

# The Album

## *Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono*

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

Vol. VI, No. 2



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Lone Pine's Gus Marsh  
and John Lubken  
and more

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*Water Controversy, Mining, Piute Indians, etc.*

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*W.A. Chalfant*

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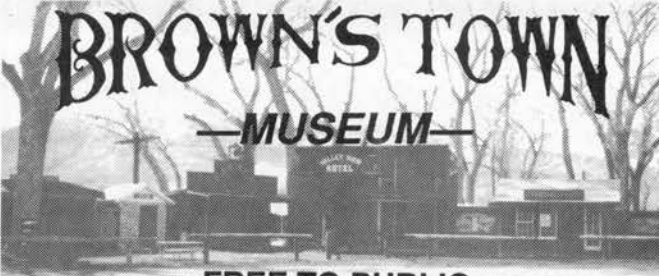
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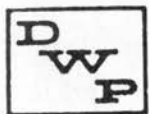
## It's The Best!



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Rock Creek!  
Bishop Creek!  
Owens River!  
Big Pine Cr.!  
Indep. Creek!  
Lone Pine Cr.!*

To get the latest on where to catch the big ones, visit or call the Bishop Chamber at 873-8405, the

Mammoth Lakes Visitors Bureau at 934-2712, or the Lone Pine Chamber at 876-4444.



Los Angeles Department  
of Water and Power





*Bodie. Photo by Bill and Louise Kelsey.*

# *THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono*

April, 1993

Volume VI, Number 2

Published quarterly by Chalfant Press, Inc.

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**Cover Photo:** Ernest I. Bulpitt, second generation of a pioneer Bishop family. This photo is titled "Home from the Wars" in the family album of his daughter, Beverly Williams. Dave Smith gets Ernie's story on page 2 of this issue.

*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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# ERNEST I. BULPITT

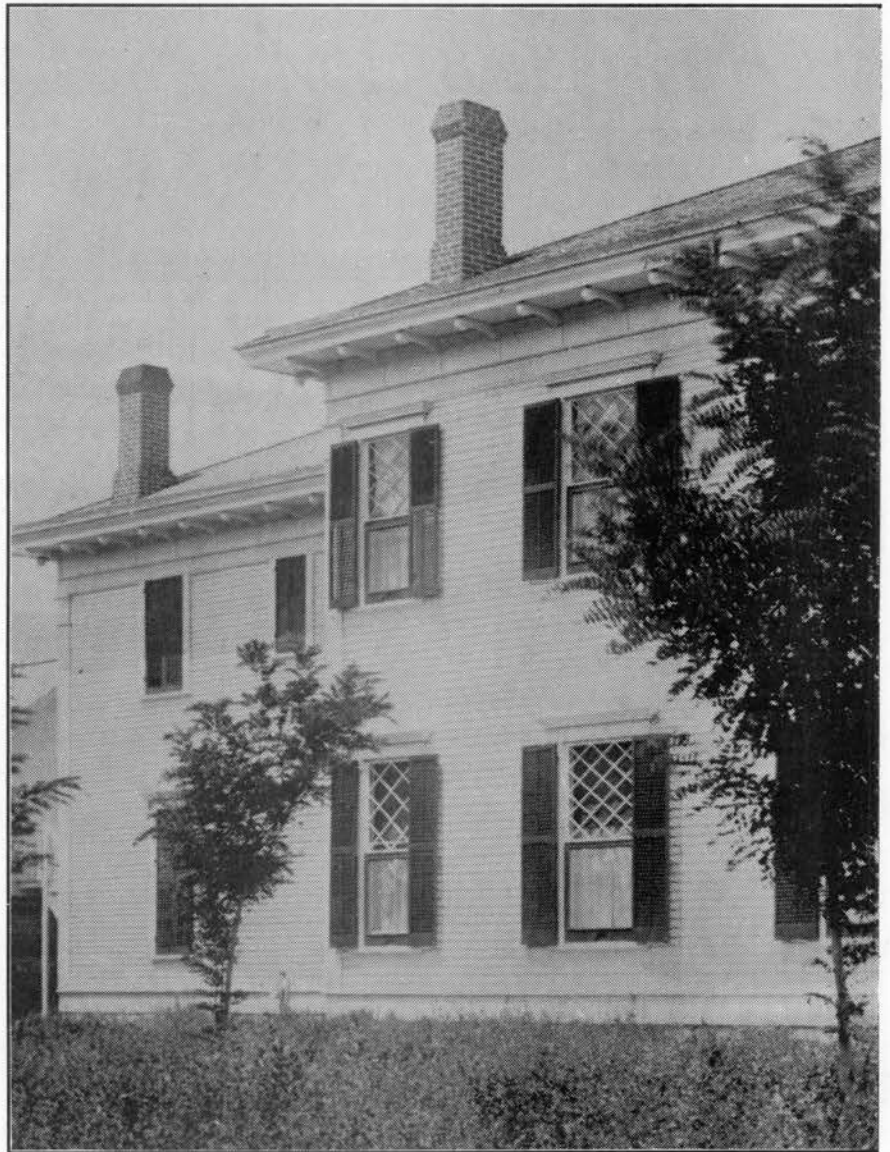
## Remembrances of "Uncle Ernie"

### Pioneer and Civic Leader

by Dave Smith

Photos courtesy

Beverly Williams



Bishop area pioneer William Crawn Bulpitt and his wife Nettie had a boy born to them December 1, 1895 in Round Valley. A boy named Ernest Irl Bulpitt.

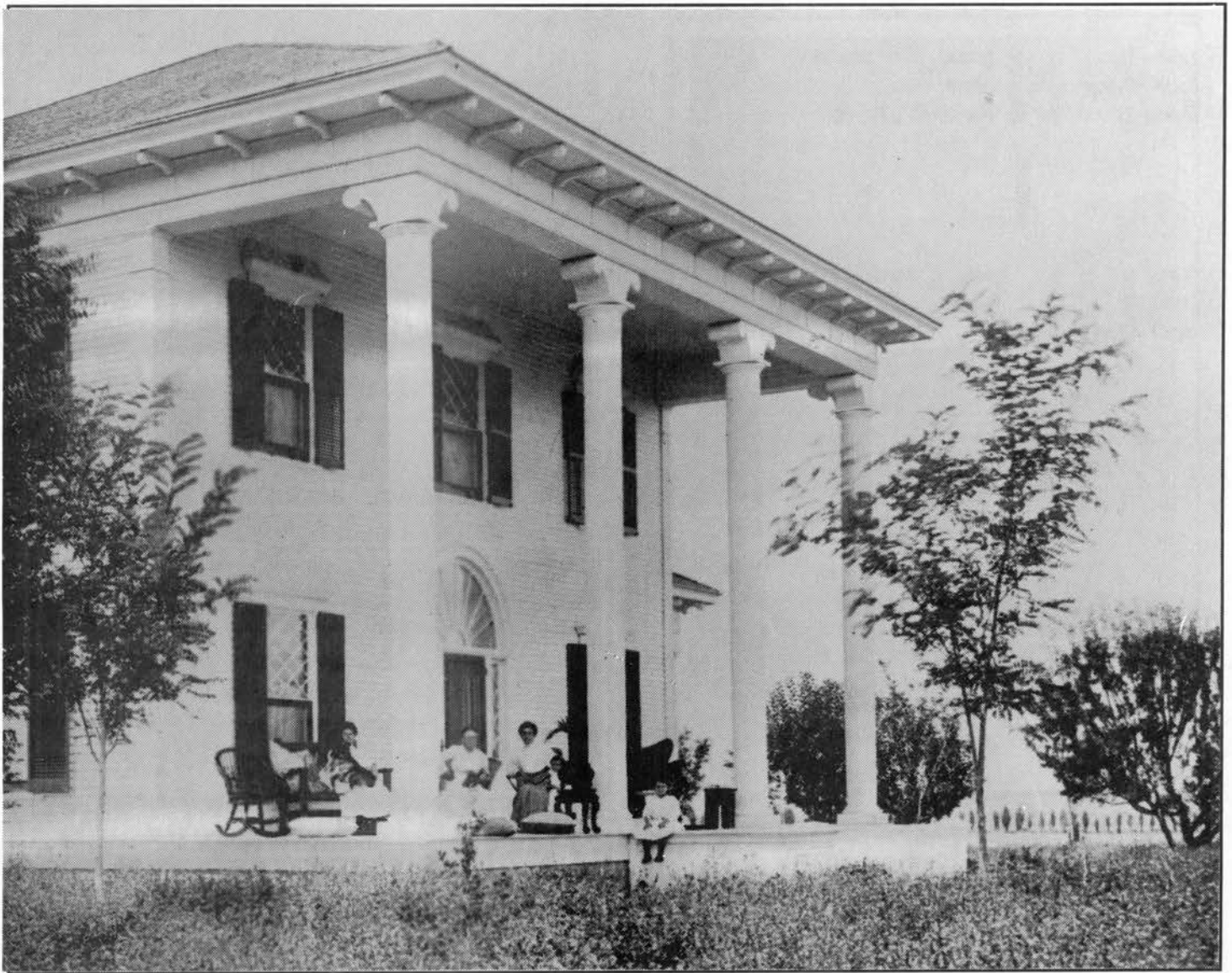
The Bulpitt family history outlined in the story of "Dr. Ed" Bulpitt (Album Vol. V No. 1) makes passing mention of Ernest Irl Bulpitt, affectionately known by Dr. Ed as Uncle Ernie.

The son of William Crawn Bulpitt, whose father (Ernest's grandfather) came west in 1851 to settle for a short time in Genoa, Nevada, then Round Valley in 1853-54, Ernest became an engineer and held the position of Superintendent of Hydrogeneration with the California Electric Power Company.

Ernest worked on and oversaw much of the early

development of hydroelectric facilities in Inyo and Mono counties at a time when these were major public works projects. His first job after World War I was a summer job with a construction crew for the power company building Gem Lake Dam. He retired 42 years later as manager of California Electric Co. - Northern Division. The next year the Company was sold to Southern California Edison.

For a time Hillside Water Company, which was associated with the power company, owned and operated the 8,935 acre Aberlour Ranch with headquarters at the site of the present Millpond Recreation Area. The grand ranch house was home to the Bulpitt family about 1924. Cattle were raised on the ranch starting in 1915, growing from 12 head to 1,700 head. The herd was sum-



*The Bulpitt home at the Aberlour Ranch (now Millpond County Park)*

mered at the Cain ranch near Lee Vining.

Shortly after 1925 the ranch was sold to Los Angeles as a result of a bond election wherein bonds were voted by that city for the purpose of purchasing the Company's water bearing lands.

One of the more interesting aspects of Ernest Bulpitt's work is best told in his own words written a few years after the end of his career with the power company in 1962:

*"I was born in Round Valley, spending most of my years there. In 1910 due to ill health my father sold our ranch in Round Valley and moved to West Bishop, where he bought a small place.*

*I graduated from Bishop Union High School in 1914. In 1916 graduated from the Oakland School of engineering with an Associate Degree in Civil Engineering. In the fall of 1917 entered the University of California as a Junior in special engineering subjects.*

*With the declaration of war I enlisted with the "23rd Engineers" serving 22 months in France. I returned to Bishop in the late fall of 1919. On April 6, 1920 went to work for the power company on a short assignment . . . You have asked me to relate some of the interesting things which I have experienced in my association and employment with the power company during these past 58 years.*





*Fred Brooks with Ernest, William and Nettie Bulpitt*

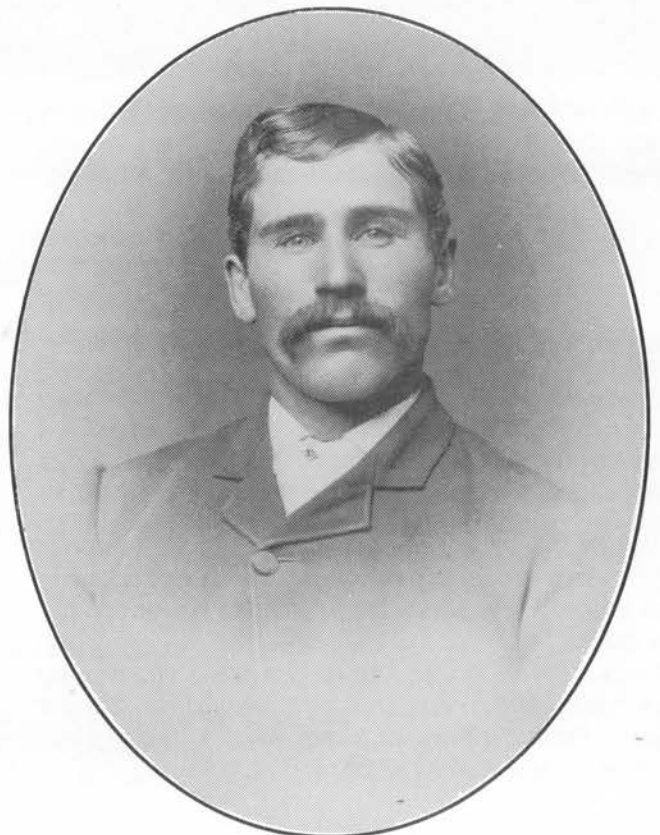


*Nettie Pruella Olds 1868 - 1927  
Married June 5, 1892  
William Crown Bulpitt 1862 -1923*

Yes, it is true all of my work for the company has been with headquarters at or near Bishop and Mono County, also Inyo County.

Probably one of the most interesting subjects and a subject which should be of considerable interest to most of the people and residents of Bishop and particularly West Bishop, would be one of the first assignments I had on going to work for the power company in the spring of 1920.

That was the adjudication of the water rights of Bishop Creek. While farming along Bishop Creek dates back to the early and mid-1860's it did not reach its full development until after the turn of the century. Previous to this time all of the produce from the ranches, cattle, horses, mules, hogs and sheep, including dairy products, were marketed to the various mining towns in Inyo, Mono and Western Nevada or shipped North by rail to San Francisco.



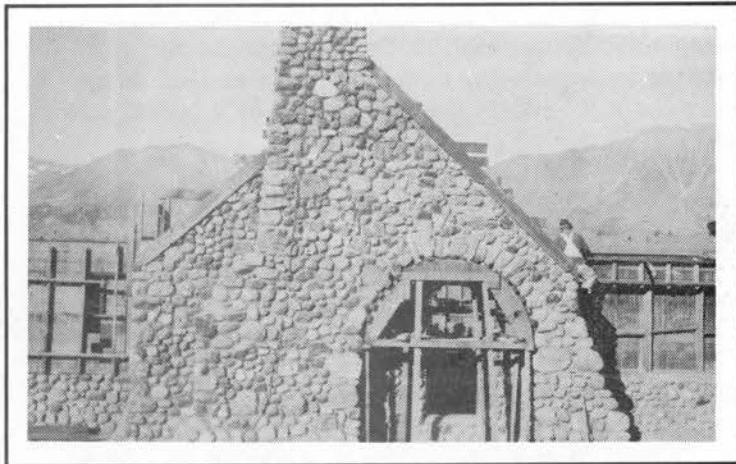
In 1905 the Nevada-California Power Company constructed their first Hydro Power Plant of Bishop Creek to furnish electrical energy to Tonopah and Goldfield. This was quickly followed by more development, including the completion of the storage reservoirs on South Lake and Lake Sabrina by 1911 for the storage of surplus waters during our spring and early summer runoff.

This was to be followed by the completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct and rail service into Los Angeles and Southern California in 1913, all bringing prosperity to Inyo and Mono Counties.

During this period of increased prosperity and development there were years of heavy winters with exceptional high stream flows with surplus water for all, but by 1917, 1918 and 1919 it was found that we were experiencing a period of subnormal precipitation which resulted in a very low snowpack with not enough water to supply the demand, of all rights, including the right of the power company to put any storage in their reservoirs and what waters were stopped were not released at a time that it served any benefits to the farmer.

This became very serious to the farmers and after several demands made on the power company for the release of storage water in the late summer months to supplement the low flow to assure a complete final irrigation to mature their crops, a group of farmers found it necessary to proceed with an active protest by forcibly opening the power company reservoir gates to release some of the storage waters.

This led to the power company placing an injunction against the farmers. This was followed by both sides securing legal counsel and during the summer of 1919, it was agreed by all concerned that the case be submitted to arbitration for the purpose of adjudicating the water rights of Bishop Creek.

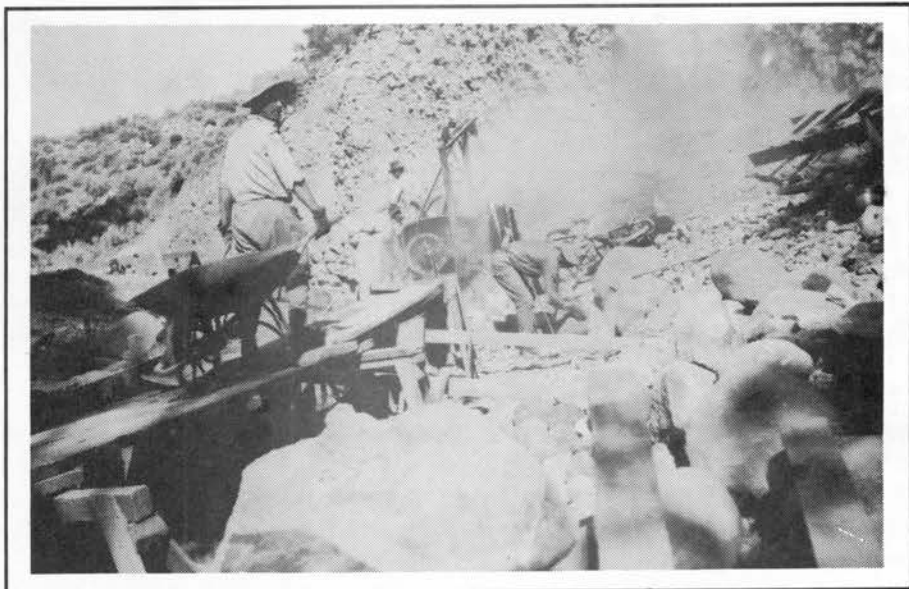


*Building Cain Ranch headquarters*

*Checking watershed, summer or winter*



*Ernest's first job after the war was with a construction crew for the power company building Gem Lake dam.*





*I was hired by the company in the newly created hydrographic department for the collection of data and evidence to present the company rights as well as to determine if all waters were being put to a beneficial used.*

*After more than 25 months of collecting information, data and expert advice, the Federal District Court in and for Southern California appointed Mr. Albert Chandler as arbitrator, to hear the case.*

*The case represented some 167 individual defendants and approximately 8,500 acres together with all the expert testimony from both sides, taking many, many weeks of hearings before all evidence and data was presented.*

*In the latter part of January, 1925, Mr. Chandler submitted his findings and it was ordered by Judge Bledsoe that a judgment and decree in accordance with his findings be ordered, adjudged and decreed.*

*Immediately both sides were very happy over the results of the long, drawn out litigation.*

*In the early spring of 1925, I was appointed Chief Hydrographer and it has been my duty for most all these years to be responsible that the provisions of this decree have been followed and that no abuse be made of any of its provisions.*

*This decree adjudication of the water of Bishop Creek was somewhat unique from most adjudications prior to this time in that it took no recognition of any rotation, division, prorating, riparian or individual rights of any defendant against any other defendant, but that the defendants, shall prorate, rotate, divide, distribute and apportion the waters as provided by the schedule to be delivered to them in such amounts and in such manner and such time as they saw fit.*

*It is to be noted that in many of the nationally famous water controversies, stream and ditch adjudications subsequent to those of Bishop Creek have been patterned from the now nationally known Chandler Decree of Bishop Creek.*

*By 1928, the City of Los Angeles had acquired by purchase approximately 80% of the Bishop Creek area under the Chandler Decree, much of which has been withdrawn from irrigation.*

*This permitted any surplus water from the area to flow out of the area into the river and be exported from the Valley.*

*I might emphasize that at the time the water was adjudicated probably no one thought of the area ever being withdrawn from agricultural use and the water taken from the area. But with this unique allotment to the area rather than an individual acreage allotment has*

*assured those lands still in private ownership their water so long as it is put to beneficial use regardless of whether it takes an inch to an acre or ten inches to the acre, and since most of the area in individual ownership has been recently subdivided, it is very fortunate that this area has such a liberal recognition of its water rights.*

*Another important factor in connection with the water supplies in our area is the gradual depreciation of our annual snow pack. The yearly runoff is in direct proportion to our seasonal snow pack or accumulated snow crop at the head waters of the individual mountain streams. The power company has kept records since 1904 which we daily deal with in our studies and forecast of runoff and generations.*

*Back 25 years ago our mean annual precipitation was 15 to 20% higher than our present mean. By the same token our yearly mean runoff is 15% less than 25 years ago.*

*With this in mind you can readily appreciate our concern, especially of February first when normally we should have had approximately 55% of our accumulated snow pack, with an actual of 25%, making it necessary for us to get 150% for the rest of the season in order to come out with normal. However, with the storms we have had this past week, we must get 130% for the rest of the season to come out with an average year.*

*How right Mark Twain was when he said "Everybody talks about the weather but no one does any thing about it. " And how true it is no matter how many years of records you have, you find no two which compare.*

*I think the best I have heard was when Mr. Pye was here forecasting our weather and a group was discussing his forecast and Wilfred Partridge interjected that the weather was not paying any attention to Pye!"*

*Thus pioneer Bulpitt played an integral part in the development and management of the most important resource which determined the history of the Bishop area - water.*

*In addition to work with the power company Ernie Bulpitt was so involved with community activities that he was properly termed "Mr. Inyo-Mono" by observers of his life who valued his counsel. He served many years on the board of trustees of both the Bishop elementary and high school districts and more than 20 years on the Northern Inyo Hospital District Board of Directors and was board president several years. His daughter, Beverly Williams, went into nursing in 1947, retiring from the hospital in 1992.*

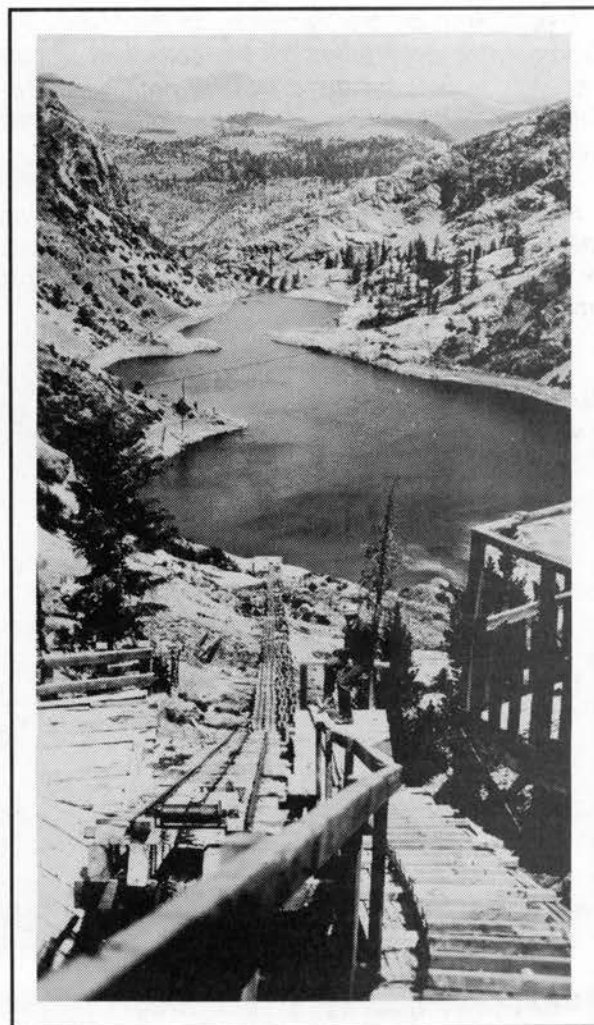
*Ernest Bulpitt seemed to rise to the top of every organization with which he was associated, having led local chapters of the Free and Accepted Masons, Elks, and American Legion. He was a past patron of the Order of the Eastern Star, past-president of Inyo-Mono Shrine*

Club; member of Kerak Temple of the Shrine and the Scottish Rite; and past high priest of Royal Arch Masons. Ernest was most helpful to his wife Dolly and her work with Rainbow Girls for 26 years.

