cold by then. Those days you had to ride or walk in. Then Wallace Berry put a tent cabin on Round Mountain. He would fly in and spend all summer up there with us. I can tell some pretty good tales of him, but that is another story.





*George Brown, Leroy's brother-in-law and Olancho rancher. Eastern California Museum photo*

*Walker House, Old Stage Station, Olancho, an adobe brick building that survived the 1872 earthquake. Note cracks under the right window. George Brown residence in the 1920s and '30s. Eastern California Museum photo*



Fishing on the south fork of the Kern was good. I used to go from Deer Mountain in south Monache to Templeton in the north, Cottonwood Canyon, Cold Meadow Creek and all that area. Hunting was good, fishing was good, all golden trout. Used two flies fishing and would get two goldens every cast. Never took fishing poles, just some line and a couple of flies; cut willow stick for a pole; couldn't beat it.

By Jordan Hot Springs on the west side over Eight Mile Canyon, we packed salt at Indian Head on the side of Kern Peak.

In the west near Snowpack there was an old cabin used as the ranger station for Sage Flat. They had a drift fence and gate that wasn't opened until they judged the summer range ready for use. The tourist trail followed the ridge, but the cattle trail went up the canyon, zig-zagged up the side of the mountain to the top. There were two summits, First Summit and then Summit Meadow. When we took the cattle in, Gregory was our packer. He always had his gallon of whiskey.

We kept the cattle down on the desert until they were ready to open the gate. The night before, we'd gather them and shove them up the canyon. This one time we made camp there and George Brown broke out the jug and we all had a few snorts. Got up the next morning at four or five o'clock, had another snort and broke camp. We left the old Indian there to pack the two mules and told him, "There's no water in the canyon so follow us up, we'll want a jug of water and a sandwich when we get up there." We got up there and checked for strays about 10:30 and no Indian.

We took the cattle up the zig-zags to the second summit and the north end of the meadow which was about three-quarters mile long. There was a hitching post and a place to build a campfire there. At the south end it dropped off into Honey Bee and Monache Meadow. George Brown said, "When the cattle hit the sound end, I'm going to make sure they get there okay and you go look for Gregory."

I came back to the north end and there was Gregory alone with his jug and a big fire. I rode up and said, "George, you're drunk."

He said, "Me no drunk." He rolled his eyes a few times and got me in focus and said, "You hungry all time."

I said, "You're damn right, I am!"

He pointed to the fire, said, "There's lotsa grub, you hungry, you cookem!"

Brown came back; he wasn't too happy, but we ate something, got the mules packed and horses saddled and went on down into the meadow. Got in there about three o'clock and Brown said, "Heck, let old George sleep it off."

We were going to stay in there a week; had to repair winter damage to the fences. Later we decided to have some fish for dinner. We went to catch them and when we came back Gregory was back on the jug. He had found ours and was on another binge. The next morning we put him on a saddle horse and sent him back home.

George Brown was quite a cook. We had an old wood range that he'd taken apart, hauled in on top of a mule. It had a warming oven, a reservoir and everything. So we put it together. Always took a milk cow too. Made cream cakes, cream pies, butter, everything else — wild elderberry pies; we ate good. He wasn't like most of the cowboys; they wouldn't butcher. As soon as we hit the mountain, he'd single out a fat yearling. Sure was good eating.

I mined at Sierra Talc Mine, Keeler, Talc City, gold mined at Darwin, worked in the mill at Olancho, clay mined underground at Centennial Flat.

This old Billy Cantlay, prospector — stringbean of a guy — I worked for him for a long time. Worked in clay underground and then open pit. For a while at the Phonolite Silver Mine south of Dirty Sox, they'd drop me off in the morning, give me a wheelbarrow, single jack, drills, powder and all that stuff, put me on a lead and I'd follow it. Then when it would peter out, I'd go to another. Had gopher holes all over that mountains.

