The Album

Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono

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

Vol. VI, No. 1

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Keough's last stand?
An endless quest
The Kittie Lee Inn
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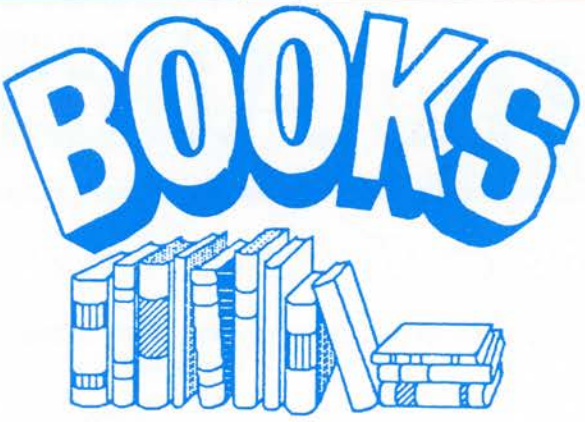

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Sierra Saddle riders at Carson Camp, Silver Lake, early 1902.

-Frasher photo

Cabin at Casa Diablo Hot Springs near Mammoth.

-Frasher photo

Fred Bulpitt's store - The Tufa Stove (see Vol V, no. 1 THE ALBUM) at site of Joseph's Bi-Rite Market. Fred at right.

THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono

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In This Issue

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Cover Photo: Los Angeles Examiner photo: "From the Mammoth Lakes district to the Auto Club of Southern California Annual Outing show came the big Malamutes of Tex Cushion's Alaskan dog team. Duke, the lead dog, and Chinook, the "first mate," are shown with Nancy Zischank, noted dog team driver and expert skier of the Mammoth Lakes area of Mono County, California." Added in small print below is the information "During the summer months Nancy sells big fat fish worms, but very cheap - Look for Nancy." Look for Nancy in NAN'S STORY on page 2.

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

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

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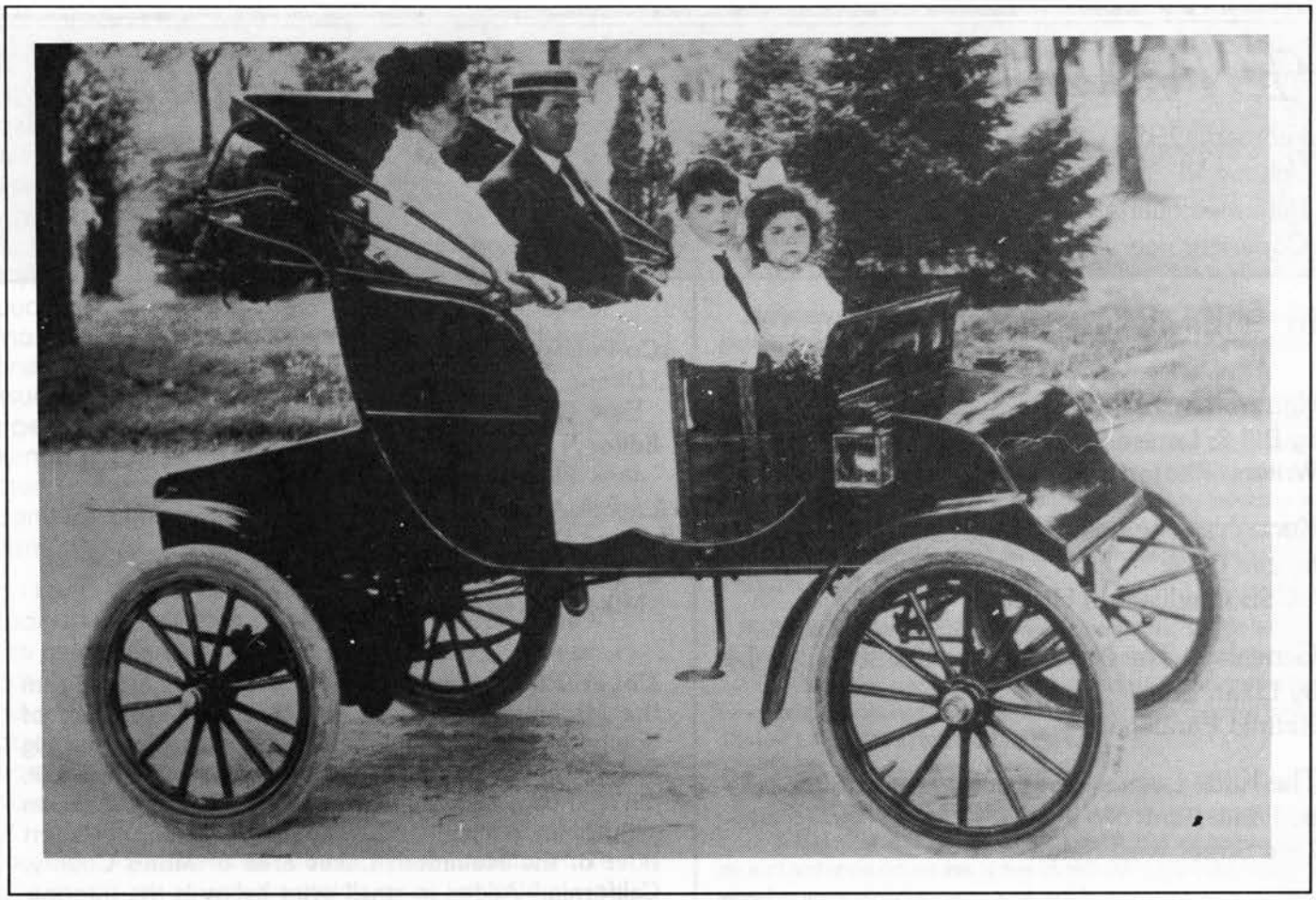


The Connor family in their electric car.

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.

The touch of a gentle hand awakened Nan. Her bedroom was flooded with early morning light and the faint fragrance of roses told her that Mother was nearby.

Henrietta Connor's only responsibility in life was to care for her husband and children. The maids, the cook and the gardener took care of the work. Henrietta supervised the meals, the housework and the yard chores but her family's comfort was her real activity, and this morning she was inviting Nan to share a new adventure.

As the two went downstairs and toward the garden she picked up the opera glasses and handed them to her daughter, pointing out a brilliant yellow bird . . . the first of the Spring season.

Nan Connor was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1907. Her English father was wealthy and the Connor home was a gracious three story house with an inviting yard and garden. Opera and cultural events were an important part of family life and the black leather opera glasses were equally divided between the stage and bird watching.

Allan Wayne Connor, a pharmacist, moved his family to Boston where he became manager of the Rexall Drug medicinal factory. His salary was $1,200 a month, very impressive for the early 1900s. After a few years of seeing placebos made of sugar and water were healing people without drugs, Mr. Connor retired from the pharmacy business.

The young lady on the right, a little younger.

The Connors joined the Christian Science Church, a religion that heals without the use of drugs. The children, Nan and Wayne, attended Sunday school while their parents attended services in the Mother Church dressed appropriately . . . father in a formal dress suit with tails and a high silk top hat and mother in a long, flowing gown. Sunday afternoons were highlighted by rides in the family car . . . a shiny black electric vehicle which took the four Connors on brisk outings along lanes and through the park.

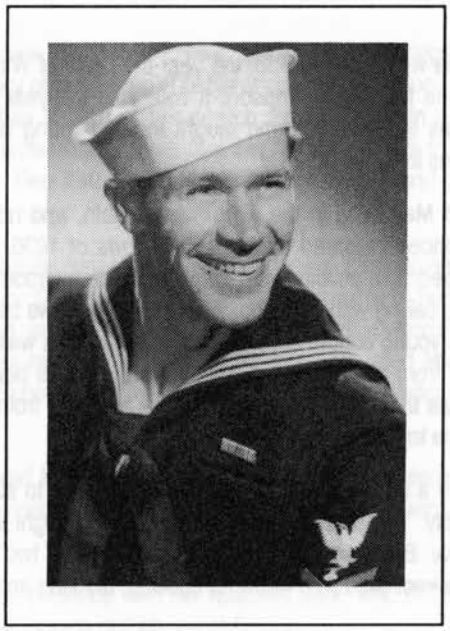
High spirited Nan attended finishing school at Sea Pines on Cape Cod. Her instructor, Miss Faith taught the proper procedure for Afternoon Tea, the duties of hostess and homemaker, as well as management of a staff of servants. There were two other sisters on the teaching staff, probably Miss Hope and Miss Charity.

Following the death of Nan's mother, Mr. Connor moved to Alhambra, California leaving Nan in finishing school. Little did she know that when she came to her new home on vacation her life would take a dramatic turn.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Max Zischank worked at the Standard Station in Alhambra, on the corner where the trolley to downtown Los Angeles stopped. Max was one of those people who could do or fix anything. He loved the mountains and he loved to fish. He had an open, friendly personality and the good looks of a man of great self-confidence and assurance. And like most healthy, normal young men, he appreciated attractive young ladies.

Nan and Max



Never one to be shy, Max struck up a conversation with the young lady who stood on the corner, waiting for the Los Angeles trolley. He asked her for a date . . . he asked for her hand . . . and in 1931 Max Zischank and Nan Connor married in Arizona and honeymooned in Tiajuana. In 1935, with all the good humor and complete optimism of youth they headed for the small settlement of Mammoth with only their car, "Inky" their dog, and $50. Their second honeymoon was at Jack and Pete Carr's cabin beside Twin Lake Falls. But they needed a job.

Penny's Tavern was a legend in the early days of Mammoth. It was a roaring, whooping, hollering place to have a dancing, drinking good time. The Tavern and Casa Diablo roadhouse on Hwy. 395 vied for wildest spot in town. But before Penny's was a tavern it was a bakery. One morning, over breakfast coffee Mama Penny asked Max if he could cook.

Of course Max answered, "Yes.'

Mama asked, "Do you bake?"

Again, "Sure."

"Well, then," Mama said, "You're my baker, starting now."

Nan's job was icing the breakfast rolls and waiting on customers. The regular customers were the employees at the Forest Service compound on the bend of Mammoth Creek.

The Zischanks' job was winter caretaking at Tamarack Lodge. The Lodge sits at the edge of Twin Lakes in the Lakes Basin. During summer months it is filled with fishermen and vacationers who want nothing more than to get away from the noise and rush of city living. The quiet pace of the Lodge lends itself to reading and relaxing in front of the large stone fireplace, and Lloyd and Bertha Austin, the owners, had built a bridge across the lake to a secluded area they turned into the Forest Chapel. They had hired Lloyd and Florence Nichols to be the winter caretakers, but when the Nicholses decided their business needed their time, Nan and Max took the job. The pay was $20 a month for the two of them.

It was the winter of 1935-36, the year the Duke of Windsor gave up the throne for Wally Simpson. It was also the year that snow buried cabins at Tamarack and taught the two young adventurers some lessons in winter survival.

Nan and Max lived in the fishermen's cabin, and nothing they had experienced prepared them for the snows of 1936. The cabin was a two-bedroom building with a kitchen. One bedroom was filled from floor to ceiling with firewood. When the big snows began to get serious, the young couple realized how fortunate this was, as bringing in wood from a snow-buried woodpile would have been a major job. As it was they had to dig a tunnel ten feet long from the cabin kitchen to the top of the snow.

They had a Kholer plant with a bank of batteries to supply them with electricity. The pitcher pump in the kitchen brought them water from the lake. Because the pump had to be primed, two large containers were kept filled with water for cooking, drinking and priming.

Summer vacationers and part-time residents kept "cold boxes" to keep their food chilled. In reverse, Nan and Max had a "warm box" to keep their supplies from freezing. Actually, it was a closet whose walls were filled with sawdust to ward off the low, low temperatures. Their winter supplies included canned vegetables, fruit, red, pink, white, and brown beans, macaroni, rice, spaghetti, sugar, flour and salt. Half a beef hung outside to stay frozen. When they wanted meat they sawed off what they needed with a six-foot crosscut saw, while "Inky" hung around to catch the meat shavings. There were plenty of supplies, enough wood, lots of work keeping the roofs clear, and life was good.

During the winter months of 1935 very few people stayed in Mammoth, and even fewer in the Lakes Basin. Lloyd and Florence Nichols stayed. Big Pete wintered at Valentine Camp. Barney Johnsen was at Crystal Crag. Tex and Ruth Cushion had the "Patrol Station" in Old Mammoth and Nan and Max lived at Twin Lakes.

Tex was a French Canadian who had been raised in snow country. Ruth was a friend of the Mulhollands of Los Angeles aqueduct fame, and had grown up in the Southland. Together they had made their home in Mammoth but Ruth never quite matched Tex's enthusiasm for snow. Tex figured a way to make a living with his dogs and sled during the winter when little else moved, gliding with his dogs over the snow to bring mail and supplies to winter residents. His whip was used with the greatest skill, stinging a lazy dog, or landing as lightly as a feather to give directions to the team. His yells and curses, however, would put a longshoreman to shame.

Tex had rigged up a short ski lift just for his own fun. The rope tow was powered by a gas engine and it was here that Nan began polishing her skiing technique. Nan and Max would ski down to Tex and Ruth's to visit or play cards. Every now and then "cabin fever" would reach out and grab the young couple, and the Cushions were a fine remedy. If the day got late Ruth and Nan would cook up a hearty dinner and the two from Tamarack would stay the night. The Cushions "guest room" was a tent house . . . very cold, but the bed was piled high with homemade quilts. Snuggling down under the blankets kept Nan warm, but they were so heavy that she could hardly turn over.

The first Christmas in Mammoth was to be a grand celebration for the two couples. Tex went into the forest and "shopped" for the most perfect little tree in the woods, bringing it back to the house dripping snow and filling the room with the fresh scent of pine. Ruth and Nan had the assignment of decorating the lovely tree, with only one problem . . . they had no decorations. There were no stores in Mammoth in the winter, and it was much too far to Bishop just for some baubles. Fortunately both Ruth and Nan like "dime store" jewelry, so the girls combined their earrings and necklaces, pins and rings, and the little tree glimmered and glowed as if bestowed with the treasures of the Three Wise Men.

Wild animals were fair game for these hardy winter people. A Sierra hare in summer is an ordinary looking animal, but in winter its coat turns as white as the snow and its coal-black eyes are like polished obsidian. But Tex had no thought for all that beauty; when he saw a fine, big Sierra hare outside his house all he could think of was how grand it would taste. During the winter of 1935 snow fell until it covered the Cushion's house and roof, but there was an air space all around the building, and that was where the hare was sitting. Tex bounded out the door and chased the hare around the house three times before catching it. The hunter forgot that when game is chased long and hard the meat becomes tough. Ruth and Nan cooked . . . and cooked . . . and cooked that hare but three hours later it was still too tough to carve so into the soup pot it went, then onto the table for a very late supper.

Tex Cushion was well known for his dog team. He delivered mail, cleared roofs and performed many needed services during the winter when he and his team were one of the few ways to get around in the snow. Through the snowbound winter months Tex, Ruth, Nan and Max would gather up their laundry, pile into the sled and head for Casa Diablo, where they would tie up the dogs, hop into a car and motor south to Whitmore Tubs in Long Valley.

Tex Cushion and dog team, famous in the '50s, pulling into camp. C. Valentine Collection

The geysers and geothermally heated waters of Long Valley have been known and used for centuries. Bubbling Pool was used by the Indians for generations before white people arrived, its kitchens and middens still silent witnesses to its use. In the summer months Hot Creek has always been a favorite bathing place. In winter hot springs can be located simply by watching for the steam that rises among the frost covered sagebrush. Whitmore Tubs, however, were something special. For one thing, Helen Eaton, who ran the Tubs, had all that wonderful natural hot water AND she had a gas washing machine. After the young people did their laundry the men bathed in the open-air pool with its magnificent backdrop of Mt. Morrison and the Sierra Range while the ladies soaked in Helen's cement bathtub.

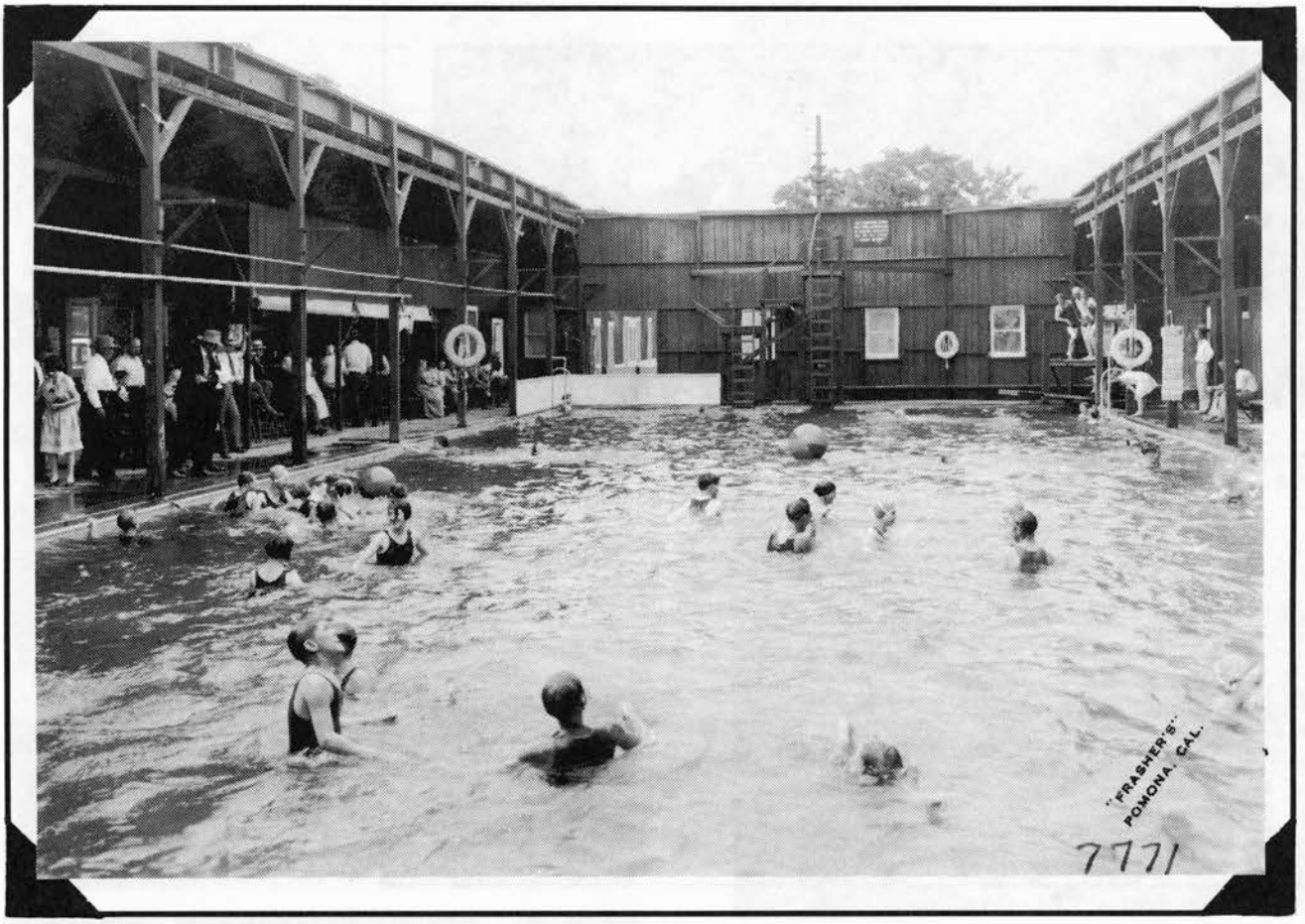
Each year the four friends headed south to help with the Sports Show, held in the Southern California Automobile Club building at the corner of Adams and Figeuroa. Ruth, Nan and Max talked to prospective vacationers with all the enthusiasm of people who love the country they call home. While they described the charms of their High Sierra, Tex was busy keeping his dog team comfortable. He had arranged with the Union Ice Company to blow shaved ice into the area where the dog team slept. Each day some concerned Southlander would report this "mistreatment" of the dogs to the management. What they did not realize was that without the ice the dogs would be deeply stressed by the heat. In order to exercise the dogs Tex rigged metal runners on the sled and each evening he would hitch up the team and take them for a run down Adams and back up Figeuroa. It took only one or two nights of this colorful run (and even more colorful language) for both sides of the street to be lined with a cheering, happy crowd out to see the dogs and the crazy French Canadian. Tex and the dogs loved the show.

Home brew was another talent the men had. Max made beer and Tex, who had been a bootlegger during prohibition, handled the stout stuff. Tex always had a bottle with him and he would sell a drink for 10¢ a mouthful. Bud Davis lived down the road and one day he told Tex that he needed a drink, bad! So Tex took Bud's 10¢ and handed him the jug. The old man took a big swig and spit it right out, along with a tiny baby mouse that had drowned in the liquor.

Max's next job was with the state on the winter crews of Highway 395. Headquarters were at the Crestview Maintenance Station, north of Mammoth Junction. There were not enough living quarters for married couples but Nan's father came to the rescue and bought them a 15 1/2 x 8' trailer for their temporary shelter. There was no electricity and no water, a "Buddy" coal stove for warmth, a Coleman two-burner stove for cooking, a Coleman lantern for light in their small residence, and water was carried in by buckets, but it was home. ❄

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

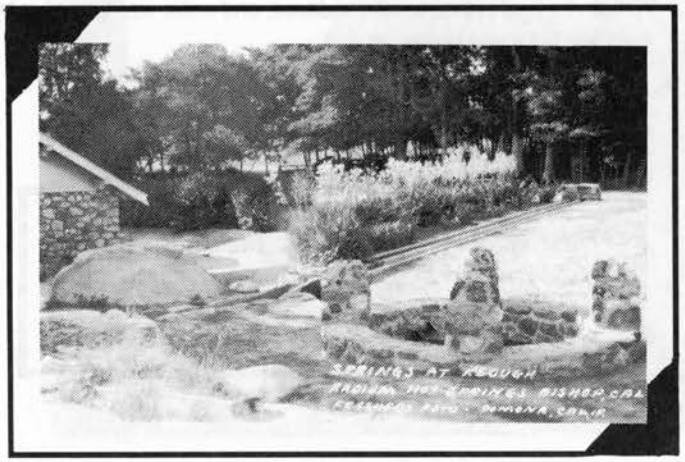
Next issue: Nan and Max build their Long Valley resort and Nan realizes her potential as a skier.



KEOUGH'S THE LAST CHAPTER?

By Jeff Cook
photos and Frasher photos courtesy Robin Andrews of the Vonderheide family

Phillip P. Keough was a wealthy man with a grand vision. In 1919, he began building a health resort, called Keough's Radium Hot Springs, around a geothermal water source seven miles south of Bishop. Within a few years there were bath houses, guest cabins, a dining room, and an outdoor dance pavilion. A large wooden building, open to the sky, sheltered an Olympic-sized swimming pool and children's wading pool. There were lawns and abundant shade trees, picnic tables, and a fishing pond. The resort soon became a popular tourist destination as well as an important social gathering place for the residents of the Owens Valley. In a previous article (The Album, Vol. 1, No. 3), the author recounts the early history of Keough's. What follows is a continuation of the story.



Left: Springs at Keough's Radium Hot Springs

Opposite: The picnic area

In certain rare places, hot water flows out of the ground like a gift. At the springs behind Keough's resort, where sweet, odorless 127° water flows endlessly at almost 600 gallons per minute, it's as if a benevolent nature is saying, "There it is; take it!"

Undoubtedly, the native people of the area enjoyed this water for many hundreds of years, but we only know the story of what has been done with this gift in more recent times.