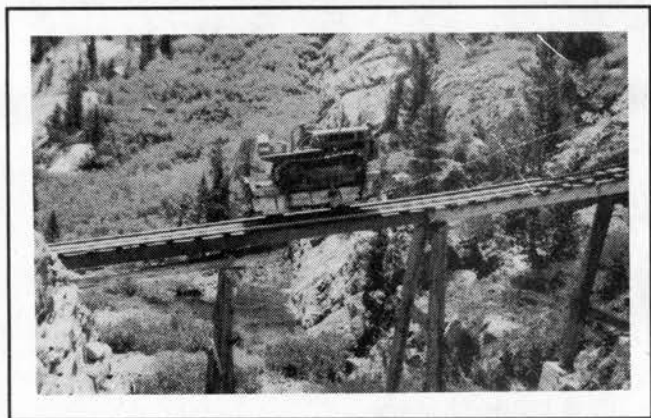
It was Ernest Bulpitt who secured a lease from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power on Bishop Creek to create Bulpitt Park and maintain it for the enjoyment of the community for many years. The lease is now administered by the Elks.

Ernie was known among Masons for his traditional "chicken mulligan" dinners and in the community for the annual power company Christmas buffet-reception put on by Ernie and his staff.

The Inyo Register noted that Ernest Bulpitt had a roomful of citations; he had compassion for his fellow man, for causes, for humanity; but most of all, that he had the profound respect and admiration of those who knew him best. Those who never knew his compassion, counsel, and generosity missed some of the finer experiences of life in Inyo-Mono. \*



*Up to the second tram*

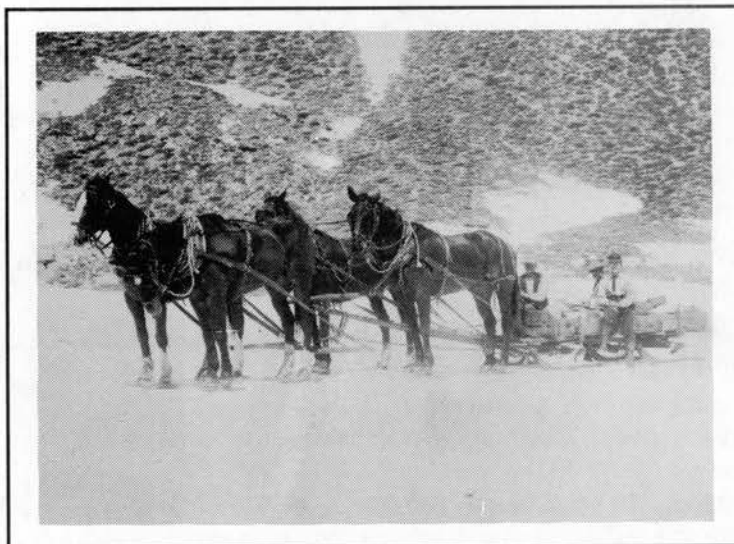


*Everything to the top goes by tram*

*Straight up to Gem Lake*



*Even the horses wear snow shoes*







# NAN'S STORY

## *The Lady on the Flying Skis*

by Bill & Louise Kelsey

photos courtesy Nan Zischank, except as noted

*Nan and Max Zischank came to Mammoth in the mid-1930s. This is the story of their adventures when skiing in the Eastern High Sierra was in its boisterous infancy.*

With the death of her father in 1938 Nan inherited \$7,000.00. She and Max had dreamed and talked and planned a resort and now it looked as if they could make the dream a reality.

1938 was the year the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power finished the north aqueduct tunnels, and with their completion, the D.W.P. announced it would auction off the bunkhouse buildings. The buildings were 50 feet wide and 125 feet long with bunk rooms at each end and latrines in the middle area. Nan and

Max wanted to buy a building but they didn't know how much to bid. They asked Ruth Cushion what they should bid, Ruth asked her friend Wm. Mullholland, who carried the burden of responsibility for building the aqueduct, and the Zischanks successfully bid \$165.

So now the couple had a building, but what to do with it? Max sawed it into three sections with handsaws, selling a 25 foot section to Tex Cushion for an addition to his cabin in Mammoth. The next thing they needed was land. They wanted an acre in Long Valley and were told to talk to Harold and Leota Eaton who owned the Eaton Ranch. Again Tex came to help them. Having been a bootlegger, Tex was wise in the ways of liquor. He gave the young land-shoppers a bottle to "loosen Harold up." They not only got their acre of land in Long Valley but water rights to a spring on the hillside to go with it.



Before buying the property they asked the advice of Doug Robinson, Inyo National Forest Supervisor. When deep in thought Doug had a habit of rubbing his chin and that morning he nearly rubbed all the whiskers off before he told them not to buy. Later he said that it was some of the worst advice he had ever given.

In 1940 Gerd Crawford moved the two sections of building from Crestview to Long Valley for \$500. An old carpenter from Bishop came, jacked up the sections and patched them together; Nan's job was to sand and refinish all the window sills – which the construction workers had used as ashtrays.

The next step was to get water from the spring at the foot of McGee Mountain down the hillside, across Highway 395, and to the resort they had planned. "Pop" Wells, foreman at McGee Creek Maintenance Station, came to their aid, advising that they could use an existing culvert to cross under the highway. Max built a water box at the spring on the mountainside, dug a trench from the spring to the highway, and laid the pipeline. The line went through pastureland so Nan took a wheelbarrow and covered the line with manure, which acted as insulation. And all of this without an environmental impact report!

#### **NAN AND MAX LONG VALLEY RESORT**

*opened New Year's Day, 1941*

*The menu includes Lobster Tails at \$4.25*

*16 oz. U.S.D.A. Choice cut prime rib steak at \$3.95  
and coffee 10¢ a cup*

Nan cut and trimmed her own meat and ground the hamburger, processing up to a ton of meat when preparing for the holidays. Her steaks were one-pounders and so tender and well cooked that one customer, having finished a steak, ordered another. When he finished the second Nan said, "Well, if you can eat a third it's on the house," and he did!

When Nan and Max spent their first winter caretaking Tamarak Lodge and learning to ski, Tex told Nan she had a natural ability and should work at become a better skier ... even a racer. When the Long Valley Resort was built plans included a modest ski lift, powered by a Briggs and Stratton gas engine. Rates at the Resort were modest, too. Charges for a cot for a sleeping bag, one towel for a shower, breakfast, lunch, and dinner (family style) was \$7 a day. Riding the rope tow was complimentary.



1936. The discovery of the wonderful snows of the Sierra had begun. Dave McCoy was part of the ski club out of Independence. He skied on barrel staves, flew down hill on "skimmers" – a homemade contraption about one foot wide and four feet long that preferred the fall-line to any other course down the hill, or anything that was fast and fun. Little did any of them know that Dave's love of skiing would lead to development of one of the nation's finest ski areas, Mammoth Mountain.

As hydrographer for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Dave's job included snow surveys and measurements in the Eastern Sierra. He used whatever equipment he needed to get him over the snow and up the mountains. Skis with skins or wax were fine for the uphill grades but flying off the passes was his idea of a grand time. When he was late out of Mammoth Pass he would often stay with Tex and Ruth at their "Patrol Station" on old Mammoth Road, talking the evening away about the best and fastest way to get over the snow.

Dave and Roma lived at Crowley Lake when Dave built his ski lift on McGee Mountain. When the lake froze over Dave would cross Crowley on skis and only once did the lake threaten to take him to its icy depths.

The lift on McGee Mountain was a cable tow with four hooks at the top and four at the bottom. Max ran the Ford gas engine which powered the lift. Roger Link, who stayed with Nan and Max, collected the 50¢ to ride the lift, giving the skier a rope that went around his waist. The rope had a loop that went over one of the hooks and up he would go. The 50¢ went into Roger's wicker fishing creel, and at the end of the day, Roger, Nan and Max would sit on the couch in the resort and count out the day's receipts.

Other tows in the young days of skiing were Hans Georgs in Mammoth, a tow at Crestview and Ingle's in Bridgeport.

Nan and Max closed their Long Valley Resort on December 7, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Max joined the Construction Battalion, 86th Division and was shipped to Adak in the Aleutians. Nan worked at Manzanar as a security officer.

The Long Valley Resort reopened with the beginning of fishing season, in 1945.

Three things in the Eastern High Sierra went along a fairly parallel course ... snow, skiing, and Nan and Max's Long Valley Resort. There were some deep snow years and some not-so-great snow years. Then came the winter of '69. Snow fall was normal until after the first of the year, when a storm blew in and "dumped." Cars were buried, landmarks disappeared, and skiers were celebrating with the greatest season of their lives.

On Washington's Birthday Max was sitting in a lounge chair in the bar. Nan was in the "third kitchen" getting food ready for the mid-day trade. The dog was curled up in the storm entry between the outer and inner door.

Everything was calm and quiet when a slide began high on the mountain and gathered both snow and speed as it developed into a full-fledged avalanche, rolling toward Long Valley Resort as if the lodge had been targeted.

Wind preceding the snow reached an unearthly level. When it hit the building, snow sped through the storm door, flattening the sleeping dog. Max was carried, still sitting in his chair, across the room, slammed against the wall, then buried in a debris of snow and glass.

In the kitchen Nan could hear a muffled "Nan! Nan! Help me!" Between kitchen and bar snow had filled the lodge so deep that Nan had to climb to the top to crawl along the three-foot space between snow and the ceiling of the dining room. Listening for Max's calls she was able to locate where he was buried. When she finally got him free they were both covered with cuts from the glass-laden snow.

One happy survivor was the cat. It had been lifted through the ceiling crawl hole and into the attic ... and trapped there. Three weeks later the cat's meows led Nan to the animal's rescue. A diet of mice and melted snow had kept kitty fat and sassy.

In 1942 the Automobile Club of Southern California sponsored an International Invitational Ski Race. Nine men and two women were invited to compete in the "Flying Skis" Carson Peak Run at June Lake. Most of the racers were European but two were from the Eastern Sierra. Nancy Zischank of Long Valley and Augie Hess of Lee Vining upheld the local honor.

The course was set down Devil's Chute. The Chute was just exactly that ... a long narrow chute whose incline was so steep not a tree grew on it and whose sides were so close that the race course was set with tight turns almost straight down.

Nan was restless the night before the race. She finally drifted off to sleep when a gentle sound awakened her. The soft patter of rain on the roof. RAIN! Oh no! the course was challenging enough without adding breakable crust. But there it was. Rain.

"Well," Nan thought "we're all in this together and I'm just as good as any of them."

Before the race Tex had taken Nan part way up the course so that she could get a look at it. Now the morning had come for the real thing. On her skis with skins Nan began the hike up to the starting gate. Five hours later Nan reached the gate and four minutes after starting she powered to the finish line.

With one complication! (Tex had always told Nan, "Never hit anything straight on. If it looks like you are going to hit something, side-slip into it.") The racer before Nan had broken through the crust at the bottom of the run, just in front of the finish gate,

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*Opposite, above: Nan and  
Max Zischank*

*Opposite, below: The Zischank's  
with Dave McCoy*

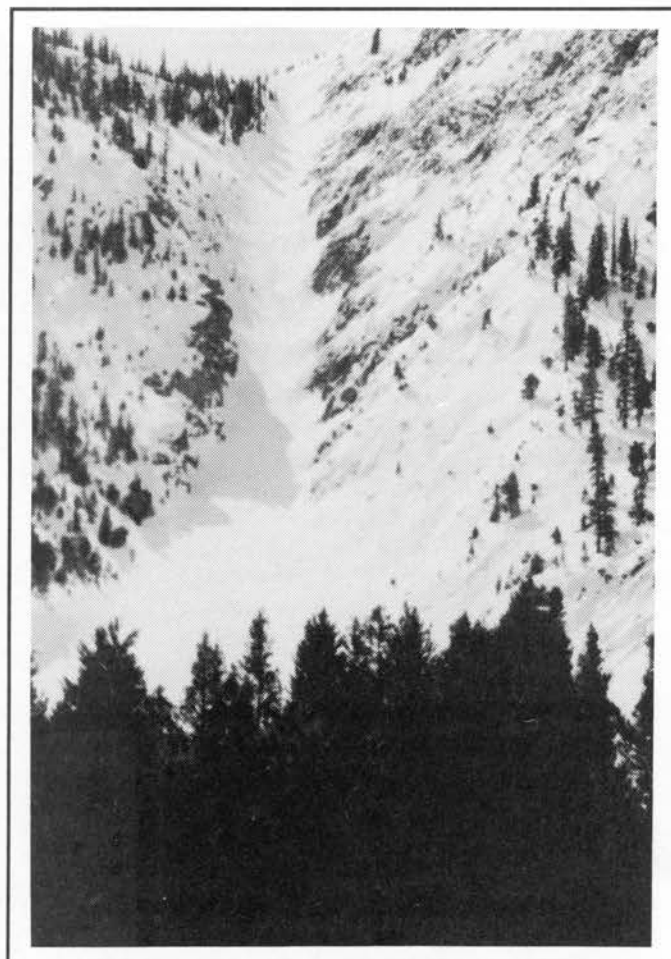




breaking his leg with eight spiral fractures. The people at the bottom of the run were shouting to Nan, "Don't come down! Don't come down!" From high on the mountain Nan thought they were yelling "Come on down! Come on down!" ... and she did. It wasn't until she was close to the downed skier, racing at top speed, that Nan saw her problem. With Tex's words ringing in her ears she threw herself into a slide, plowed under the injured skier and carried them both through the finish gate.

The two were driven to Bridgeport on mattresses furnished by a local motel, and delivered into the competent hands of Dr. William Denton. Dr. Denton set the broken leg and took several x-rays of Nan, pronouncing her whole. Getting up the next morning Nan found herself black and blue from head to toe and questioning the doctor's pronouncement, but for all of it she had won the prestigious "Flying Skis" Trophy.

This lovely, lively lady, a young 85, lives in Bishop. She is involved in her church, Eastern Star, the Women's Improvement Club, Republican Party, and is always gracious in sharing her memories of the early days of skiing and the adventure of living in the Eastern Sierra Nevada. \*



*The Chute. Photo by Louise Kelsey.*



*...but for all of it she had won the prestigious "Flying Skis" trophy.*

Now I am going to relate to you one of the old time incidents of Pioneer days. This is a true story though it sounds like Fiction yet there are many yet who can testify to its truthfulness and the records of San Bernardino Co will verify the most of these facts.

## A FREIGHTERMAN'S TALE

Here follows a pioneer story by Freighterman John Abraham Delameter, who drove from San Bernardino to Death Valley and the gold mines. Walter B. Clausen, veteran Associated Press correspondent and Acting Bureau Chief, met Mr. Delameter through Death Valley Scotty and urged him to write down his account. The tale in turn was given to THE ALBUM by Mr. Clausen's daughter, Mrs. Jean Runyon of Pacific Palisades. To preserve the charm of the writings of this pioneer, the text is printed here exactly as he wrote it. Photos and copies of the handwritten account, courtesy of Mrs. Runyon, from her father's personal collection.

Now I am going to relate to you one of the old time incidents of Pionners days. This is a true storey though it Sounds like Fiction yet there are meny who can testify to its truthfullnes and the records of San Berndino Co will verfy the most of these facts.

In The erlie seventyes in the Mining Boom of that date there came to Eldorado Canyon a young French man by the name of Johnney Moss that was the American intepration of his name. He came direct from Paris when He graduated from coledge. His Father gave him a few thousand doll and advised him to come to Americe wher Golden oportunities only awaited the gathering and as Eldero Canyon was a booming Mining Camp and blessed with allthe avenews of disapation that usualy atend Mining Camps He at once launched into a carrer that soon consumed all of His money and left Him Broke in a foren Land with no Knowledge of the English Language and never having been taught eny

kind of Labor He was indeed in avery Pitibale condition.

He at first tried working in a Resturant this was a failure then He tried working in the mines and this also was a failure and He graduly went down the moral Path until He finaly was compelled to seeke food and shelter with the Indians as there was quite a number in that vicinity and this led to a Blood Brother+hood that lasted untill He died som four years later

Now this incident led to the discovery of some of the Ritchest Mines ever discovered in Lower California and brought millions of doll in to the world. The white mans energy soon aserted its self and He asumed leadership of the Indians and set them Prospecting and the first Mine that they found I think was one acrost the Colorado River almost oposite the Canyon. He named it the Moss Mine and it goes by that name ever Since and it was Produce quite a lot of money I think that Moss sold this mine for two





*Freighterman and Death Valley Scotty talk about old times.*

*thousand dol+ and this was the incentain that led to a Series of very Success discoverries*

*There was the Ivanpaugh the Ivarwach the IbiX Valey wells the Mexican Mine Charles Mountain and many ohter Now Moss sold all of these Mines and received some- thin over two hundred thousand dol= and of course Moss Handled the money and the record of these sales are in San Berndino Well after receiving all this Money Moss though that He would take a trip to France and display the wonderfull success that He had made So he Induced two Indians to acompany Him But when they reached New York and the Indians could not see acrost the Water they refused to go eny father and could not be persuaded One of those Indians afterwards told meNo could see land on other side So Moss Brought them tickets back to Reno Nevada and they walked from there Home a bout five hundred miles.*

*Well to get back to Moss again when He reached His old Home he was hailed as a Royal Prince and meny was the fated calf Killed in his honor and meny wer the fablous tales of ewath so easily gained in America and to finaly crown His noble carreer he married a Beautiful young Lady Just Past sixteen having just finished high School Her Mother having died when she was but a small child and being the only child of a ritch Banker raised in luxury Just imagine the tirable fate that she was condeming her self to*

*So after a time they were returning to America accom- panied by Her Father who had meny relatives in Louisiana and Canada that He wished to visit so He Parted with them in New Youk and they came on alone Now when Moss got to New York He telegraphed someone in San Berndino to notify all the Indians out on the desert to meet Him in San Berndino and I think that He had written to*



*Death Valley Scotty and his promoter, Walter Johnson*

*this Partie before the Indians might have been expeting the news for it went from mouth to mouth like wild fire and soon you could crowds of Indians with all manner of transportation all going to San Berndino and soon there was about two thousand camped in and around San Berndino Something went wrong with Mosses Transporting and he was about four days late and He telegraphed His friend to give the Indians about one Hundred doll a day for food and He also telegraphed me to meet them at Colton then three miles from San Berndino and there was about three Hundred Indians there also and when we wer all seated in my open top stage Moss arose to a standing Position and introduced His Wife tothem His first setences wer in the Poyute dilect and then He interpreted to his wife in Frentch and Inever will forget Her look of astonishment and it convinced me that he had never told Her any thing about the Indians.*

*The Indians Stood Silently looking at Her and acknowl-*

*edge the introduction by a gutral grunt This is the usual form of Indians greeting They never cheer or clap their hands to eny speaker Well we went to the old Southern Hotel (the first Hotel Built in San Berndino It was Built and run by an old German and his Wife) It was a two Storey Building and there was a poarch or Portico running out over the Street and Moss and His wife and anumber of others including myself went out with them and the street was Packed full of Indians it was imposable to get up or down the street with eny Kind of vehicle and trafic Was completely tied up He first spoke in the Poyute dilect and as I understood some of that Language I knew that He was making some very high Promises but the Indians only shoed their aproval by ocansly utering a gutural grunt then He spoke in broken English and at the end of his speach from some Place He Produced handsful gold and bradcast it down among the Indian this He did three times and telling them to Buy food with it Then we all went inside and the*