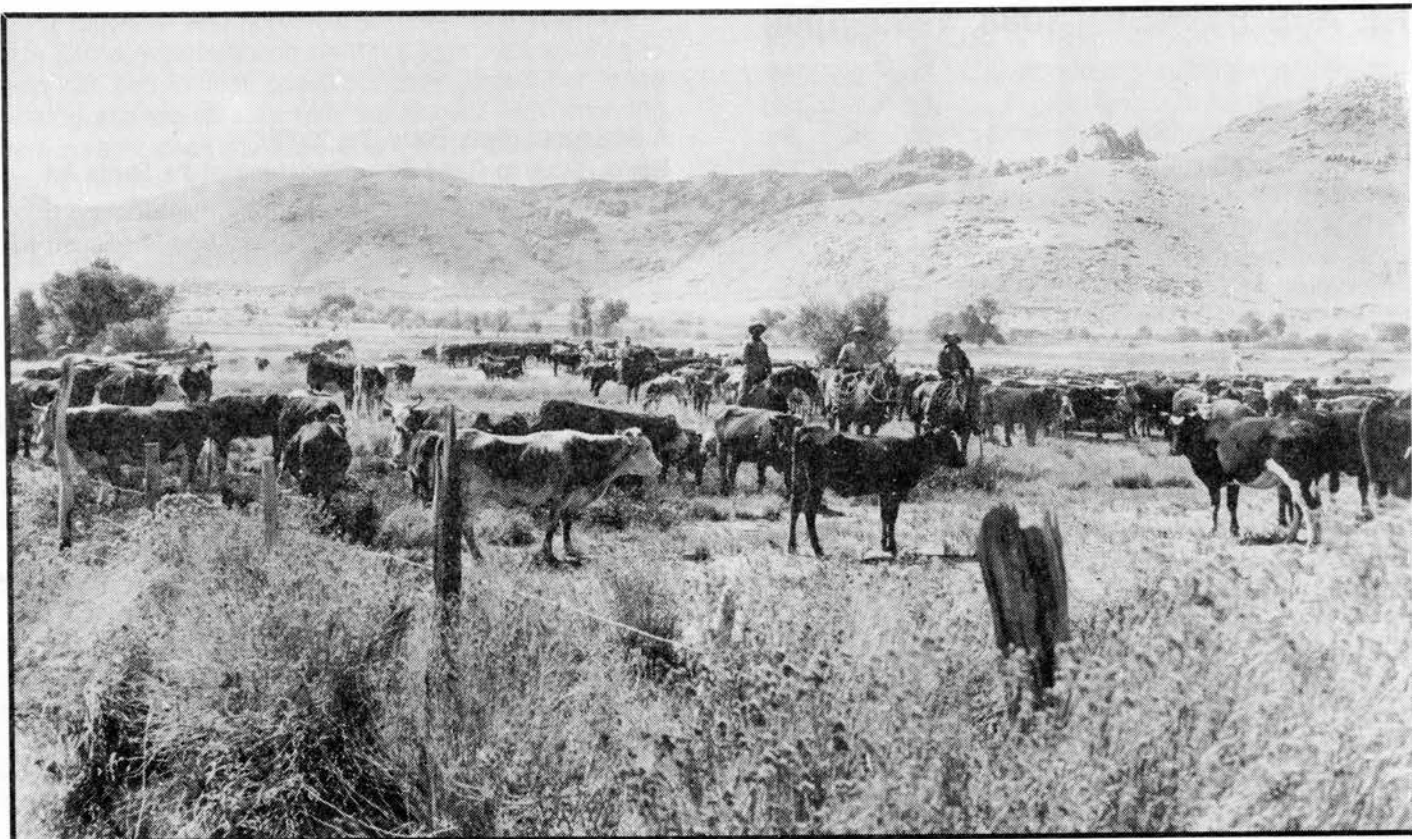
Sometimes they'd drop me off in the morning, maybe check on me once a day and then bring me back in the evening. This old guy gave me \$1.00 over scale and furnished one meal. He'd pick up lunches at seven a.m., drive out twenty miles. He liked to smoke. He'd say, "Sit down, take five." Then he'd jump up and say, "We can't make anything this way." He'd get in there and work right with me sometimes. At noon we'd sit there for an hour and then at two o'clock start picking up our tools and come in. We'd get more work done in that short time. He was a good old guy. ❀

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More to come in April, when Leroy Cline talks about his many-faceted career working for the movies, the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, cowboying and truck driving, with photos of Leroy, then and now.

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*Getting ready to shove them up the canyon.*

*Eastern California Museum photo*

*Cowboys at Monache Meadow*

*Eastern California Museum photo*



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*continued on page 56*





# THE CARE AND FEEDING OF SOURDOUGH

*by Marye Roeser*

(by request: "You put in all those sourdough recipes and didn't give us any starter!")

As the pioneers rolled westward in the endless wagon trains of the forty-niners, cooks carefully tended their crocks of sourdough starter. This precious dough enabled these argonauts to leaven their bread, an important food staple of the westward migration. The pungent aroma of a bubbling crock filled homesteader cabins and miners' shacks, imparting a characteristic tang to the air. Chuck-wagon cooks kept their sourdough pots brewing for hotcakes and biscuits. Bread or biscuits baked in a cast iron dutch oven comprised daily menu items out on the range. Starters were lovingly guarded and shared with family and friends along with much myth and legend.