There are two overlapping parts to the story. Part one is the glory time in the 1920s, when the Owens Valley still had a thriving agricultural economy. Keough's was then at its peak. It was a focal point of community spirit for the entire valley, as symbolized by the Farm Bureau and Independence Day picnics, which brought together as many as 1200 people—more than the population of Bishop at that time. These picnics were also-important organizing events for the movement that resisted the destruction of that economy by the city of Los Angeles, according to John Walton, University of California historian and author of *Western Times and Water Wars: State Culture and Rebellion in California.*

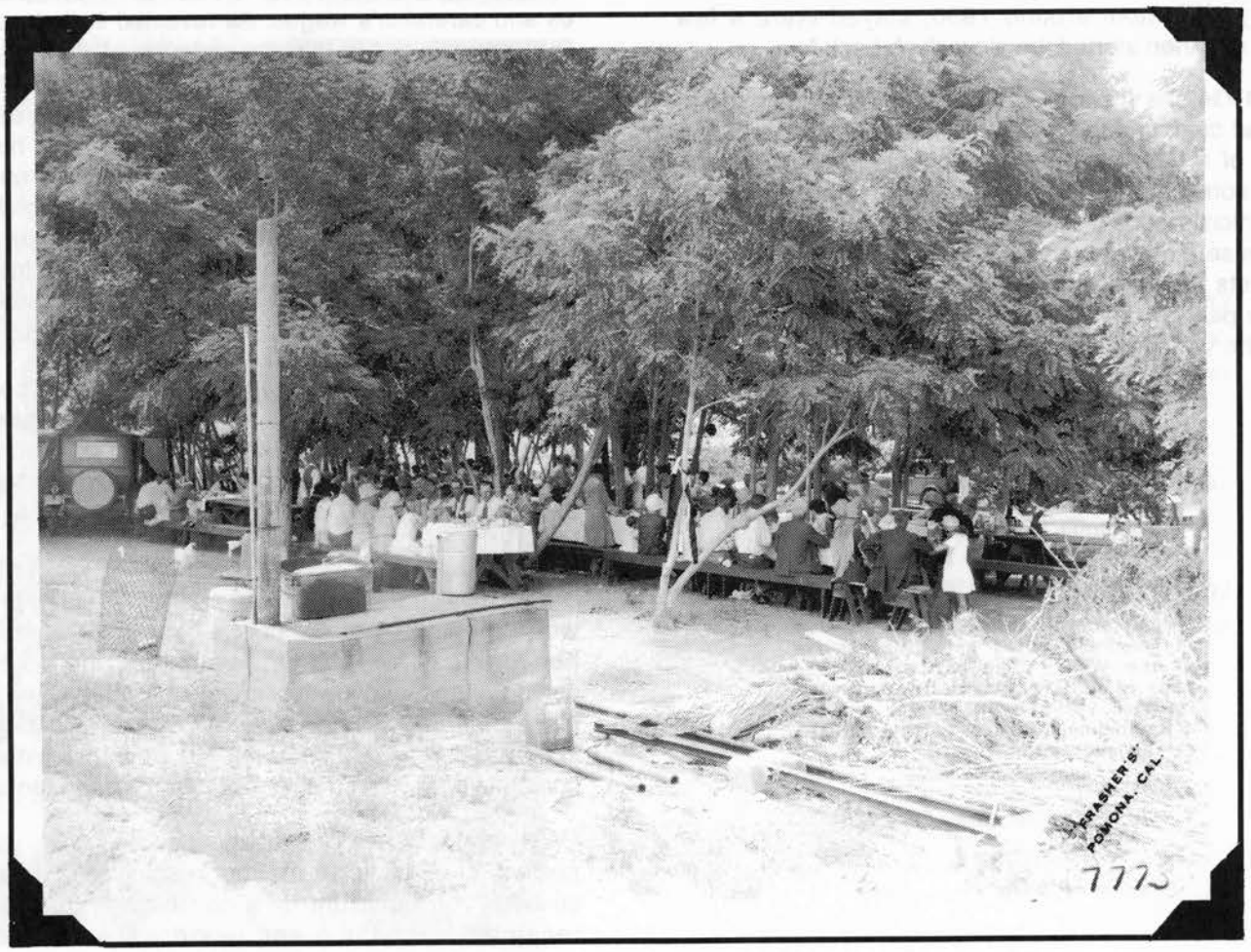
Part two began in 1926, when the city of Los Angeles bought the resort property, and continues to the present. This is a story of decline, partly due to the difficulties caused by the city's absentee ownership. It's also a story of the perseverance and ingenuity of the people who have kept Keough's alive despite the difficulties.

As with all of its land purchases in the Owens Valley, the Department of Water and Power—the agency in charge of the city's interests in the valley—wanted Keough's only as a source of water. However, the resort was allowed to stay open for business as long as the water eventually drained into the city's aqueduct. In 1926, DWP leased the property to Bishop rancher George L. Vonderheide and his wife Rowena.

The Vonderheides put a lot of energy into keeping the resort successful. From the start, their Independence Day and Easter celebrations were as lively as ever.

They brought in hot bands every week for the big Saturday night dances, and spent hours polishing the dance floor and filling the cracks with straw. As in the Keough family, there were two sons, Harry and George Jr., to help out, and except for hiring a lifeguard, they did all the work themselves.

Rowena Vonderheide was a strong woman with a colorful style. She raised parrots and canaries, and kept ducks and geese on the pond. Several peacocks ran



loose on the grounds. At one time, she had 48 pairs of parakeets in the bathhouse lobby, where she also raised tropical plants. She took on a lot of the management duties, and even helped keep order at the dances. According to her niece, Bea McGraw, "Aunt Rowena was as good a bouncer as any."

Despite the Vonderheide's dedication, there were problems behind the scenes. The interests of the Department of Water and Power were simply not consistent with the operation of a small business. Commenting on the DWP's interests in the valley, Walton writes, ". . . two fundamental considerations shaped [its] policy: the city wanted to maximize the water supply available for its own use, and minimize unfavorable publicity that would hamper its image and operations."

Therefore, Keough's was allowed to remain in operation; but under a tight rein: no tenant has ever been given more than a five-year lease. Without a long-term lease, even dedicated tenants have had little incentive or ability to finance improvements or pay for costly upkeep. When their lease ran out in 1930, the Vonderheides chose not to renew.

The next few years were a struggle for the new tenant, B.F. Leete. General hard times probably were a fac-tor. Walton writes: "Under the combined impact of the depression and city purchases, local economic activity hit bottom around 1930, stayed there a few years, and then started the slow climb back."

By 1934, the resort was closed. Much of the vegetation had died, and the buildings were in disrepair. In the words of a DWP memo, "Keough's is now in a dilapidated condition. [It] is a liability rather than an asset." City officials considered offering it to the county on a long lease. They also considered demolishing it to avoid the costs of taxes and maintenance, which were normal- ly paid by the lessee. However, at the end of that year, the Vonderheides agreed to come back.

A NOTABLE RELIC

The lunch department at Keough's Hot Springs is now possessor of a somewhat notable relic of Goldfield's liveliest days—the bar of the Northern saloon, in its day one of the most noted gambling resorts of the West. The bar cost thousands of dollars, originally, and with its back bar and big mirror will be a handsome addition to the fixtures at the swimming resort.

Inyo Register, May 20, 1920

Although no longer what it was in its heyday, Keough's when it reopened continued as a happy scene of swimming, holiday celebrations, and family picnics. The dining room and lunch counter were open, and the mineral baths were popular. A big change occurred at the Saturday night dances. When Prohibition was repealed, the way was open for liquor to be sold for the first time. A bar was built to meet the demand. As Harry Vonderheide remembers it, business was so good that the bartender mixed fifty highballs at a time, adding ice as they were sold. At 25¢ for a mixed drink and 15¢ for a beer, they took in as much as $400 a night in liquor sales alone.

The Vonderheides kept things going into the period of the Second World War. But when the lease came up for renewal in 1945, Rowena wrote a goodbye letter to the DWP, thanking them and saying, "I almost weakened to the thought of wanting it back . . . to restore it to its used-to-be."

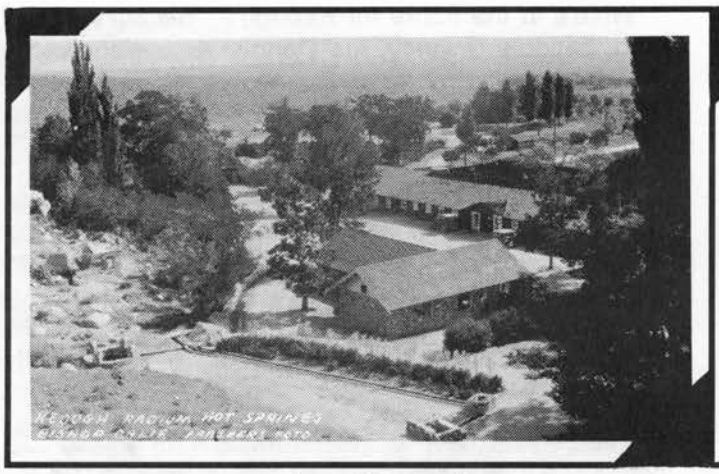
By then the facilities were in bad shape. Most importantly, the cooling tower had decayed to the point of being unusable. Without it, there was no practical way to cool the hot water to a comfortable swimming temperature. For the next several years, under a series of caretakers and short-term tenants, Keough's saw little use.

During this period, the DWP made little rental profit from the resort, and was faced with paying property taxes and caretaker's wages. As revealed in their records, DWP officials began thinking seriously of allowing a long term lease. In a series of internal memos from 1945 through 1955, there was much talk of finding a developer who would rebuild the facilities at his or her own expense. It was even suggested that the resort be expanded, with more pools, a guest lodge, motel units, a gasoline service station, horse stables, "and other required improvements to meet the demand." In return, a 25-30 year lease would be granted "so lessee could have time to amortize permanent improvements."

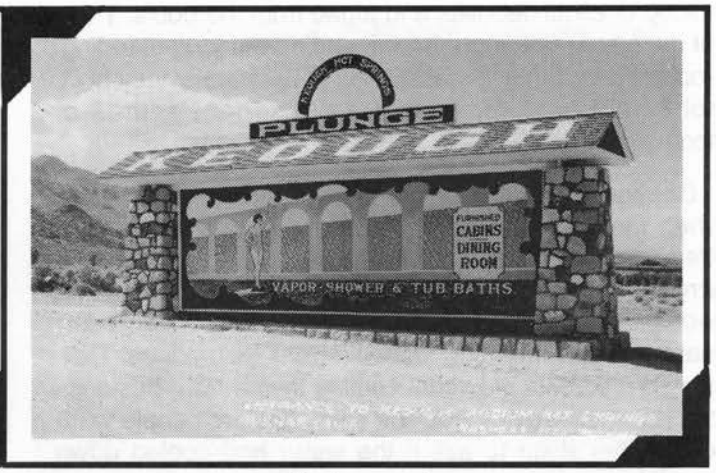
By 1955 the situation had become urgent. The buildings had further deteriorated, and the county was threatening closure due to unhealthy conditions. When a married couple, Dick and Liz Denniss, applied to take over the resort, the DWP decided to grant them a five-year lease.

Liz Denniss had come from a 30-year career in Hollywood. Beginning as Samuel Goldwyn~s receptionist, her work included acting as stand-in and double for Jane Wyman and Bette Davis, with whom she spent nine years. Dick Denniss had an extensive background in mining and millwork. His knowledge of machinery and construction would be essential to the job of renovation.

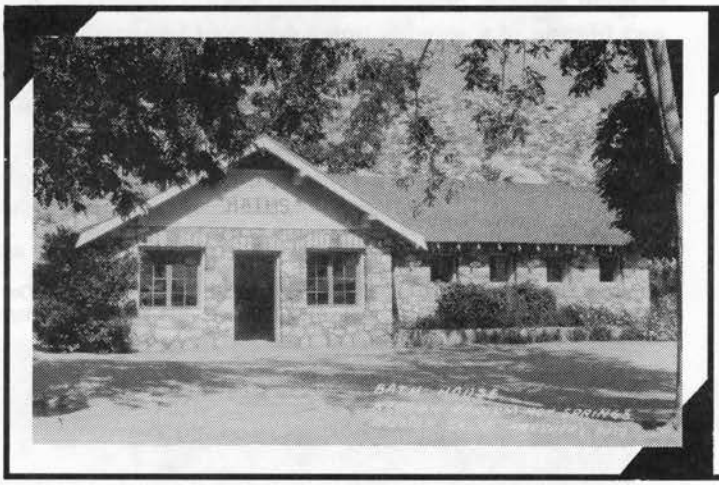
Working together, they set about reversing the years of neglect. They replaced the roofs, which Dick says were so bad "you could throw a cat through them." They repainted everything and laboriously removed the



Overview of Keough's

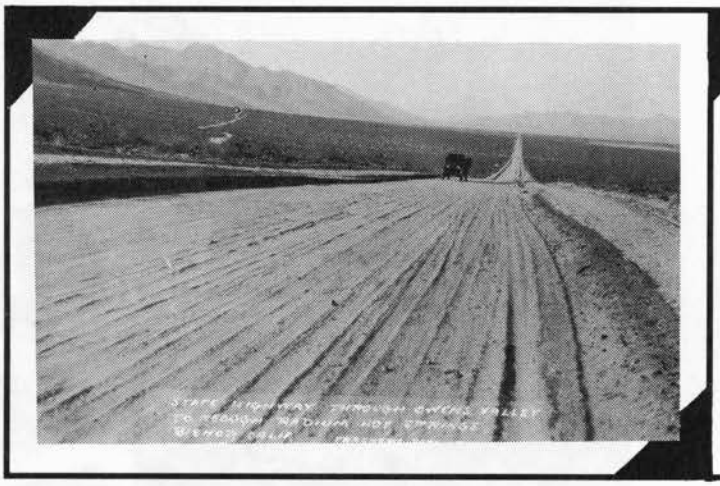


The famous sign



The bath house

Two of the cabins



The old highway near the turn-off to Keough's

The picnic grounds

buildup of alkali deposits and algae from the pools. They got the city to sink a good well, ending the long-standing problem with drinking-water quality. Eventually they built mobile home sites, adding an important source of income.

Cooling the hot water was a particular challenge. When the pool was refilled after its weekly cleaning, it often took three days for the water to cool to the preferred 90°. Mixing in creek water didn't work; it made the pool murky and promoted rapid algae growth. After years of experimenting with different techniques, Dick located a surplus industrial cooling tower. "Our business took off when we got that," he says. "Before people were constantly calling to ask if the water had cooled down yet."

As always, Keough's was a paradise for young people, who were welcome in the pool anytime it was open. They came by the hundreds for summer fun at Keough's, beginning with the traditional end-of-school picnics that Dick and Liz hosted for schools as far away as Nevada.

They also came for swimming lessons. Many valley residents first learned to swim from Thelma Mathie, who taught at Keough's from 1955 through 1979, or from Gloria Bame, her successor. According to Mrs. Bame, Keough's warm water is the perfect learning environment for young children, who tend to get cold easily.

But that ended in 1985. In that year, the Dennisses were told by their insurance company they would have to close to children and teenagers to keep their coverage affordable. Since then, Keough's has been a "key club," for adult members only.

Today, Keough's Hot Springs remains open for business. The grounds are well-kept and the pools are clean. Members can still enjoy some of the pleasures that have been available there for over 70 years: swimming laps in the crystal-clear water of the big pool; talking with friends or strangers while immersed to the shoulders in hot water, (the ultimate social lubricant), or watching the clouds and stars in fetal comfort, even in freezing weather.

But much has changed. The bath house and snack bar are closed, the picnic tables and guest cabins are gone, the fish pond is dry. The dance floor is unrecognizable. Most of the big shade trees died long ago, although many young trees are being nursed along by the mobile home residents.

Because of insurance stipulations, the clientele is different now. There are no kids, no families, and only a few tourists are willing to pay the high one-time admission price. Keough's is now quiet; there's no yelling or splashing, and diving and horseplay aren't allowed. Most visitors come to do laps, sunbathe, or soak. The hot pool (formerly the children's wading pool) is very popular for soothing the tension and body aches that grownups get.

What's in the future for Keough's? Because of their long, capable tenancy, the Dennisses are assured of their lease being renewed. But everyone retires eventually, and change will come when the DWP decides what to do with its property.

Keough's old-timers and current regulars have various opinions about what will happen: DWP will bulldoze it. DWP will lease it again to whoever buys the rights from Dick and Liz. DWP will allow it to be privately developed under a long-term lease. The county will negotiate to run it, as at Tecopa Hot Springs or Whitmore Hot Springs.

People also have opinions about what should happen: Keep it as a club, low-key and uncrowded. Open it to the public so everyone can enjoy it again. Modernize the facilities and maybe build more pools. Keep it as it was—it's a historical landmark.

These notions reflect the common view that what will happen is up to others, and may not be what the users and friends of Keough's believe should happen. But the resort's long history qualifies it as a public resource, and the water still rushes from the ground as a gift to all. Perhaps people should have a say. ✣

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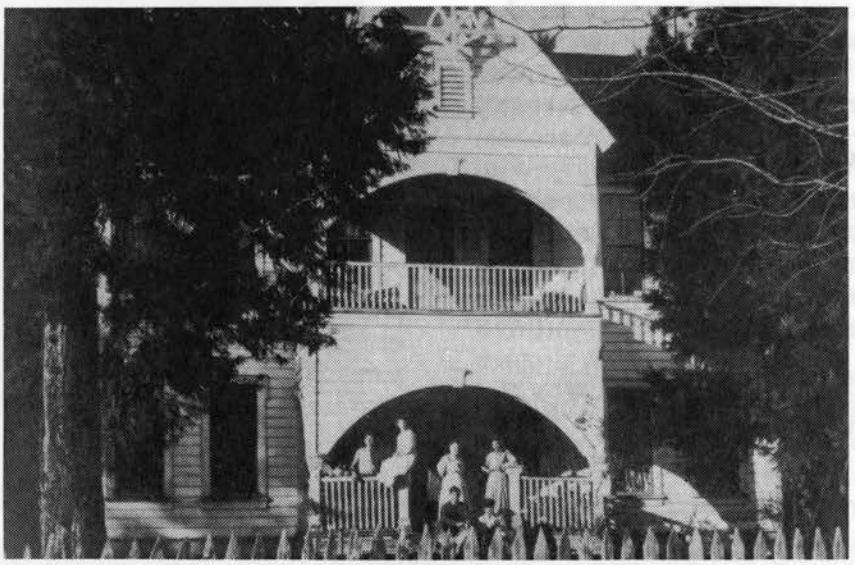
GENEALOGY - THE NEVER ENDING QUEST

A Search for Ancestors

by Lilian Edell



Grandfather Richard B. Graves built this home for his family about 1895, on property now under the waters of Clair Engle Lake near Stringtown, Trinity County. Grandmother Ida Barber Graves stands in center of porch; father Chester R. Graves seated on steps.

I cherish my memories of visits with my maternal Grandmother Hettie Taylor, in her home, where I was born, on Court Street in Redding, California. I was always full of questions about our family heritage, and she loved to reminisce. Sometimes we were joined by Grandma's sister, my Greataunt Belle Long, who lived in the same block. Often we sat on the front porch – the houses on the street were built during a period when front porch sitting was a sociable thing to do. Part of our visits were spent looking at and sorting Grandma's collection of undated, unidentified photographs.

With information from my talks with Grandma Taylor and interviews with other relatives, both maternal and paternal, and from various recorded and other documents, I prepared a thirty-six page typewritten list of family names, dates, and miscellaneous information, and distributed copies to family members at Christmas time in 1969. Partly as a result of the preparation and distribution of that simple document, I am in contact with and share information with many close and distant relatives. These contacts are important – the more people who are interested in the family, the more information that can be gathered.

Now I am retired, and I have time to do research. I'm learning more about my ancestors – not just names, dates, and places, but information that brings them to life for me, such as height, color of eyes, health, disposition, habits, pleasures, hardships and home life, and the major social and political events taking place during their lifetime.

I'd like to share some of my observations and experiences.

Genealogists seem to agree that the best way to search for ancestors is to start with the most recent ancestor, and work backward. A lot of genealogists recommend that you concentrate on one ancestor until you know all about him or her, before moving on to another. It works best for me, however, to research a group of people. For one thing, it often takes weeks or even months to obtain copies of military records, census records, and/or vital statistic records, and rather than losing the rhythm and momentum of the hunt, I spend the waiting period doing other research. For another reason, people usually migrated in groups, not individually, and a cluster of names found in one location or source may later appear in another. For instance, census and other records show that my maternal Taylor and McFarlin ancestors were neighbors and probably fellow church members in Illinois and in Wisconsin before Greatgreatgrandfather George McFarlin, as wagonmaster, with Greatgrandfather Alanson Taylor as one of his teamsters, brought his family to northern California in 1860. Alanson married George's daughter Sarah in California on October 13, 1861. My paternal Graves and Barber ancestors were also northern California pioneers, so I'm concentrating my present search on all of my California ancestors before going-back to the previous generations.

There are a lot of publications available to facilitate the search. To obtain copies of official records on my ancestors in the United States of America, I used Ancestry's *Red Book,* published in 1989 and revised in 1992, by Ancestry, P.O. Box 476, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110. For each county in each state, there is a table showing for that years birth, marriage, death, land, probate, and court records are available, and giving the mailing address of the county offices. A catalog of other publications by Ancestry can be obtained by writing to the above address.

Another source for genealogical publications and supplies is The Everton Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box 368, Logan, Utah, 84321. Everton's Handy Book for Genealogists, first published in 1957 and revised and updated periodically, is a reference book used by a great many genealogists.

The Family History Center at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) at Bishop is presently open for use by anyone interested, Mormon or nonMormon, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and on Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Librarian Jean Mower and other volun-

The community of Ono hosts a dinner for its oldtimers and their descendants at the Grange Hall each May. It's a great opportunity to make contacts.

teers are very helpful to all comers. There is no charge except for materials and copies, and a small handling fee on microfilm and microfiche ordered from the Family HIstory Library at Salt Lake City, Utah. The Mormons do appreciate, however, any genealogical information anyone wishes to contribute to its records.

The Family History Center has several microfilm and microfiche readers, and a computer with CD-ROM disks containing a vast amount of genealogical information. The computer procedure is easy to learn. Users may sign up for a one hour's use at a time.

The Bishop Library has a microfilm/microfiche reader-printer, and can order film, on loan, from various sources. It has an index, on microfiche, of the holdings of the Sutro Library at San Francisco, which include local and family histories, city directories and telephone books, census records, ship passenger arrival lists, and D.A.R. lineage books. There is no charge except, occasionally, a small fee for postage.

Recently the Bishop Library obtained a copy of the catalog of census, military, ship passenger, and other records available through the American Genealogical Lending Library, of Bountiful, Utah. There is a small rental charge for items obtained from the A.G.L.L. The library has a copy of the *Red Book* mentioned above.

Bishop Library can obtain, on microfilm, copies of various newspapers. Through the library, I was able to read the March 1, 1853 issue of the *New York Tribune,* where I learned that my paternal greatgrandparents, William Cobb Barber and Phoebe Austin, were married at Williams Ranch near Washington, Yolo County, California. From information in a family Bible, I already knew the date of the marriage: January 13, 1853. As a bonus, while searching for the report of the Barber-Austin wedding, I found, in the January 29, 1853 issue of the *Tribune,* an announcement of the marriage of my widowed Greatgreatgrandmother Nancy McCormick to Hiram Green at Nicolaus, Sutter County, California, on December 12, 1852. With this information, I was able to obtain certified copies of the marriage records of both parties. The Library has also obtained for me copies of old issues of the *San Francisco Chronicle,* the *Redding Weekly Searchlight,* and the *Weekly Trinity Journal.* The newspapers make fascinating reading, and I often find myself engrossed in the "news" long after I have found the information or article I sought.

Bishop Museum and Historical Society at Laws, California, has a collection of histories of Inyo County pioneer families. The Museum is always interested in receiving additional items and information.