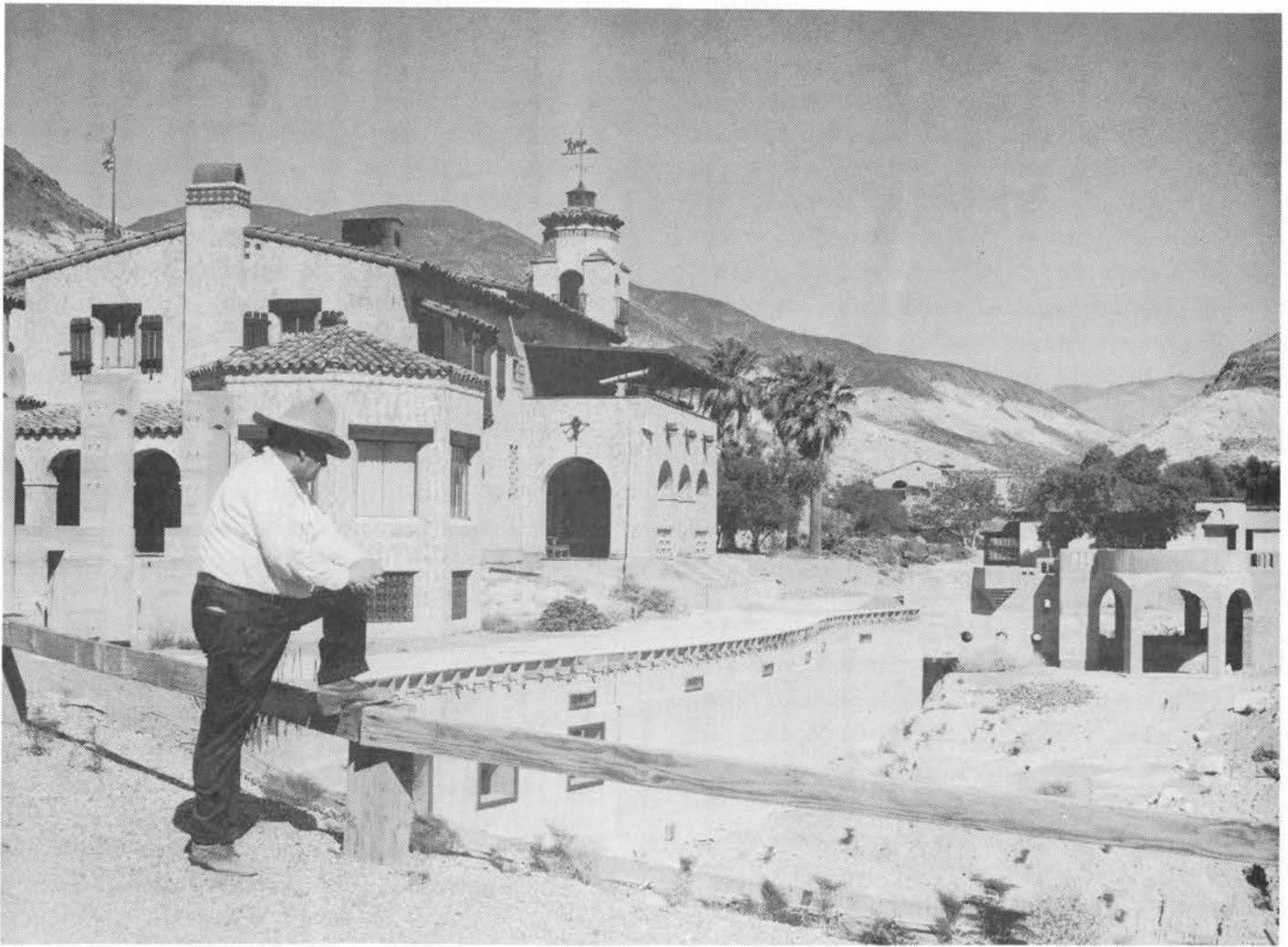
*Johnson, Scotty, Jean Clausen, Ranger, and Bertin Clausen*

*crowd gradually dispersed*

*Well we wer three fourdays getting ready to start for Clarks Mountain I had a large Desert Stage built in 2 I thot would carry almost two tons on this I put six Horses and we loaded it all kinds of fancy goods and several cases of Old John Cutter Whiskey and wine and Several Boxes of good cigars and I had another six horse team load with some freight for the mines But there was five Big Large Trunks from Paris filled with the finest Kind of lingera of Mosses wife imagine this for an Indian Camp Well when we wer ready to go there was a large bodey of Indians to acopany us They had all kinds of transportation some had Buroes some small mules som Ponies and some afoot I think there was about three Hundred the first night we camped at a station called Curlies Moss had sent word ahead for the Stationman to have two Beeves there for the Indians and whenwe arived they wer waiting forus Moss Paid Him for them and told the Indians to Kill them the*

*Indians threw them down and cut their throats and when they wanted some meat they would just skin a little more of the carcass and cut out what meat they wanted then cut it in strips and stick a small piece on a stick and hold it over the fire and as the outside cooked they would eat it off and then cook it some more Some would pull the coals out of the fire and lay the meat on them sometimes the Blood from the raw meat would run down on each side of their mouth a horrible site This would make the Wife almost frantic Moss would say to Her why do you look She would Say I cannot Help it Well the next morning there would only be the hide and a few Bones left*

*The crowd kept getting smaller as we got farther out and when we reached Clarks Mountain our Escort had been cut down to about fifty and as we wer nearing the Mill Perhaps half mile from it but in Plain open site of it I aske Moss wher He was going to camp as the town of about one thousand was half mile father on than the Mill*



*Death Valley Scotty at the "swimming hole."*

he said hold on let me see I guess this is a good Place there was a perpendicular bluff about twenty feet high He said unload there I said how will you get water Carry it from the mill (I didn't think that there would be meny Baths taken He shouted to the Indians and they came all around Him His word was law with all of them He told some to go to gathering Rocks and some to cut down Jocheways and drag them up to us with Ruaps tied to the horn of the saddle He stood these up against the wall first and roled Rocks around them then done the same thing with others out in front then anchering them as you would a tent then drawing canvas over them He had a large Room walled in three Sides with canvas and the bank made the fourth side

All this time Mosses Wife was standing by watching and then they wer done she asked Moss wher do we sleep oh said Moss I forget that then He called to some Indians and they went off and soon came back with Baskets full of Quiata grass this He piled down on the ground in the corner then threw a very expensive mattras on the grass and

some beautiful quilts and laying down on them Said there is a bed fit for Kings His Wife burst in to tears and walked some distance away She seemed for the first time to realize Her Position I told Moss to go and talk to Her so He want and took her in his arms and talked to her and when they came back She was not crying but you could Plainly see the Pain that was inher mind

Moss Paid me well with a check on the Bank of San Bernidino and I told Him I must go on up to the town to get ready to leave in the morning He Said Ill go with you to town and when we reached the town there five or Six Sloons and He just went from one to the other calling every one to come and get a drink So I did not see Him eny more that night

I had made arrangements to to come back with a load of freight for the Co in about two months so I started quite earli and when I got down to Mosses camp His Wife came out to meet me in tears She had been crying all night She



wanted to know if I had seen Moss I told her I thought Him at Her camp She Said He had not been there all night and she was frightened to death so I told Her in as few words as Possible how Moss got His money and I thought that He would soon quit drinking and Set the Indians to Prospecting again and I had no doubt that they would find more Mines and that she was mutch safer with them than if She was in Some large Cite Then She said She could not talk with them nor with the Americanand She didnot know what in the World She would do So I told Her I was coming back in about Six weeks or two months with Supplies for the Co So I sure would come and for her to be Brave untill I come back and I thought every thing would Be all rite by that time

Well it was almost two months before I returned and when I came in sight of their camp almost a mile away She came on a run and as I was walking by the Side of the team She fell into my arms and fainted as there was three others with me we layed her in the Shade of the Wagon and soon brought Her too again but she was almost Insane and quite histerical but I gathered that Moss had not quit drinking and had spent all His money and would some times stay away from the Camp fife or Six days at a time and that She would have to live on sutch food as the Indians could finde Lizards Snakes or turtles or rats and to make the conditions still worse that She was Pregnant and that She was lousey with Indian lice.

So we stoped at Her Camp and took a Big Trunk and Put it on the wagon so that she could change clothes when we got to town So when we reached the mill and was unloading some Freight a man came up to me and asked me if I would hauls his Family to San Berndino I told him that would gladly doso if His Wife would take charge of Mrs Moss as I intended to take Her in with me He said that they knew all about the case and was sure that she would only be glad to do So and when we reached town He went and got His wife and Intruduced them and I told Mrs Moss that she must look on his Woman as Her Mother to whitch she readily agreed

So that evening I went and found Moss asleep in the back Room of a sloon I woke Him up and told Him that I was going to take His wife in side withme He said why are you going to do that for I am good to Her I explaiend Her condition and that apealed to His humanly He finally Said all rite take Her and Ill give you a Ritch mine as your Pay I aranged a place for Her to ride near me wher I could talk to her often and when we reached San Berndino She was almost normal wher we turned her over to old man Miller and His Wife who could speak a little Frentch and wer kinde to Her

Then I sent a Cable gram to France asking if they knew wher bouts in America Her Father could be found answer came that he was in Neworlians Louisiana I then telegraphed to them there and they answered and said that He was in Canada I then telegraped there and found Him I then gave Him a short History of what the conditions wer His answer was (Spare neither money nor care of my Daughter I am on my way there)

Well I met Him at Colton and gave Him detailed account of the whole History of the case and my Hart went out to Him for it was for it was Plain to see that He was Hart broken Well I am so sorry that I cannot finish this story as they do in Fiction but I am going to give you the facts Her Father Paid everything witha libral Hand and in a few day took His Daughter and went back to France But inspite of the best medical care she died in childbirth and the child was Born dead and the Poor old Father only survived ashort time and He also Past away

Now doubtless there are meny in San Berndino who can remember this incident and men of those Mines have Sagas that are very interesting

Respkt J.A. Delameter

I forgot to say Moss Died in a Drunkenstupor in about 4 months after his wife left and is buried at Clarks Mountain \*

Now doubtless there are meny in San Berndino who can remember this incident and meny of those Mines have Sagas that are very interesting  
Respekt J.A. Delameter

B

M

O

Gets in  
my eyes

K

E

by Marye Roeser



There was just no other solution, but to axe that beef roast in half. The frozen roast was too large to bake in the reflector oven and would have required at least a half a cord of firewood, which my husband Lou wasn't looking forward to chopping. I always included a pressure cooker in my kitchen

box and half of that roast would fit quite nicely in the pot.

This perplexing dilemma occurred on the third day out on a seven day pack trip from McGee Creek Pack Station through the High Sierra. My husband Lou Roeser was the packer and my job

was camp cook. Russ and Anne Johnson, owners of McGee Creek Pack Station specialized in delicious camp meals and Anne was a wizard at turning out wonderful juicy roasts in a reflector oven. Lou and I were newly married and I wasn't nearly so skilled.



We were camped along upper Fish Creek in a lovely glade that many years before had served as a camp for sheep flocks summering in the high country. An old log enclosure encircled the camp. In earlier days, herds moved into the high country each summer over Mammoth Pass or Fresno Flats Trail from the present town of Oakhurst to the High Sierra. A crossing over the North Fork of the San Joaquin River is called Sheep Crossing and there used to be a swinging suspension bridge over which the sheep crossed the swift, treacherous river. In 1952, the year before this trip, the bridge had washed out and was never rebuilt.

A wooden pack box, lined with corrugated cardboard, served as our refrigerator/freezer and I had packed the frozen meat in the box with the last day's menu on the bottom and progressed up to the first day's meal on top. The well wrapped meat had been solidly frozen and then wrapped again in newspaper. Dry ice on top kept everything cold and the frozen foods frozen.

This particular day's activity included a fishing trip with our pack trip guests to Virginia Lake on the John Muir trail for a day of fishing for big golden trout. The California record golden trout, weighing in at 9 lbs. 14 oz., was caught here in 1952, the previous year. Lou was packing for Lee Summers at Mammoth Pack Outfit and he had packed the huge fish out, not realizing it would be a record. The proud fisherman had rolled the huge fish up in his sleeping bag and it stuck out on either end.

I packed lunches for the day and took the big chunk of frozen roast out of the chest to thaw while we were gone. When we returned, I planned to roast the meat in the reflector oven while the guests watched it nicely brown. Lou hung it from a pine branch in a relatively warm spot, well out of reach of hun-



*The reflector oven in action.*

gry bears and an inquisitive pine marten.

We rode off with the guests to the high timberline lake. It was a clear, cool day and the fishing was marvelous. How carefree I felt as we rode back to camp. As soon as we reached camp late in the afternoon, I hurriedly began dinner preparations.

The reflector oven I used was constructed of flat sheets of steel which had to be joined together with many nuts and bolts. I was always so nervous about losing those precious little nuts and bolts that I carried the small metal box containing them in my most personal ditty bag.

As soon as we arrived in camp after each day's move, my first priority was to put that oven together, as we used it for each meal. It was positioned in front of a blazing, three sided fire built against a large flat rock or boulder. I placed an oven thermometer on the center rack, and maintained the temperature by moving the oven closer or

farther from the fire, or by adding more wood. It baked quite accurately, if the cook carefully watched the thermometer.

Baking possibilities were unlimited. I baked peach cobbler, pineapple upside down cake, coffee cake, biscuits and even roasts. If a cook is so inclined, almost anything that can be baked in a conventional oven can be baked in a reflector oven.

In a short time, I had a reflector fire blazing against a large slab of rock and the oven in place ready for the juicy beef roast. Wiping smoke from my eyes and pulling the roast down from the stout tree branch, I realized with a sinking heart that it was still quite solidly frozen. It really was a large roast too — it would require at least 3 hours to roast! What to do! Being a flexible and resourceful backcountry cook, I had to think fast. The guests would be coming to the fire soon. If the roast were smaller, it would fit in the pressure cooker, and I could steam it for an hour and then hastily put it in the



*Marye Roeser dodging the smoke.*

reflector oven to finish roasting while the guests watched in amazement – the secret of a tricky camp cook really being showmanship.

I attempted to slice into the roast but it was much too frozen. Then inspiration struck as I saw Lou chopping firewood. The axe! I related my plan to him in confidence and we carried the frozen meat out of sight behind a screen of pine trees. With a swift stroke of the axe, Lou split it in two.

Quickly, half of the roast went into the pressure cooker on the camp stove for pre-cooking. By the time the guests had washed up, changed clothes and taken a leisurely walk along Fish Creek, the meat, with fresh cloves of garlic inserted and artistically sprinkled with rosemary and coarse ground black pepper, was nicely browning in the reflector oven. We smiled serenely, accepting the accolades of the happy campers and never

divulging our emergency culinary shortcut.

At that particular camp, we constantly waged battle with a brazen pine marten who was cleverly determined to invade the larder. The freshly caught trout were strung on a string between two trees with a sharp can lid on either end. Even so, we apprehended him trying to tightrope walk and climb over the can lid to the fish!

One morning, as I left camp to haul water from the creek, it was so lovely that I sat on a boulder watching the morning light through the trees. My brief reverie was shattered by an ear piercing shriek. A young guest flew out of camp as though she were pursued by wolves. The predator wasn't a wolf or even a wily coyote, it was our foxy-faced camp robber, but our timid camper imagined this creature must have, at least, been as large

as a mountain lion.

This camp was located near the junction of the trail to Lee and Cecil Lakes in upper Fish Creek. The lakes contained large rainbows and were so remote they were seldom fished. Lee Summers was the owner of the Mammoth Lakes Pack Outfit and his uncle, Cecil Thorington, owned the McGee Creek Pack Station. So years before, they had planted trout in the lakes, hence the lakes were named after them.

Upper Fish Creek cascaded by and the Lodgepole pines grew quite tall and stately, shading my camp kitchen. The camp stove was built on a pedestal of rocks which enabled "Cookie" (me) to cook standing upright, quite a plus even for a young back.

Before the advent of plastic ice chests, backcountry cooks had to be innovative. We often began with



a wooden pack box and lined it with corrugated cardboard from cartons. If you had access to a freezing compartment, everything freezable could be frozen. Each parcel was then wrapped in several layers of newspaper (a good insulator and later, in camp, excellent fire starter). The items to be used last were packed first in the box and after the box was tightly loaded, dry ice, wrapped in newspaper, was placed on top. More cardboard and a tarp covered the box. Some wooden pack boxes were constructed with a wooden hinged lid. In camp, a canvas tarp was thrown over the box which was always kept in the shadiest spot. The frozen parcels remained frozen for many days, allowing fresh meat for the last days of a trip.

In camp, fresh produce could be placed in a large pot and sunk in a quiet eddy of a nearby stream. Lettuce remains crispy for days in such a cooler. On occasion, I even made jello salad using just such an icy mountain stream for refrigeration.

Old style burlap collapsible coolers were easy to pack in and were hung from a shade tree branch where cool breezes off the high peaks blew through the wet burlap. What a humorous sight to watch the clever pine marten trying to figure out how to invade that contraption!

Russ had built a set of wooden kitchen boxes that were almost indispensable to a semi-organized cook. The two boxes were hung on either side of the mule pack saddle and were like traveling cupboards. They had drawers for kitchen tools, shelves, spices and herbs, and best of all I could always find the coffee and matches! Russ's coffee pot was also ingenious. He had constructed it of sheet metal and besides making delicious cowboy coffee, on moves the Coleman lantern

was wrapped in newspaper and packed inside. We never broke a globe or a mantle. We now have four sets of kitchen boxes at the Mammoth Lakes Pack Outfit that our backcountry cooks swear by, but we haven't been able to duplicate Russ's coffee pot and the Coleman lanterns occasionally suffer.

Smoky campfires were a long way from UCLA and academia, but I had been taught "always do your best and if your role is to be a tree, then be the best little tree by the side of the road." There were many better cooks than I, in my near vision, notably Anne Johnson and my mother, but I could build a fire and use only one match! So my endless challenge to myself was to use only one match even when it was raining. I could always find dry twigs, pine needles, and cones under heavy thickets. Dry "squaw" wood was available under thick forest canopies and burned hotter and with less smoke to get in my eyes. Newspaper, saved from the wrapped frozen food, served as a great fire starter.

Early in my camp cooking career, I learned to respect white gas. During a drizzling rainstorm, I had built a campfire using too many large wet chunks of wood which, of course, weren't burning well. My smoked-reddened eyes focused on a can of white gas, and I reasoned I could stand well back and throw a little on the fire for a more respectable blaze. To my horror, the fire instantly traveled back into the white gas can, which I held in my hands. Needless to say, it was quite fortunate that it was raining, or I would have had my own forest fire with a real dose of smoke in my eyes.

My favorite herb for barbecuing is rosemary which, combined with garlic, gives a wonderful flavor to meat. The filet steaks were grilling topped with a liberal sprinkling of rosemary and garlic when one of the guests strolled by to sniff the delectable aroma, gasped, and gazed up at the spreading pine tree above the stove. "Oh my," he said, "This pine tree is shedding needles all over these beautiful steaks!" Whereupon, he carefully removed all the rosemary leaves. Rosemary does resemble dried pine needles, and I didn't have the heart to inform him that he was also removing the special flavor from the steaks.

When I was feeling particularly creative, I used a favorite biscuit recipe in which I added caraway seeds to the flour. I then rolled out the dough, sprinkled it liberally with cheddar cheese and chopped green onions, rolled it up like a jelly roll, sliced the roll, and baked the biscuits in the reflector oven. A

*Breakfast cookout, Camp High Sierra*



polite guest, who would not have dreamed of complaining about anything, strolled by to see what was cooking for dinner, observed the biscuit dough, and exclaimed, "Oh, my, you even have a mouse problem out here in the wilderness!" She then surreptitiously picked out the caraway seeds vowing not to mention the "problem" to the other guests.

After Labor Day, resort owners often took a breather before the hunters arrived in the middle of September. One of the local lodge owners had planned a holiday pack trip for himself and his son into upper Fish Creek, over 12,000 foot McGee Pass, right after Labor Day. After having served customers all summer, he desired to be waited on, if only for a few precious days. He especially wished for the luxury of having his early morning coffee served to him in his sleeping bag. Each morning on awakening, he would poke his head out of his tent and call, "Cookie, where's my cof-

fee?" Lou or I would immediately trot over with a steaming mug of cowboy coffee, while he sighed with ecstasy.

Another guest was less fun and we had diabolical thoughts during his trip. He was a business associate of another frequent pack trip guest who was treating him to what he believed to be a special vacation. However, this obnoxious man complained about everything, including the size of the trout. He claimed to have used larger fish as bait where he was used to fishing.

Big McGee Lake had excellent fishing for big rainbows and he caught some nice ones. One evening, he had ordered me to "Cook me a fish!" I prepared the pan-sized rainbow trout in evaporated milk, rolled in Bisquick with a touch of cornmeal, and fried golden brown in the skillet. Charlie, our regular customer, eagerly picked up a cooked trout and holding it by the tail and head, happily proceeded to

eat the fish like corn on the cob. Our grumpy guest looked on in disgusted horror and decided he definitely was no longer hungry. His vision of a sauteed fish filet with a basting of almandine sauce, nicely served on china, was shattered. Charlie really got into his act then, eating the trout like a neanderthal man, and including gross comments while winking at me. Lou and I hastily retreated behind a pine tree to smother our giggles.