Basically, sourdough is a fermented wheat dough whose action causes the bread dough to rise. By adding baking soda, a double rising action occurs. The sour sponge supplies varying degrees of sourness depending on the individual preference of the cook. Given tender loving care, the starter becomes even more flavorful with age. Some particularly good strains are even said to be over fifty years old!

There are many recipes for making a starter if you don't have access to an established one. A starter, today, is easily made using commercial yeast. But, in yesteryears, if the range cook lost her starter — perish the thought — she had to begin a new starter by capturing the wild yeast cells floating in the wind. I can attest to the fact that this was not always successfully accomplished on the first try. The method I used for beginning a new starter is reliable. The wild yeast cells usually managed to elude my capture.

## SOURDOUGH STARTER

### STEP ONE

1½ cups warm water  
1 package dry yeast  
1 cup flour

### STEP TWO

1 cup warm water  
1 cup warm milk  
2 cups flour

### STEP ONE

Dissolve the dry yeast in ½ cup of warm water. Mix together the remaining 1 cup of warm water and 1 cup of flour. Add the yeast mixture to this dough. Beat well and place in a crockery bowl or glass jar in a warm spot in the kitchen. Cover with a damp cloth and let stand for about 12 hours. The mixture will rise and should be bubbly.

### STEP TWO

Next add 1 cup warm water and 1 cup warm milk along with 2 cups of flour. Beat well and let stand in a warm spot covered by a damp cloth for another 12 or so hours. Stir from time to time. If the weather is cold, this process may take longer but your sponge will soon be ready to make into mouthwatering hotcakes.

Before you begin whipping up your batter, be sure to save at least ¼ cup of the sponge in a glass jar or crock and store in the refrigerator. This is your starter for your next batch. If you are going to be gone for a period of time, the starter can be stored in the freezer. Always use glass or crockery for your starter, never metal.

As you work with your starter, you can vary the flavor and sourness. More use of milk, especially unpasteurized milk, will make a more sour, pungent starter. The more sour your starter, the more baking soda you should add. Begin with the recommended amount of soda and then adjust the amount as you become familiar with your strain of starter.

I like to maintain about 1½ cups of starter. At the pack station during the summer, I kept a gallon mayonnaise jar brewing and bubbling on the shelf above the Old Stove always ready for instant use. To increase your starter, add equal parts of warm milk or water, and flour.

You'll soon want to branch out and try sourdough cornbread, waffles and even chocolate cake. In the backcountry, a breakfast including dutch oven baked sourdough biscuits and country gravy will satisfy the hungriest of mountaineers. ❁

## Editor's Corner



## Middle Song

by Jane Fisher

"Sing me a backpackin' song," you said,  
and your eyes as you lit up your pipe and smiled  
reflected a thousand remembered fires,  
"and one about skiin', too."

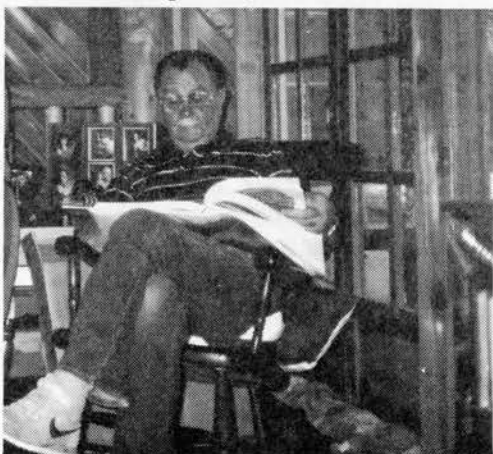
"But I'm writing some morning and evening songs  
and it wouldn't be fitting to do."

"That's just where it goes," you logically said,  
"between morning and evening is right."

Can a country woman sing heart-close songs  
for a mountain man, quiet  
and free as the flight of rockbound heights?

A mountain man sees with the eagle's eyes.  
His logic is solid as stone. He fears no thing  
on the whole round earth  
and he knows that he's right, in his bones.

But a country woman feels more at home  
on hallowed ground, that talks when she walks.



She dreams and she sings of middle-earth things,  
of mystical, soul-sensed tongues.

A mountain man skier flies wild down the slopes  
and thrills at the spray and the speed  
he's imposed on the snow,  
while my terrified heart is still waiting to start,  
and listening for birds,  
and inspecting the crystals  
to see if they stick to my fur.