California State Library, 914 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, has a comprehensive collection of local history and genealogical sources. Write to the library at P.O. Box 2037, Sacramento, CA 95809, for a guide to sources for genealogy. Items from the collections may be viewed in person at the library or, in most cases borrowed through your local library.

Before visiting any library for research purposes, do your homework – know what you are looking for. This will save time and frustration, and please and impress the librarian. Many libraries keep special collections, particularly fragile documents, out of sight, and you

Left: The Graves-Barber family plot at Oak Hill Cemetery, Red Bluff. All grave markers furnish valuable information on ages and dates of death. The marker for Caleb A. Barber bears an engraving of an anvil and an arm and mallet, commemorating his occupation as a blacksmith. The marker for infant Leona May Graves bears the inscription "Budded on Earth to Bloom in Heaven." The marker for Greatgrandfather David Rice Graves, in another part of the cemetery, bears a Masonic emblem. Right: Historical plaque at Wheatland.

must contact the research librarian to access them. Take a pencil, as many libraries will not let you use a pen when working with rate books and manuscripts.

Always telephone in advance when planning to visit a library in another area, in order to verify the hours the library is open and to ascertain any requirements for access to the library's holdings. Recently I found, through the LDS Family History Center, that a manuscript collection on Tehama County pioneers is available at the Meriam Library at California State University, Chico. I spoke to William A. Jones, Head of the Special Resources Section of the library, by telephone, and found that, because of budget cuts, the section was open only on Mondays and Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. However, Mr. Jones said that if I would give him the names of the pioneers I was interested in, he would pull their files and have them available for me at 9 a.m. on the Monday I arrived. Thus, I was able to spend the entire four hours reading and copying manuscripts.

As shown by my experience at the Meriam Library, people are nice. Andrew J. Osborne, a retired social studies teacher and the docent who helped me at the Tehama County Library at Red Bluff, California, took the time and trouble to mail me a copy of an obituary he found after I left the library. The County Recorder of Johnson County, Missouri, when sending copies of probate documents I had requested, attached a note to the effect that a book had been written about the family I was interested in. The book is out of print, but I was able to read a microfilm copy at the LDS Family History Center. The manager of the Red Bluff Cemetery District, when responding to my request for information about the family plot, volunteered the information that a paternal aunt is interred in the plot, in an unmarked grave. With information from the cemetery manager as to the date and place of the aunt's death, I was able to read an account of the circumstances of her death in the *Oakland Tribune.*

On the part of the genealogist, he or she should *always* enclose a self addressed and stamped envelope when requesting information, and should *always* express thanks – by a cash donation, by exchange of information, or by a simple thank you note, for courtesies extended.

It's advantageous to belong to genealogical societies in the areas involved in your search. I belong to the Shasta County, the Trinity County, and the Tehama County Genealogical and Historical societies in California, to the Illinois and Central MIssouri societies, and to the National Genealogical Society. The annual dues don't amount to much, and it's a good way to keep up to date on what research has already been accomplished and what sources of information are available. The membership fee usually includes quarterly or annual publications containing stories of historical interest. If possible, attend a genealogical organization's seminar or convention, if only to see the wealth

Left: Entrance to the Igo Cemetery, which is on private land and difficult to find. The author has visited graves of a greatgrandmother, a greatgreatgrandmother, and various other relatives, in the cemetery. Right: The Wheatland City Hall, on premises formerly occupied by the Hook and Ladder Hose Company (firehouse).

of material – forms, books, computer programs, microfilm equipment, indexing sources, preservation supplies, etc., displayed by the commercial exhibitors.

Rootfinders is an informal group of amateur genealogists, who meet at the LDS History Center in Bishop on the second Thursday of each month at 1 p.m., for an interchange of information. The meetings last about an hour, and are open to everyone.

Learn the history of the area you are interested in. I now know more about the westward expansion of our country and about California history than I ever learned in school. It explained a lot and helped me in reading census and other records, when I learned that the town of Ono, in Shasta County, California, where my mother was born and my parents met, was known as Eagle Creek until the name was changed when a Post Office was established there on April 16, 1883, and that area of the nearby town now called Igo, was formerly referred to as Piety Hill.

Get maps of the area. Especially helpful are the early fire insurance maps, called "Bird's Eye" maps, which show the location, nature and concentration of all build ings in an area. I recently obtained copies of the Sanborn Map Company's 1909 insurance map of the town of Bishop and a fraction of the town of Laws. The home I lived in from about 1934 until 1942, on Fowler Street, is shown on the map.

Look into modes of transportation. Before lands were cleared, most settlements were located near waterways. The Sacramento River was a main transportation route in northern California long before the railroads were built.

Take your camera wherever you go. Take pictures of grave markers, historical markers, buildings, etc. Last year at the California State Library, I was told that a copy machine was not available, but that it was permissible to photograph pages of a book, using my own camera. If you want a copy of an old photograph, and the owner of the photograph won't part with it for copy purposes, you can obtain a reasonably good picture with your camera.

If you can, visit the sites you are interested in. Recently I stopped at the town of Wheatland, in Yuba City, California, and within two hours, after asking questions in the business district and at the City Hall, I was referred to Juanita Neyens, a fourth generation Wheatlander, who graciously took time to direct me to the farm known as the Red Barn, where my grandmother was born on August 15, 1869. Ms. Neyens told me that she is currently revising a book on the history of Wheatland, and I am now on her mailing list so I will know when it is available for purchase. Possibly I could have obtained that information by mail, but it would have been a slow process.

Have a family outing and get your children and grandchildren interested in their history. Recently, when starting on a vacation trip to the northwest, my husband and I met our son and his family for a weekend at Weaverville, California. The first day we visited the Jake Jackson Memorial Museum, which is full of history, and also the Joss House State Historic Park. The second day we drove to Trinity Center and then to Trinity Center Cemetery, relocated by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1959 in connection with construction of the Trinity Dam and Reservoir, where my Greatgrandmother Annie Christie Graves and several other relatives are buried. The grandchildren thought it hilarious that we were looking for "Graves," my maiden name, in a cemetery. They were also amused at the grave marker for an "Unknown Stagecoach Robber." Continuing north, we had a picnic lunch near Stringtown, by the shore of the reservoir, now known as Clair Engle Lake, as close as we could get to the site of the Graves ranch house, which was inundated when the reservoir was filled. We returned to Weaverville via French Gulch, where my parents once lived and where my father is buried at the Oddfellows' Cemetery.

There is a special feeling about standing on land where your ancestors stood. I get this feeling at cemeteries, and I have been to many of them. They are full of information. In addition to written inscriptions, tombstones frequently bear meaningful symbols and artistic work, such as an inverted torch which symbolizes the end of a family line. Sometimes the monument maker's name and address and/or a date appear on the reverse side, at the bottom.

I make note of any information I find as to disease and cause of death of an ancestor. This could be helpful in tracking a possible genetic disease. Unfortunately, some records show death by "consumption," a term used indiscriminately in the past, or even by "old age." However, most old fashioned terms are translatable, such as "catarrh" for the common cold or sinus infection, and "black tongue" for typhoid fever.

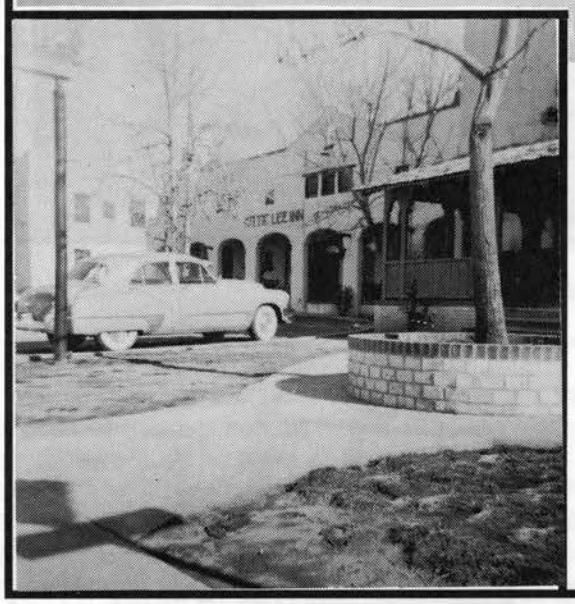
Don't visit a foreign country to find your roots. You would simply not have time. Do your research here – learn your ancestors' names and find out when and where they lived, and then, when you go to the foreign country, you can visit the appropriate place and perhaps find some living relatives. I heard the head of the British Genealogical Society, at an after-dinner speech, say that after he left the convention at which he spoke, he was going to take a group of fifty or so Britons to the Family History LIbrary at Salt Lake City, to search their British roots.

If possible, find a niche where you can keep your records readily available. There are a lot of things you can do in five or ten minutes – write a letter, make a phone call, check a location in an atlas, etc., if you don't have to bring your papers out of storage each time you work on them.

Eventually, you are going to want to put all of your information in some kind of order, and publish it in some form – in typewritten and photocopied looseleaf sheets, in hard or soft cover, or otherwise. With this in mind, make a style sheet, and be consistent in entering information into your records. This is particularly important if you are entering information in the data base of one of the many computer genealogical programs that are available. Cite your sources – undocumented information is worthless, except as a clue. A lot of professional genealogists recommend *The Chicago Manual of Style,* published by The University of Chicago Press, and for genealogical footnotes, *Cite Your Sources,* by Richard S. Lackey, published by the University Press of Mississippi.

As to cost, genealogy is no more expensive than most other hobbies. You can spend a little or a lot. There is information you can obtain for little or nothing, but if you want to have your own computer and software, photocopy machine, microfilm/fiche reader, and library, and if you want to travel a lot in your search, you can spend a lot. Either way, you will meet a lot of nice people, strengthen your family ties, provide a service to your kinsmen, and have a wonderful time. ✱

The author with her husband, son, and grandchildren, at the entrance to the Trinity Center/Coffee Creek Cemetery, in Trinity County, California.



The Kittie Lee

by Eddie Ford
photos courtesy Shirley Fendon

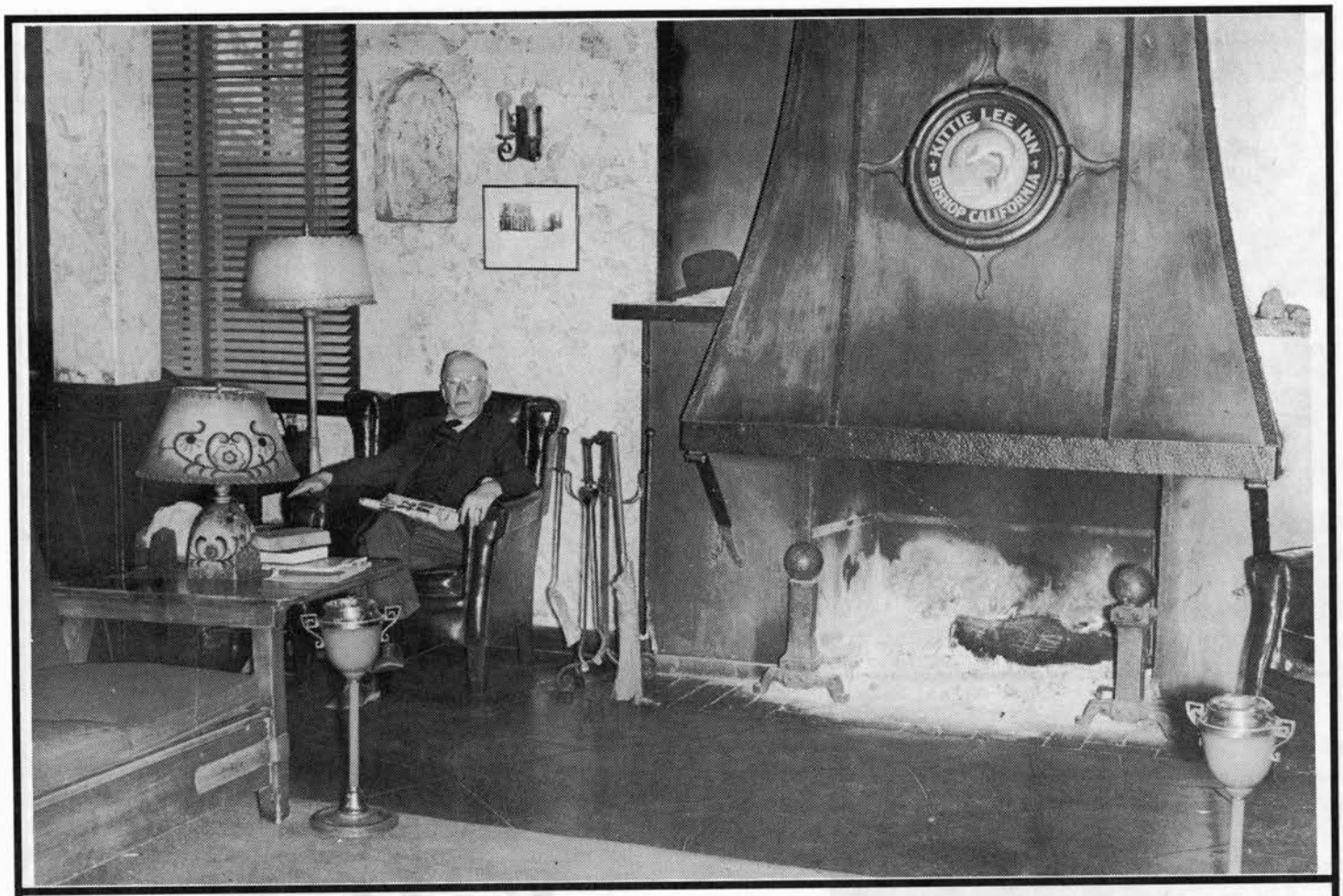
Bill Whorff, son of the second owners of the Kittie Lee Inn, entertains with witty reminiscences about Bishop's once famous hostelry. His eyes dance as he remembers the Hollywood glitz that shone there. For a moment his lips curl into a smile; then he shares his thought. "John Wayne was just an ordinary guy. He'd come into the coffee shop in the morning, sit at the counter and visit with people. He'd have his breakfast and never say who he was."

Those days are gone, but Bill Whorff is alive and eager to share a small part of the Kittie Lee's history and snippets from the legends of Hollywood. His memoirs include the Kittie Lee and World War II, how Charlie's Room (the bar at the Kittie Lee) was named, and a man named Matt Wilkenson.

The first owner of the Kittie Lee was a man from Texas by the name of Matt Wilkenson. Wilkenson was a promoter and a builder. He raised the money for the hotel by popular subscription (money raised by locals) and by using some of his own money. In 1923 he started construction, and the hostelry was opened in the summer of 1924.

The two-story building was situated on about an acre of land on the east side of Main Street, facing Grove Street. Now occupying that property is Whiskey Creek Restaurant.

The Kittie Lee was 151 feet long and 76 feet deep. The finish, weather-brown and rough textured, favored the California Mission style. A tile roof and a long, shady


KITTIE LEE INN
BISHOP CALIFORNIA


DINING ROOM CLOSED

front porch, running almost the full length of the building, added charm. Just beyond the arches on the porch stood rocking chairs and glider swings made of logs, where the view of Mt. Tom awed many a relaxing guest.

Beyond the French doors and the pane glass windows were stucco walls, a massive fireplace and colorful Persian rugs covering red cement floors. The black metal fireplace dominated the center of the east wall. Its unique screen was designed with small children sculpted out of black iron, who appeared to be dancing when the fire was blazing. Later, in 1933, this fireplace became the salvation for many whose power went out in a heavy snowstorm. They not only stayed warm by its fire, but cooked inside it as well.

The guest rooms were deeply carpeted. Metal furniture of modern design popular in the twenties decorated each room, and every one had reading lights and a telephone.

In all of its splendor, the Inn was named after Wilkenson's daughter, Kittie Lee, and thereafter was known affectionately to local citizenry as just that - the Kittie Lee.

The hostelry was officially opened for business on August 23, 1924, with a gala dinner party hosted by Wilkenson for 120 people. They were entertained by the fashionable Step's orchestra of Los Angeles, and encouraged to acquaint themselves with the entire hotel.

William Ryder Whorff and Margret Claire McDonald, Bill's parents, took possession of the Kittie Lee in August of 1925. This, according to Bill Whorff, was the most exciting thing ever to take place at the Inn.

For a moment Whorff leans forward, plants his large forearm on the table before him, and remembers, "I did everything. I was the night clerk. I worked in the kitchen, and was the bell boy." He knew the hotel inside out.

Bill smiles as he speaks. "Rooms were $1.50 per night for one and $3.50 for two, including a private bath." Some rooms were available for a lesser fee. Those guests shared a public bath. However, each room had its own sink.

Then Bill remembers the trips between Los Angeles and Bishop. "You used to take two and a half days from Los Angeles," he says. He shifts in his seat and continues. "You used to drive to Little Lake, stay the night. And you'd drive to Lone Pine and stay overnight. Then you'd come to Bishop the next day."

Opposite: The famous fireplace and reception desk at the Kittie Lee Inn.

The road was not paved in those days. Old cars would putter along a dirt road, pull to one side, and stop to let oncoming traffic pass. The lucky ones weren't grounded by the deep sand; others became stranded alongside the road. But with the Kittie Lee Inn at the end of the long journey, travelers knew that leisure times were ahead.

In spite of the drive, Bishop was both haven and work place for many of Hollywood's rich and famous. The glamorous Kittie Lee Inn was "the" place to stay. Many stars from the early movie sets stayed at the Inn during film making in the Owens Valley, including Will Rogers, Hop Along Cassidy, Cary Grant, John Wayne, Kathryn Hepburn, Tyrone Power, Henry Fonda, and Merle Oberon, to name a few.

Some of the classic films made in the Owens Valley were "Holiday," "The Cowboy and the Lady," and "Jessie James."

"In fact, we did such a big moving picture business here that we built a special dark room for them to keep their film in," says Bill, waving his hand enthusiastically. The film was flammable and couldn't be kept in the hotel, so a 20'x20' room was built for handling the delicate film. After the day's shooting, film was taken to Los Angeles for processing, and a copy brought back to Bishop for viewing.

Bill cooked for film crews at the top of Little Egypt, a craggy mountain west of Bishop toward South Lake. The location was chosen for the film classic "Jessie James." Getting to the crew was difficult, the road steep, rugged, and long. Bill hauled his beloved portable kitchen to the top, where he fed hungry crewmen and movie stars, among whom were Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda.

Bill removes his red cap and puts it on the table, exposing a full head of silver hair. "You never talked to the movie people first or they would clam up," he recalls. John Wayne would share stories in the coffee shop, never bragging about his fame. And, "Will Rogers, why he was as common as an old shoe." According to Bill, Will would sit on the curb down in front of Rusty's at the end of the day "spinning yarn" with the locals.

Leaning back comfortably, Bill remembers the hard times. "In slow times, including snow limiting years, it was necessary to borrow $40,000 to $50,000 to get through the winter." The debt would be paid off in the summer when the hotel was full of vacationers. The main attraction for vacationers was fishing. "In those days, fishing season ran from the first of May to the first of December."

Along came World War II, and Bishop Airport was used as a training center for the military. Business at the Kittie Lee Inn was slow then, and the Inn became a barracks for servicemen stationed in Bishop. The dining room was cleared out, and cots lined the walls. Later,

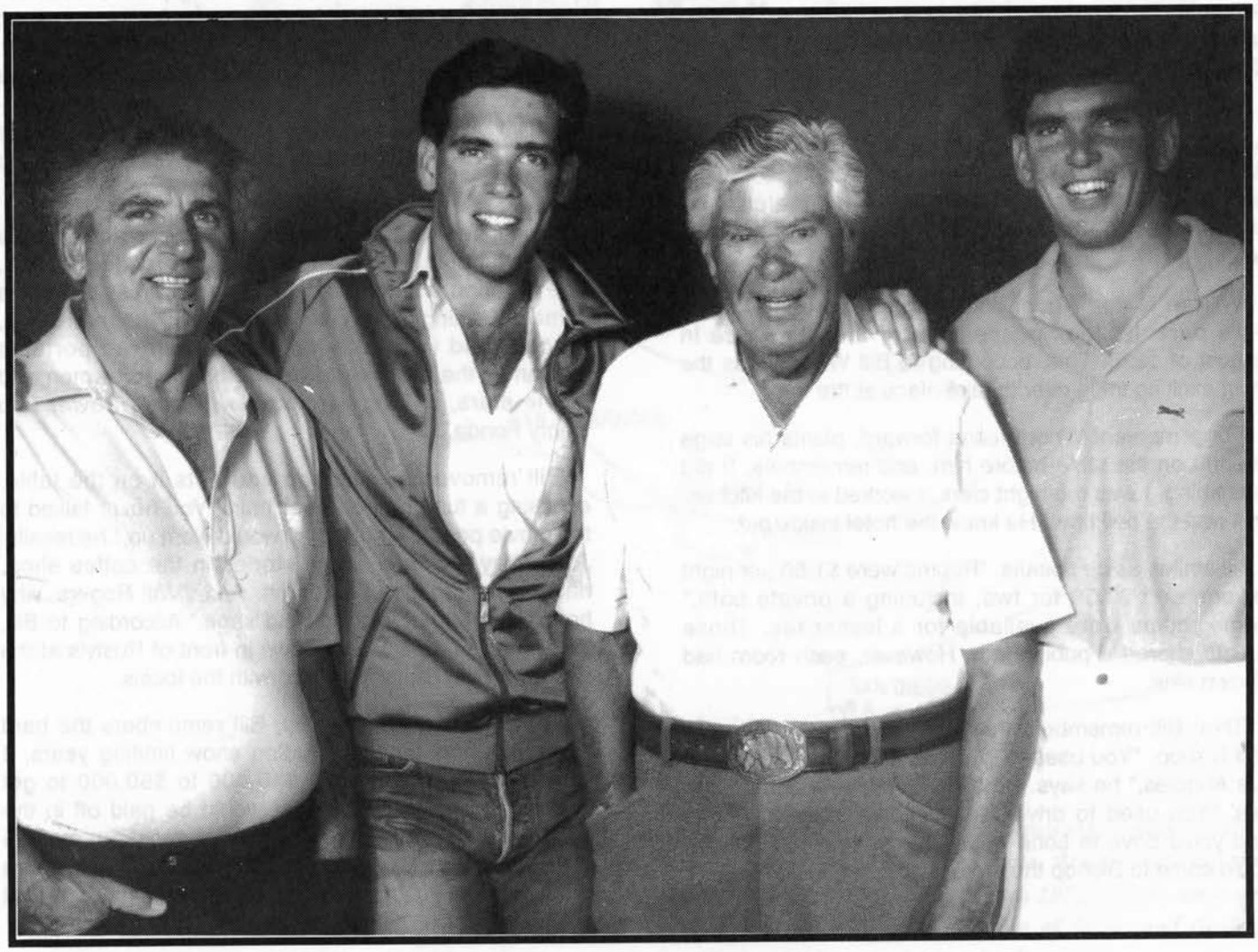
this room became the Copper Kettle Coffee Shop, a restaurant built in 1946.

Then Charlie's Room was added, becoming the bar. This room was originally the living quarters of the Gordons, who had a bakery in Bishop. They were friends of Charlie Chan and had his pictures everywhere. However, the bar was not named for Charlie Chan, but for a man by the name of Charlie Scharf, a retired lumber and mining man who lived in the room after the Gordons. "Uncle Charlie," as he was called, had a quick wit and a bottle of whiskey (Early Times) waiting for his guests at all times. When the Whorffs, Bill and his wife Mazie were trying to find a name for the bar, Bill's seven-year-old nephew Robbie piped up, "Call it Charlie's Room," and so they did.

The Kittie Lee Inn was torn down in 1965, from the Copper Kettle wing over to the north. Sam Walker, the present owner of Whiskey Creek, rebuilt the building in 1990.