However, cooking over a campfire always means the cook gets smoke in her eyes. Smoke always seems to follow me around the fire. Along with the smoke are the soot-blackened pots which have to be scrubbed, not to mention soot-blackened hands. I devised all sorts of methods for coping with soot-blackened pots and hands, but smoke in my eyes, I have never solved. *(Marye gives some camp recipe secrets in the recipe section.)* \*



*Early training to be a smoke-dodger.*

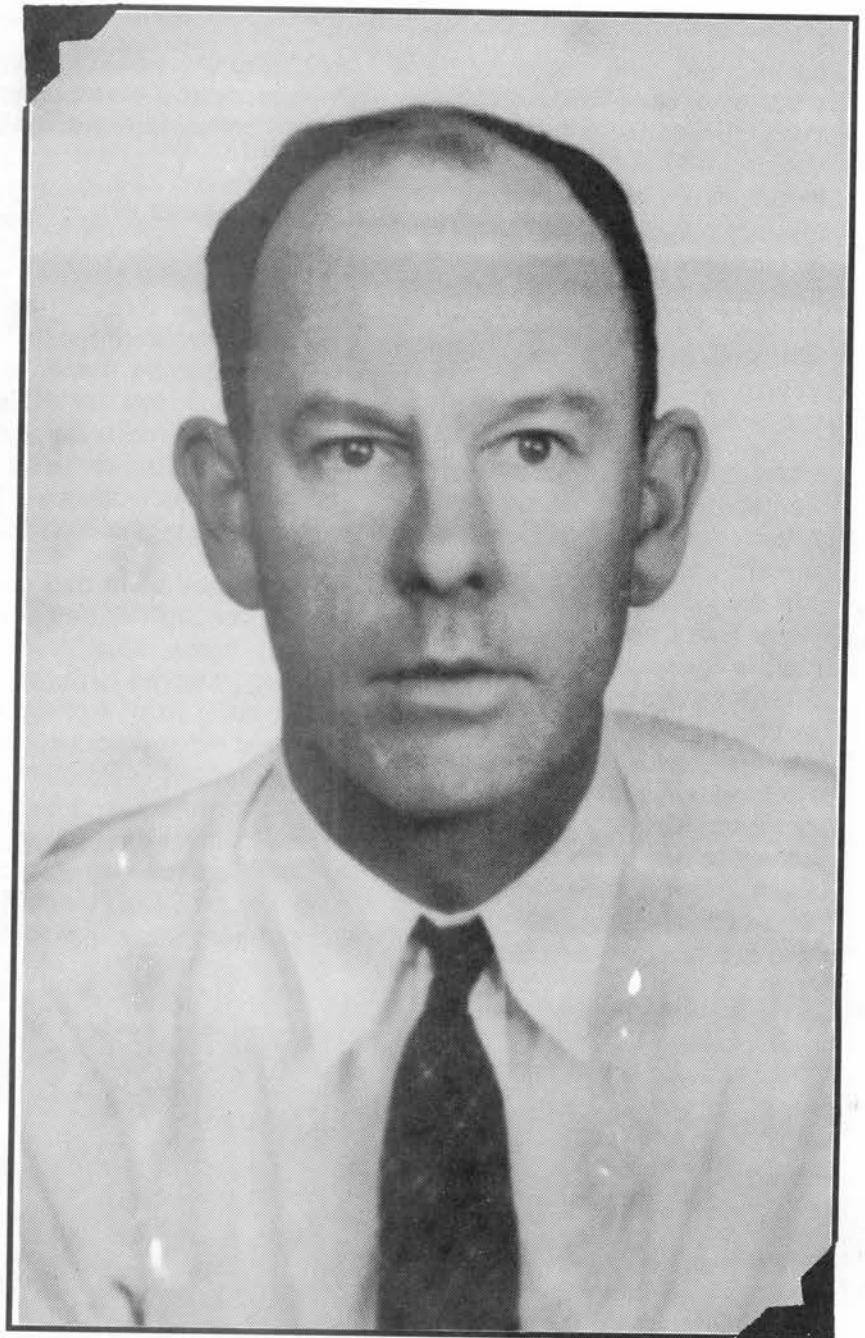


# GUS MARSH

A collection of  
remembrances  
from  
his life in Lone Pine

Photos and text courtesy  
George F. Marsh

*George F. Marsh writes about his father, who was 90 years old on March 21, 1993. He still lives in Lone Pine with his wife of 68 years, Zoe (Chambers) Marsh.*



*Gus Marsh, c. 1930*

Gus Marsh was born in the home that had been his grandfather's, Josiah Garland Dodge, at 305 West Willow Street in Lone Pine, California on the 21st of March 1903. His mother, Elizabeth (Dodge) Marsh was also born in this home in 1881. His father, Gustave Marsh was born and raised in Morton, England. Gus lived in that house until 1915 when his father replaced it with a new house.

The old house was cut into several sections and moved aside while the new home was being built. All but Gus lived in the major section; he lived in a three-walled section with the cats. They helped to keep him warm and entertained him with their purring. Gus had a sister Blanche, who was two years younger, and a brother Maule, who was seven years younger. Blanche died at the age of

15 in 1920 of influenza. Gus almost died from it at the same time.

As a boy, Gus pulled weeds from the vegetable garden and tended to his baby brother at the same time. He changed diapers, wiped noses, helped mow the alfalfa and bring it in after it dried; and there was a cow to milk, chickens to care for, and other chores common to a farm. The farm included the home, located on four

lots and the 10 acres behind to the west.

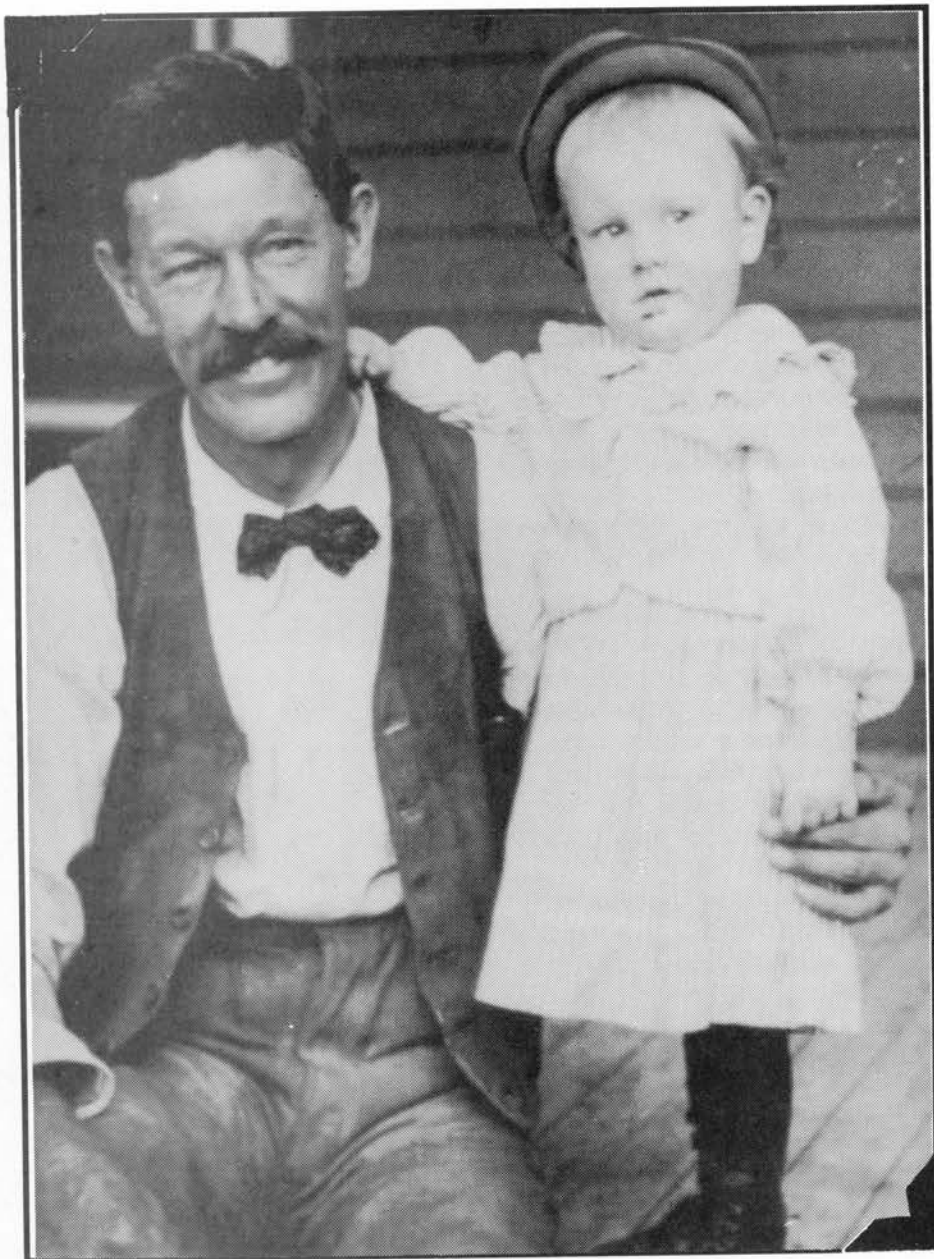
He learned to saddle horses, throw a pack on a mule and to hitch a team to a wagon. This was their mode of travel. However, his young brother Maule missed all of that. Gus taught his son George how to throw a squaw hitch to tie a pack to a mule, which came in handy when George worked for the forest service one summer.

Gus's father had several businesses; one was the taking hunters out to the "islands." During the 1872 earthquake the river changed its course, creating an area of islands below what is now the spillway<sup>1</sup> for the L.A. Aqueduct at the north end of the Alabama Hills. Gus would take groups of duck hunters to the "Islands" in a horse-drawn wagon for his father. One of the hunters offered Gus some hardtack which he had never tried before. He claims this was his first sandwich. After taking a bite he was curious about what was in it and to his surprise, it was full of weevils.

Gus's first train ride was on the narrow gauge from Mt. Whitney Station to Keeler. He and his mother went to visit her half sister, Aunt Anna Mates, owner of the Lake View Hotel (Hotel Keeler). They made this trip several times. Gus's father drove the stage to pick up and deliver passengers, U.S. mail, and freight for transportation to and from Lone Pine. Therefore, they had riding privileges on the train. His first broadgauge trip, approximately 1915, was to San Francisco via Mojave and Bakersfield with his father on a business trip.

When Gus was about 10 years old he got a whopping from his father. He thought it was unfair and ran away. His parents and the town folks became worried and they went out to find him. George Hancock, Jack Kahn, and Spencer Kahn found him by the fire he had going that night. Gus had become a good camper at an early age.

Young Gus was a cross bearer<sup>2</sup> for



*G. E. Marsh, Sr. and Jr., c. 1905*

the Trinity Episcopal Church. Just after church services one day, he became disturbed by the Episcopalians who were "running down" the Methodists. He felt this was unjust; he knew the Methodists were good people, so he took off his robe, carefully folded it, put it and the cross on the floor and never went to church again (not even to vote many years later).

Gus and his pal, Bill Skinner (Pat Boyer's father<sup>3</sup>) ran a trap line for skunks for two winters. These suc-

cessful trappers have a photograph of themselves holding skunks to prove their expertise. (I wonder how the photographer got so close?) They had several other business ventures: collecting and selling bottles to the bootleggers, and corralling

1. *The Alabama Gates*

2. See photograph on page 84, "Saga of Inyo County," 1977, So. Inyo AARP, Taylor Pub. Co., Covina, CA

3. See page 3, A Skinner Family Record, "The Album," Vol. V No. 4



the markets for fireworks and Christmas trees are a few that Gus remembers. Their earnings were banked in a tin can they hid in a culvert where it was readily available for the next venture.

Bill had an old motorcycle that they worked on and had running. One night Gus took it up on Hoodlum's Peak and on the way down forgot about a bad spot, and he took a spill but didn't get hurt. He felt so lucky to come out of that that he never rode a motorcycle again. Bill also got hold of an old Stevens-Duryea auto that they fixed up and drove for awhile.

When they were older, they explored for a direct route to Wallace Lake by the way of Tulainyo Lake from Whitney Portal. After several years, Gus found what appeared to be the route and Bill was the first to use it in the late 1930s. This was a great lake for fishing; they usually brought out their limits of Golden Trout in pounds rather than numbers. Their best time over this new route to Wallace Lake was about five hours. (George's only trip took 11 hours). The route has an elevation gain of about 5000 feet from Whitney Portal to Tulainyo Lake and about a 3000 foot loss from there to Wallace Lake.

While still in high school, Gus guided a school teacher up Mt. Whitney in the month of March. There was lots of snow above Lone Pine Lake. After passing Trail Crest the wind and sun was causing the ice cornices near the trail to make weird noises that spooked the teacher, and he decided to return to Lone Pine. Gus went on a little longer but became concerned and started back, to find that the teacher had turned west rather than east at Trail Crest. Had Gus not found him in time it could have been disastrous. On the way back they stopped at Outpost Camp; the snow was so deep there that only the tops of trees were available for firewood. The fire was to heat water for tea which Gus found to be a very good pick-up. He often wonders what the summer hikers must have thought when they saw

those topless trees.

The Lone Pine school, built by Charles Winfield Stewart in 1893, was attended by Gus, his mother, his future wife, and son. While building the school, Stewart married Martha Dodge, a sister of Gus's mother, Elizabeth. The first school<sup>4</sup> that Elizabeth went to was in the old town hall in the same location as the current one built by Mr. Statham.

Gus recalls that the ceiling boards

in the school were tongue and groove and that there was a loose board above a schoolroom. This was just right for letting loose a number of bats gathered from Anton's stable. That pretty well cleared the room. Also, the restrooms were outdoor privies. The boys outhouse was separated from the girls by a large board fence. (He didn't say, but I suspect

4. See photograph on page 62, "saga of Inyo County," 1977, So. Inyo AARP, Taylor Pub. Co., Covina, CA



*Gus in center, others unknown, c. 1910*

there is another story behind this scene.) Some of the boys were much older and you could tell who chewed tobacco by the holes carved in the school floor next to their desks. Once, Gus and one of his high school teachers had a fight and Gus threw the teacher out of the room. Since his Dad was on the school board, not only did he "get it" at school but again at home. About 1920 the high school put on a play, "Princess of Poppyland." Gus was one of the actors, as shown in a photograph in the Independence Museum (Eastern California Museum). This was a big event as it was still the talk of the town when Zoe (his future wife) moved to Lone Pine a year later.

After graduating from high school Gus's father gave him the choice of going to college or to work. The next day he was working at NSP<sup>5</sup>. He worked there from 1922 to 1929. One of his jobs at NSP involved driving a Model T Ford truck to the Christmas Gift mine near Darwin. He would stop for about 45 minutes during a steep climb to allow the transmission to cool. The heat radiated from the very hot transmission indicated that it needed to be cooled. Like the stock animals, if not given proper treatment, a machine will fail. The mechanic in charge was concerned as to why it took Gus so long to make the trip. To find out he had his son ride with Gus one day. The son made the next trip without Gus. Gus warned the mechanic to go looking for his son if he was not back by a certain time. Sure enough, the transmission blew up soon after passing the place where Gus would allow it to cool. After this they asked Gus to take a truck up to Cerro Gordo, which he did and he may have been the first person to do so. These trucks had rag brakes and to prevent them from overheating when going down hill, it was the practice to "bank" the truck. To do this, the truck was driven off the road onto the bank of gravel and gently zig-zagged to slow it up.

Gus recalls that when Keeler had heavy

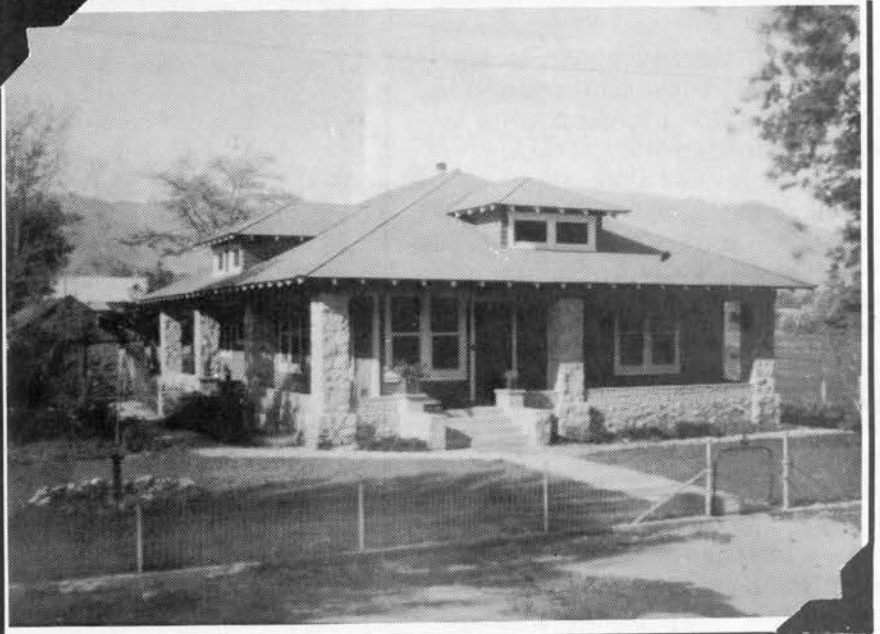
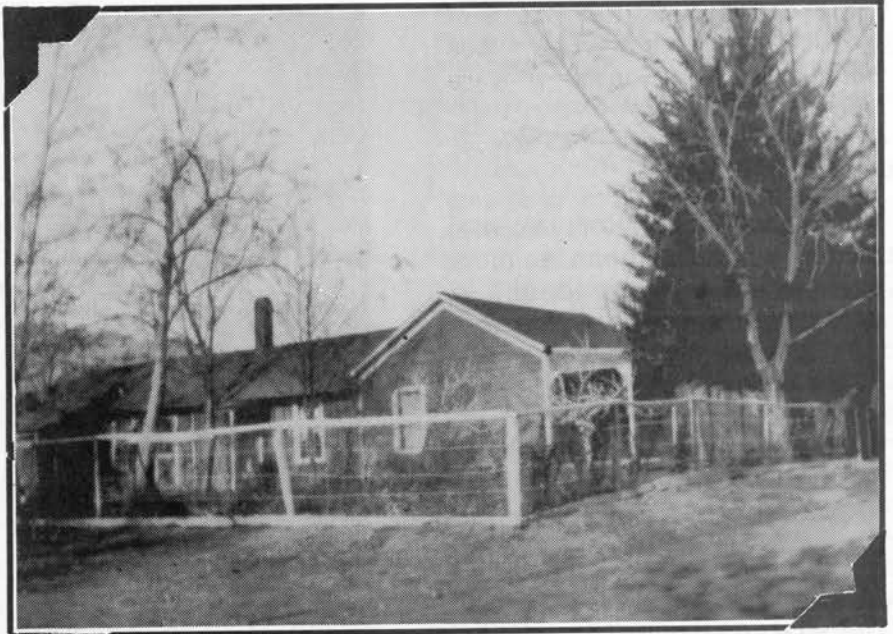
5. Natural Soda Products which was located about a mile south of Keeler, California

305 W. Willow St., Lone Pine.

Josiah Garland Dodge home, c. 1900

J.G. Dodge home, c. 1910

G.F. Marsh home, C. 1915





rain and wind, men would start out from Keeler and Lone Pine to put out the electrical power pole fires and make repairs. The transformer fuses had dynamite in them to clear the fuse completely to minimize the chance of fire and other problems. The fuse ends would be found several hundred feet either side of the pole. (Sounds like lightning wasn't the only danger near a power pole.)

Gus and Zoe Chambers eloped on the 15th of September, 1924. They were married in Bishop by the Reverend Denman. They honeymooned at NSP in their first home where the nearest "outhouse" was a half a block away and water was available from a faucet in the street. This is where they became lifelong friends with Lyle and Emma Smith. When son George began to be a serious possibility, Zoe returned to Lone Pine for his birth (2nd of November 1926).

Zoe stayed with her folks, Lee & Rene Chambers, and her in-laws for a period of time in Lone Pine just before and after the birth of George. She didn't return to NSP after George was born. She had some difficulty with his birth that set her back and she was glad to have the help of her mother and sisters, Garnet Showalter and Fern Harback. One of George's first notable acts was to lose the only money they had, behind one of the mop boards in their new home in Lone Pine. This money was not recovered until the old house was torn down in 1972.

Gus continued working at NSP and commuted from Lone Pine. They moved into the house at 206 South Washington Street in Lone Pine in September of 1927. The 1928 index to the Great Register shows Gus in Keeler as a truck driver and Zoe in Lone Pine as a housewife. They had the old house torn down in April 1972, replacing it with a mobilehome they call "the trailer." Their old home had one bedroom and one bathroom, and the new one had two of each. Gus and Zoe have lived at this address for 65 years and still counting. There was no house at this loca-

tion<sup>6</sup> in about 1906; they don't know when the old house was built, but believe it was built for one of the Elders. Gus's father bought it in 1911 from A.B. Elder. Its construction was a simple board & bat design as contrasted to current frame construction. It was necessary to use wall paper to help keep out the wind and the ceilings were 11 feet high.

Gus bought the Desert Holly Sweet Shop in 1929 and operated it until 1942. Its original location was at the southeast corner of Main and



*Gus, left, and Bill Skinner with proof of prowess, c. 1915*

Willow Streets, and is now Laskey's Radio Shop. The place of business was moved circa 1934 to a new location on the same side of the street, two blocks south, a less rowdy area not so close to a newly opened saloon<sup>7</sup>. The name of the business was changed at this time to The Malt Shop and featured double thick malts. This new location was in the

6. See map on page 38, "Saga of Inyo County," 1977, So. Inyo AARP, Taylor Pub. Co., Covina, CA

7. National prohibition ended with the passage of the 21st Amendment on 5 December 1933.

building that had Hopkins' Hardware in the north half and The Malt Shop in the south half. Now, Gardner's True Value Hardware store uses the entire building.

The Malt Shop was a family affair. Zoe and George worked there with Gus. Zoe worked afternoon shifts and sometimes George would get an afternoon malt. George's first job in The Malt Shop was to wash dishes and make change. Later, he would take over for an hour or two after school at 25¢ per hour. In the middle 1930s Gus put up a building in the back yard of their home for making ice cream. This extended his day from before 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. He taught George to wash and sterilize the ice cream cans and Zoe to make the ice cream, in order to get a couple of days off now and then.

Gus took George hunting with him once in Monache Meadows. I remember him, tracking a deer and watching the countryside, walking at a good pace without making a sound. However, George was having a hard time just keeping up and having no success in walking quietly. Gus found a place where the deer had bedded down and the spot was still warm. A little later a large four point buck was seen on the run and he was soon out of sight. Also, a bear was seen on this trip, and he too was on a dead run from us. The camp spot for that trip was well away from the trees, in the sagebrush. On return to camp, after the first day of hunting, Gus found that his bottle of whiskey had exploded in his sleeping bag. Apparently he had filled it too full and the heat from the sun did the job. No whiskey, a damp bed with an aroma of good whiskey lost; no use crying over spilt whiskey.

One summer Gus and George flew in to Tunnel Meadows and stayed there with Bruce and Grace Morgan. From there, they rode horses over to Rocky Basin lakes to fish. George stayed with the Morgans for a week or so, but Gus only stayed a couple of days for the trip to the lakes. Being an excellent fisherman, he usually always caught his limit

and would fill out the limits of anyone else that might be with him; George for instance, and Ollie Knowles, one of his friends from Bartlett. Other trips were walking trips to places like Lone Pine Lake, the Meysan lakes, the Owens River Gorge, a creek near Aberdeen, and Cottonwood Creek. The spot on Cottonwood Creek at that time, was a several hour walk from the end of the road to the old saw mill of the Cerro Gordo days. he took George hunting for dove, quail, pheasants and ducks. One very cold morning on the Owens River a number of ducks were shot all at once and fell in the pond out of reach. The ice wasn't thick enough to walk on, so Gus waded in, breaking the ice with the stalk of his gun. This was too much; George never went duck hunting again, having learned it is necessary to recover whatever game is shot.