There must be a song for a mountain man  
that a country woman can write!  
A walking-high song that touches the warmth  
of a camp in the pines,  
the heart drunken joy of a last, late star  
and the touching of hands in the night!

*Published in WESTWAYS, August, 1981  
for Robert "Himself" Fisher  
April 15, 1921 — November 23, 1990*

*Please forgive us for being late with this issue of THE ALBUM. The shocking loss of "Himself" brought a sudden halt to many things. For those of you weren't acquainted with him through "Seriously Enough" columns in the Inyo Register, here is a sample of what a good sport he was about letting us tease him — just one of the many reasons he is sadly missed.*

In the spring a man's fancy, having run out of football games, turns to thoughts of love until the first baseball event. A woman's thoughts go into high-gear nest making.

This spring, I have a long list of nest repairs for Himself, who feels fortunate to be working six days a week, two hundred miles away. We have a working agreement about repair work. If I won't hammer ten-penny nails into quarter-inch boards, he will fix the molding where I slammed the door. He will fix the chimes in the grandfather clock if I stay away with the hairpin. If I will stop turning it on while he's working, he will wrap the bare wires on the iron.

Actually, I don't have to ask him to fix things very often because he is a self-starter. Especially when I start to paint, he takes right over without hesitation. Am I supposed to know you don't paint the walls with a two inch brush? Or that, even when time is short, rollers don't work on trim? Men are the ones born with those instincts, not women. We know our place.

There is a complicated division of property and duties in a lasting marriage. The washing machine is mine when it and I are working. It's his when we quit. The same with the dryer and garbage disposal. The oven and dishwasher are a little more complex because, while they are, in theory, his when they quit, their functions become mine or we eat out until we run out of



My sister and brother-in-law have a different arrangement. We will call them Natasha and Ivan, in the interest of preserving my health (although I only have one sister). Natasha's business and lust to wander require her to travel the world. Ivan decided to take over the laundry because he didn't like the way she was folding the towels between trips. Natasha's clothes, she noticed, were growing steadily dingier, but we have a family tradition that goes back to the days before electricity: if you don't like salt in your coffee, make it yourself. So Natasha didn't mention dingy for a long time, but one day, in preparation for another trip, she decided to throw a few gray things into the washer and see if anything changed.

"I just bought four jugs of it and put them on the shelf there; it was a real bargain," Ivan called back. As it turned out, the bargain soap Ivan liked to use was liquid softener.

This is a case where women are born with the operating instinct, but that's not the end of the story. Natasha was enjoying a good laugh with the family over Ivan's inexperience, when he retaliated with the threat of telling how she tried to make French toast in the toaster. "But I didn't," she protested.

When I complained to Himself about his six-day work week deducting from my nest repair time, he sent me a present. It's a charming Do-it-Herself tool kit in a powder blue carrier. It's composed of baby-blue trimmed thirteen ounce hammer, pliers, measuring tape, cutting knife, wrench, needle-nose pliers, two kinds of screw drivers, and eighty-seven other unidentifiable objects, most of which are housed in a small plastic box.

We've both learned a few things, living apart as we are for the time being. Himself has discovered frozen dinners taste great; dirty laundry never goes away; you don't wash new jeans and white shirts together unless you like to dress like a teenager; it's okay to eat cheese with green edges, but not a casserole; if you open the windows, dust will blow away; it will also be replaced by more dust.

# Letters to the Editor

## PIONEER FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Although I have never been a resident of Inyo County, my grandparents moved there in 1885. My mother was just six years old. Her youngest sister, Mary, was born in Bishop just four years later. She passed away this last July, living mostly in Inyo County for one hundred and one years.

My father, C.E. Kunze, moved to Bishop in 1908 and was publisher and editor of a weekly newspaper, and also published the Inyo Magazine for a little over a year.

My father and mother met in Bishop and were married there. Both of my older brothers were born in Bishop. Due to the health of one of my brothers, my parents moved to the San Francisco Bay area in 1912. My sister and I were born there.

While I was still of grammar school age, James Sherwin moved from Bishop to the same town my family lived in and were close neighbors. Their only son, Ray, a year younger than I, became one of my close chums, so for all of my life, I've had strong ties to Bishop and the Inyo region.

We wish to thank you for the early copies of "The Album." We read them with considerable interest and enjoyment.

I have more material on both my family and the Inyo region, which may be of interest to you for possible use in future issues of "The Album."