Although the original building no longer exists, memories of children throwing water balloons from the hotel balcony on unsuspecting hotel guests and visits from famous movie stars and U.S. soldiers remain. Also remaining are a few family photos and the screen from the original hotel fireplace now in the home of Shirley Fendon, Bill's daughter.

Bill brings out an old picture of the Kittie Lee viewing it with pride and pointing out its architectural accents with obvious admiration. "I could sit and talk by the hour about different things that happened," he says. But outside the gray sky has turned to black. Time has slipped away. He stands, still a tall man, and says good-by, walking into the night air, leaving only his memories behind. ✱



Above: Bill Whorff (center) with his son-in-law Jerry Fendon and two Fendon grandsons.

Opposite: Two of Bill's prized collections of movie pictures. These scenes are from Universal's spectacular aviation classic, "Airmail," featuring Pat O'Brien, Ralph Bellamy, and Slim Summerville.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AIRPORT
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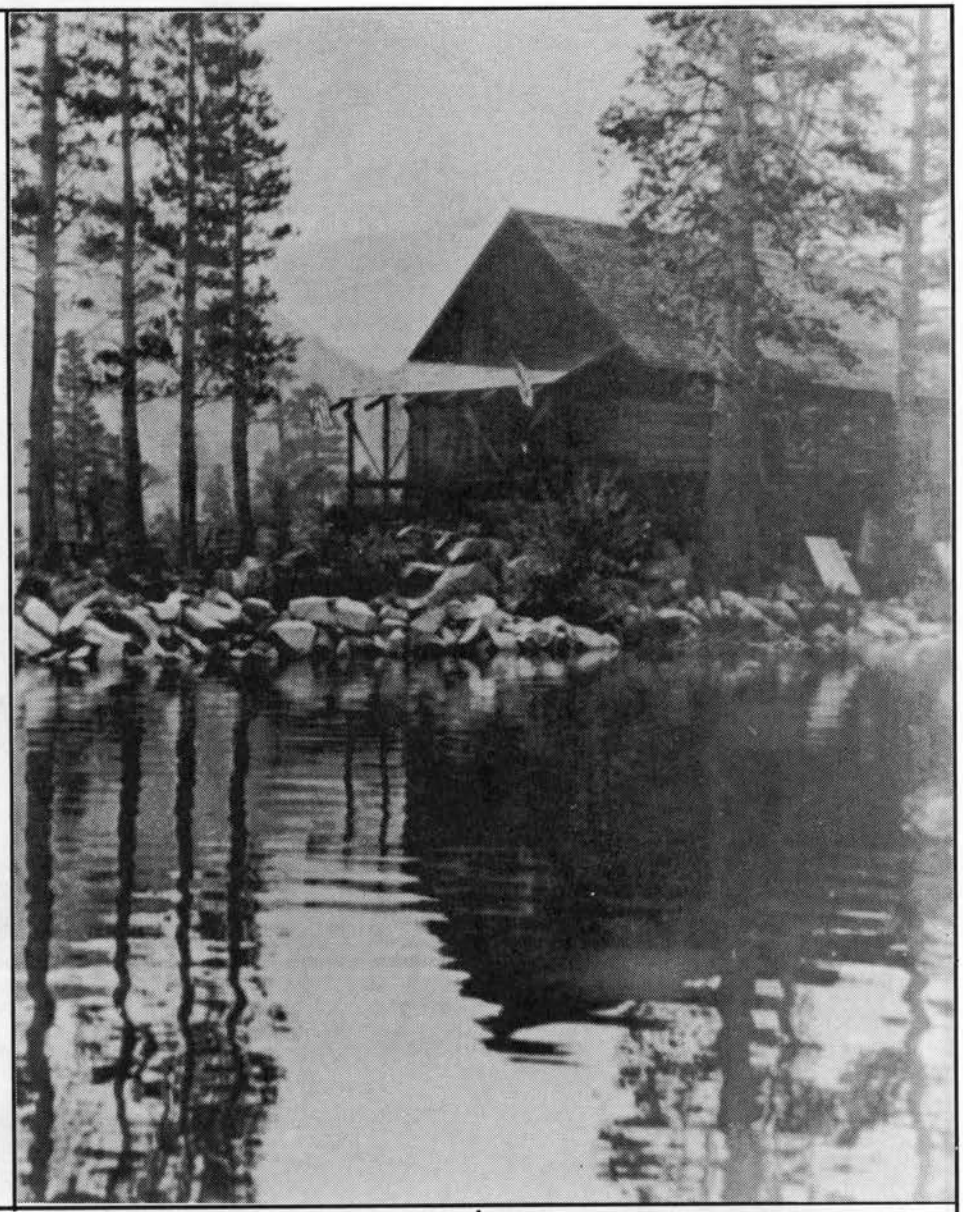
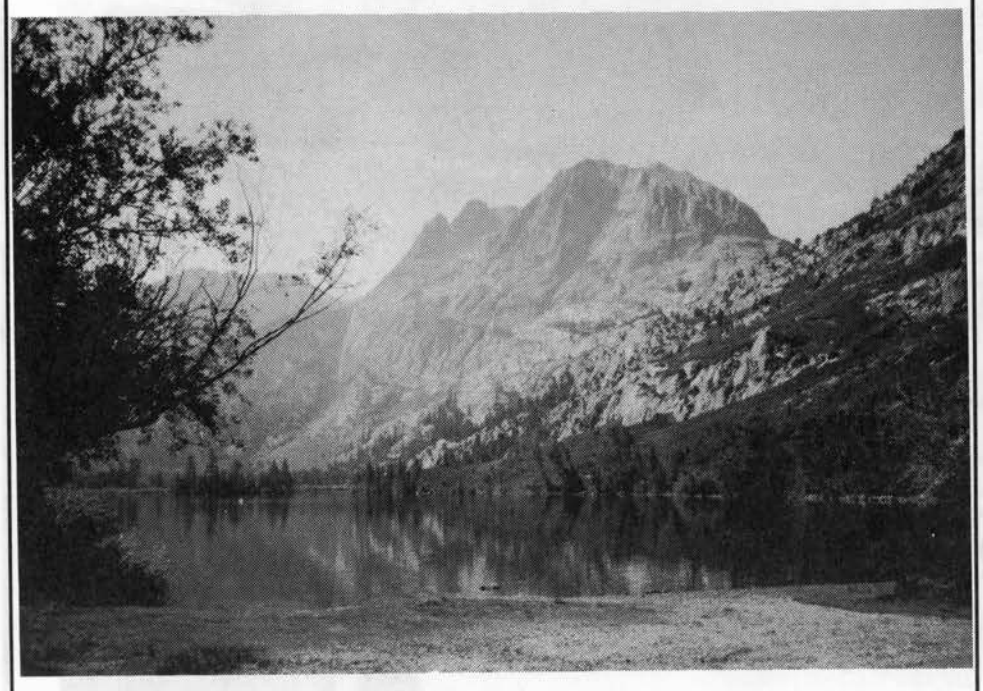
SILVER LAKE

by Marguerite Sowaal





Above: Wallace Beery cabin

Left: Looking south across Silver Lake to Carson Peak

A brief summer shower left the air smelling of Christmas trees and wet earth. Clouds hugged the lake for a few minutes, then sped over the mountains, leaving tattered remnants to decorate Carson Peak.

From across the highway at lake's edge, came the gentle, rhythmic slapping of wave against shore. Tethered to a line between two trees, boats tugged softly at their mooring, as though impatient to be out on the lake again.

It wasn't hard to guess how the lake got its name. Breezes teased the water into tiny waves, but still its surface reflected the clouds and both lake and sky were the color of newly-minted coins of long ago, when coins were made of silver.

Carson Camp, first private resort in the June Lake Loop, was established by Roy Carson in 1916. The initial camp was in a tent where "fishing is always good." In 1919 his wife, Nancy, became camp cook and housekeeper. The first building on this site, adjoining Alger Creek, was completed in 1920. The main building was finished in 1921. This same building now serves as the Silver Creek Store.

Back in 1916, the year Roy and Nancy Carson moved to Silver Lake, dollars, quarters and dimes still contained silver and the lake appeared as a giant silver coin. The Carsons decided they would find no lovelier spot. Roy, with the help of his son, Stanley, built a small log cabin on a site overlooking the most beautiful lake they had ever seen. The cabin still stands, still overlooking the lake, still habitable.

Friends of the Carsons would visit, enjoying the beauty and respite from busy city noises and the frantic schedules of the movie industry. Fishing in the quiet serenity of the Eastern Sierra proved to be addictive and several of them tried to convince the Carsons to build more cabins ... perhaps, even, lay in fishing supplies .. maybe build a resort.

Building the cabins was a difficult process, as raw materials had to be brought to the site ... no easy task. At first there were only platform tents to house the visitors. These were tents placed over wooden flooring and partial siding, quickly erected and adequate for a summer's stay. It wasn't long before logs were floating down Rush Creek into Silver Lake and small cabins were leisurely built by Roy and Stanley.

For a time the cluster of lakeside cabins was known as "Little Pasadena" since most of the Carsons' acquaintances came from that Southern California city. In 1921, Little Pasadena became "Carson's Camp," the first resort in the Eastern Sierra.

Sitting in a high alpine canyon at approximately 7,300 feet, Silver Lake is fed throughout the year by the melting snow and ice of many contributing streams. These aerate and constantly replenish the lake with a fresh supply of water. It is deep and naturally formed, unlike some of the others in the area which have been helped along by man. It doesn't matter whether their catch is from a rowboat, canoe or outboard, fishermen claim that the trout from Silver Lake taste better than trout from anywhere else in the country ... and that goes for fish in the surrounding cold water streams as well.

It wasn't always easy to get to this spot of clear blue daytime skies and star-studded nights. Originally a rough road was scraped from Highway 395 (north) to Grant Lake but stopped before reaching Silver Lake. Another road, originating from 395 to the south, followed the shoreline of June Lake into the community of the same name. Neither end got to Silver Lake. With the building of a powerhouse in 1916 by the California Electric Power Company, the two roads were extended to connect, providing access to Silver Lake.

When paved and dedicated this road became the June Lake Loop, Highway 158, an exquisitely scenic drive of sixteen miles. Originally called Horseshoe Canyon by a government surveyor, the lakes and connecting streams curve in a rough horseshoe, the road cutting through volcanic rock and glaciated hills into valleys and over grades. Winding through June Lake, past Gull Lake where the seagulls visit from nesting sites in Mono Lake, through the small valley of Fern Creek, past ski lifts built in 1960, into aspen and Jeffrey pine groves, rocky cliffs and secret glades, past the power station, the road finally arrives at Silver Lake Resort.

Thereafter Highway 158 continues into a marshy valley where the overflow waters of Rush, Parker, Lee Vining and Walker creeks are held in Grant Lake before going into Owens River and Crowley Lake.

The banks of Rush Creek, connecting Silver Lake with Grant Lake, display the vibrant green of aspen and willow in the springtime, the pink of wild rose thickets in the summer, and the yellows, reds and coppers of autumn leaves in the fall .. resplendent all year, even in winter, although few see the frozen lakes and icebound trees.

Many higher lakes in the Sierra can be reached by hiking from Silver Lake up steep paths and over rugged terrain. It is a breathtaking 1300 foot climb to Agnew Lake and the trail contains many switchbacks. Wires from the power house are in evidence all the way to Gem Lake, named by Tom Agnew "Gem-o-the-Mountains." Plan on yielding the right-of-way to horseback riders. Up into Rush Creek Canyon there are interesting smooth rocks, striated in striking hues, indicating glaciers were once cutting their own trails.

Over the years the resort attracted both fishermen and beauty-seekers, as well as backpackers. Included in the list were quite a few well-known motion picture actors. In the early days, celebrities had cabins built around the lake to enjoy the peaceful seclusion within the valley. One such personality, Wallace Beery, built his vacation home on the small island at the end of Silver Lake and spent many seasons enjoying the solitude it afforded. Unfortunately, one winter an avalanche demolished his and other cabins, pushing some into the lake and completely destroying others. Silver Lake Resort cabins were left in one piece, but a maintenance shed and all the equipment therein were rendered useless.

Other cabins, built on the lake shore, were later torn down at the request of the Forest Service. It was of concern that those lakefront cabins excluded the public from access to Silver Lake. The Forest Service was the lease holder for the resort property and the request

was honored. One cabin was allowed to remain, to become a boathouse where equipment is stored and repairs are made.

The resort has always been a family operation and when the Carsons sold it in 1941, it was purchased by the Johnsons – Bill and Madge – who continued the tradition until they sold it to the Baldosser family in 1960. In 1975, the resort was owned by two couples in partnership. At that time Gary Jones was working as an engineer in the area and became interested in Silver Lake. He bought a half-interest then, and ultimately the Jones family took over complete ownership of the resort. They have been there ever since.

Gary Jones, from Long Beach and his wife Chris, from Pomona, along with their two children, decided to move from Southern California and make Silver Lake their new home. It was their wish to live at the resort year-round. They sold their home in Huntington Beach, and in January 1977, with the intention of trucking all their worldly goods to Silver Lake, they set out happily from that sunny coastal city. They got as far as the power station on June Lake Loop where they were confronted with a four-foot bank of snow completely blocking the highway. To their chagrin they found that the Loop was closed from the north as well. Southern Californians don't normally think of snow as a problem, if they think of snow at all. But this snow presented a big one to the Jones family. The road is usually closed all winter and there they were; truck full of household goods, two children, and their new home inaccessible ... so near, and yet so far.

Gary pondered the situation with the confidence that he, as an engineer, should be able to figure out a way to get his family and household to Silver Lake. He did. He built a large sled, filled it with their belongings, and snowmobiled them to Silver Lake. It took a little doing, but they brought everything into the resort and began to settle into their new home. One of the other problems, of course, was how to get a large home's furnishings into a small cabin.

The Joneses stayed at Silver Lake throughout the winter every year until 1985 when they decided that the children needed a social life as well as a quiet one. They now live in Mammoth during the winter months, awaiting the spring thaw. Although the kids are grown and going to college, Gary and Chris remember taking their snowmobile over the two feet of ice covering Silver Lake in order to get to the power station where a school bus picked up Andrew and took him to Mammoth High School, then traveling north to Grant Lake where the bus picked up Jason and took him to the Lee Vining grammar school. Twice daily – both ways. Now Andrew is working on his master's in engineering at Arizona State and Jason is at San Luis Obispo pursuing a degree in landscape architecture.

Chris manages the books, reservations, and a small but fascinating gift shop; the "old-fashioned general store," where a shopper who goes in to buy a loaf of bread might linger to investigate a surprising variety of products from imported beer to camping supplies, books, magazines, and fishing tackle. Gary is in charge of maintenance and the small breakfast/lunch cafe just behind the office, where they specialize in omelettes. The kids come back to help with the resort in the summer and all the Joneses are on a first-name basis with the visitors who return year after year to rent a boat, hike a trail, fish in the lake, or plain relax ... just the way it was in 1916.*

Opposite: Gary and Chris Jones, and The General Store

Right: Anniversary photo given to guests at the resort in 1991.

Walter and Barbara Lyons at Lake Mary, 1941

LYONS AMONG MOUNTAINS

by Dr. Susan James

In 1932 when my mother was ten, she drove north in the old black Nash with her parents, Walter and Bess Lyon, towards the wilds of Mammoth Lakes. They left at dawn on a summer Sunday morning, my mother singing to herself in the back seat, my grandfather riveted on the road in front of him. By the time they reached Palmdale, the car had broken down. What mother remembered most about the next eight hours was the heat -- over a 100° of it -- baking down on a wooden garage with its doors standing open while she and her parents waited for a spare part to arrive from Los Angeles. Late that afternoon, the Lyons finally sputtered into Bishop.

"It was much smaller then," she told me. "I remember the ice cream parlor with the soda fountain, the white, clapboard Christian Science Church and Uncle Tommy's drygoods store."

Uncle Tommy was Tom Watterson, who together with his first wife, Katie Arcularius, were early residents of Bishop. Uncle Tommy was an important person in my mother's life. She was fascinated by his high-buttoned shoes and old-fashioned manners. When she graduated from high school in 1940, Uncle Tommy sent her the first watch she ever owned as a graduation present. She still treasures the letter that accompanied it. (The Watterson family stories THE ALBUM Vol. IV, Nos. 1-4 and Vol. V, Nos. 1-3)

Dear Mrs. Lyon,

I don't know of any finer girl than this daughter of yours who graduated from High School last night, and in consideration of our friendship of long standing, I think her 'Uncle Tommy' has the privilege of presenting her with a graduation present.

Intended to get her a watch, but on second thought, am sending the price of one direct to you, for she might have one, and you would know of something else that would be more fitting.

Sincerely yours,
T.G. Watterson

Mother got the watch and never forgot Uncle Tommy.

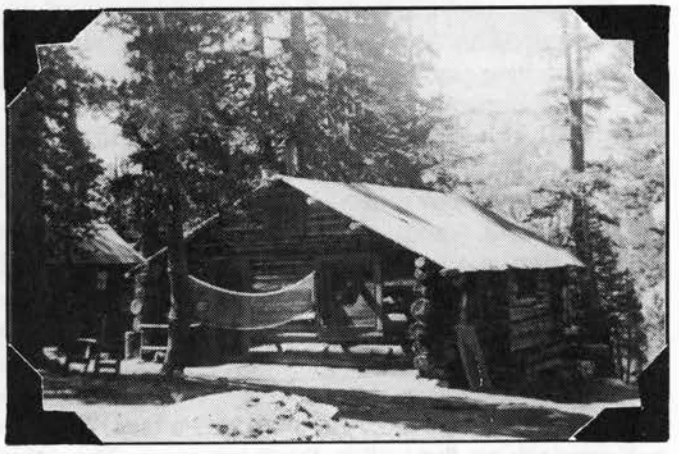
On that first trip in 1932, the Lyons picked up Tom Watterson at his small, single-story frame house off the main street in Bishop. Walter Lyon was Watterson's attorney and the purpose of the trip was to try and straighten out legal complications involving Watterson's various homesteading claims at Mammoth Lakes. In those days of the Great Depression, cash was scarce and Watterson had offered Lyon some of the land between Lake Mamie and Horseshoe Lake if he could clear Watterson's titles.

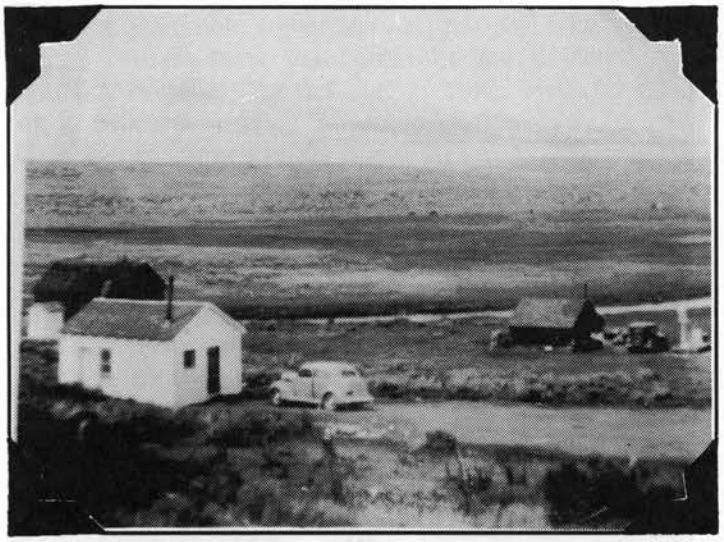
"All the way up to the lakes from Bishop," Mother recalled," Uncle Tommy would point out geologic features -- cinder cones, lava flows -- and explain them. He knew the land like the back of his hand. The road ran differently then, and between Bishop and the start of the Sherwin Grade were the wikiups of the Piutes. I was fascinated by them, and by the people who built them -- stocky men and women with round faces and black hair. All I knew at the time about Indians was from Zane Grey and Saturday matinee serials. But my father had an endless curiosity about Indians. He'd lived among the Navajo in Arizona and the Piute wikiups seemed to strike a spark in him as we drove by. On that trip though, the first trip we took up to Mammoth, it wasn't stories of the Indians that we listened to but to stories of Uncle Tommy's childhood."

Wattersons' parents had come to the United States from the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, and he could still remember as a child with his brother, Jim, driving in a wagon through the sagebrush and up the old road that led to Red Mountain and the gold rush camp of Old Mammoth. The mine had been closed down by then and the winter snows had crushed and ground away all but a few stone foundations, yet the Wattersons formed an attachment to the area that never changed. Tom grew up, married Katie Arcularius and opened a dry goods store in Bishop. He was a neat, precise man, prominent citizen and First Reader at the Christian Science Church. When Walter Lyon was desperately ill, Tom Watterson wrote a loving letter to Mrs. Lyon about her husband.

Bess Lyon and Mildred Watterson (Uncle Tom's second wife) with Barbara Lyon on the road to Horseshoe Lake, 1936.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin," 1938





Jim Watterson's cabin (right) & rental (left), Hot Creek, 1941

While he may not be conscious of this at this time, he is being taken care of just the same, and though it is not proper for some outsider to interfere with his mental arrangement, there is nothing to prevent both you and your daughter to lift your thoughts of him up to God, and do your best to hold him there.

Jim Watterson grew up, too, weathered, cowboy-ized, living in a primitive log cabin on Hot Creek on land he had homesteaded. He drew deaf and grizzled and irascible, an archetypal frontiersman, but Walter Lyon, that lover of Western lore, would spend hours sitting on a split log by Jim's cabin in the sunlight shouting questions at the deaf old man about what Mammoth had been like in the "old days."

"Better," Jim would tell him, "better 'n now. Too many people now." It was 1932 and from Jim's cluster of cabins (some of which he was forced to rent out to make a little money), there was not another building in sight.

Tom and Katie Watterson had built a number of log cabins around Mammoth Lakes on land they had homesteaded. One of these, a three-room cabin above Twin Lakes (now Twin Lakes Tract), was known as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and it was here that my mother and her parents stayed on that first trip. "Uncle Tom's Cabin"was a wildly exciting place for a child. Rustic and rugged outside with a separate washhouse-cum-shed and a stunning view down over Twin Lakes, inside it was Halloween. The Wattersons had done all the decorating themselves and they'd used black and orange throughout. Black and orange canvas covered the pull-down Murphy bed in the kitchen and furnished the color scheme for the stacks of dishes in cupboards near the heavy, cast-iron, wood-burning stove. All of the wooden furniture, some of which the Wattersons had made themselves, like the kitchen table and chairs, was painted black and orange too. And there was a huge German cuckoo clock on the wall in the living room. The cabin had three rooms -- kitchen, living room, bedroom -- a huge stone fireplace and mice in the chinking. My mother spent all of one never-to-be-forgotten night complaining about the noise in the chinking only to discover the next morning that a mother mouse had given birth to a litter there during the night. But when you're a child, mice are more a matter of interest than concern.