Gus tells about his mother Elizabeth, "She could do anything and do it right." She could harness and drive a team, plow, chop wood, crochet, sew, cook, solder with a candle, and no one could pick the feathers off a bird, including down from a goose, as fast and thoroughly as she could. Her holiday dinners, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years, were always outstanding. Turkey (usually raised by her), mashed potatoes, French cut string beans, cranberry sauce, dressing, gravy, pumpkin pie, mincemeat pie, plum pudding and hot hard sauce, etc.: she was an excellent cook and cooked on a wood burning stove. George liked everything she fixed, especially beef tongue, beef steak and kidney pot pie, to mention those that quickly come to mind. Gustave, Grandpa Marsh, introduced George to sardines and pickled pigs feet from his Dutch lunches.

The Malt Shop was sold in 1942 as Gus had an excellent offer of employment from "poppa Dub" at the Pacific Alkali Company near Bartlett. Some time later, this mining operation was taken over by the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. Working for someone else allowed Gus to have

regular working hours and vacations to pursue his much loved hunting and fishing. Carl Boyer tells about seeing Gus deer hunting one day with a red tie on. Carl couldn't believe Gus was all that formal; he isn't – the tie was a "good luck tie." When hunting and fishing seasons were closed, Gus had time to hunt for arrowheads and generally explore the valley. Also, he had time to learn to fly an airplane. There was a pilot training program in Lone Pine for several years after the start of World War II. Evelyn Sharp was a CPT<sup>8</sup> instructor; she taught Gus, Roy Joseph, Charlie Summers, and others in Lone Pine to be pilots. The job at Bartlett allowed Gus to explore a much broader horizon. His hunting trips had been restricted mainly to Inyo County. Now he was able to expand his range into Idaho and Montana.

One of Gus's hunting partners was Buddy Leete, who still stops from time to time to see Gus. Before Zoe married Gus, she worked for Mr. Leete, Buddy's father, in the Lone Pine Branch of Watterson's Inyo County Bank. Harriet Leete, Buddy's sister, married Art Burns who worked at Bartlett with Gus. Both Art and Buddy were Gus's good friends and hunting and fishing partners. Art also called on Gus from time to time until Art's recent death. Mrs. Leete, Buddy's mother, taught George in the third, fourth and fifth grades.

Gus's work at NSP gave him some experience regarding Owens lake and while working at Bartlett he became one of those to know the Lake very well. His understanding of it allowed him to be able to recover an airplane that had made a forced landing on the lake bed. The pilot thought he had made the recovery job easy. Wrong! Though the lake looks dry, there is brine under the crust of a large portion of the lake bed. The crust moves with wave-like motions when perturbed and it can

*8. Civilian Pilot Training program and later Wartime Training School, if I remember correctly.*



be penetrated, like breaking through ice. It was the brine that was mined by the plant at Bartlett and by NSP, Cartago and Inyo Development Company in prior years. Another job was to recover a tractor that had broken through the crust, which he did by floating it to the surface. Also, he used the wind to sail large pieces of equipment out to stations on the lake bed.

In 1964 Gus had a mild stroke that slowed him down for a while but he was soon back to work. Though he was ready to retire in 1966, his boss asked him to stay another year to handle a U.S. government contract that needed his expertise. After finishing that contract Gus retired on the first day of April 1967 at the age of 64.

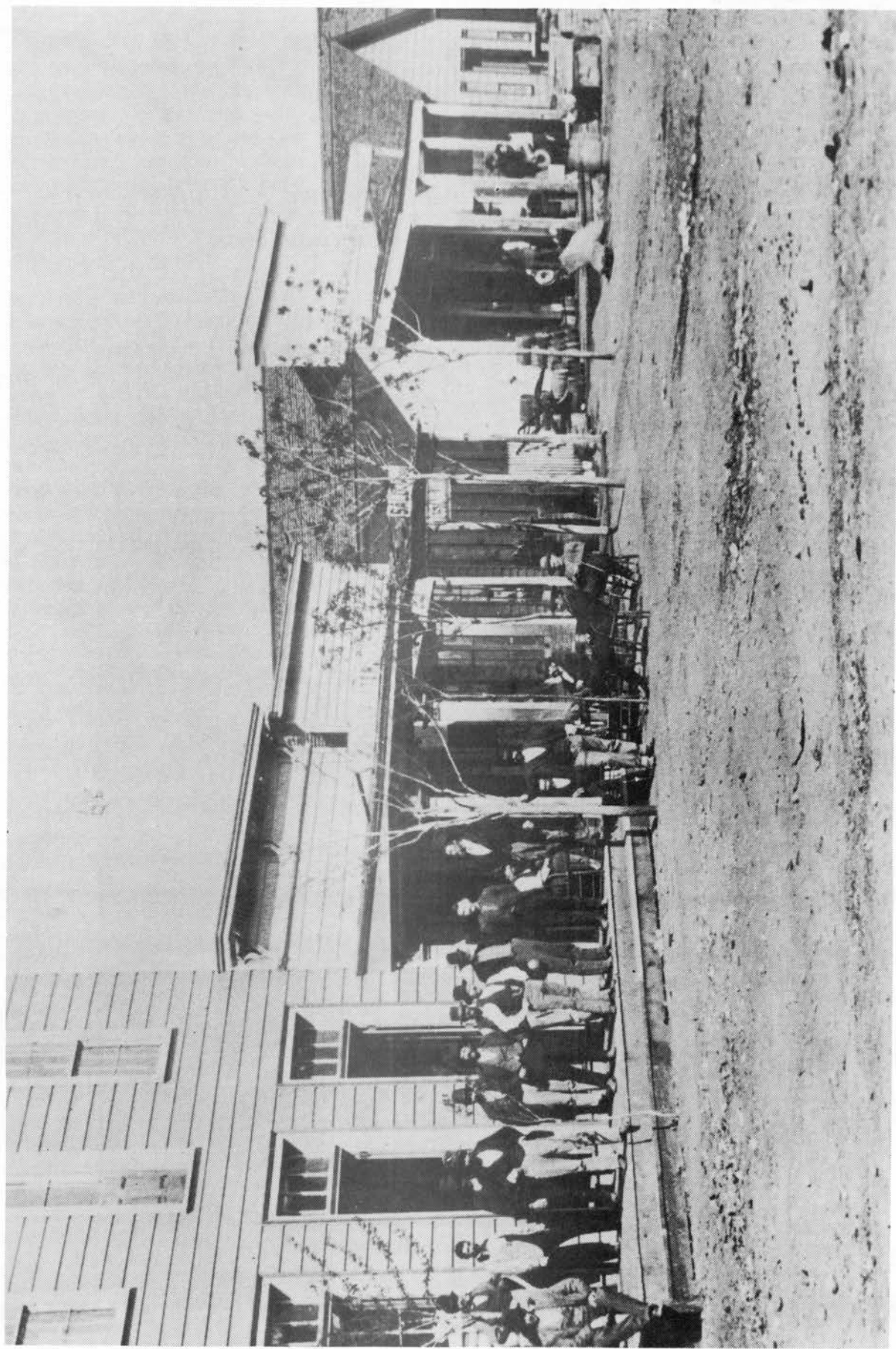
In 1967 Gus and Zoe took to trailering several months in the spring and fall to avoid the school vacation crowds. Since Zoe was skeptical about retiring, she took a leave-of-absence from her work for the first trip in 1967. When they got back she retired with no reservations in August of 1967. These trips continued for about 15 years and they say these were the best years, as they fully explored all of the western states.

Gus still enjoys fishing and each year he impatiently awaits the opening of trout season at Diaz Lake. You will find him there when the trout are biting.

*These are but a few of the stories Gus has to tell and George expects to be told and to share many more. \**



*Gus and Zoe Marsh, 1990*



*Picture taken before fire of 1886 destroyed all buildings on Edwards St. Taken looking West, at Market and Edwards Street in Independence. Photo courtesy of the late Omie I. Mairs.*



*Some little histories of Mammoth discovered by Gym E. Williams in his research as County Manager of Chicago Title.*

## *ORIGINS OF SKIING in the Eastern Sierra*

*photos courtesy Gym Williams*



*To ride No. 2 rope tow to Gravy Chute on Mammoth Mountain, one gripped the wet rope by hand or with a nutcracker-like gadget attached to a rope around the waist. Dave McCoy Collection.*

In the 1940s skiing boomed in and around Mammoth. The 1930s began with a rope tow or portable cable lines hooked up to a Ford or some tractor near a likely ski area. But in the '40s the economy of Mammoth Lakes began to rely heavily on being THE place to ski.

McGee Mountain became one of THE places in the early '40s. It was organized by Dave McCoy, Hans Georg, and others. It was a busy beginning, so much so that the Eastern Sierra Ski Club headquartered in Bishop was formed to promote competition skiing. The first to work on the club were George Deibert, Bob Crosby, and Bob Kelso.

Ruthie Janes was one of the first to begin a skiing school, and Hans Georg from St. Moritz, Switzerland, where he'd been an instructor, later opened up his own school on the lower eastern slope of Mammoth Mountain. He was later to write two books on the subject: *Reverse Shoulder Technique* and *Modern Ski Systems*.

At about the same time a northern club was formed in June Lake under the name of Mono Ski Club, while the Inyo-Mono Association was also busy promoting winter sports with the slogan; "The road is always open to the snow country!"

But it was 1941 when the real concentrated efforts began by the people of Mammoth. They were solving several problems: one beginning an organization to promote winter business; another, mail service; and still another, clearing the snow on Hwy. 203 up to Twin Lakes Bridge. All these needs brought the first meeting together on March 1, 1941, organizing 123 members, both local and outsiders. It was known as Mammoth Mountain Ski Club. Together with the Winter Sports Association and led by Lloyd Nicoll as president, they started the push to bring the avid skier to Mammoth.

Championship Races, known as the Inyo-Mono Championship Meet, were held at McGee Mountain on March 16, 1941. The biggest competition was in downhill and slalom between Augie Hess, Mono Ski Club and Dave McCoy, ESSC. Augie was the new champion by a very small margin. Many others placed and the Eastern Sierra Ski Club was praised for its efforts in organizing the meet. A celebration dinner was hosted by Dorrance Keough at the McGee Creek Lodge with master of ceremonies Dr. Scott of Bishop.

In June Lake another race was sponsored by the Mono Ski Club that same year and assisted by the Mammoth Mountain and Pasadena clubs. It was a huge success. It hosted the "Flying Skis" five-mile Carson Peak run. The thrilling race, if not hazardous, began at the 11,000 foot level and dropped nearly 4,000 feet to the end, laid out by top pros and considered one of the hardest in the world. The long way to

the top took four and one-half hours and the race began at 10:30 a.m.

Only two women ever made the run. In 1941 Clarita Heath of the Mono Ski Club made the run in 8:30.3 over Nancy Zischank of the Mammoth Ski Club with 15:02. In 1942 Nancy was the only woman to make this run, winning the perpetual trophy given by C.B. Harrison of the Southern California Auto Club. (See Nan's Story on p. 8.)

April of 1941 proved to be even more event-filled. It was time for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Skis, scheduled for Easter morning and in full costume. It was held on the lower slopes of Mammoth Mountain, using the Lloyd Nicoll ski lift. Tex and Ruth Cushion and Nan and Max Zischank had originated the event in 1938 at McGee Mountain.

The Easter Program began at 11:00 a.m. with an opening speech, followed by formation skiing through single and double slalom flags. Then came the riotous barrel-stave race. Staves could not exceed 36 inches in length and no ski poles were allowed. Competitors spent hours preparing the staves – shaping, smoothing and waxing. While it was nothing more than a straight Schuss from the top of the run to a gate, most people ended up on hands and knees by the finish.

The costume parade followed with all sorts of dress from court jester to a professor-who-forgot-his-pants. And the final event was the hunt for eggs – on skis – with no container to hold the eggs gathered.

That year Augie Hess of the Mono Club won with 18 eggs; Marie Meckel, ESSC, won for the women with 11 eggs; Don Banta, Mono Club, was first in the kids division, finding the jackpot of 12 eggs. Dick Rogers, Mammoth Ski Club, made the outstanding time of 12-1/2 seconds in the barrel-stave race. Cliff Banta and Augie Hess, Mono Club, came in second and third.

For all this fun and games, promotion and work, one man, forgotten by most, was instrumental in bringing skiing to the Eastern Sierra. Roy Boothe, Supervisor on the Inyo National Forest, held great leadership in the coming years. One paragraph from a letter of invitation shows clearly how he felt about the sport: "Please come prepared to contribute constructive ideas and cooperative effort into putting Inyo-Mono winter sports on a business basis, and in a position to grow in popularity with other winter sports areas of California, eventually assuming its rank among the best of them."

Roy knew the forest well ... and his predictions have come a long way.

And last, Dave McCoy and the McCoy family, names synonymous with Mammoth Mountain and ski-



ing, finish out this story. Dave's deep love and endless energy for the sport has never diminished over the years. From 1936 with his first tow rope at Gray's Meadow west of Independence and his progression to Bishop, McGee Mountain and finally Mammoth Mountain, he has advanced the love of winter sport — despite its ups and downs.

Dave and his wife Roma (Carriere) were active in the beginning of Mammoth Mountain Ski Club and Winter Sports Association and all the events that followed. Dave managed the McGee Ski School, following the snow with portable ski tows and ropes. In 1941 he set up his first rope tow on Mammoth Mountain on a Thanksgiving weekend, with over 250

skiers.

In December of that year Dave finally moved out of the area as the heavy snow closed the roads. In the following years Army-surplus Weasels would carry people to his tows, but it wasn't until 1947 that Dave could promise open roads. He then built his first permanent ski building and eventually the first lift at the foot of the broad, beautiful north face of Mammoth Mountain, paradise for skiers.

Years later he was asked if he'd ever dreamed that this Mountain would become a kingdom of its own. He smiled sheepishly and said, "No, definitely! But it's been a lot of fun!" \*



*The McCoys - a winning pair.  
Nan Zischank collection.*



*Homer Harris scrambles one.  
The lady knew she had two - somewhere. G.A.  
Packard collection.*

# HISTORY BITS

History, it has been wisely said, is in the eyes of the beholder. In 1991, Junior high school students were invited to participate in the Inyo County speech contest, the topic: "a Piece of Inyo County History." Through the courtesy of Rebecca Neil, Administrative Secretary of the Inyo County Office of Education, we are able to present some bits of history in the eyes of youth, from two of the nine finalists.

## WINNEDUMAH

by Julie Hamilton

Many of you might think of this rock as just another rock, and it is. And many of you also think that the Paiute monument, better known as the Winnedumah, is just an ordinary rock, however it's not. That stone pillar stands for courage.

According to the old legend called Winnedumah, long, long ago, hordes of Diggers poured across the passes of Pahabatoyo to raid the Paiute hunting grounds. These Diggers were a group of rival Indians who had trespassed on Paiute Territory looking for their native food of worms, insects, and roots. The Paiutes felt threatened by these Diggers and their trespassing and started a battle unlike any ever seen by the Paiute Nation. This battle lasted for many days of fierce fighting. At last the Paiutes were beaten and forced to flee. Most fled across the rugged mountains to the east.

Among the fugitives was a medicine man named Winnedumah. His medicine had proved useless against the invaders. Sorely pressed, exhausted and alone he made his way to the summit of the Inyos where he stopped for a final view of the familiar domain he had lost and to await the coming of his warrior brother Tinnemaha. But Tinnemaha had fallen in the fray and while Winnedumah invoked the aid of the Great Spirit for his

stricken people, a great convulsion of nature transpired and one of its effects was to transform him into a pillar of stone.

The same natural manifestation so frightened the Diggers that they fled back across the mountains never again to dispute the ownership of the Owens Valley.

I would like to tell you of another legend that displayed courage. Many years ago the Shoshone Indians occupied Saline Valley and the region east of the Inyo Range. The Paiutes occupied the Owens River Valley. The Shoshone chief had a beautiful daughter and the Paiute leader had a handsome, wonderful son. These two met and fell in love, and eventually asked their parents permission to wed. Neither father would consent. The matter led to war. A battle lasting a day and a night occurred at the Inyo boundary summit. While this was going on, the young people sought a happier solution and ran away. When the Warrior chiefs heard the news the tall, splendidly formed Paiute leader was instantly changed into an upright granite stone, while the less stately Shoshone became a smaller stone which stands nearby.

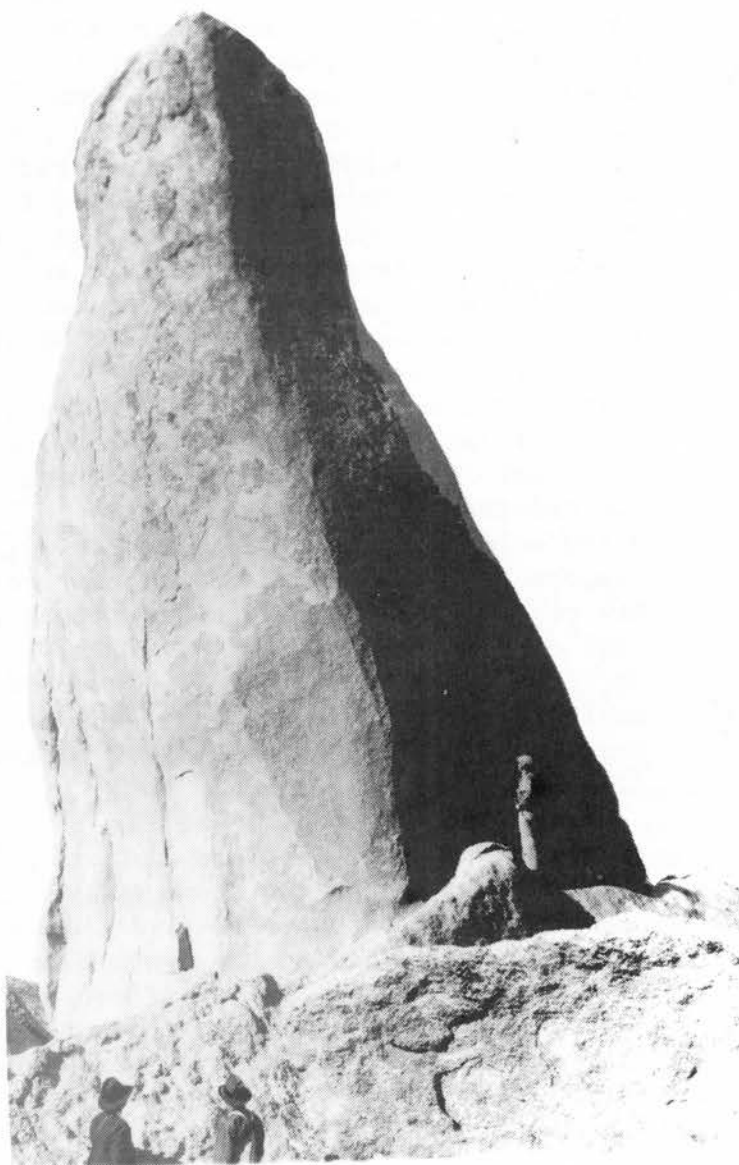
You might not understand why I think of these legends as showing courage. I feel that in the legend of Winnedumah the Paiutes showed courage just by being able to stand up against the Diggers. It was their land and they had the responsibility to fight for it, but that didn't mean they had to. Think about it, if hordes of Diggers started coming after you because they wanted your land, would you just let them take it? The Paiute Nation would not.

In the second legend, I believe it stands for courage, because the young daughter and son of the Great Chiefs were able to live up to their love and belief in one another. They were able to defy their elders and families' wishes because of a greater dedication. That requires courage. If you were wondering where the Paiute monument stands, while driving north of



Independence search the crest of the Inyos and you will see the monument. Geologically the monument is an irregular trapezoidal 52 feet in length, north end 12 feet, the southwest end 45 feet. The angled sides are rounded and smooth. A magnificent 80 foot high solid rock of weather worn, storm beaten granite.

In conclusion you may think of the monument as just another rock, or you may think of it as the Great Medicine Man Winnedumah, or even the Great Paiute leader. How will any of us ever know? I'll let your mind wander but I see youth, age, defiance, love, and most of all courage. Look the next time you go by. Does Winnedumah call out to you? \*



# THOMAS JEFFERSON

by Sara Jefferson

When you hear the name Thomas Jefferson you see the Declaration of Independence or the third president. When I hear the name Thomas Jefferson I see a big, handsome Paiute, Shoshone, and Mono Indian, a large grey hat, and handmade cowboy boots. I see a man that has gone through a lot in his time, the man I see is my Dad Thomas Jefferson.

He was born in 1927, in Lone Pine on the old Spainhower Ranch. He grew up being a cowboy, riding, roping, and storytelling. I would like to share the stories and adventures with you because these stories have helped make a piece of Inyo County history.

When my dad started cowboying, cowboys had a hard life. Riding 8 to 10 days straight on a cattle drive from Lone Pine to Crowley Lake, forcing 2000 head of hereford (white faced) cattle ahead of them. Riding in the Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter got to be very hard work. He has worked with the local ranchers Fred Reynolds, A.A. Briely, Sandy Kemp, and the Spainhower Ranch. Through these people my dad developed a knowledge of the Owens Valley that has served him and Inyo County well.

In the summer, my dad would pack in the mountains. My dad has packed in many famous people in the mountains, the director of Ben Hur for instance, William Wyler; the world renowned photographers Ansel Adams, and Cedric Wright; Robert Cutter, whose family owns the Cutter laboratories, and the maker of Cutter products. He has also packed Robert Middleton, the

actor; Eddie Anderson, who was Jack Benny's sidekick; William Colby, the founder of the Sierra Club; Norman Livermore, who was governor Reagan's Resource department manager; and the former President of the United States, Ronald Reagan. Through these people, my dad has touched not only Inyo County history but he helped Inyo touch California, U.S., and World history. Besides cowboying and showing famous people the majestic backcountry of the High Sierra, he wrangled for the movies. What he did mainly was to supply the horses, and to make sure all the horses and cattle wouldn't run off. He also did special effects in the movie RAWHIDE.

He's worked on movies such as JUNGLE RAIDERS, TARZAN, DESERT MYSTERIES, THE UNTAMED BREED, KIM, RAWHIDE, THE VIOLENT MEN, THE GREAT RACE, and many other low budget, unknown movies.