Currently we are working with Dan Cronkite of the Sagebrush Press on the reprinting of my father's little magazine, "The Death Valley Chuck-Walla." My father, Curt Kunze, and his partner, Carl Glasscock, wrote and published this little magazine in 1907 at Greenwater, a mining town in the mountains on the eastern edge of Death Valley. Dan hopes to have this out right after the first of the year. This also should be of much interest to the people of the Inyo region. **Lowell Watterson Kunze, Santa Rosa, CA**

*The "Mary" to whom Mr. Kunze refers, is the late Mary Gorman. Mr. Kunze was kind enough to share some of her writings with us, which we plan to show readers in future issues of THE ALBUM. We certainly plan to tap into Mr. Kunze's knowledge of the history of this area and will be watching for THE DEATH VALLEY CHUCK-WALLA.*

## THE SHAW FAMILY STORY

My sincere thanks for the production of Albums (Vol. III, Nos. 3 and 4) on the Frank Shaw and Harry Shaw family. Surely is outstanding and well done. I'm proud of being a member of the family . . . I can think of so many people who would love the Albums. How to let them know?

Grand write up on Dorothy Sherwin. We were in second grade together, families long old friends. **Clara Shaw Eddy, Los Angeles, CA**

*Mrs. Eddy supplied much important information, bringing treasured family photos from her home in Los Angeles. Without her help and the expertise of Demila Jenner in putting together family sagas, the Shaw family story could not have been recorded for ALBUM readers.*

*We have flyers with an order coupon for THE ALBUM and will be happy to send them to anyone who would like to mail them to family and friends.*

## IDEAS

. . . Had a thought when reading THE ALBUM: there are so many interesting facts that are brought up in different ALBUMS that tie together, I was wondering if a directory could be made to refer people to other volumes. Also was thinking about a gathering of these interesting people at a

certain time and place to talk about places and events of the past. Maybe it's been done, like "Mule Days," and I missed. **Robert L. Gage, Ontario, CA**

*We are working on a cross index, but the intricacy of old family relationships in this area is a multi-colored tapestry of life. Even tying together family trees requires more of a grapevine than a tree. About gatherings, Bishop has an "Old Timers" picnic in conjunction with Homecoming in the fall. It drives me crazy to hear so many wonderful stories without enough time to record them all!*

## MORE MEMORIES

Articles in reference to Bodie and Mammoth Lakes particularly intrigue me. My husband and I have been to Bodie twice and it's just about time to put that into our plans for a late spring trip once more.

Mammoth Lakes was one of the first vacations my family experienced. I was probably 10 years old. We went in June. The thing I remember most was the COLD. We made Jello in the creek — covered container, set into the water. My Dad kept his beer under a cot and it stayed perfectly cool. We even fought over who would get to do dishes — the water was warm!

We do have a fondness for Bishop — it's as lovely an area as our Lassen National Forest. We would like very much to subscribe to your magazine, and who knows, we may take a vacation to Mammoth Lakes. **Bonnie Frazier, Westwood, CA**

## THE EDITOR GETS TO TAKE A BOW

More than all of the interesting great stories and family histories which I identify with, having been born in Big Pine in 1909, are your "Editor's Corner" and your personal experiences. Even with all the duties you have, it's a big success story. I enjoy each one. Much continued success to you. Your faithful reader, **Eva Ketchum Maltzberger, San Bernardino, CA**

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*continued from page 52*

Vol. II, No. 3 (July 1990)

Early Packers of Mammoth Lakes  
Packin' Back  
The Frank Shaw Family Legend, Part I  
Where Have All the Ranches Gone?  
Wood for the Home Fires (in Big Pine)  
Lost in Cartago  
Packing, 50 Years Ago  
Seriously Enough  
Fish Tails  
Recipes from the Real Wild West

Vol. III, No. 4 (October 1990)

The Frank Shaw Family: Second Generation  
The Old Wood Stove  
Other Days at Aberdeen  
The Sherwin Story  
Up a Creek with Col. Stevens  
Model T to Tonopah  
With Gavel and Gun (frontier justice)  
The Shooting of Sheriff Passmore  
Seriously Enough  
Recipes from the Old Wood Stove



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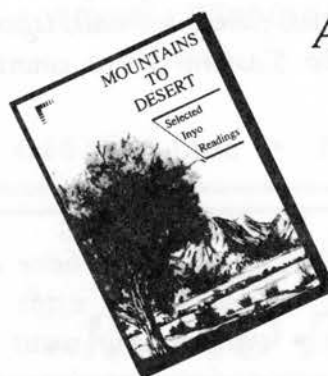


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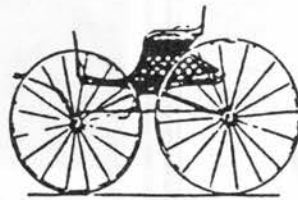


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