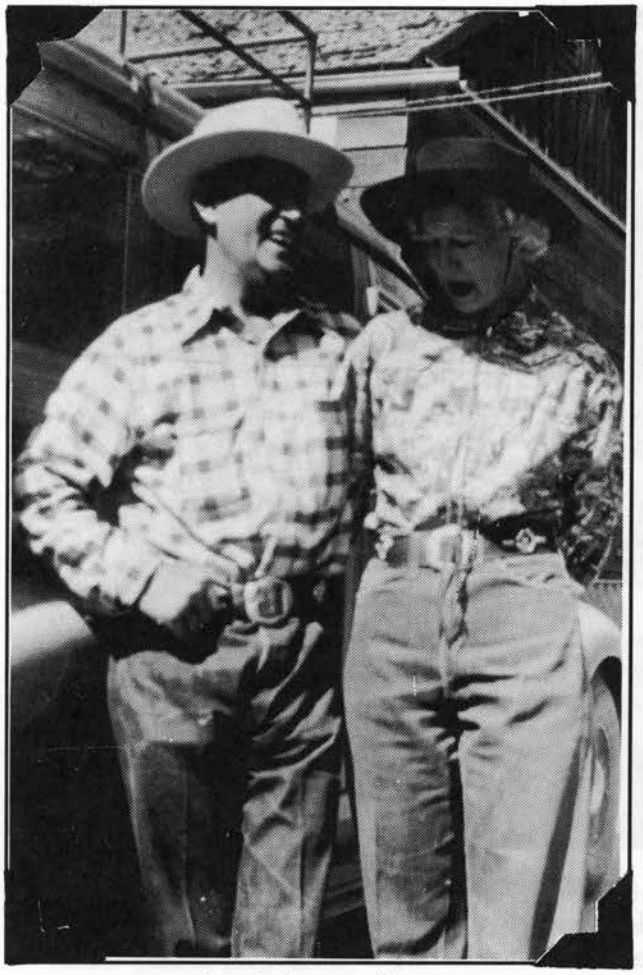
"It was wonderful," Mother said wistfully, remembering that first trip in 1932 and all the trips that came after. "We drove through heat and dust for what seemed like days from the city. The dust was so thick you had to roll the windows up against it and the air was so hot, you had to roll them right back down again. The old Nash would climb up Sherwin Grade groaning like its bones ached and all along the side were cars whose radiators had boiled over. Women in cotton dresses would sit on the running boards and men would fan themselves with their hats. At the top of the grade we would stop and rest the radiator and look back. All down the mountainside were the wrecks of cars whose drivers had fallen asleep and crashed over the verge. Then we started up toward the lakes and the air was cool and scented with pine. The sky was blue with the spikey fingers of the Minarets pressed against it, and the air was clear and clean. The lakes sparkled in the sunlight, the falls roared above Twin Lakes and everywhere there were wildflowers. It was like you'd finally reached Heaven and you never wanted to leave again."

The town of Mammoth wasn't much in those days -- a store, a hotel, a gas station -- but the Lyons loved it, coming back summer after summer to fish for trout from their special rock jutting out into the blue-brown waters of Lake George, to walk in the woods, swim in the ice melt of Horseshoe Lake, pick watercress at Hot Creek or just sit on the porch over hot cups of coffee and long hours of conversation.

"The first thing Mother did," my mother told me, "when we finally arrived at the cabin was to fry up a big pan of potatoes and onions on the stove. I'd collect wood and Dad would get the stove going and Mother would have those potatoes and onions sizzling in no time at all. They went great with trout, too."

Clothes were washed in a tin washtub and strung up between two pine trees or in later years sent out to Nona and Bud Keffer's laundry. "Bud had an old truck," Mother said, "and he would drive over those washboard roads like a race driver at the Indy 500." Baths were taken in a very few inches of tepid water in a large claw-footed bathtub in the washhouse and the toilet facilities had a wooden seat -- very exotic to a child living in Hollywood!

The water was piped to the cabin from Lake Mamie and tasted like ice cold nectar but all hot water had to be boiled up on the stove. There was no entertainment except the homegrown variety so the Lyons invited friends to share the cabin with them. All summer long the small log rooms overflowed with family



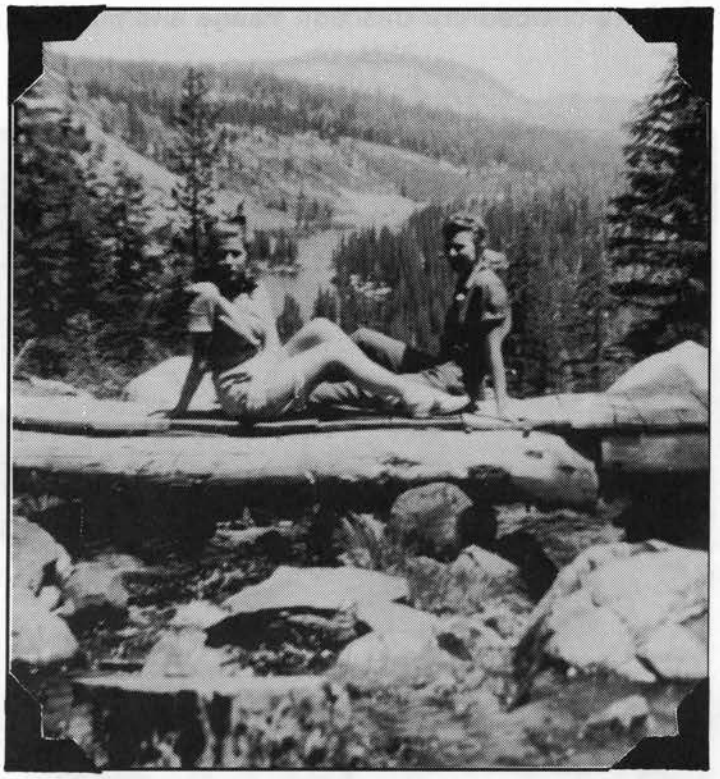
Bud and Nona Keffer, 1930

Helen Lyon and Howard Arcularius, 1940

and friends while Bess Lyon, queen of the frying pans, cooked up endless meals of trout and potatoes on the old stove. One summer, mother's cousin, Helen Lyon, a pretty girl in her early twenties, came for a visit. At a rodeo held down in Mammoth meadows Helen met young Stanford-graduate Howard Arcularius. Walter Lyon had acted as attorney for Howard's father, Frank, and introduced Helen to Frank's son. Helen, whose only experience of cowboys was in the movies, watched Howard ride in the rodeo and fell in love. Howard asked her for a date and took her to Penney's Tavern.

'We were all dying of curiosity," my mother recalled, "and sat up late in the cabin until Helen came home to tell us all about her date with a cowboy."

Helen's comments consisted of giggles and the blushing confession that Howard had kissed her. By the end of the summer, Helen and Howard were engaged -- a real Mammoth love story -- but unfortunately this one didn't last happily ever after. When Howard went to see Helen in Los Angeles that fall, she was having second thoughts about living as the cowboy's lady in Mammoth. Helen was a city girl and Mammoth seemed awfully full of wide open spaces. The engagement ended and both went on to different partners and different lives.



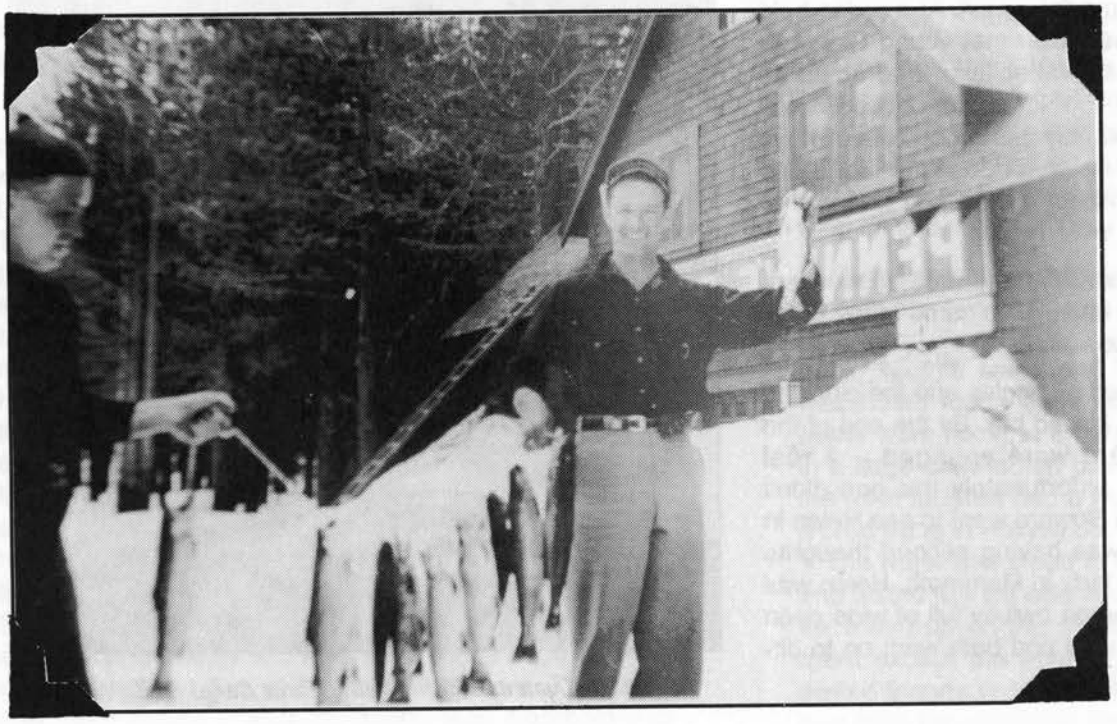
Barbara Lyon and Teen Wells, Twin Lakes Falls, 1941

Other Mammoth romances had happier endings. My mother met my father just before the start of World War II at Los Angeles City College. In 1943, when he went off to Officers' Training School in Fargo, North Dakota, he wrote to my mother who was flattered but resolutely refused to admit she was interested in the tall, good-looking Air Force officer. That summer at Mammoth, however, mother found herself thinking a lot about Air Force lieutenants during long walks to Horseshoe Lake or short walks to buy groceries at Wildyrie Store. Then one day in August, she got a letter from her father which mentioned casually that: "Bill James is back in town for a few days and has been calling here twice a day for you. I don't know if you're interested or not but he seems pretty anxious to know when you'll be coming home."

"Get packed up," Mother announced to assorted family and friends, "we're leaving now." In two hours, the crowded car was tearing down the road toward Bishop. Mother swore she drove eighty miles an hour and wouldn't let anyone else touch the wheel. That evening Bill James walked through her front door on North Irving Boulevard and swept her into his arms, announcing between kisses, "We're getting married!" And they did.

Walter Lyon wasn't sure that his daughter had picked the right man until he went hunting with his new son-in-law at Mammoth. When Bill James shot two deer with two bullets, Lyon was impressed enough to give the marriage his unconditional blessing. He took James to his special rock at Lake George and taught him how to catch trout. Mammoth and my mother became the bonds that drew these two very different men together. My father grew to love the lakes and mountains of the area. He climbed the Cascade Range and poked

Barbara Lyon, Hot Creek, summer 1943
(the summer she decided to marry my father, Bill James)

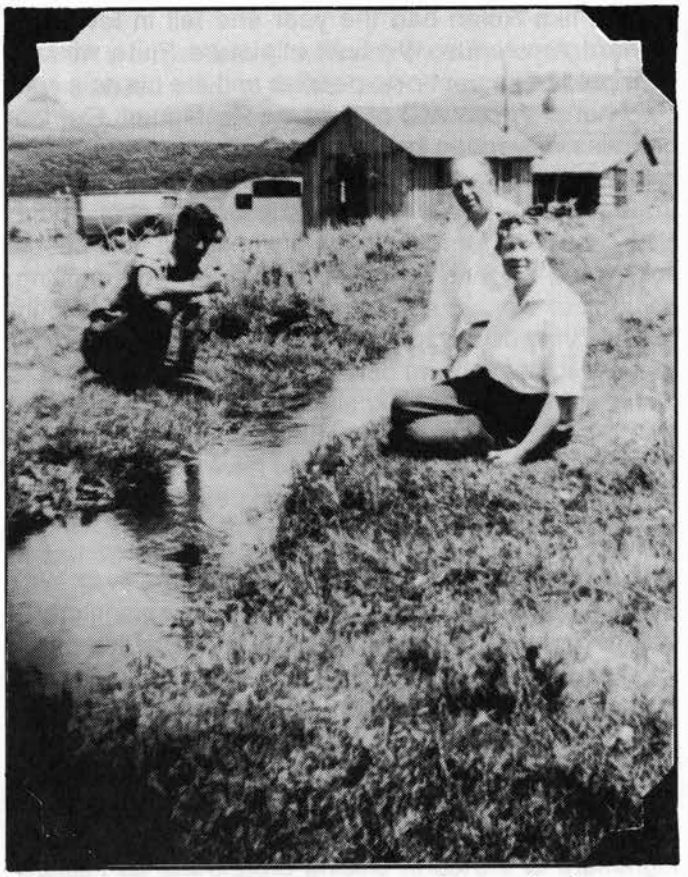


Bill James and the ones that didn't get away, Penney's Tavern, 1948

around Bodie which had only been a ghost town for about a decade. The history of the Eastern Sierras fascinated him as it had fascinated my grandfather before him.

In 1945, my father worked with a group of investors to open a boys' camp on the land Tommy Watterson had once promised to Walter Lyon as a legal fee, the pine woods between Lake Mamie and Horseshoe. Although Lyon had tried hard, the labyrinthine tangle of Watterson's homestead claims could never be successfully unraveled. The boys' camp was built in the woods off the new highway that ended at Horseshoe. My father helped build the bunkhouses and dining hall and in September 1945, two months before I was born, the last stones were set in place on the great fireplace and hearth in the dining hall. In the wet cement of the hearth my father and the men who had labored to build the camp wrote their names.

Like my mother, Mammoth to me was an integral part of my childhood. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' had been the legal fee my grandfather finally collected for his efforts on Tom Watterson's behalf and we went there nearly every summer. In those days, before air-conditioned cars, my grandmother and parents would load up the old Ford station wagon, the 1940's successor to the old Nash of 1932, and put my brother, Scott, and me to bed on a makeshift mattress in the back. We'd leave the house on North Irving at midnight to get across the Mojave before dawn. To my brother and me, leaving the city behind in darkness to drive across the vast, featureless desert beneath a sea of stars, was like taking ship for a long voyage to another land -- a land full of infinite prospects and infinite mysteries. At dawn we would arrive in Bishop and while my father filled up the gas tank, my brother and I would peer through the plate glass windows of Bishop's shops, eager and excited by being up and about while the rest of the world was still asleep in bed. Uncle Tommy's hardware store was gone and someone else lived in the one-story wooden house but only my mother and my grandmother noticed. Those times -- in the darkness of the desert and in the brilliant dawns of Bishop -- belonged to Scott and me, crossing the frontier as Uncle Tommy had so long ago, but our wagon was a station wagon. Sometimes the snows were late and the road to the cabin was buried in drifts until late in June. We'd have to leave the car then well down the road and hike into the cabin. But always the excitement of the cold, pine-filled air and lapping lakes welcomed us back and my grandmother would pull out a stack of orange plates and her iron skillet and start chopping onions and potatoes. We had all summer to look forward to and my father's visits on long weekends from the city. We went to Whitmore Tubs and swam with plastic innertubes -- yellow and blue for Scott and yellow and red for me. We walked to Horseshoe as my mother had done that dreamy summer of 1943 when Air Force lieutenants spun round and round in her head like sugarplums, and we rode horses from Mammoth Pack



Bess and Walter Lyon at Jim Watterson's place, Hot Creek, 1946

Building the Sierra Boys' Camp, summer 1945, Bill James in the back.

Station like Helen had the year she fell in love with Howard Arcularius. We built miniature Piute wikiups from piles of fragrant pine needles and ate pie as a special treat at the counter of Wildyrie Restaurant. Our icebox was a wooden box built onto the outside of the cabin and covered with wet burlap which the wind blew through. I would put my hand up on the cool, rough cloth, checking for moisture and wondering how people in covered wagons kept their ice cream from melting. My mother worried about us tumbling down the mountainside that fell precipitously away from below the cabin to the distant sparkling dots of Twin Lakes. When I was just learning how to walk, she used to tie me to a pine tree by a length of stout rope around my waist so I wouldn't toddle into disaster. I still have a photograph of myself, attached to the pine pointing excitedly to something just beyond the camera lens.

Summers came and went and ended abruptly in 1957 with the death of my father and brother in a plane crash. The cabin needed a new roof, a new foundation and a lot of work. We had to let go -- of it and of the memories that inhabited it. But when I think about that time I remember a day that my father took us down into the earthquake fault and told us graphic stories of the forces that had split the earth apart. That night in the Murphy bed with Scott sound asleep beside me, I had a terrible nightmare of the earth closing around me as I scrambled unsuccessfully to escape from the steep-sided fault. I woke up trembling. Through the chinks in the wall I could see firelight from the great fireplace in the living room flickering on the pine log ceiling. My parents' voices murmured reassuringly from beyond the wall and my grandmother's chuckle was comforting as a lullaby. I could hear the wind stirring in the pines as my brother stirred in his sleep under the heavy Indian blankets that were my grandfather's pride and joy. Somewhere that night beneath a changing moon, the snow still gleamed in the folds of the hills and the stars spattered the sky like a painter's dropcloth. Old Mammoth was gone except for a few tumbled-down logs inhabited only by an occasional prowling mountain lion and gone too was Jim Watterson's cabin by Hot Creek and the fly casters that he had charged and cursed at the same time. The miners and explorers and fortune hunters had vanished from the mountains but they had left some mark of themselves behind in the tumbled mine tailings and slubs of melted glass that the winter snows panned every year from piles of crushed gravel beneath the pine trees. And there were still wildflowers and cool air and the shimmering mystery of the lakes, just as my mother remembered them from that long ago summer of 1932. And today in the pine trees down by Horseshoe Lake in the crumbling cement of an old fireplace which stands now alone among the trees, my father's name is still visible where he once wrote it, left like a signature on the ever-changing face of time. ❋

Lyon cabin party: Walter, Barbara, and Bess on step; Marion Evans and Margaret Glassel on porch, 1939

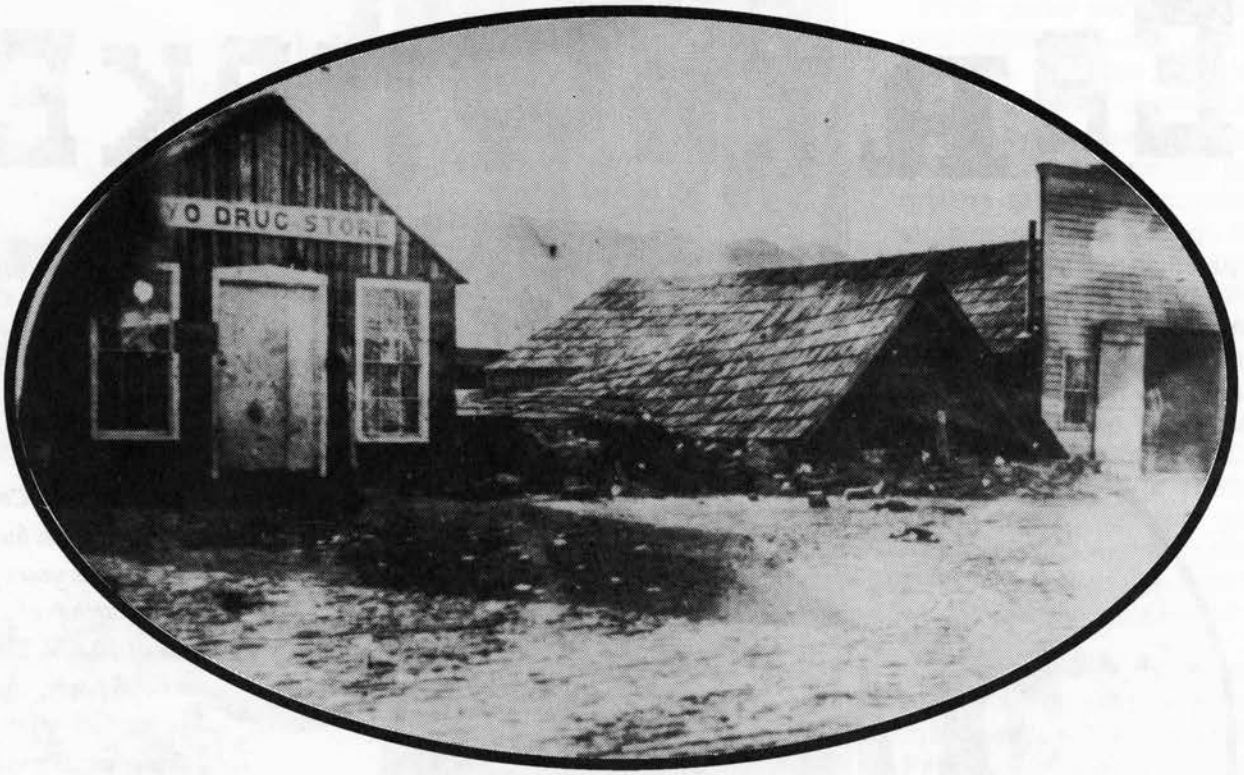
EARTHQUAKE

by George Garrigues

First Inyo County Courthouse, built in 1869, three years prior to the earthquake, at a cost of $9,832. During the earthquake, the second story fell. The lower walls were left standing, but badly damaged. The salvage value of the remains was $120. Laws RR Museum photo.

"It was like this," depending on where you were in the Owens Valley and what you were doing during the early morning hours of March 26, 1872: first person accounts of the greatest earthquake in the United States since the West was explored by white men.

At Camp Independence it was a calm, balmy evening with a hint of spring in the air. Soldiers lingered around their campfires long after taps and lights were sounded, most deep in reverie, busy with their own thoughts. Orion followed the moon across the sky and eventually, the soldiers wandered into their barracks. Most were asleep when the quake hit about 2:30 a.m. Sentries tried to stand, but were thrown to the ground. Men poured from the barracks; officers and wives ran from their quarters; children began to cry. The original shock lasted three minutes. No one was able to go back to sleep that night.



Remains of Inyo Drugstore operated by Dr. P. G. Gerieich. The end of the building used as a pharmacy fell, destroying most of the medical supplies. Garrigues Collection.

Rockwell Loomis was buried within the Loomis Brothers demolished store. A fire started near some powder kegs. William Covington, in the midst of the shaking and falling bricks, moved the kegs and dug until he found Loomis, who survived, but lost an ear and a large portion of his scalp.

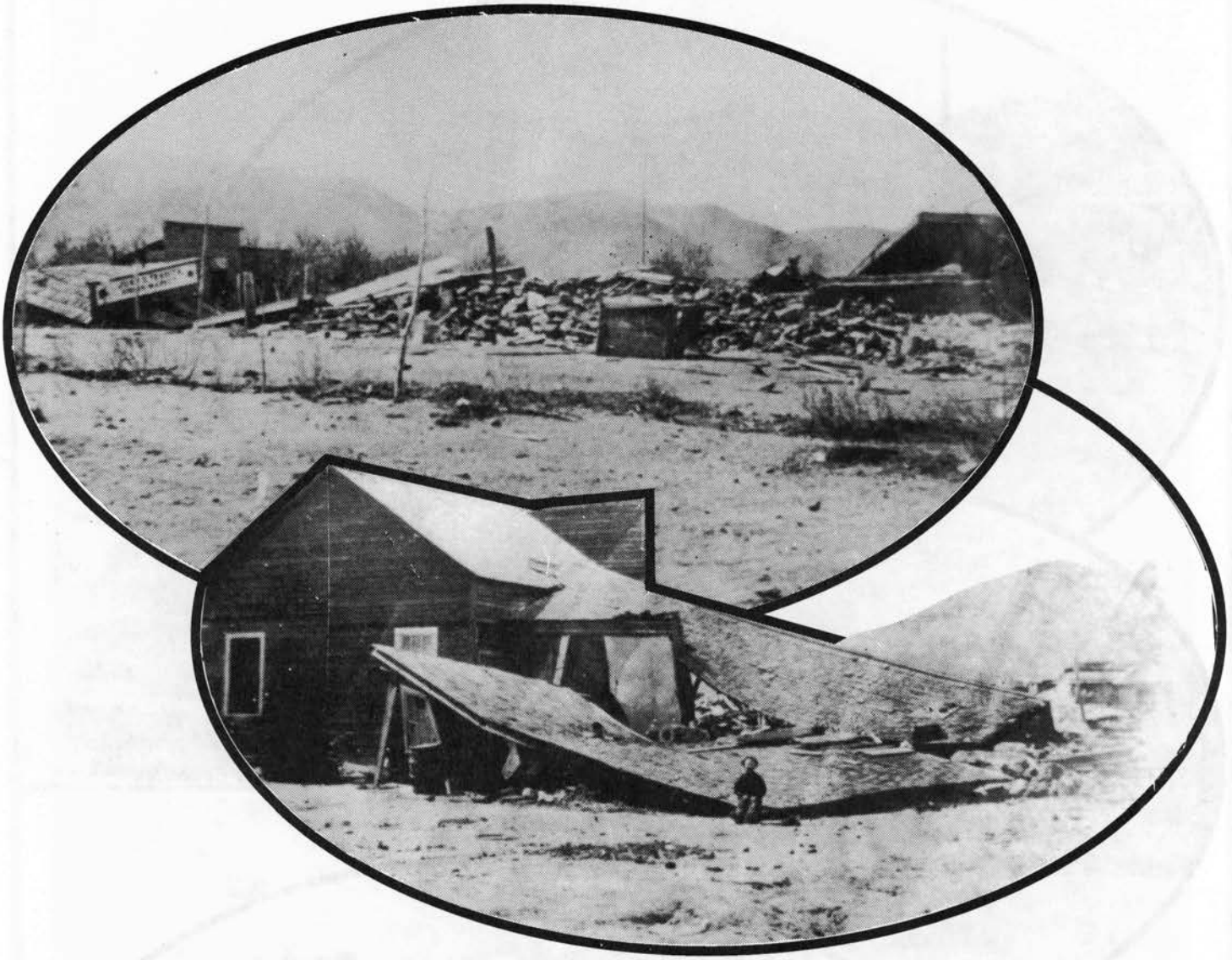
B.L. Brown was writing at a high-desk in the Pioneer Stable using light from a tall kerosene lamp, a "comet" burner. The lamp's chimney was thrown straight up and came down on the desk still in an upright position. The lamp base slid to the edge of the desk and tipped, spreading burning oil onto the floor. Brown ran from the building to the street for safety, but returned to stamp out the flames.