One of the western stories my dad likes to tell is about when he was bringing a string of frisky, bronc mules down Horseshoe Meadow road while the KING OF THE KHYBER RIFLES, was filming soldiers going over the supposed Khyber pass. They told him to wait because he was in their way, but he wasn't about to wait for a stupid movie with a bunch of frisky mules, it's kind of impossible! So the director had to stop everything and as he was coming slowly down the steep slope, all the people scared the mules, the mules pulled back, breaking the ropes holding them together. Actor, directors, and movie people were scrambling for their lives. At that very moment the bellowing voice of Russel Spainhower cried "for God sakes

people stand still." This taught the directors a thing or two. My dad went onto his business and that was that.

My dad has met many movie stars, Jack Elam (whom he played pool with on the set of RAWHIDE) also Randolph Scott, Susan Hayward, Dean Stockwell, Dean Jagger also in RAWHIDE, and the ever famous Errol Flynn who became a good friend. All of these movies brought stars, hopefuls, and ideas, with these put together this made movie history in Inyo County.

My dad has seen, met and talked to many famous and intelligent people. But when he pulls out his guitar he's the famous one. I've even heard ladies call him the "best" guitar player in the world! And even unbiased people love him.

My dad has often said "I hired out to be tough and I think I'm gonna fill the bill." Well with the history I have given you, you see that my dad has done a lot of hard work in his life. This hard work and toughness has contributed to the making of Inyo County history. I hope now when you hear the name Thomas Jefferson, next time, you see the great man I do. \*

As space permits, we will be pleased to bring you bits about "Cattle Ranching in Inyo County," by Scott Kemp, "Lon Cheney," by Charles Peterson, "Doctor Nellie," by Randee White, "Norman Clyde," by Andy Brosma, "The Land of Little Rain," by Skye Powell, and two untitled: one about being Japanese in 1941, by Wendy Franz, and the first place winner about a trip back in time to the dynamiting of the Los Angeles aqueduct at Alabama Gates, by Meredith Ginn. All of these young historians were 7th or 8th graders less than two years ago, when these remarkable little stories were written.



# THE GHOST OF KEARSARGE

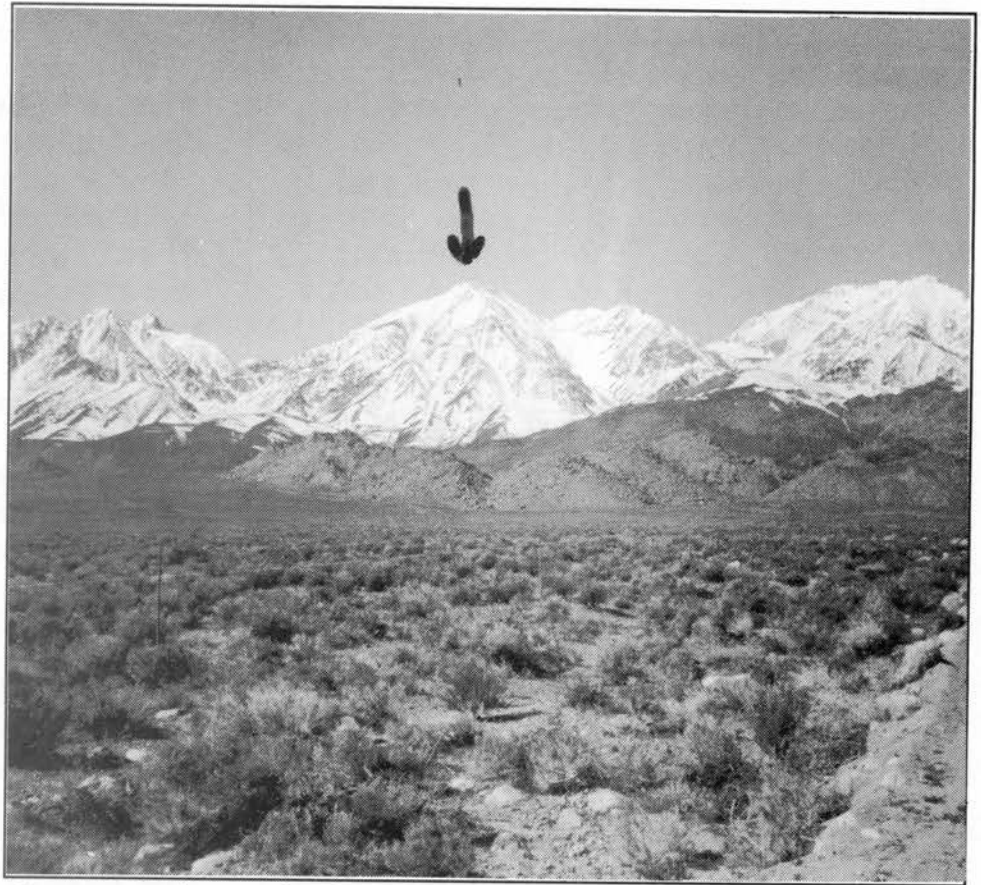
by George L. Garrigues

Imagine yourself in a miner's cabin, sitting by the fire with your after-dinner coffee, reading the newspaper by candle-light. Suddenly an apparition appears. A female figure dressed in a flowing robe. She looks at you with a kind of Mona Lisa smile. You don't know what to make of it. You ask her what she wants, but she doesn't reply. You blink your eyes and try to make her go away, but she just stands there, motionless. Finally, in desperation, you pick up your candle and throw it at the figure. The candle passes through the image as if it were a shadow and bounces off the opposite wall. This is what Mr. Kitchen insists happened to him. There is more to the story, but first a little background.

Thomas W. Hill, G.W. Cornell and A. Kittleson had a sawmill at Gray's Meadows about five miles west of Independence. They also prospected the surrounding area. In the fall of 1864, with Thomas May and C. McCormack, they found some promising outcrops of silver ore on the side of Kearsarge Peak. Soon other discoveries were made in the area and a mining district was organized on September 19, 1864, and a processing mill built in July, 1866 at what is now Onion Valley, ten miles from Camp Independence.

During the winter of 1866-67, some of the miners stayed in their cabins at the mine site on the side of Kearsarge Peak above Onion Valley. That winter brought heavy snow mixed with rain and below-zero temperatures in the mountains, then new snow fell on top of the earlier ice coating, causing several avalanches. The camp escaped damage until the afternoon of March 1, 1867, when a huge avalanche came down the side of Kearsarge Peak and eleven cabins were swept away. Other cabins were buried and one person was killed, Mrs. C.W. Mills, who becomes the heroine (if you want to call her that) of our story.

When the slide occurred above the Mills cabin and rushed past it, an immense boulder rolled through the building, destroying it, everything in it,



Kearsarge Peak, west of Independence. Mine was located south. Photo by G.L. Garrigues.

and crushing Mrs. Mills into a lifeless mass.

Ten years later, in 1876, stories began to circulate about the appearance of the spirit of Mrs. Mills, frequently in the shape of a thin, sad-faced woman in flowing robes. Mr. Kitchen reported several spiritual visits to his cabin. One night in particular, as he sat reading a paper by candlelight, the ghost appeared in front of him. He threw his light toward it, but the candle only went through it as if it were a shadow and struck the opposite wall. Finally, the phantom disappeared. Another time, one of Kitchen's visitors decided to converse with the apparition, but he was unable to speak when he saw it; his words stuck in his throat. Unearthly moaning was said to have been heard further down the canyon. The noises had been formerly attributed to underground water, but now the unhap-

py ghost was held responsible.

When this story appeared in print in the *Inyo Independent*, unexpected results followed. D. Murrer, writing from Aurora, but as if he were living in Kearsarge, challenged the propriety of publishing it. He stated, in part, "This story . . . probably originated in the brain of some over-imaginative person who thought no doubt that he was contributing largely to the pleasure of your readers by detailing the supposititious facts to your reporter ... its publication generally results in a moral if not intellectual injury to the public ... Mrs. Mills was well known in this community and was highly esteemed by all who knew her, a lady of refinement, pure in character, modest in behavior, possessing an inoffensive disposition ... The questionable occupation of visiting miners' cabins and disturbing the good people of Kearsarge





(which she never did while living) should deeply wound the sensibilities of her husband and numerous friends ..."

The following week, L. Hutchinson of Bishop Creek responded in flowery language: "... in behalf of many who don't believe as he (D. Murrer) does, nor think all others who may differ from him in opinion, are fools or lacking in intelligence ... he has a perfect right to his own belief, but when he assails the intelligence, which must ever rest upon evidence pro and con, of a large portion of the people of this county, he over-steps the bounds of individual rights, showing that dogmatic spirit that would say to others, *"Believe as I do, or be damned."*

"That the spirit of Mrs. Mills or any other – for the facts are incontrovertible ... both from the Bible, and past as well as present testimony – should visit a miner's cabin is no more degrading than to visit a palace of a king.

"Let those who shut their eyes to the oncoming day of spiritual light ... not try to blind the sight of those who stand by the graves of their loved ones and tell them there is no hope of their recrossing the dark gulf that lies between this life and that beyond.

"I can say from personal knowledge, which is more than belief, that the power of human and divine love has bridged the mighty chasm, on which the silent feet of angel friends go and come ... hard and unloving must be the hearts of those who will refuse to hear the knock or let those loved ones in.

"It is too late in the day to ignore the facts and the proof of the return of spirits ... we should not hinder, but even bid them welcome to our hearts and homes."

Thus we have different points of view. You have a choice as to what you believe. It could be Mr. Kitchen and the others who saw the ghost of Mrs. Mills; it could be those who thought otherwise. But perhaps the book isn't closed yet; maybe there is another chapter yet to be written. It leaves just one question:

*Has anyone seen the ghost of Mrs. Mills lately?*

## NAME TRIVIA

The Alabama was a famous Confederate cruiser that preyed on Union ships during the Civil War. She was built in England in 1862 and first sailed from Liverpool, England, under the command of Capt. Raphael Semmes in July of that year. In the next two years it captured or destroyed sixty-four Union ships.

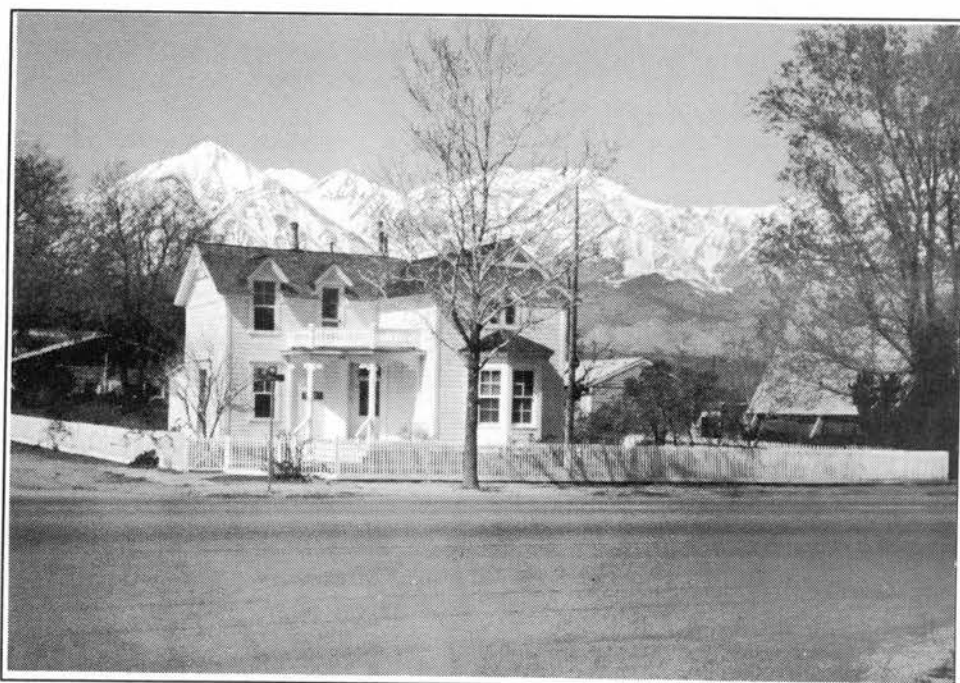
In the spring of 1864, the Alabama entered the port of Cherbourg, France for repairs. This became known to John A. Winslow, Captain of the Union battleship U.S.S. Kearsarge, and he waited outside the bay. When the Alabama left harbor on June 19, 1864, he challenged her and, after a furious duel at sea, the Kearsarge sank the Rebel cruiser off Cherbourg, France.

Shortly before the confrontation, some miners, southern sympathizers having claims in the hills west of Lone Pine, had named them the "Alabama Hills" after the Confederate privateer. With that in mind, Hill and his partners named their claim "Kearsarge" for the Union battleship. ♣

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*The ghost refused to be photographed – in fact, the author's whole roll of film was blank. Below, from a safer distance, the historic Commander's House in Independence, another view of the Kearsarge Ghost's haunt. Photo by G.L. Garrigues.*



# TUFA TOPICS

by David A. Wright

It is a beautiful autumn day at Mono Lake. Picture yourself standing somewhere south and east of Lee Vining, walking among the tufa at the South Tufa grove. Afoot along the boardwalk, relish in your senses – sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste.

Look – the intense blue skies, the golden splash running the length of each canyon, the buff colors of the Mono Craters, the intense yellow of the blooming rabbit bush, the deep blue of Mono Lake.

Smell – fragrance of sage and blooming rabbit bush, the crisp, clean air.

Taste – wide open space around you, alone, with no boundaries.

Feel – brisk autumn chill of the early morning in Mono Basin, the sun warm to the skin.

Hear – nothing. Isn't that just grand? But then, perk up those ears for a bit. What do you hear? Gentle lapping of little waves of the lake, keeping perfect time as they hit the tufa and shore – lap, lap, lap.

It is also a beautiful autumn day at the southern end of the Great Basin. Picture yourself at a site thirteen miles south of Trona, walking along the southern shoreline of Searles



*Two views, south Tufa Grove, Mono Lake, 1988. Photos by author.*



Lake, among a grove of tufa of monstrous proportions called the Trona Pinnacles. This locale is about 175 air miles southeast of Mono Lake. You might look at this locale and call it the Mojave Desert. Some just call it "hell on earth." Two of Jayhawker party of the '49ers died here; one survivor named this spot "Death Valley."

Great Basin, Mojave Desert; both terms would be correct for here they overlap. Geographically, it is the Great Basin, basin and range country. The giant slash of the Garlock Fault that separates the Mojave from the Basin scars the earth to the south. Botanically, what little vegetation there is can be found only in the Mojave's deepest basins, such as next door in Death Valley.

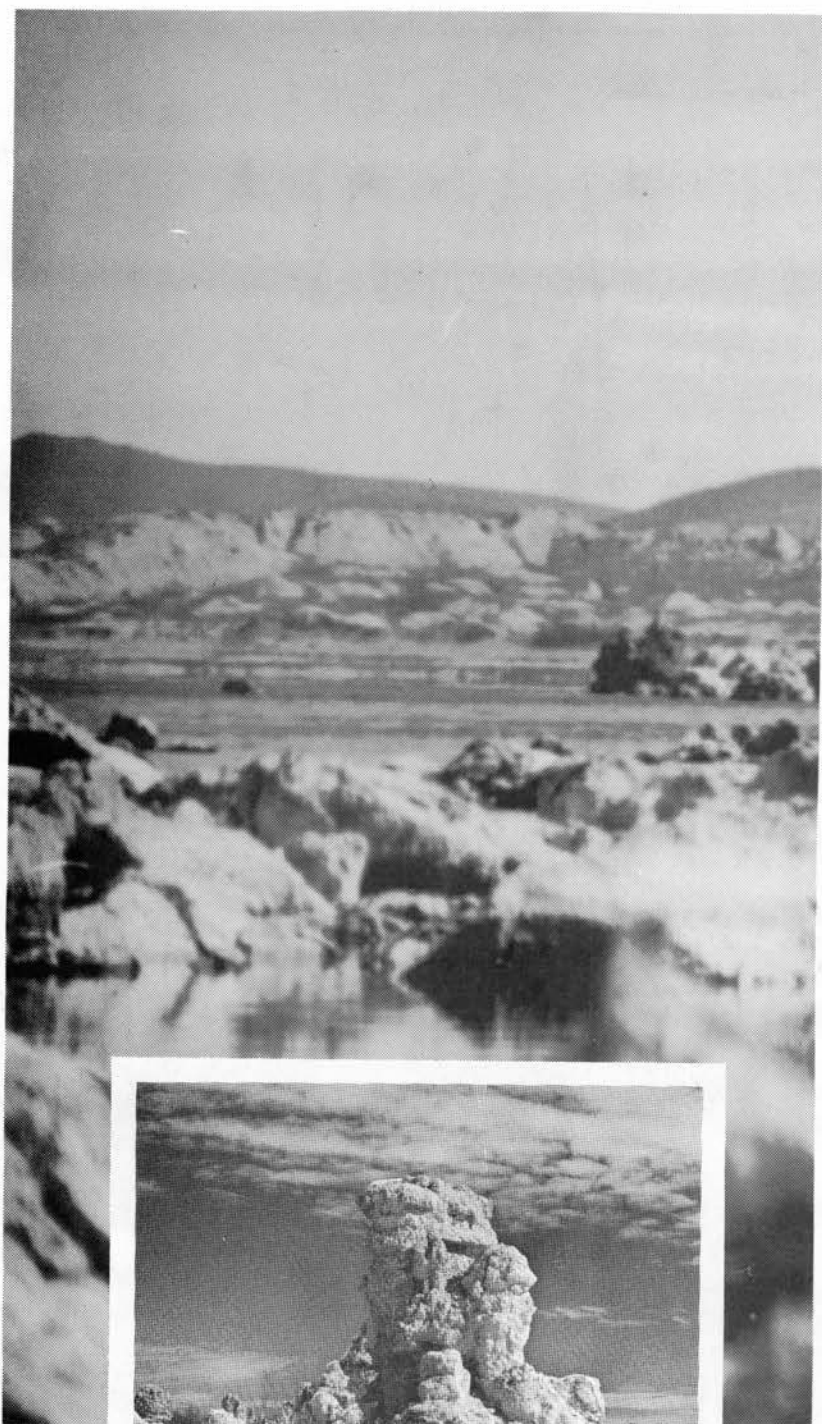
Look – the sky is deep blue, the ground a glaring white, the mountains tawny with a grayish hue, each canyon darkened with deep blue shadows. Lines encircle the slopes close at hand, old beach terraces that mark the receding waters of ancient Lake Searles. Bluish brush strokes color the Panamint Range to the north, with the sentinel of Telescope Peak dominating that scene. West are the southern peaks of the Sierra poking their summits above the Spangler Hills; north in the distance can be seen the huge industrial landscape of Trona. What little shrubbery that grows in this harsh environment is as grey as the land. Before you, a goblin's playground of tufa in huge proportions thumps the senses, compared to Mono's tufa groves.

Smell – what is that pungent odor? hydrogen sulfide. It is the smell of a dead lake. The locals call it "Trona Daisies in Bloom."

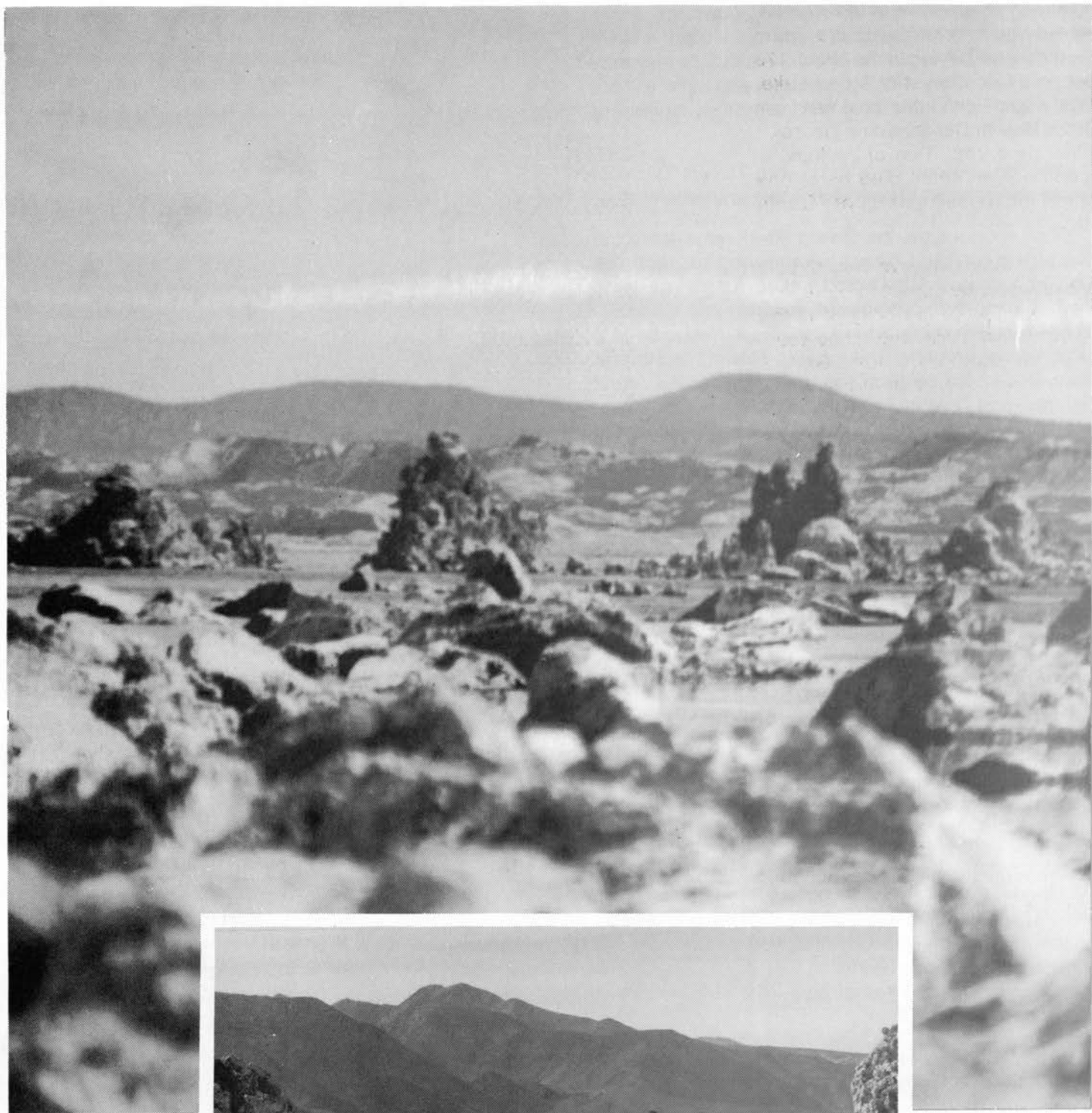
Taste – believe me, you don't want to. But then, taste the freedom the desert affords. As with Mono, there's nothing to hem you in.