P.A. Chalfant used his personal experience to give an account of the awful terror. "A great unknown and unmeasurable power beneath began to rumble and roar, to heave and toss." It probably continued for some time before he awakened to the cries of his terrified wife. With a feeling of indescribable terror he reached the floor, reeling and staggering like a drunken man. He sought vainly to grasp a sleeping child from its nearby crib. As he staggered toward it, the crib rolled away and then returned with a shock that sent Chalfant against the bed. By unknown means, he got the child in his arms and started for the kitchen. At that moment he heard a loud crash from directly overhead in the printing office on the second story. The 2,000 pound presses seemed to be breaking through the floor. he hastily unlocked the kitchen door and threw the child to the heaving ground. Returning, he met his wife as she stumbled out with the other sleeping babe. Amid the falling plaster and crashing crockery, all escaped without a scratch.

In the *Inyo Independent* office, forms and standing matter were moved nearly a quarter of a circle in a clockwise and southerly direction. The Gordon press was turned partially around on the floor. The clocks in the office stopped instantly except for two that had refused to run for weeks. They started at once and continued for several hours afterwards. Racks of type-cases were thrown over and material of all sorts and sizes was mixed in a heterogeneous mass.

Emma Louise Duval was four years old and recalls that everyone was very frightened. They lived at Duval Springs northwest of Cerro Gordo. She thought that the earth would never stop trembling. Her older sister took her and her little brother into their mother's room, then ran into the yard to see if there was any danger from rocks rolling onto the house. The dog howled and the poultry squawked. For several days, they could place their ears to the ground and hear the constant rumbling.

Some men were building a boat on the Owens River east of Lone Pine. The first shock was so severe that fish were thrown out of the water and onto the bank. The men, not hesitating, picked them up and ate them for breakfast. According to Josiah Whitney, "A novel method of utilizing an earthquake."



Structures damaged by earthquake; Juan Q. Ybeseta's Union Market above. Garrigues Collection

Two men had stopped at a farm house several miles from Lone Pine. When the house collapsed from the shaking, one was thrown out through a window. The other was trapped by falling timbers. Some men from town were able to rescue him later, but his friend thought he was dead, and ran into town so scared that he started for Los Angeles on foot at daybreak, without even waiting to wash his face or change clothes. His face and hands were extremely scratched and stained with blood and his clothes were badly torn.

One person who was awakened from a sound sleep said there was such motion that the moon appeared to swing back and forth like a trainman's lantern. The roar was terrifying.

Eva Lee Shepherd, nine years old, had sneaked out of her home six miles south of Independence to spend the night with the two Rogers girls on a ranch about a mile away. She and her friends were sound asleep in a sod room. The night was frosty and they had pulled the covers over their heads to ward off the chill. The house collapsed right on top of them in the initial shock.

"My first memory," she wrote," was a sensation of being smothered. Then someone seemed to be walking right over us. As a matter of fact, someone was; a Paiute Indian that worked for Mr. Rogers was searching the piles of debris for bodies he knew must be somewhere underneath. He fished us out, sobbing and gasping for air, but saved from the slightest bruise by the thick quilts."

She continued, "No words can express the terror I went through in the next few minutes. Under our feet the rubble was rolling and shaking while those sod walls were still crumbling and crashing around us . . . loose chunks of sod heaved and shook like Mexican jumping beans . . . I thought the end of the world had come . . . that I was being punished for running away from home."

Structures damaged by earthquake, Garrigues Collection

Shivering outside in the night air, she heard one of the men say, "Oh, look at the moon. It seems to be ten miles long."

"Have you ever," she replied, "seen a boy at a campfire pick up a brand and wave it to and fro? Well, that was just the effect we got from this lunar display except that we were moving back and forth with the ground, the moon was standing still."

Mr. Chaquette lived in an adobe house near the fort. He was sleeping in a bed adjacent to the bed of his wife and three small children. He jumped out of his bed just before the building fell. A two by four rafter crashed across his empty bed. The other bed was crushed to the floor, killing the cat underneath, but no one else was injured.

Two gents living near the fort, neither of them exceptionally bright, were seized with mortal fright. The younger, remembering his Sunday School training, began to say the Lord's Prayer with great earnestness. The other repeated the words as fast as he could, but fell behind. He finally shouted, "D you, Lafe, don't go so fast. I can't keep up with you."

At P. Reddy's law office all the books and fixtures against the north wall of the room were thrown down. Not a book was displaced from the south wall in the same room. In the adjoining room to the west, the order was exactly reversed. Nothing was disturbed on the north wall while everything was knocked down on the south wall.

D.E. Hunter was asleep in a small frame building on the bank of a creek near the fort. He reached the door just in time to see the ground open a full eighteen inches under one corner of his house. He had to jump across the opening to escape.

At Little Lake, H.W. Robinson, a stage man, was fast asleep in a small room on the second story of the station house. When the quake hit, his first impression was that his team was running away with the stage. He sang out, "Whoa! Whoa!" lustily and as he tried to catch the lines, he fell out of bed. His second impression convinced him that something else was wrong and to "get out of there."

Two teamsters were camped at Little Lake with their mules tied to their wagons as usual. one teamster jumped up, threw on the brake and commenced to swear loudly at the mules. He thought they were responsible for the trouble. He stopped when the other teamster said, "You d fool, 'taint the mules; it's an earthquake."

T. Goodale's moderately substantial barn near Fish Springs had its north and south walls thrown out. Seven horses escaped when the structure fell. Goodale and others were sleeping in the box granary and were tossed about so roughly that they could not gain their feet. The adobe house fell quickly, burying Mrs. Goodale and her aged mother, severely injuring the latter. Horses and cattle acted with the greatest consternation.

A small girl a few miles north of Independence said, "It rocks so nice, mother, now we can to sleep."

At Big Pine, dangerous fissures opened in the ground. An ox standing in a corral died, probably from noxious fumes, according to the *Inyo Independent.* A horse met a similar fate a mile to the north. Professor Josiah Whitney, in his report, disagreed with the cause, stating that the death of these animals was probably from fear or over exertion caused by fright and the desire to escape.

Alney and Libby McGee had attended a dance in Round Valley and were on their way back to their home in Pleasant Valley. Their horses were thrown together and then apart several times. When they reached the top of the last sand hill, they realized what was happening. Pandemonium reigned; horses were running and neighing in the fields; cattle were bellowing, dogs barking, chickens cackling. When they reached their home, Alney's father was on his knees outside the house, praying.

B.H. Yaney, his wife and children had attended the same dance. They had placed the trundle bed for their daughters, Annie and Elma, next to the fireplace for added warmth. Returning from the dance they discovered that the earthquake had knocked the fireplace down with large rocks falling on top of the empty bed. Had the girls been in bed, it would have been tragic.

A young gentleman at Bishop Creek was "setting up" with his inamorata at the hour of 2:30 a.m. The young lady, in the line of duty, fainted away. Our Adonis held her in his arms until she recovered which required many minutes. The next day he was heard to say, "I will give $20 a shot for earthquakes when setting up with an offish gal."

Farther away, in Marysville, two billiard players had an altercation when the earthquake moved some of the balls and provided some help to one of them.

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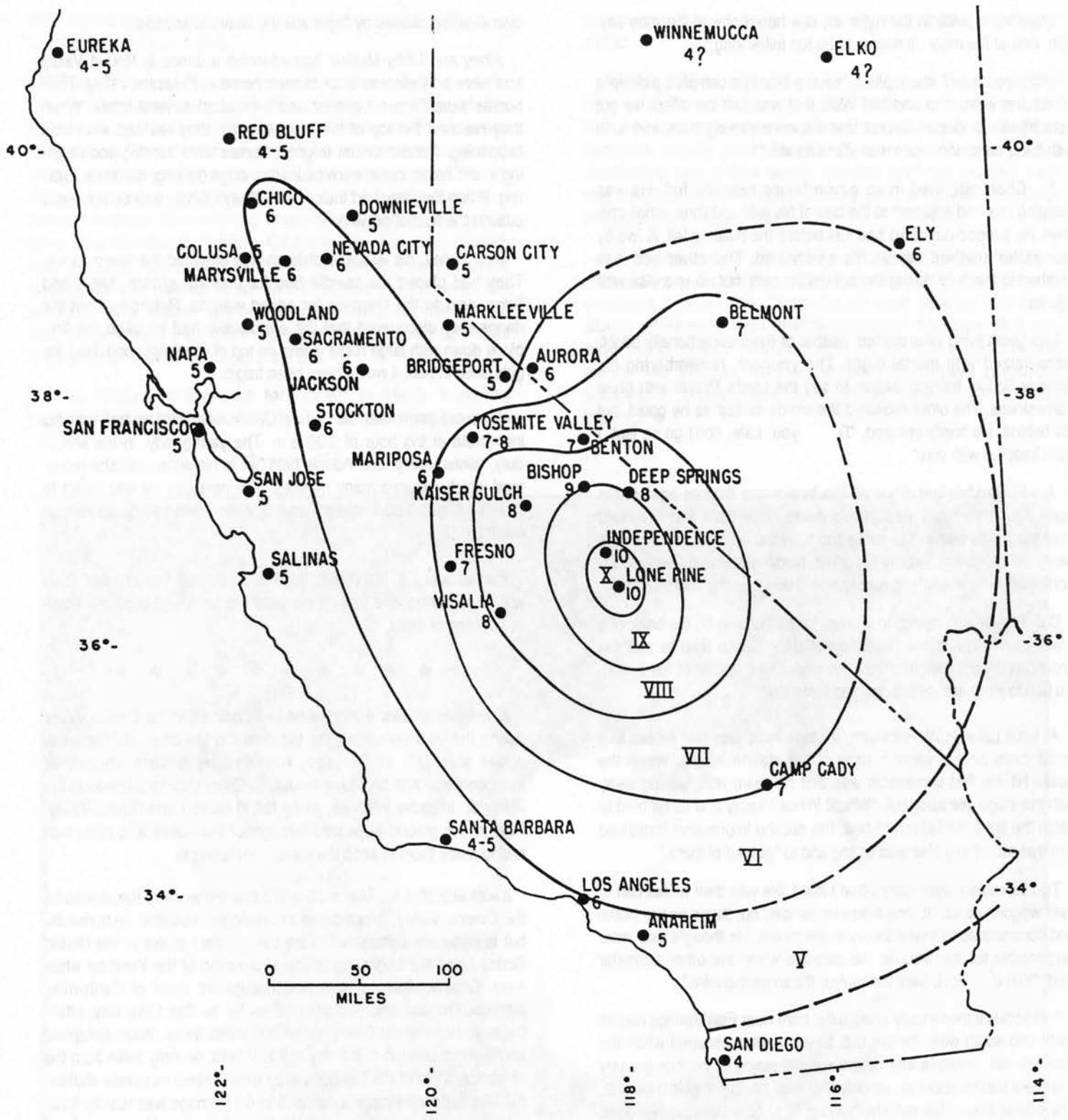
A series of smaller earthquakes had occurred in the Owens Valley during the year preceding the big one. On March 6, 1871 a weak shock was felt at Cartago, followed by severe shocks at Independence and Swansea on July 5. Other shocks followed in the valley at irregular intervals, many felt in Bishop and Round Valley. Rifts in the ground appeared throughout the valley and cattlemen had to fence them to keep the cattle from falling in.

It was at 2:30 a.m., March 26, 1872 that the worst of the shocks hit the Owens Valley. It pre-dated seismologic recording instruments, but is generally considered to be the greatest quake in the United States since the beginning of the exploration of the West by white men. Ground shaking was felt throughout most of California, Nevada, Oregon, and Arizona and as far as Salt Lake City, Utah. Damage occurred in Chico, some 300 miles away. Walls collapsed and fissures opened in the clay soil at Visalia, seventy miles from the epicenter. Most of the Central Valley experienced moderate shaking (Richter estimated magnitudes of 5 to 6.) Damage was usually limited to cracking and occasional falling of plaster. Most people in Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento, Yuba City and many other valley towns were awakened. Most people were frightened and ran outside. Coastal communities from San Diego to Eureka experienced estimated magnitudes of 4 to 6. In Los Angeles some people were thrown from their beds and most ran into the streets.

Records from Camp Independence indicate that between the time of the first big shock at 2:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. the same day, 200 tremors were felt. They continued for months, but no attempt was made to record the number.



Isoseismal map of Owens Valley earthquake in 1872. Towns identified are those from which newspaper accounts were received. All intensities are on Modified Mercalli Intensity scale, not the Richter Intensity scale. Arabic numerals give intensities at specific localities. Roman numerals give zonal intensities. (Califonria Geology, March 1972). If you are interested in additional technical details, good information is available from the California Division of Mines and Geology Library in Sacramento. The Eastern California Museum in Independence also has supplemental information..

Seismographs were not introduced until 1887, fifteen years later, and various methods have been used to estimate the intensity of quakes prior to that time. One of these is, basically, to determine the furthest point that the earthquake was perceived or felt. In this case, the point was Salt Lake City indicating the quake was felt over an approximate 640,000 square mile area, calculating to a Richter magnitude of about 8.

A more reliable method is complicated. It compares the average epicentral distance to a given isoseismal line for the 1872 quake with a quake of known magnitude. Comparison with the Rainbow Mountain, Nevada quakes of 1954 indicates a magnitude of 8.3 for the Owens Valley quake. Using the Alaskan "Good Friday" quake of 1964 gives a magnitude of 8.0. The 1906 San Francisco quake is commonly assigned a magnitude of 8.25. Comparison of its isoseismal radii with those of the 1812 quake indicates that the 1872 quake was the stronger of the two. Geologists have considered this and more to reach the conclusion that the magnitude of the 1872 Owens Valley quake was not less than 8.25.

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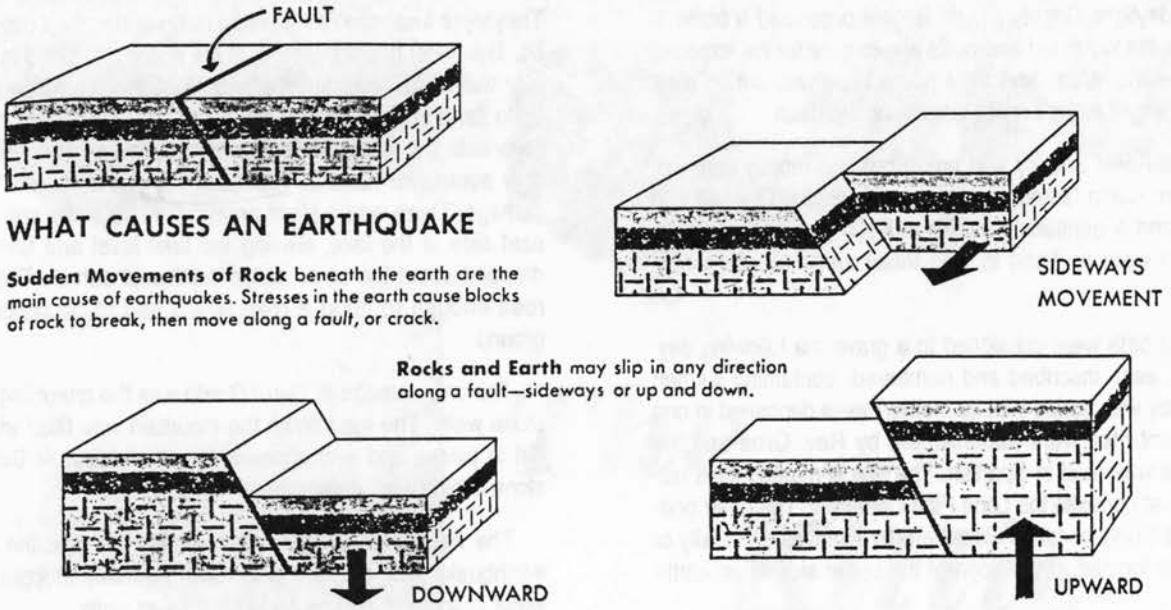

WHAT CAUSES AN EARTHQUAKE

Sudden Movements of Rock beneath the earth are the main cause of earthquakes. Stresses in the earth cause blocks of rock to break, then move along a *fault*, or crack.

Rocks and Earth may slip in any direction along a fault—sideways or up and down.

Damage throughout the Owens Valley was extensive. The number of deaths is uncertain from the historic record, but twenty-seven is the generally accepted figure. At least fifty people were injured in Lone Pine. Most of the personal damage was due to the character of the buildings. The population of Lone Pine was estimated at 250-300, primarily Mexican. They had brought with them the practice of building adobe and stone houses, usually without any kind of mortar. Lumber was scarce and expensive. Fifty-two of the fifty-nine structures in town were thus composed and toppled like children's blocks, burying their occupants. The destruction was estimated at $237,000 in Inyo County with $132,000 occurring in Lone Pine. Loss at Camp Independence was estimated at $26,500, all in 1872 dollars.

At Independence, the upper story of the brick courthouse fell to the south. The lower walls were left standing, but crushed and cracked to the foundation. County Clerk Hammarstrand and Undersheriff Moore were sleeping in their offices on the first floor and could not get out until after the crash. Hammarstrand received severe cuts on his head and Moore escaped with a few minor scratches.

The store of Harris and Rhine, constructed from brick and concrete, dissolved into a mass of ruins, burying a large amount of merchandise. County Treasurer Isaacs and Mr. Brown, a clerk at the store, occupied a wooden building at the rear of the store. They escaped through a window just as the store wall crashed and buried their room.

The walls of the adobe dining room in the Exchange Hotel collapsed although the timbers remained, holding up the roof. No one was injured. The shelving and adobe lining of Rothschild & Co. fell across the counter and showcases, smashing all that could be broken.

Judge Hanson's house, a strong frame structure that was adobe lined and hard finished, was nearly ruined. It was moved from its foundation and the chimney sank two inches. The family escaped without injury. All the other adobe lined buildings were cracked and wrenched enough to render them uninhabitable, including P. Reddy's luxurious home north of town. All the merchandise in both John Lentell's and J.D. Blair's drugstores, wooden buildings, was thrown down and almost totally destroyed.

The east and west ends of the new Masonic Temple building were badly cracked and shattered. The entire building was thrown out of square.

The large and strongly built brewery of Munzinger & Lubken fell partially, but all escaped without injury except Munzinger's little baby, who was crushed by falling debris. Two well known women of the town, Lucy and Antonia, occupying different houses, were crushed to death in their beds.

Col. Whipple was asleep in the second story of his residence when the quake came. He felt escape was impossible and, thinking

of his absent family, exclaimed, "This is death!" The building went down carrying him with it. He extricated himself, though nearly suffocated, and found only a few minor scratches. Mr. Austin was not so fortunate. His arm and three ribs were broken.

One end of Dr. Geleich's building, used as a drugstore, fell. The doctor, his wife, and baby escaped as the side walls and roof collapsed. He was slightly injured by the falling debris. He heard cries for help from across the street and responded just as an after-shock hit. It knocked him to the ground, injuring him enough to cause him to spit blood. It was difficult for him to answer the numerous calls of the wounded, but he never ceased in his endeavors even though his stock of drugs and all was a total loss.

Soon after daylight, Deputy Sheriff Begole organized a committee to look after the wounded and dead and to care for the exposed property in the ruins. A day and night police force was put on duty. One man was caught in the act of trying to rob the dead.

A Lone Pine Relief Society was organized and money contributions came from Cerro Gordo, Swansea and Visalia. Over $2,200 was received and a gentleman's offer of $100 was turned down. Sufficient funds were on hand to help those very few who would accept help.

All of foreign birth were consigned to a grave the following day. Fifteen coffins, each inscribed and numbered, containing sixteen bodies (one baby was buried with its mother) were deposited in one grave. Protestant rites were administered by Rev. Orne and the Catholic service was read in Spanish. The site is marked by a historical marker just opposite the Lone Pine Cemetery. The other bodies were buried singly or taken elsewhere by relatives. Ironically or not, the grave is located at the edge of the upper side of an earthquake scarp.

Drs. Geleich, Columber, Lesesne, and Messrs. Grannice, Begole and others were assiduous in their care of the wounded. Many were laid on the bar room floor in the Orleans Hotel or the Lone Pine Hotel.

Interestingly, a portion of the wall of the General Store in Lone Pine survived and has been preserved. It is protected by a chain link fence and tin roof. It can be seen behind the La Florista Shop on North Main Street in Lone Pine.

At the Eclipse Mill, Superintendent Henry Tregella's house collapsed. When terrified employees found him, his arms were tightly wrapped around his wife. Both were buried in the debris, she badly injured and nearly suffocated;he was dead. Every building, except the frame mill, was destroyed. Miraculously, no one else was injured at either the mill or mine.

At Camp Independence, the surgeon's house, the first sergeant's house, guardhouse, mess hall, cookhouse, storehouse, blacksmith's shop, and laundresses quarters were entirely destroyed. The barracks, commissary, hospital, and balance of officers quarters were so shattered as to be untenable and unsafe. Most were constructed from adobe bricks.

South of Lone Pine, most buildings were adobe and were all destroyed. The bridge across the Owens River was a total wreck. It was heaved up, down, sideways and endways until the planks were torn from the timbers and the timbers from the lower framework. It lay flat to the ground, sideways, in such a shape as to passable only by foot traffic.

At Big Pine the shock was severe; somewhat less so at Bishop Creek. There were some buildings down in both locations, but no injuries were reported. Aurora and Benton reported some cracks in the brick buildings.

At Swansea, near Keeler, buildings were leveled, but no lives were lost. The main smoke stack and the galmadores of Brady's furnace were knocked down. The earth opened and rose about two feet. The residents reported a striking tidal wave on Owens Lake. They were awakened by a fearful noise and rushed out of their houses. The water had receded from the shore and stood in a perpendicular wall lengthwise ion the middle of the lake. The land there is quite flat and they were afraid of being swept away when the wave reversed. The wave, when it returned several minutes later, swept only about two hundred feet past the shoreline and caused little damage. There was a slight permanent rise in the soil on the northeast side of the lake, leaving the lake level and lower. The land dropped about the same at the northwest corner. The water there rose enough to flood a road which had to be rebuilt on higher ground.

The only damage at Cerro Gordo was the crumbling of a few dry stone walls. The road down the mountain was filled with rocks and dirt in places and was impassable for vehicles. At Belmont, a few stone cabins were demolished.

The *Pacific Coast Readagram* mentioned that the Inyo County earthquake was credited with having entirely stopped the flow of water in some of the Los Angeles artesian wells.

Newspaper accounts of the earthquake brought Inyo County world-wide notoriety. Some reporters, especially from San Francisco, greatly exaggerated details causing considerable disgust among those familiar with the situation. Chalfant was particularly verbose in attacking the erroneous statements.

Under the headline "Occupation Gone," the *Inyo Independent* reported that it takes years to effect a radical change in prevalent architectural styles, but the 'dobe style in this area was an exception. In less than forty seconds there was a complete revolution in architecture and the 'dobe maker's occupation was gone.

For all of the day following the shocks, what appeared as a dense fog, smoke or more probably dust hung over the valley. Hard aftershocks continued for more than two months. Professor Josiah Whitney, California State Geologist, inspected and reported on the quake shortly after it happened. He wrote, "at Lone Pine we found ourselves in the midst of ruin and disaster – giving a vivid idea, even after the lapse of two months, of the distressing scenes through which the inhabitants had passed."

Nevertheless, the April 13, 1872 *Inyo Independent* reported Lone Pine businessmen were busy getting into new quarters. Loomis Brothers placed a portion of their stock in a temporary shed constructed from materials on hand. The roof of their old building had been raised and new sides were being constructed. C & M Cohn had

relocated and was ready for business. H.N. Stratton was using a portion of Brigg's Saloon. V. Hoff reestablished himself in a wooden house on the site of his former adobe structure. The following week, the paper reported that all of the Lone Pine wounded were slowly recovering under the care of Drs. Geleich and Columber. Especially noted was the fact that Rockwell Loomis was out and around with a festive new hat.

Rebuilding the camp facilities at Independence was uncertain. Local merchants depended on the soldiers for a portion of their income. Some stated they could not afford to rebuild unless the camp was rebuilt also. Major Egbert, Commander of the camp, believed it should be rebuilt. After some politicking, Congress appropriated $30,000 for the project, in July. This gave the people of Independence a feeling of permanency and a building boom erupted. No one bid on the camp project at $35,000 nor again when it was raised to $40,000. The men and officers of the camp then offered to build it under the supervision of qualified builders. Construction proceeded rapidly and plans were made to celebrate with a Thanksgiving ball in the new barracks building.

In 1875, General George S. Evans, who had directed the establishment of the original camp, returned for a visit, expecting to find the adobe structures that he had constructed. He was hardly prepared for the New England type camp with gleaming white buildings and two story houses.

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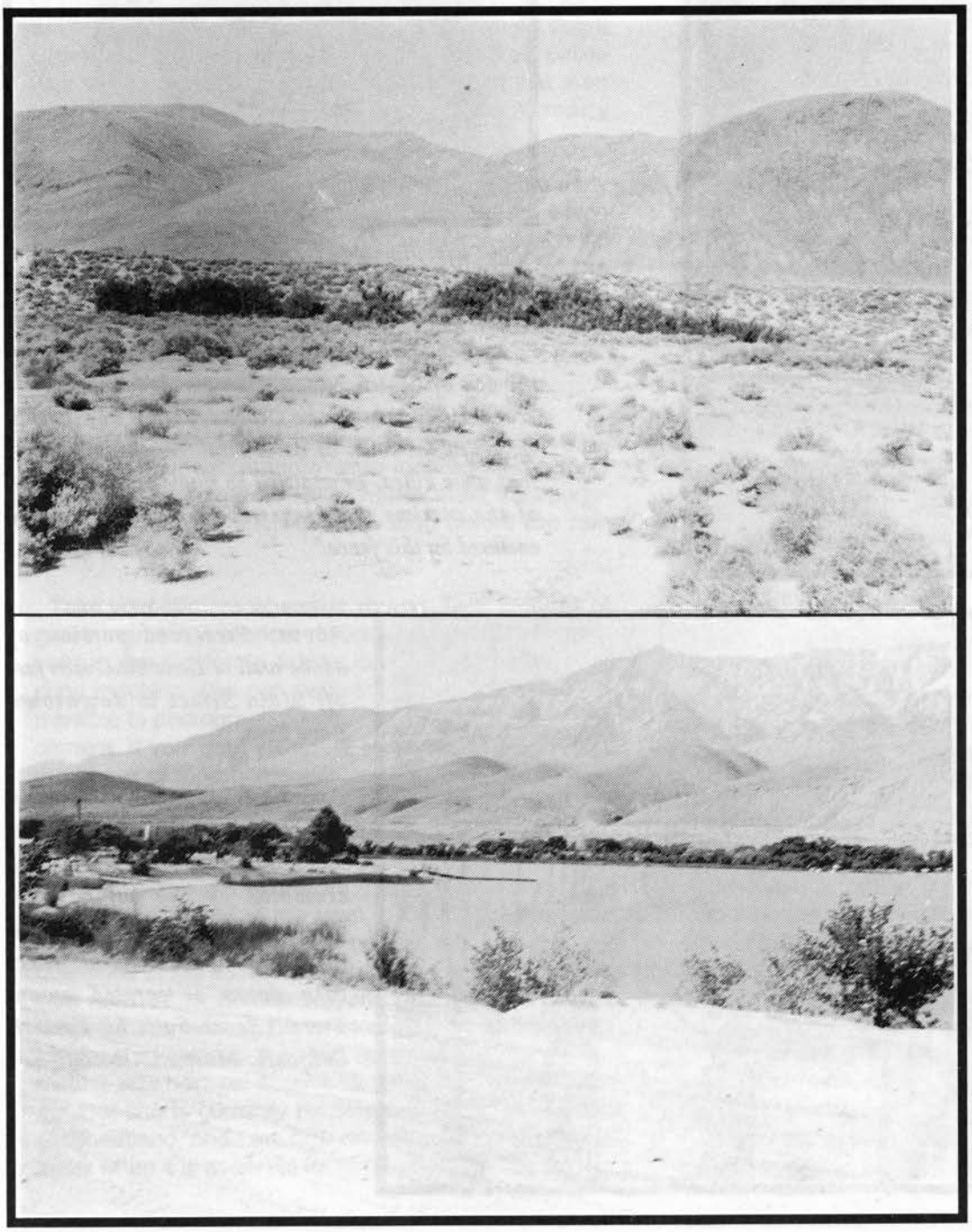


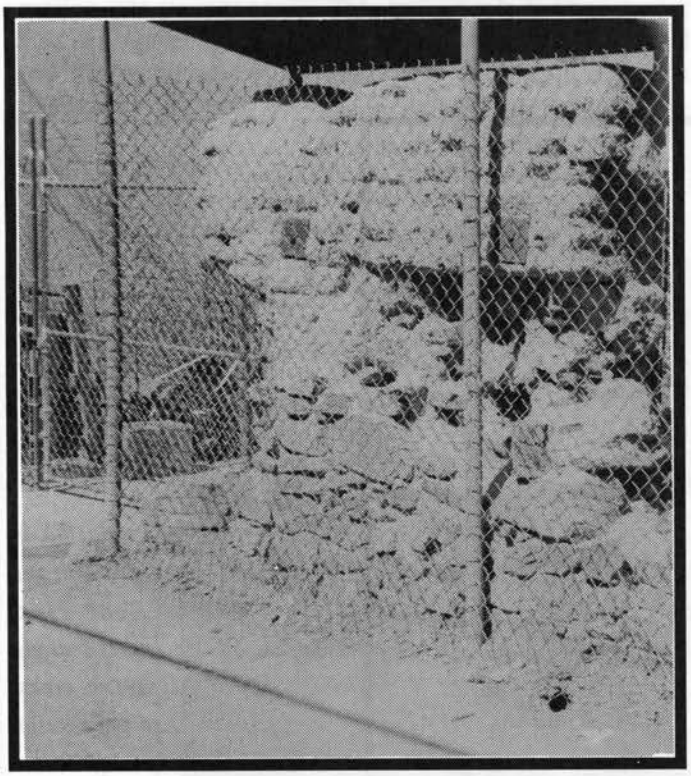
}scarp

Scarp (a sharp variation in elevation) seen from Hwy. 395 north of Lone Pine. Springs were created along the fault, allowing trees, grass and other vegetation to grow where dry, desert plants had grown.

Diaz Lake scarp dammed water from new springs, creating the lake.

}west scarp

}top of east scarp, now a road



Above left: Highway marker

Above right: "Grave of 1872 earthquake victims, Historical Marker Number 507, Disaster in 1872. On the day of March 26, 1872 an earthquake of major proportions struck the Owens Valley and nearly destroyed the town of Lone Pine. Twenty-seven persons were killed. In addition to single burials, sixteen of the victims were interred in a common grave enclosed by this fence."

Above: Preserved portion of adobe wall in Lone Pine, seen just off Main Street in downtown Lone Pine.

Common grave of 16 men, women, and children with unknown relatives, killed when their homes crumbled in the earthquake. Original picket fence was replaced in the 1920s by a metal fence, torn down or carried away. Present fence built by Easterh Californria Museum Association.

Among the topographical effects of the disturbances, Whitney lists: fissures in the soil or rocks; alterations of the ground level in different parts of the valley, either temporary or permanent; changes in watercourses; accumulations of water where not known before; all proving that the shock left a permanent record of its passage.

Evidence of some of these is obvious today. Portions of scarps stand out in many areas and are especially visible west of the highway between Alabama Gates and Lone Pine. Many of these scarps are fifteen to thirty feet high. The slippage created many new springs along the fault. When layers of earth that carried subterranean water moved in opposite directions, impervious strata blocked the flow of underground water. With its former course blocked, the water rose to the surface along the fault creating numerous new springs. Some of these can be seen today where trees and green bushes grow beneath the scarp. At one location just north of Lone Pine, the area is quite marshy, tules and meadow grass growing among the trees.

Whitney also reported that, at the edge of the alluvial fans in the valley, the geological effects were most distinctly marked. From Haiwee to Big Pine he found frequent cracks in the earth, areas of sunken ground, depressions partly filled with water (sumps), and areas where the surface soil had moved either in a vertical or horizontal direction. In all cases the soil disturbance was the same. Narrow belts were depressed between fissures running parallel to the Sierras and chiefly limited to the edge of the sage brush slope.

In the Lone Pine area, the Owens River ran dry for several hours after the shock. The many fissures opened up the valley had "greedily" absorbed the water from the river.

Another result of the quake was the creation of Diaz Lake. There are two visible scarps in the area; one a short distance west of the lake and the other at the eastern edge of the lake. The block of land in the middle sank and the land west and east of the lake was pushed upward. This created a low spot that filled with water from a small stream out of the Sierras dammed by the eastern scarp, and by small springs opened by the western scarp.

There were several places in the valley where fissures had crossed roads, ditches, and fences. These showed evidence of both horizontal and vertical ground movement. A road east of Independence was cut by a twelve foot fissure and the western portion moved eighteen feet to the south. Other instances of similar movement occurred near Big Pine and Lone Pine.

The noise from the crash of masses of rock falling or rolling down the mountain side was impressive. North of Bishop, at the edge of the tufa plateau, a block of rock estimated at two hundred cubic yards rolled down and broke in two. There were stories of fires being seen with the descending debris. Whitney believes that they were caused by friction between the various falling pieces.

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What really happened? Authorities seem to agree that there was both lateral and vertical movement throughout the valley. In lateral movement, a portion of the earth moves south while an adjoining portion moves north or vice versa. In vertical displacement a block of earth moves up and an adjacent block remains at the same level or drops. The pattern for the 1872 earthquake is not uniform, but most of the faults lie parallel to the Sierras. There was some cross movement, especially between parallel faults. Lateral movement of as much as eight feet occurred in both directions. Vertical movements of up to thirty feet also occurred in a somewhat haphazard manner. A major contributing factor, according to Whitney, was that the soil at the lower edge of the sage brush flat (alluvial fan) was soft and springy, permeated by water from the mountain streams. The junction where it meets the soil of the valley floor is a fault area. It is here that the geological effects of the earthquake are most distinctly marked.

P.A. Chalfant, writing in the November 6, 1872 *Inyo Independent,* presents his personal theory as to the cause of earthquakes. It gives educated but unscientific thoughts on the question. He wrote "Since earthquake theories are likely to be the order of the day for some time to come . . . here present own crude ideas. The focus of action is not deep in the earth . . . but quite near the surface . . . this is proven from the limited space affected. If . . . deep under the earth's crust, within the molten mass . . . it would affect nearly half the world at the same moment . . . it is close to the surface because a small area is affected . . . forces . . . are simply combinations in proper proportions of certain gasses, acting by expansive force like steam. The earth, rocks and minerals near the surface constitute nature's laboratory where these gasses are generated. . . . They permeate every clod of earth, separating and expanding the particles . . . bodies of earth . . . suddenly are condensed or collapsed by consuming or expelling the gasses . . . and the sinking of the surface . . . is brought about.

". . . Saltpetre, charcoal and brimstone, each harmless, combined together form a compound still harmless without the addition of fire. The explosion consumes the whole, leaving a vacuum. Thus the gasses, hydrogen, carbonic, sulphurous, muriatic and other acids... ejected by volcanoes . . . occupy space in the earth. When properly combined, they explode and the earth settles to fill the vacuum only to rise again to its original position in a few years . . . when a new supply of gasses takes the place of the original gasses."

Knowledge did not exist in 1872 about the pressure of the Pacific plate pushing against the Continental plate resulting in the rise of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the fall of the Owens Valley. This is a continuing action and, when pressure becomes great enough, the earth gives, slipping and sliding, creating earthquakes. Geologists, at that time, did not attempt to explain why the earth moved. They only described and tried to detail the physical changes.

The big question remains: when or will another great earthquake occur in the Owens Valley? The most learned answer is, "Yes, another big one could happen." When, is the guess. The pattern suggests that a major earthquake occurs once every one hundred to two hundred years in the Owens Valley. It has now been one hundred, twenty years since the last one unless we consider the 1986 Chalfant Valley quake which measured 6.4. Perhaps you should draw your own conclusions, but remember that today there is much more knowledge about seismological movements. We have some ability to predict and we are constantly learning more. The next time we should be adequately warned.

Inyo Independent.

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Saturday,.....March 30, 1872.

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Between 2 and 3 o'clock Tuesday morning last (March 26), the inhabitants of this region experienced one of the most terror striking, awe inspiring sensations that ever falls to the lot of mortal man—an earthquake—an earthquake in all its mighty power! The solid earth was loosened from its very foundations, and heaved and tossed as if in the throes of a terrible agony. The Mighty Power beneath threw it up and down, hither and yon as a strong man might toss a helpless babe. No words of ours can begin to portray the terrors of that dread moment, nor the great horror that fell upon every living thing! It was a terrible scene when all were so rudely awakened from deep slumber to face death in its most terrifying form. Men whose cheeks would never blanche in ordinary dangers cried out in a very agony of terror, women screamed as they clasped their crying little ones, cattle lowed, horses broke from their fastenings and huddled together, dogs howled, chickens left their roosts and staggered about in the darkness in their wild efforts to escape a danger that came they knew not whence. Strong wooden houses bounded up and down and rolled to and fro like ships in a heavy seaway, crockery smashed and furniture danced about the floors, chimneys dropped instantly to the ground, stone and adobe houses crumbled and went to earth like piles of sand, burying the miserable occupants in the ruins, and the whole world was in its last convulsions! It would fill volumes to detail all the wonders of those few seconds of time—the wondrous phenomena of nature, the dire calamities, the personal experiences, miraculous escapes and interesting incidents.

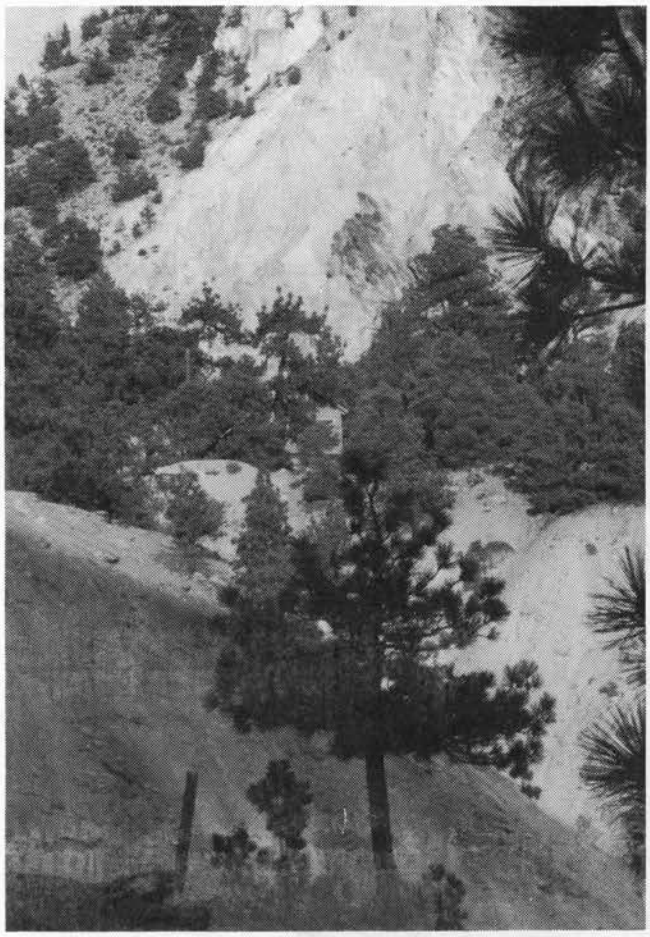
I have long admired Bill Chalfant's use of the English language and often wondered where he got his ability. I visualized him spending hours reading all sorts of books on every imaginable subject, possibly even the dictionary.

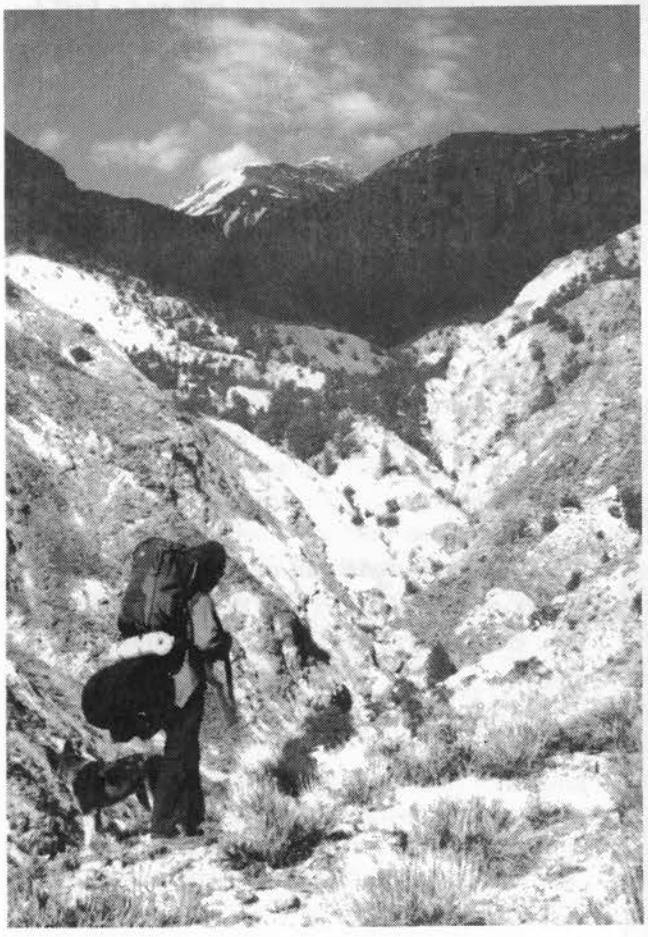
Researching this story, I read the newspaper accounts written by Bill's father, P.A. Chalfant. I realized that Bill was just a chip off the old block. His father demonstrated the same writing talent.

Newspaper reporting, as it was done in the old days, is a lost art. To me, this colorful writing is a thing of beauty. I miss it.

As an example, to the left, you will see the lead paragraph from Chalfant's earthquake story in the March 30, 1872 Inyo Independent. I hope you enjoy reading this fine writing as much as I do. ✱

G.L.G.





Sparks on the Mountain

by David A. Wright

"The quest for exploration has been a part of my psyche since my teenage years," explains David Wright. He heard of the Sparkplug Mine and the unique preservation of its skeletons from a lifelong friend and fellow explorer, Jim Sauter.

"It came as no surprise to me one morning in April of this year (1991) when Jim called with the idea to explore a remote site in Mono County called the Sparkplug Mine. I first heard him use that name years ago as we bumped and bounced over the sagebrush in search of an endless list of ghost towns, abandoned railroads, and wide open spaces free of dirty snow... and dull routine."

Jim and his two dogs had worked their way up the oftentimes narrow and scary footpath into the jagged canyon some years before, leaving this in the register: "I walked up today. It was a hard hike. Beautiful place. I hope somebody don't tear it down. Jim Sauter. Lady. Moosemutt. Crowley Lake." A poignant commentary on the greed that compels some people to make off with the remains of history on the land.

It seems appropriate to us that Bill and Louise Kelsey's article on the history of Sparkplug Mine should be followed by David Wright's photo essay on the area today. "I had over 125 photos to sort through, and it was like chopping off appendages to my body to pare them down to 63," wrote David. This may give a small indication of my feelings in paring the 63 down to 23. Oh, if only you could see the pictures we've had to leave out!

"The Sparkplug sparked with Jim and I feelings of enthusiasm to return, to cherish it like those few like Margy and Don, keeping it intact for others to experience," David wrote.

-Jane Fisher, Editor

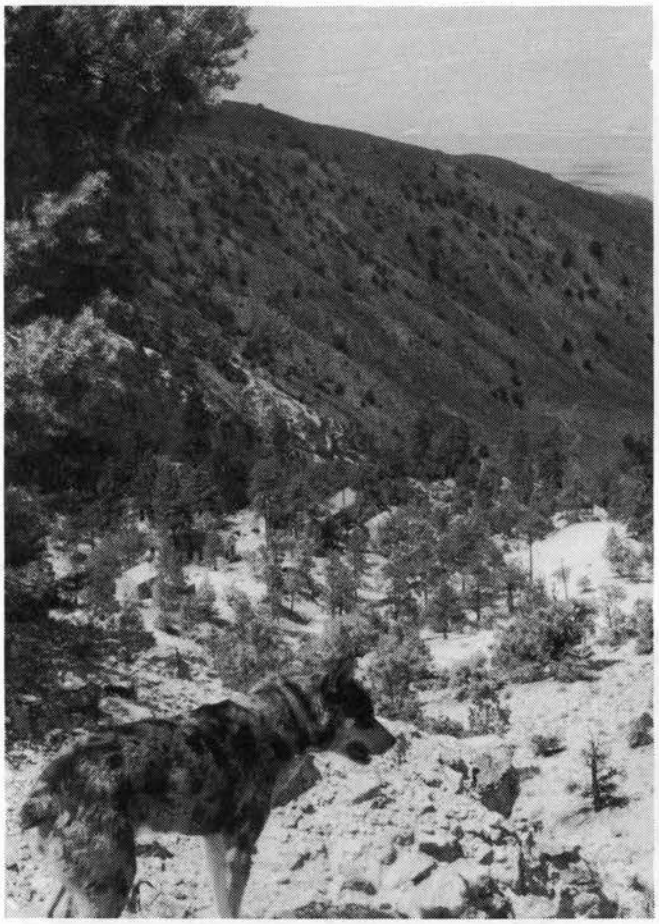
Above: Jim Sauter and Reno finally hear the sound of running water, far below. Our goal has not been sighted yet, although it is in the forest in the center of the photo.