Feel – The air is warm; the searing heat of summer in this low elevation is over.

Hear – nothing. But then again, a



*Winter  
1980*



*South Tufa  
Grove, 1980*





mile long coal train may be rumbling down the Trona Railway grade a few hundred yards to the west. A Navy F-15 may be playing in the skies overhead, or they may put on a real show with B-1 bombers and other military toys engaging in interesting and sometimes frightening antics over the dry lake.

What does Mono have to do with Trona? Two elements are common to both sites – tufa and water.

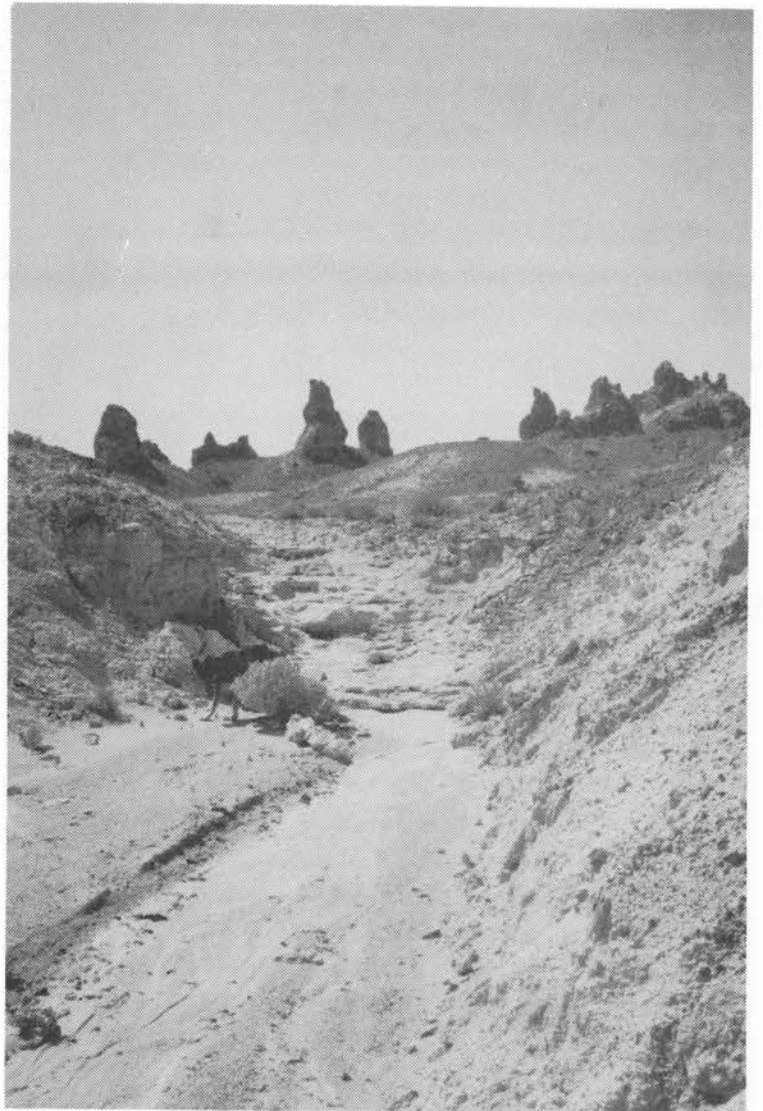
Once upon a time, the Owens River came splashing out of the majestic Sierra. Wandering through the Owens Valley, it fed Owens Lake. Instead of dying there, it kept flowing southward, watering lush meadows at Haiwee, splashing down Fossil Falls to puddle in a large valley, creating China Lake. Flowing south and east, around the south of the Coso and parallel Argus Ranges, vast Searles Lake was formed, 640 feet deep and filling a large valley. In especially wet periods, the waters continued to flow, filling the valleys of Panamint and Death Valley, but usually the dead end was Searles, and there, to the delight of modern chemists and corporations, every mineral known to man was dumped into Searles Valley.

During the eons, in both Mono lake and ancient Lake Searles, a chemical process stewed deep under the lake surfaces, as fresh water flowed out of holes in the earth and bubbled up in those briny waters. As the water flowed, rock began to grow. It grew into weird shapes, but no human eye saw it, as it was hidden by the deep blue waters. By acts of nature and of man, Searles finally disappeared and Mono is in that process. Left above the surface of those receding waters are those strange and grotesque growing rocks called tufa.

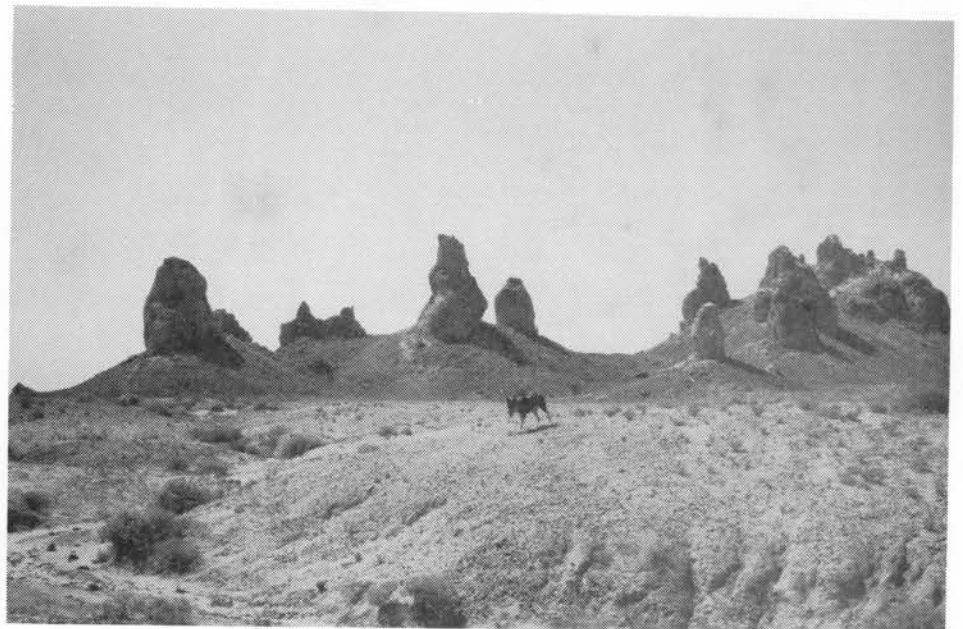
Tufa in both Mono and Searles Valley are made of the same stuff. Chemically, it is identical to limestone. Tufa is built by freshwater springs as they bubbled up in Mono Lake brine and ancient Lake Searles calcium-rich waters. Look in any tufa formation; you will likely find water or evidence that it once flowed out of internal pipe-like passages in the formation.

Mono has many fields of tufa, and as the lake drops, more are exposed. Five, ten, twenty or thirty feet high, they poke from the water, or lie marooned by a mile of mud. Searles tufa is clustered over a hundred or so across at the south end, and those formations can tower to 140 feet!

Other than being interesting and photogenic, tufa has many uses. In both the Mono Basin and in Trona and Ridgecrest, tufa has been used as an excellent building material. During the years I worked for Mono County, I periodically took care of the cemetery at



*Reno, the author's co-adventurer, looks for critters at the weird Trona Pinnacles.*



Mono Lake. Below the cemetery, there is a spring over which is a pump house to send water up to the storage tank, watering the trees there. Nearby is a fairly large tufa formation that had been transformed into a house with a little ingenious hollowing and a bit of lumber, a cozy place to live now abandoned and hidden in the thick willows. There also remain a couple of tufa houses in Trona and Ridgecrest, built years ago and still in use.

Movie makers long ago discovered the Trona Pinnacles for use in science fiction thrillers, biker movies, and westerns. Remember the final battle scene in Star Trek V? Trona Pinnacles is where the shuttlecraft landed, with special-effects tufa pinnacles shooting from out of the ground to cage the crew. They were fooled into thinking they had reached heaven. Trona residents think otherwise (unless they've been out in the sun too long or under the influence of those "Trona Daisies!")

Whether you are out there saving Mono Lake or a die-hard desert rat, these tufa treasures are there to enjoy and protect. \*

## NOTES

### Mono Lake Guidebook

**Pg. 2:** At the close of the Ice-Ages, when glaciers melted up Sierran canyons. Mono Lake filled its basin to the brim and even overflowed into Owens. Panamint and ultimately Death Valleys. An inland sea reached for miles into the Nevadan desert.

**Pg. 4:** Rocks composed of small lace and spear shaped crystals called *thinolite*, overall shape is bulbous, as if bubbled out of the earth. These rocks are on Highway 167 about 1.3 miles east of 395. It is ice age tufa.

**Pg. 6:** Tufa towers built by freshwater springs as they well up through Mono brine. Calcium in freshwater combines with carbonates in lake, forming tufa, which is chemically identical to limestone.

### Adventuring in the California Desert: The Sierra Club Travel Guide to the Great Basin, Mojave and Colorado Desert Regions of California

**Pg. 191:** Searles Lake once 640 feet deep, part of chain of lakes. Pinnacles Natural Landmark considered best example of tufa spires in US. Mineralogists think Searles tufa was laid down by algae in fresh water hot springs in and around Lake Searles. Algae combined the calcium from springs and carbonates from lake, forming calcium carbonate deposits that make up tufa. Towers have central channels through which water bubbled up. Some of the pinnacles are 140 feet tall. Scene of many sci-fi movies.

### The California Deserts

**Pg. 9 & 10:** Ancient Lake Searles part of Owens River system.

### Trona

**Pgs. 1-4:** Searles Lake and Owens River system.

Chemicals on lake bottom.

### Mark Twain: His Adventures at Aurora and Mono Lake

**Pgs. 72-74** Tufa at Mono. Twain's opinion of it.

### Ridgecrest - A Photographic Retrospective

**Pg. 52:** Tufa houses in early day Ridgecrest, still there.

### Death Valley & The Amargosa - A Land of Illusion

**Pg. 8:** Jayhawkers calling Searles Valley "Death Valley."

### High Mountains & Deep Valleys - The Gold Bonanza Days

**Pg. 42:** Trona and the pinnacles

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**Mark Twain: His Adventures at Aurora and Mono Lake** - Williams III, George  
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*South Tufa Grove, Mono Lake, Sept. 1988*





# JOHN H. LUBKEN

## *A Lone Pine Legend*

Photos courtesy Bettie Halamicek



*John and Marie Lenore Lubken with their children Henrietta, John August, and Bernice.*

John H. Lubken, Inyo County Supervisor and rancher

Born May 5, 1876, in Lone Pine

Son of John Frederick and Augusta Marie Roeper  
Lubken

Graduate of Healds Business college, San Francisco,  
July 2, 1896

Married Marie Lenore Hollengren at Independence,  
June 17, 1902

Children: Bernice, born July 9, 1903; Henrietta Crist,  
born Dec. 31, 1911, and John August, born April 18,  
1917

Grandchildren: Bettie Halamicek, Bennie Bonham,  
Alberta Comino (children of Bernice); Christy, Linda,  
and John (children of John)

Inyo County Supervisor from 1913 to 1917, and from  
1930 to 1956; Chairman of the board for 19 years  
until his resignation at age 80

Member, Federal Advisory Board for Taylor Grazing Act

Honorary Life Director of Death Valley 49ers

Inyo-Mono Cowbells "Father of the Year" 1967

Director, California Cattlemen's Association

Director, American Cattlemen's Association

Member, Inyo Lodge, Free & Accepted Masons, 1940  
until his death

Member, Knights of Pythias for 50 years

Hobby: raising bees with the help of his grandchildren

Recreation: gatherings with his friends

Died October 25, 1973

Those are the statistics, but I remember a man who seemed as big and full of energy and authority as Triton, whose voice at a whisper crossed an auditorium and in normal conversation stilled the birds outside, and whose heart and warmth were equally overwhelming. So was his independent disposition.

Everything about John Lubken was larger than average -- his features, his voice, his determination, and his generosity. There was always a silver dollar for the piggy bank when he came to our house with my dad, Earl Hurlbut, and the other Inyo County Supervisors. There was always time for community service, despite that even in his late sixties he still did much of his own ranch work. When he was Chancellor Commander of the Knights of Pythias Lodge, he gave a turkey dinner for members which turned into an annual event, and eventually included members of the Masonic Order as well. In 1945, for instance, 110 pounds of dressed turkey was prepared for about 120 men, according to the "Intake," a DWP periodical.

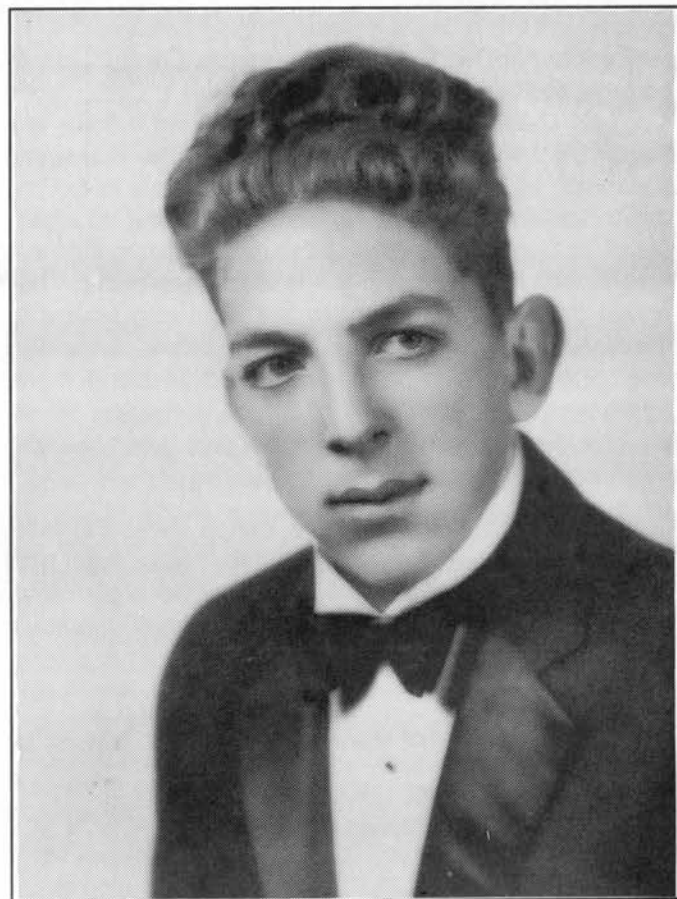
"My mother came from near Berlin, Germany to Placerville in 1866. She came to this valley in 1869," Lubken wrote for the pioneer family publication Saga of Inyo County. "My father came to the valley in 1862. He came to New York from Germany and then went on to Australia during the gold boom. He came back to New York then by way of the Isthmus of Panama to this valley. That was long before the Panama Canal was built. He married my mother in 1875 when she was 19."

Best told in his own words, his account of his life continues, "My father homesteaded on George's Creek, then traded the homestead for a share of the Lone Pine Brewery, built by Louis Munsinger before the earthquake of 1872. John Myers, known as Hans Myers, bought Louis out and eventually my father traded his ranch for Myers interest and owned the whole thing. The malt mill in back of the brewery was a horse drawn mill. The horse would keep going as long as the barley hopper was full. Lone Pine Beer tasted a lot like Miller's High Life; it was the same kind of beer. When it got so he couldn't make a profit and he stopped brewing in 1894. After my father died, my mother sold the brewery to Skinner, who tore down the building.

"There were lots of ranches here then. They raised all their food and had everything they needed, winter and summer. When I was a little boy I pulled weeds. I pulled since I was four years old and could tell the difference between weeds and vegetables. Sometimes I would hide because it was too hot to work. I would get in the shade and my Grandmama would come along and say,

*Above: Augusta Marie Roeper Lubken, mother of John H. Lubken.*

*Below: The young John at 21 in 1897.*





"You cussed little fellow, you are lazy. You don't do nothing." My mother always was good to me and she would save me from a licking when my Grandmama wanted to give me one.

"I started milking cows when I was nine years old. I never tasted ice cream until I was about sixteen years old. I had one dish at Levi's in Independence and didn't have any more until I was grown. I was set to work and that's all I did was work. I could lift a 180 pound sack of potatoes onto a wagon when I was fifteen. My father would go along with four or five kegs of beer and take it up to Cerro Gordo. He made beer and every two days he would take 240 gallons and send it all up to the miners. He made lots of money. There were four saloons in Keeler and one at Swansea.

"The farmers raised all kinds of vegetables, corn, potatoes, barley, and wheat. There was the Bell Mill on Oak Creek and another on Bishop Creek run by Kilpatricks. They made the flour and the housewives made the bread. There was an old bakery in Lone Pine that made bread in big pans, like milk pans, and sold it for 25 cents a loaf. When I was only ten, my Grandmama, my brother, and I would sell vegetables. My brother died when he was thirteen.

"They also raised a lot of draft horses here. They were heavy horses that could pull, weighing sixteen to eighteen hundred pounds. They hitched 18 to 20 of them to the big stake bed wagons and hauled groceries to Mojave. It took from eight to ten days to make the trip.

"People decided to run a boat across Owens Lake to help get the lumber from the mill high up in Cottonwood Canyon. They made lumber there and sent it down in a flume. Sometimes it would get stuck in the flume and stack high up in the air, and they would have to call the mill to shut off the water so they would fix it up again. Down at Owens Lake where the creek comes in, there was a dock running out in the lake to deep water. They would transfer the lumber to the boat and take it to Swansea. Swansea was then a thriving town, something like Lone Pine, with people scattered all along there. There was a pier coming from Swansea running far out into the lake. From there the lumber was taken to Cerro Gordo.

"Cerro Gordo was a big mine, rich in silver and lead, with a lot of men, mostly Cornishmen. I have seen gold stacked high on the tables where they were gambling. They would play until one of the men won all the stack or until dark, sometimes all night.

"There were six stores in Lone Pine and three in Independence. There were two in Keeler, owned by



*John and his bride, June, 1902.*



men who sold and traded dynamite. There were two mercantile stores in Darwin, and one saloon. John Burkhardt was a watchmaker in Lone Pine, and Bill Vaughn was a tailor. Shoemaker Pete made shoes and boots. I remember him making my father seven pairs of boots; he was the only who could fit him. After Pete died, my father got them in Independence but they weren't so good.

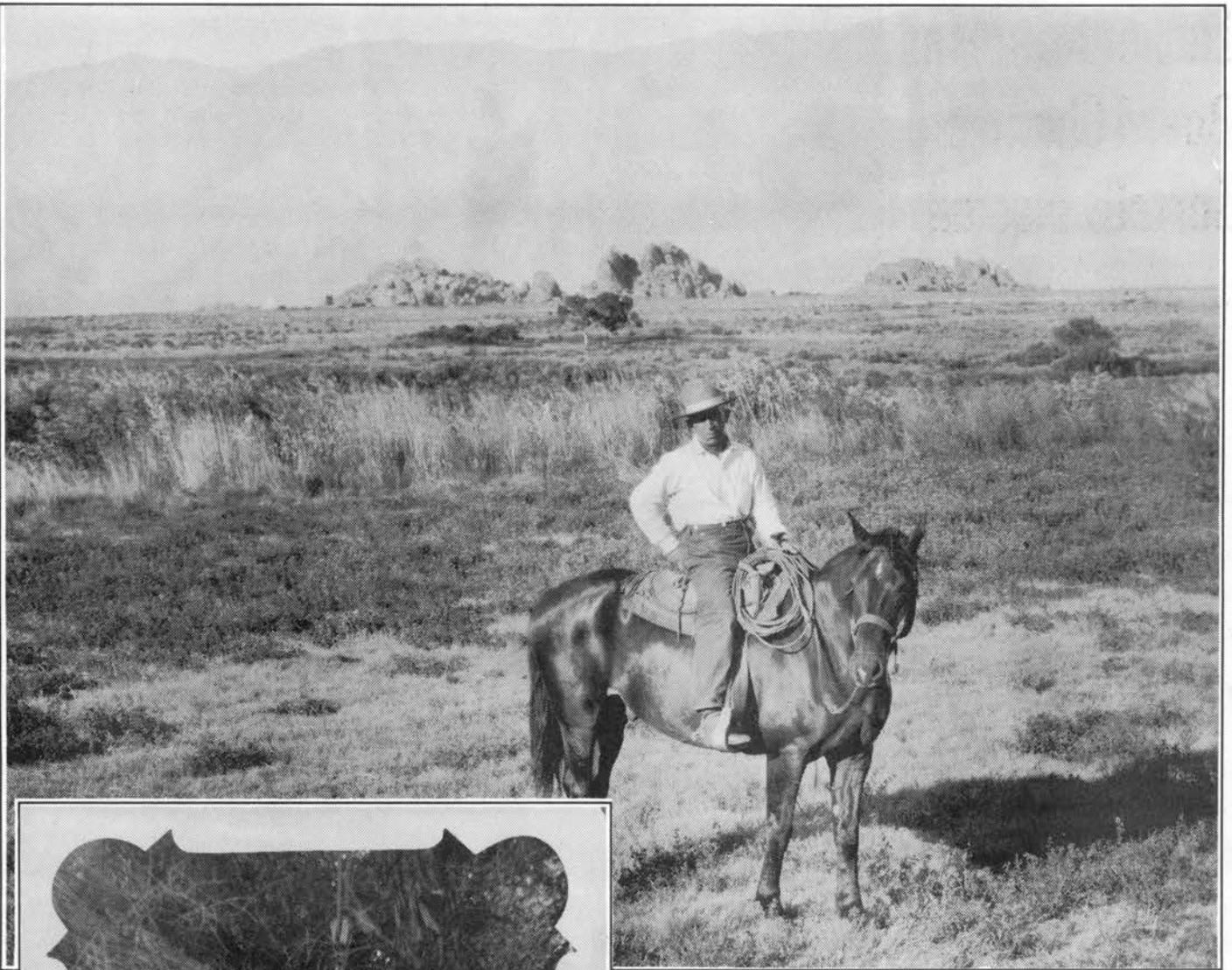
"I went to school in a little school building where the Town Hall is now," John wrote in 1976. "Elisa Carrasco is the only one living who went to school with me. My wife taught school in a two-story building where the elementary school is now, and she planted the big tree which still stands in the school yard.

"I bought the ranch from my mother cheap. She was going to sell it to George Shoe for \$12,000. It was a hell of a place, all willows. I asked her if she would sell it to me for \$12,000 and she said, If you have the money, I'll take it. I told her to never mind the money,

*Above and right, clockwise: Bernice at 18, in 1921; Henrietta at 16 in 1927; "Johnny Boy," who posed like his dad (see p. 50)*







*Working the ranch in Lone Pine.*

but to be in Independence the next morning and we would fix it up.

"She said, Alright, but remember I have to have the money!" She never knew what money I had; I gave her my check for \$3,000 and paid her all the rest in cash. I had \$9,000 drawing interest.

"I was a rancher most of my life. After I went to business college, I came home and went into the cattle game and made my living out of cattle. I ran about 500 head all the time, mixed whiteface and Durham. I would run six years whiteface and three years Durham. One year I got 33 cents for them on foot; had 97 steers. One time Spainhower and I were coming down the mountain with the cattle. It was hot, real hot, and he said, "By golly it sure is hot and by jings I'm going to pray the sky will be covered tonight so it will be cool tomorrow. I don't know whether he prayed or not, but that sky was covered from one end to the other. It was cool and the cattle



# Lubken Retires as Board Chairman; Sorrells Elected

John H. Lubken of Lone Pine stepped down this week as chairman of the Inyo County Board of Supervisors after having served in that capacity continuously since 1938. Maury Sorrells of Shoshone was elected chairman of the board for 1956.

Lubken said he felt that some other member of the board should head the county governing body during the coming year when it was reorganized for 1956.

The veteran Lone Pine supervisor has served on the board at various times for 32 years.

Sorrells was first elected to the board in 1944 and took office in January of 1945. He has been a member of the board continuously since that time.

The board, in recognition of Lubken's service to the county, presented him with the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Honorable JOHN H. LUBKEN, has for 32 years been a member of this Board of Supervisors and has during that time selflessly and sincerely devoted himself to the duties of that position; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure on this Board of Supervisors, JOHN H. LUBKEN has, continuously served as Chairman thereof with wisdom and integrity since 1938; and

WHEREAS, during his service on this Board JOHN H. LUBKEN has served this County and its purposes with faithfulness and honor, with humor and intelligence, and with profound knowledge of people and of government; and

WHEREAS, JOHN H. LUBKEN has consistently treated the problems presented to him with fairness, dignity and sincerity and has acted for the general rather than the special welfare of this County; and

WHEREAS, JOHN H. LUBKEN has retired from his office as Chairman of this Board this day

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the undersigned members of this Board of Supervisors hereby extend to JOHN H. LUBKEN on their own behalf and on behalf of the officers and employees of this County, their affectionate and heartfelt thanks to John for his painstaking and able service to this Board and this County as Chairman of this Board of Supervisors, and hereby express the further hope that John will share his wealth of knowledge and experience as a member of this Board for many years to come; and



JOHN H. LUBKEN

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of this Board cause a copy of this signed Resolution to be delivered to JOHN H. LUBKEN as a memento of our friendly and affectionate regard for him.

(SEAL)

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF INYO  
MAURY SORRELLS  
WALLACE PARTRIDGE  
ART BARLOW  
SABERT KEOUGH



*Inyo Independent, Friday, January 6, 1956.*

traveled like hell, a five mile trip, too. And about an hour after we got into the field, the sun came out!

"The white men sold whiskey. They would take half a barrel of whiskey and fill it up with water and throw in four plugs of chewing tobacco. People liked it, thought it was pure whiskey, but I knew it was tobacco because my folks made sauerkraut from cabbage they raised and they used to get the barrels to put it in."

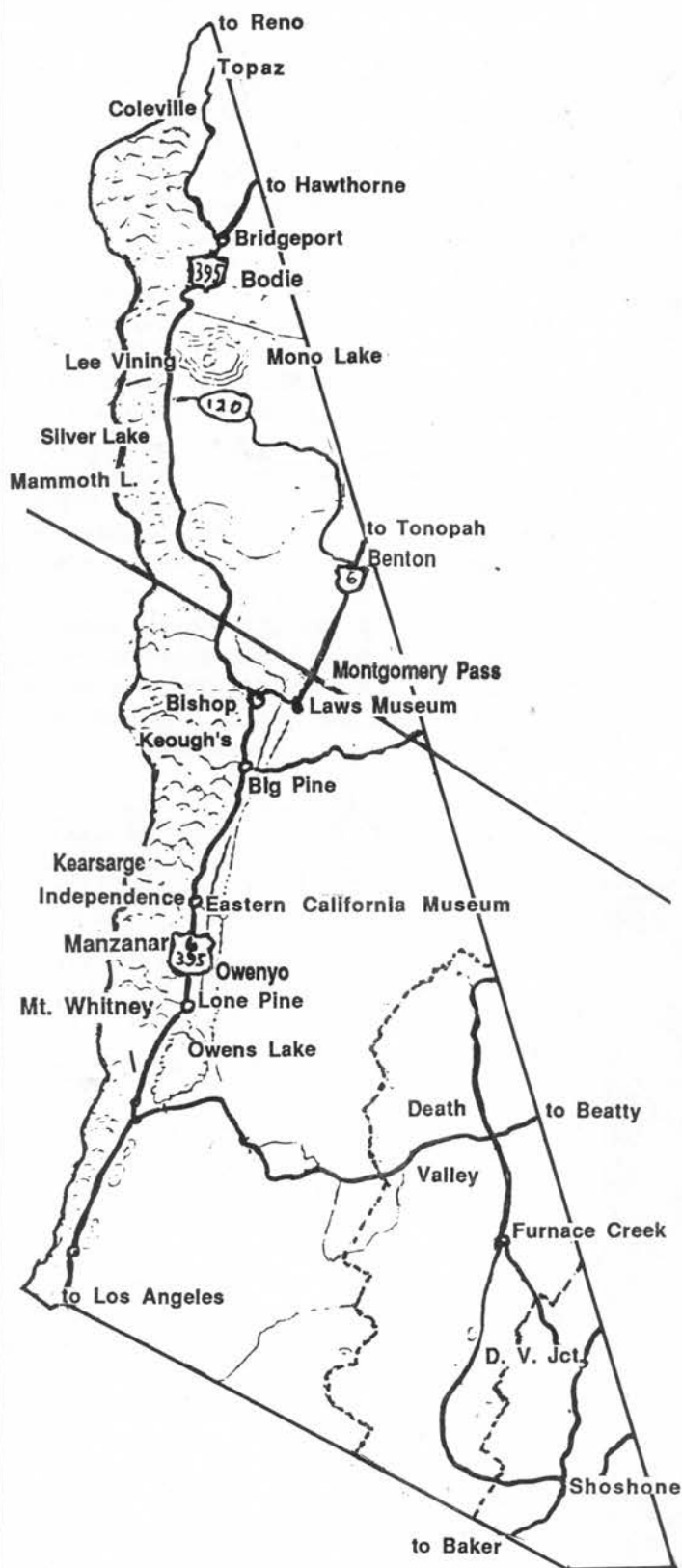
How could a man such as this not become a legend? He is said to have driven himself to the pub for his daily breakfast of a man-sized steak washed down with a generous draft of spirits, for years after he probably should have depended on someone else to drive. The ranch dogs -- all named "Dog" -- came along in the back of his pickup and caused him a problem from time to time, in their excessive eagerness to defend the vehicle. One story has it that he engaged another driver in a collision on his way to breakfast, and was extremely indignant because "everybody knows I drive this street every morning at this hour and they should know enough to stay out of the way!"

Many were the stories inspired and exaggerated by John's reputation for fierce independence. The "Intake" called him friendly and hospitable, a true descendant of those hardy Americans who developed the Owens Valley. Typical of long-time residents, John believed that a man's word is as good as his bond and that a friend is a friend, come hell and high water. \*

*"Pioneer residents of Owens Valley are Mr. and Mrs. John H. Lubken, shown in front of cottonwood tree planted in 1869." From the "Intake."*



# MONO COUNTY



# INYO COUNTY

## Editor's Corner



This issue represents the second in our sixth year of publication. It is gratifying to us that so many of you have picked up an issue, subscribed from an advertisement, or been given a gift subscription, and then wanted to collect the complete set. If anyone has old numbers to share or sell, or if you have gaps in your collection, let me know and we'll try to set up an exchange.

For those of you who have asked: accidentally hidden in the warehouse were the following: about four each of the out-of-print issues Vol. I, No. 3, and Vol. I, No. 4, and about six of Vol. II, No. 1. It will have to be first come, first served if you need one of these to fill out your set. On the other hand, the last issue of Vol. II, No. 4 has been locked in the safe for Chalfant Press files, and no more of that one will be available.

The super volume, our collection called "best of the Album" has been a great success, especially as a gift and if you are thinking of giving them for birthdays or next Christmas, perhaps the time to order is now. Early though it may seem, remember that a limited number were printed.

Here's a nice idea handed over to me by our writer-photographer Louise Kelsey. Starcrest of California sells an item called "No-Punch Magazine Holders." They are plastic strips with three holes that fit standard loose-leaf binders. The strips come in punch-out form, each with a centered slot through which you can slip (half, or more or less) of the pages of an 8 1/2 x 11 magazine. This provides the magazine with a spine that can be slipped into a 3-ring binder without any damage, holes, or wrinkles and you can stuff as many as a dozen issues of THE ALBUM into a 3-inch deep binder. I know - I did it. For a set of 12, stock No. 12-09606-0 the cost is \$1.99 plus \$.50 insurance, 7.25% tax if delivered in California, and shipping charges of \$4.00 for an order under \$15. Starcrest address: 19465-Brennan Avenue, Perris, CA 92379. Or if you send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope, I'll send you a copy of their order form. And if the boss sees this, he'll send them a bill. No free advertising!

# Seriously Enough...

Growing up under the influence of men the likes of my dad, John Lubken, and that ilk, has put a definite damper on the wild side of my personality that I just know I would have found delightful.

For instance, in the matter of a person being only as good as his (or her) word. I don't remember if I learned that lesson over dinner table conversations, by example, or at the end of a switch, but it put me in some uncomfortable situations. Do you know how embarrassing it is for a woman to sit in a bar by herself when she really isn't trying to pick up a date? You tell your friend okay, you'll meet her at the watering hole at 5:30. With my upbringing 5:30 is NOT 5:32 or 5:35; and perish forbid that it be 6:00!

So there I am promptly at 5:29.00 – all by myself – trying to shrink to the size of Alice after she ate the cookie (or was it drank the soda pop?) and slithering down the sidelines into a great big, huge, lonely table with NOBODY else at it. And it's always right in the middle of the room, with everyone staring at me.

Do I fold my hands, stick my nose in the air, and order a drink in a snotty and sophisticated tone? No. I scratch, twitch, sneak peaks around, crane my neck to see the door, mumble something about more people expected when the cocktail waitress comes by, and wonder if I'm sitting up straight or slouching. My hands and feet grow too big for their arms and legs, which same get tangled in the chair or my coat and knock over anything upright on the table.

It's actually all I can do, when my friend finally arrives at 5:37 – well past the dot! – to restrain myself from jumping up, throwing my arms around her and yelling "Oh thank you, thank you, for rescuing me!"

After that, I can be as sophisticated as the next one. After all, I'm a politician, used to being in the public eye.

I have been asked how I could stand politics, it being such a foot-in-mouth job. I grew up with it, so I don't know any better. The family has been cluttered with judges, sheriffs, city clerk-administrators, school board members, and county supervisors for generations here – some related directly and others by shirt tail.

I've been Bishop's Mayor twice and am still a City Councilmember, and Dad, whose fault most of this is, was in Inyo County Supervisor for 12 years in the days of such great men as John Lubken (whose story appears on page 46), Mark Lacey, Wallace Partridge, and Maury Sorrells.

These were men of stern conviction and positive action. The late Judge John McMurry once confided the dilemma he often faced when he was District Attorney. This was back in the days when there was one DA, no assistants, and no administrators or county counsels to aid in keeping the supervisors out of trouble (which of course saved the taxpayers a great deal of money – not a popular thing these days). After a strong Board decision in resolution of a problem, John would protest, "You can't do that; it's against state regulations!" Five pairs of eyes would turn upon him, he said, as wide and clear as the summer skies they worked under, and five voices would announce, "But we're going to do it anyway."

That's my political platform, too, but it does give our poor City Administrator and City Attorney some bad moments. After all, I learned my politics from the man who earned the nickname "Oil" Hurlbut by skipping the red tape and climbing aboard a motorgrader to wheel out and personally oil the streets of Independence. To heck with EIRs, state preemptions, and all that nonsense.

The honesty and courage of such men (and women!) is stifled today by the dialectical shambles of state and federal law squatting in leering profusion in the halls of congress and stored by the bale in the capitol basements. But these are the men who raised me, and when I got married it wasn't any better because Robert Himself was of the same persuasion.

And as I said at the outset, it's left me in some ticklish situations. Like I'm never popular when someone says "Oh boy, it's FRIDAY!" Then I have to admit that I may be the only person in Bishop who loves Monday. On the other hand, that may not be contributed as much to my fine sense of integrity and work ethic as it is to weekends just being a little too lonely around here without men like Dad, John Lubken, and Robert Himself to back up my contention that 5:30 is NOT 5:32.





# Campfire Recipes

from  
*Marye Roeser*

Little did I realize when I first cooked the weekly breakfast cook-out at Camp High Sierra in 1949, how many smoky campfires were in my future. But, years later, I'm still convinced that cowboy coffee, boiled over a backcountry campfire with the sun touching the granite peaks, tastes like no other coffee at the finest restaurant. In fact, when I think about it, meals eaten while huddled around the red glow of a campfire are absolutely food for the soul.

## RECIPES

### TROUT ALMANDINE

trout - pan sized  
evaporated milk  
lemon juice  
season salt  
pepper  
1 package sliced almonds  
margarine

Squeeze a little lemon juice over each pan sized trout. Sprinkle with season salt and pepper. Saute in a little margarine until cooked through - about 10 minutes. Saute sliced almonds in a little margarine until lightly browned. Sprinkle the almond and margarine mixture over the grilled trout. Serve with fresh lemon slices, if available.

### PEACH COBBLER

Heat reflector oven to 400°  
1 can peaches - 1 lb. 13 oz. (with syrup)  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
3 Tbsp. cornstarch  
1/4 tsp. brandy flavoring - optional

Combine above ingredients in saucepan. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and boils. Boil and stir 1 min. Pour into 1 1/2 quart baking pan or dutch oven.

1 Tbsp. sugar  
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
3 Tbsp. shortening  
1/2 cup milk

Measure flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into mixing bowl. Add shortening and milk. Cut shortening into flour mixture with a fork until crumbly. Mix until dough forms a ball. Drop dough by spoonfuls onto hot pie filling. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until biscuit topping is golden brown. Serve warm. Can add a topping of whipped topping or sour cream.

### GRILLED ROSEMARY FILET STEAKS

diced fresh garlic cloves  
whole rosemary  
garlic salt/pepper  
fillet steaks - 6 to 8 oz. 1 inch thick

Season steaks with garlic, rosemary, salt & pepper. Grill over hot coals or on griddle. Grill approximately 8 minutes on each side for medium rare. You can serve with mustard butter for additional flavor.

### MUSTARD BUTTER

Mix 2 Tbsp. prepared dijon mustard  
1 Tbsp. chopped parsley  
1/4 tsp. onion salt  
1/4 cup soft margarine or butter

# Letters to the editor

## INFORMATION PLEASE

I am writing regarding the publication that the Bishop Chamber of Commerce sponsored by the name of "100 Years of Real Living, Mementos of Bishop, Calif." I am not sure when it was published. On page 46 there is a newspaper insert about the Elmhurst Sanitarium dated August, 1916. My grandparents were Wm. H. and Cecile Byrne who had a ranch on the outskirts of Bishop by Brockman Corners (I think that's the name) and moved into town and bought this house that was the old Elmhurst Hospital.

I have a picture of this house with the old sign still on it. I have for some years been doing research on this old home and have been unable to find any proof it even existed. When I found this piece in this magazine I thought maybe now I have a chance of finding out more about it.

Where can I find the history, old pictures, past owners, anything at all on the Elmhurst Hospital? I understood it was the first hospital in the area . . . **Dusty Zraggen, Deeth NV**

**We have nothing on the Elmhurst Hospital, other than the clipping printed in the old "100 Years of Real Living," but promised we'd published this letter in case any readers can help Dusty.**

## NICE NOTES ON RENEWAL

. . . And the beat goes on – year VI of THE ALBUM. The first V went by all too swiftly, with each issue a delight. Keep up the good work. **John DiPol, Ridgecrest, CA**

. . . Really enjoyed the last edition. Tom Watterson was my mother's cousin. I spent time in Uncle Tom's cabin; also many happy days at Keough's as a young boy. **Robert Geyer, Reno, NV**

. . . I plan to send you, within two weeks, an article and photos which I've entitled "Growing Up in Mammoth." Our family spent the summers there from 1925 to 1963 (my last summer was 1942). We also were fortunate to know many of the settlers in Inyo and Mono counties. **Bob Partridge, San Diego, CA**

**We accepted Mr. Partridge's offer and have his memories and photos ready to bring to readers in a future issue – July, I hope, but have learned not to promise.**

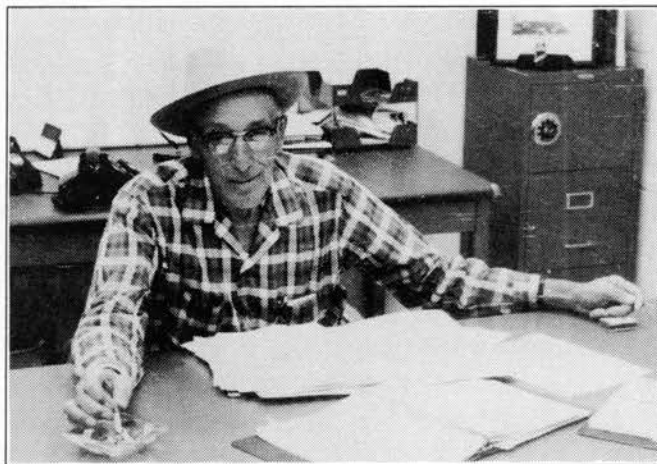
## MORE ON 'ERNIE' BULPITT

I am certainly sorry that I have taken so long in getting this to you. However, I have been exceptionally busy with the preparation of a slide and lecture show for the Orange County Historical Society. As that is now history, I am gradually getting caught up with the other situations.

On this picture of Ernie Bulpitt, I did not realize that the negative was in such poor condition. This picture was taken about 40 years ago and the film was stored, as was the case in those days, in a cartridge canister. I cleaned the negative before printing and then I noticed the white spots and thought I did not clean it good enough. I cleaned the negative and you will notice that in a couple of the prints only a very few spots disappeared. With these prints in such poor condition, there is no charge and maybe you can touch up one of them so that it may be acceptable for publishing. There are three prints with somewhat different exposure and contrast. The damage wasn't noticed until the picture was enlarged, so I am also enclosing a 4x5 print which does not show the scratches!!

You are really doing a great job with THE ALBUM and it is really appreciated. **Albert F. Hill, Sun City, CA**

**After the Dave Smith's interview with Dr. Ed Bulpitt came out (January, 1992), mentioning "Uncle Ernie," Mr. Hill wrote of his acquaintance with Ernie, and offered to copy a photo in his possession. He went to a lot of trouble, as you can read in his letter, but how appropriate that it can be printed in this issue along with "Uncle Ernie's" own story.**



## AND ANOTHER PHOTO IS SHARED

Upon opening my copy of the *Album*, Vol. V, No. 4, I was pleasantly surprised to see the picture of old Joe Skinner. He looked just like my father, Peter Binder, had described him: a rugged old man with a white beard.

Around 1909 my father and a few others hiked from the valley over the Cottonwood Pass to the Kern River. "There," he said, "we linked up with another party headed by Joe Skinner and his son Max."

The combined group hiked north along the Kern and ultimately climbed Mt. Whitney from the west side. "There was no trail, he said. "We just scrambled up over the rocks."

When it was time to retrace the route, Joe said he was going to go down the east trail to Lone Pine. Some of the men protested that a man of his age (70 or 71) should not be doing that alone. But Max



said, "He knows what he's doing and can take care of himself."

So Joe went down the trail and the others hiked back the way they came. My father said they checked up when they returned, and learned that Joe made it with no trouble.

Enclosed is a crude reproduction of a tiny dark snapshot I have of part of the group on top of Mt. Whitney. Perhaps you can pass it on to one of Joe's granddaughters.

Most of the group are unknown. But there is no doubt about the person standing in front of the famous old Mt. Whitney monument – it is old Joe Skinner and his eight-inch white beard. **George E. Binder, El Segundo, CA**



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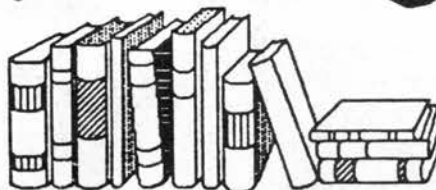
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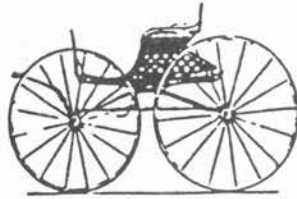
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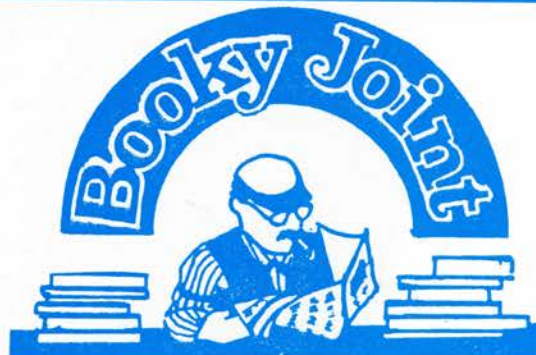
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