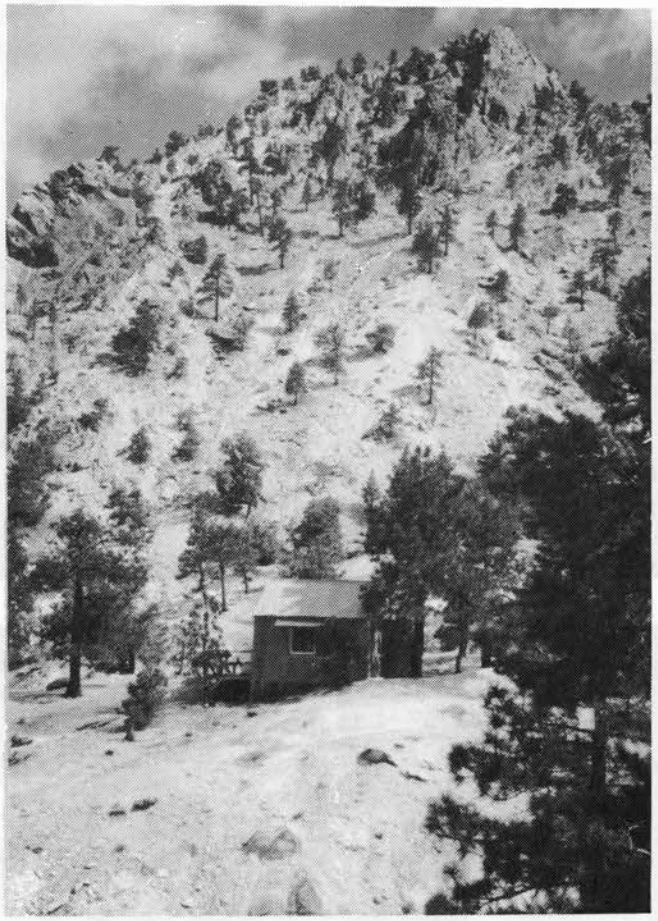
Below: As the sun begins to fade, we finally reach our goal: the Black Eagle Camp of the Sparkplug Mine. Until the last, the dwellings of this retreat hide behind the cover of Jeffery and pinyon pine.

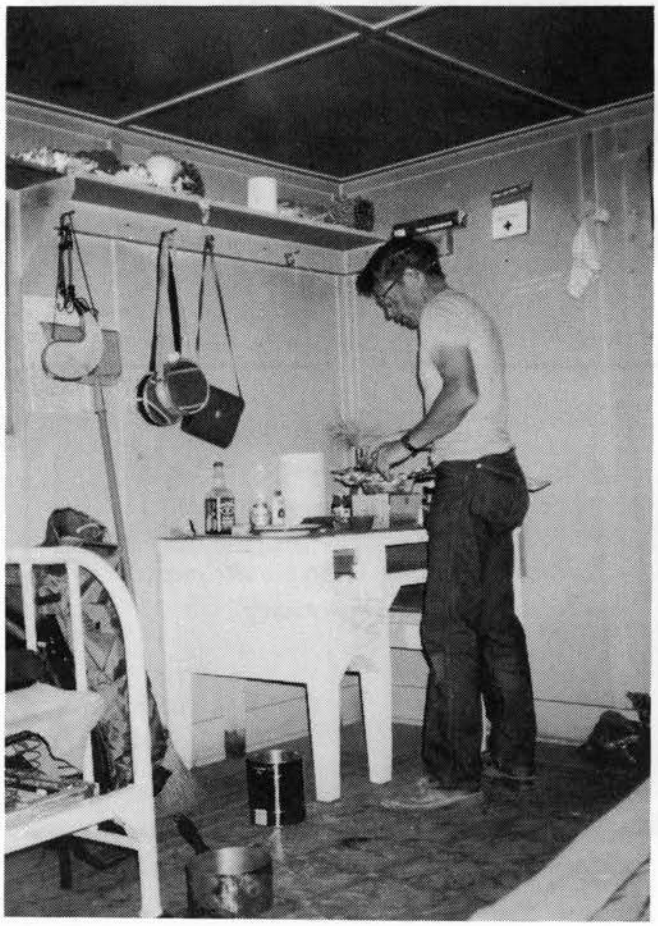
The Black Eagle section of the Sparkplug Mine nestles in the Jeffery-pinyon forest of Jeffery Mine Canyon, amid spectacular colors of rock and spectacular vistas of space and distance.

This old building is thought to be the original one in this section of the Sparkplug. The mine was another 1500 feet higher and a mile and a half farther up the route, and the living quarters were originally up there.

The mess hall (right) and bathhouse at the Black Eagle section of Sparkplug Mine. The mess hall was well stocked with food and bedding on our visit.







Above left: Reno checks out the scene from the trail above the Black Eagle Camp section of the Sparkplug Mine.

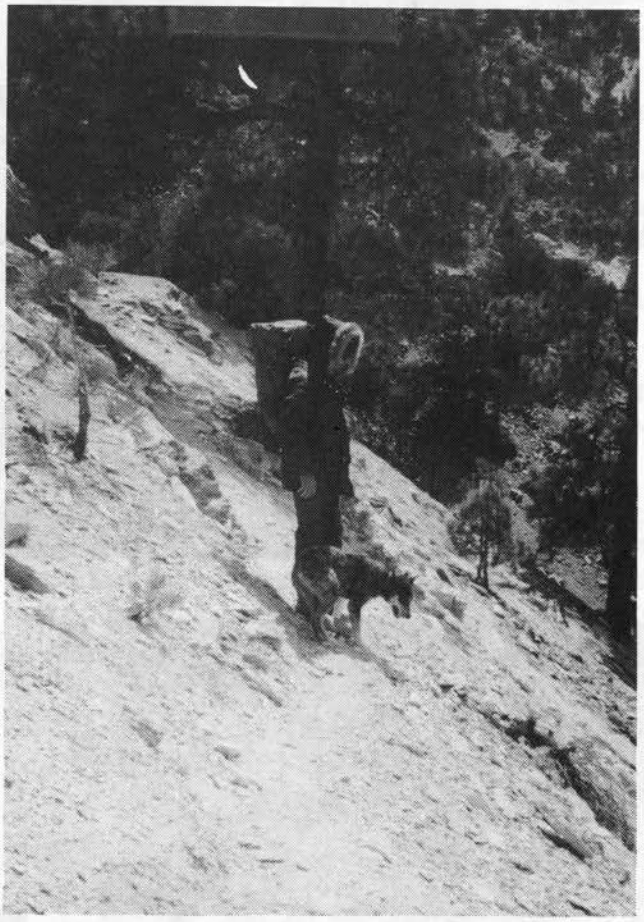
Above right: The nicest cabin, off by itself at the north end of the encampment and separated by a deep ravine, was occupied by the Frasers, who certainly deserve first class accommodations for their tireless efforts to preserve Sparkplug history.

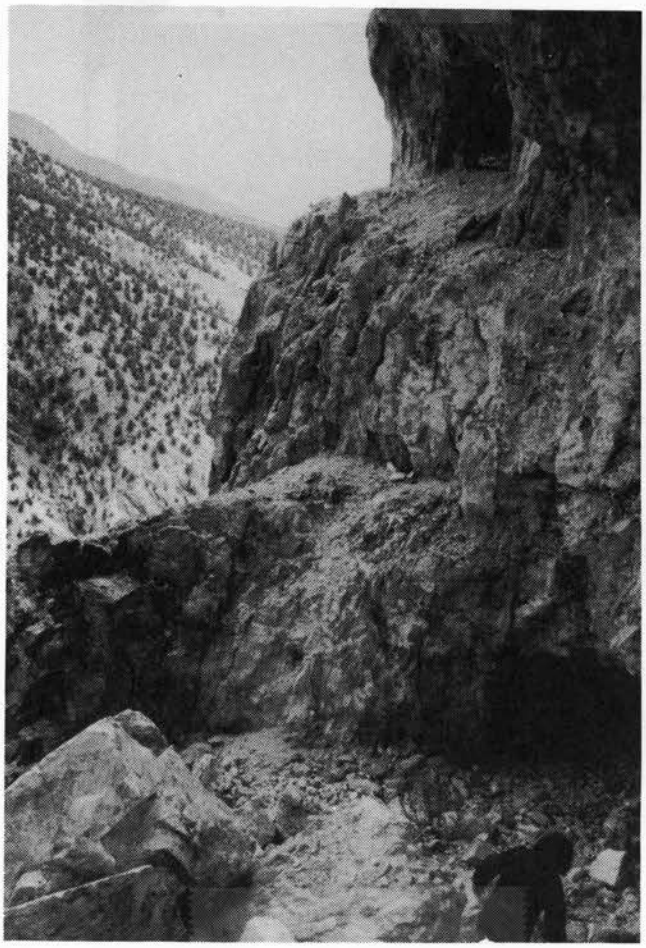
Below left: Jim prepares coffee and breakfast on the Sterno in the corner of our cabin. Part of the 65 pound load in my backpack included wine (in bota bag hanging from hook, left), two steaks, bacon, potatoes, and chicken breasts. I like to eat well on backpacking trips!

This was the view from the back window of our cabin at Black Eagle.

We had most of the comforts of home (except electricity, which the miners did have), including a hot shower. A 55-gallon drum full of water (provided by a strong back carrying two 5-gallon buckets of water form a spring a hundred yards away), a hot fire under the drum, and a few minutes to heat rewarded us with hot water out of the pipe to a crude open-air shower stall. Jim's low-desert blood was a tad thin for the cold run, naked, back to the cabin, however.

The remaining large structure sits precariously but spectacularly at the upper camp.





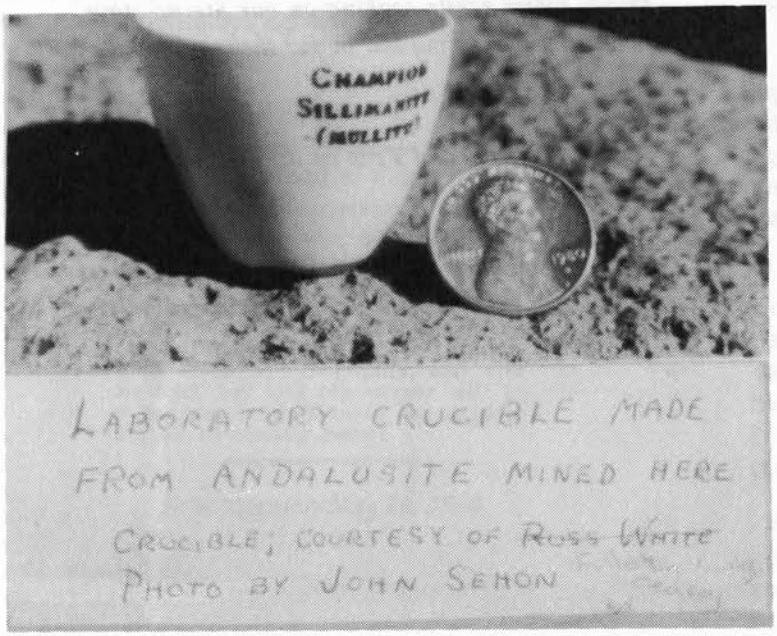
Above left: The woodstove, useful in keeping things warm while cooking on our Sterno stove, sat at the foot of my bed in our sheltered cabin at the Sparkplug.

Above right: Jim and Reno on the dim route to the upper camp.

Left: Jim enjoying the warmth (but not the smoke) of a fire at one of the mine entrances at the Sparkplug.

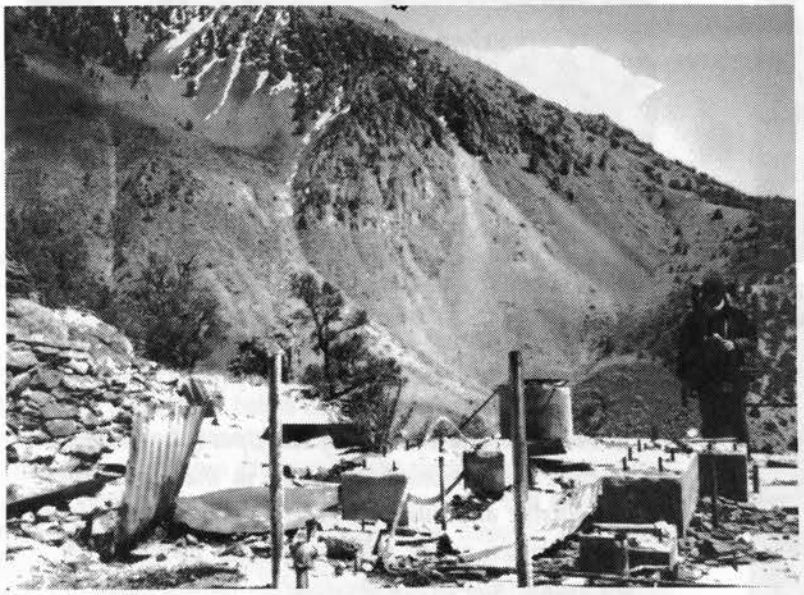
Don and Margy Fraser are busy in the museum, which Margy started in 1971.

Inside the museum.



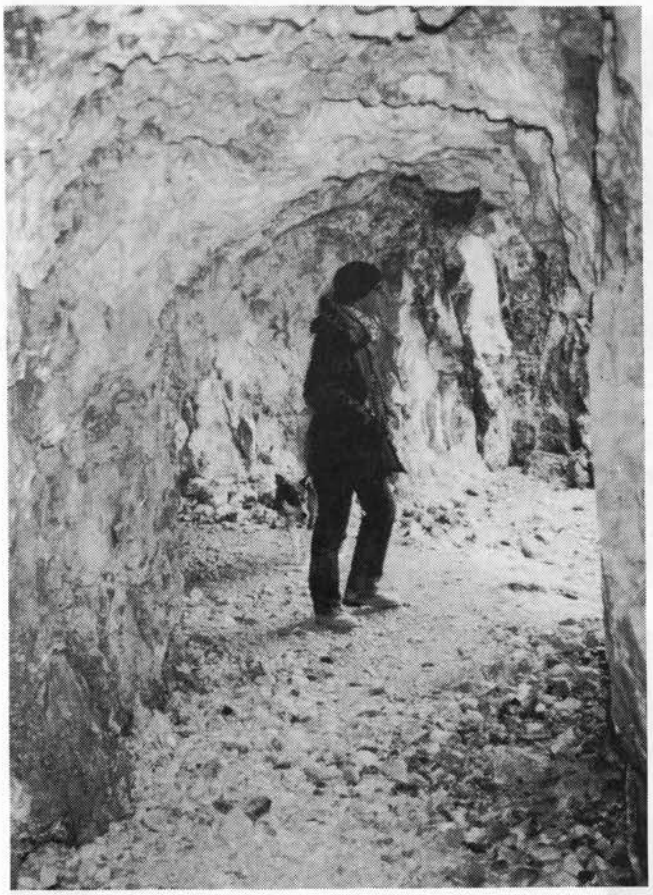
Museum display depicting one of the uses for andalusite.

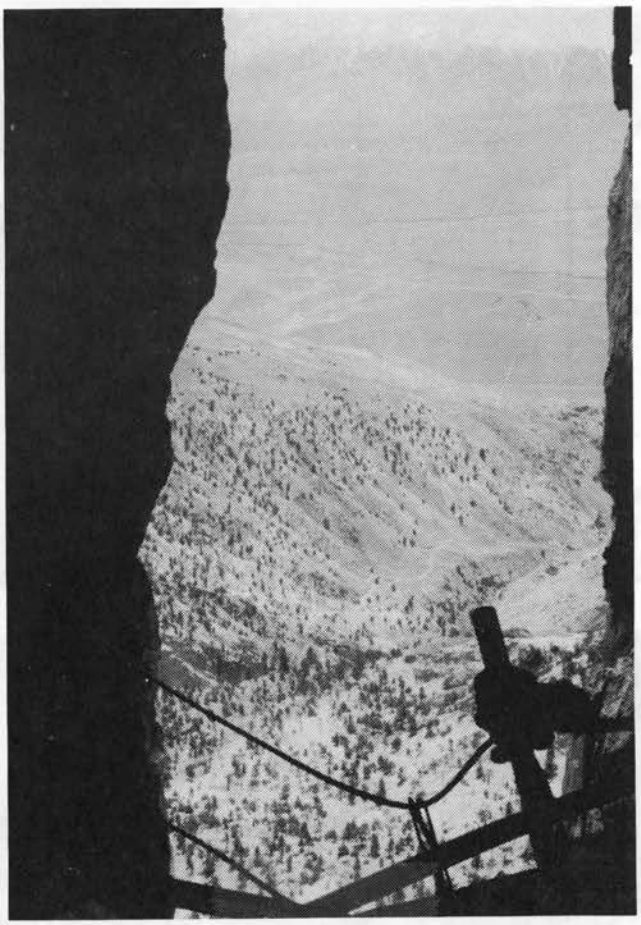
Upper Camp, Sparkplug Mine. The cabin remaining survived the holocaust of January 1987 when the others burned. Only quick action by firefighters airlifted to the scene saved the one remaining structure from oblivion.

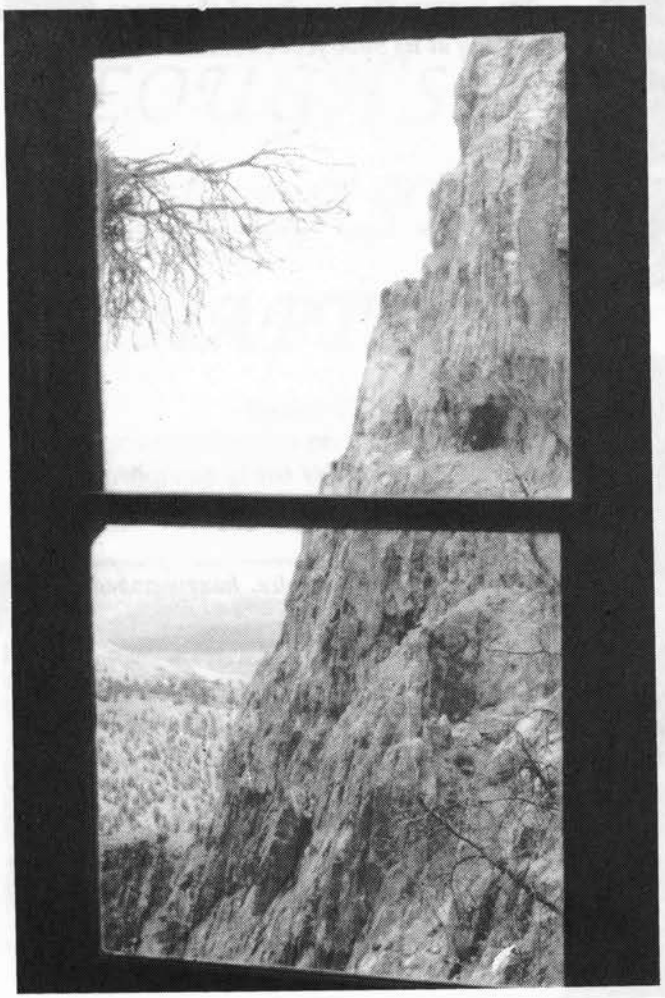


Jim surveys the remains of the upper camp, chilly in May at its 9000 foot elevation.

The pockmarked precipice, honeycombed by mines from upper camp.



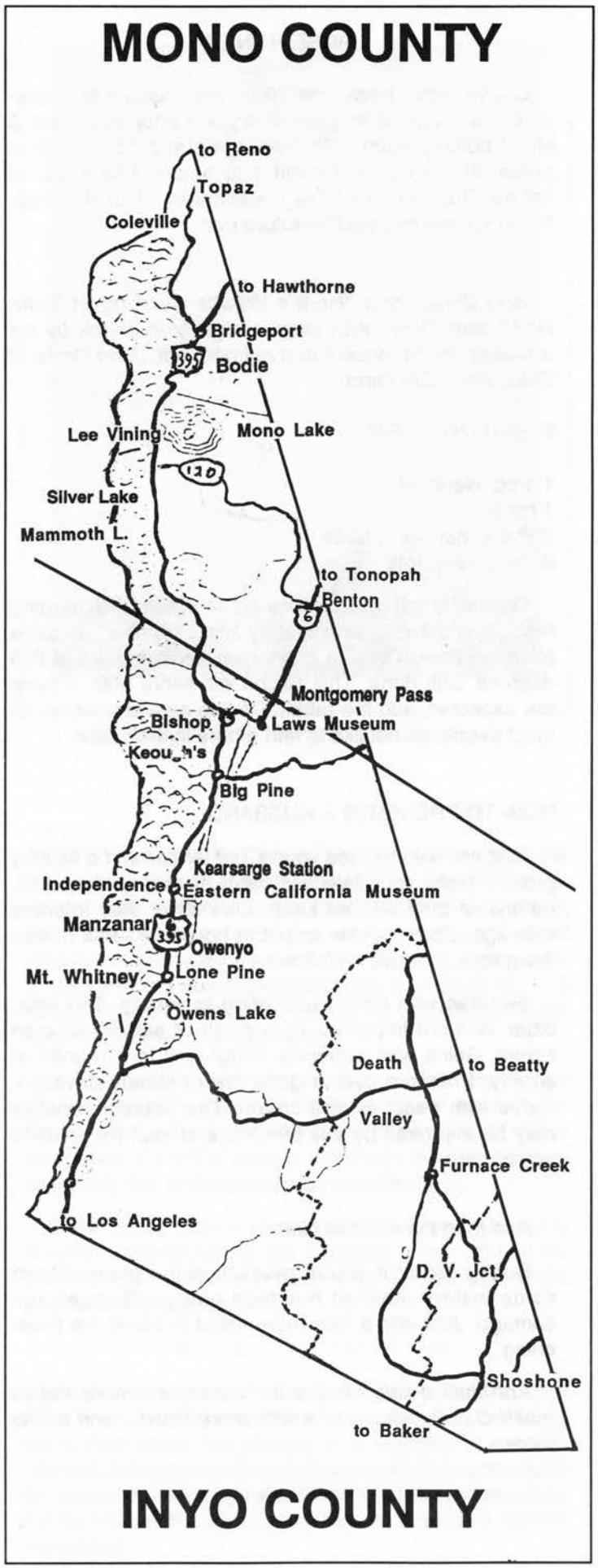




Above left: The tunnels of the Sparkplug honeycombed the mammoth precipice in the search for the elusive andalusite. Here Jim inspects one for the approach to the sole tunnel that pierces it for the grand Inyo-Mono overlook.

Above right: The view from the orifice in the cliff spans from Mt. Williamson near Independence, north to Conway Summit country. The deadly drop kept me back well behind the cables that signal explorers to stop, so the wide angle lens stayed in the camera bag. The panorama is stunning, even in this narrow scene. The Black Eagle Camp can barely be made out in the triangle formed by the overhead cable and the left edge of the cavern. Down canyon, a glimpse of the old jeep road to the camp can be seen.

Left: View of one of the many mine portals framed in the window of the quarters at upper camp. May 1991.



Editor's Corner

In "Genealogy, the Never Ending Quest" we have departed from our strict policy of publishing only history of Inyo and Mono pioneers. Lilian Edell has written of her search for ancestors in a way that informs and entertains, and we feel it will inspire others to enjoy the same hobby. Feel free to take tips from her research and enjoy your own past.

While her family weren't Inyo-Mono pioneers, Lilian is very much a part of Bishop. She is a native Californian, lived with her family in Benton, Bodie, and other mining areas before they settled in Bishop when she was nine years of age. She was graduated from Bishop Union High School with the Class of 1940, and attended business college.

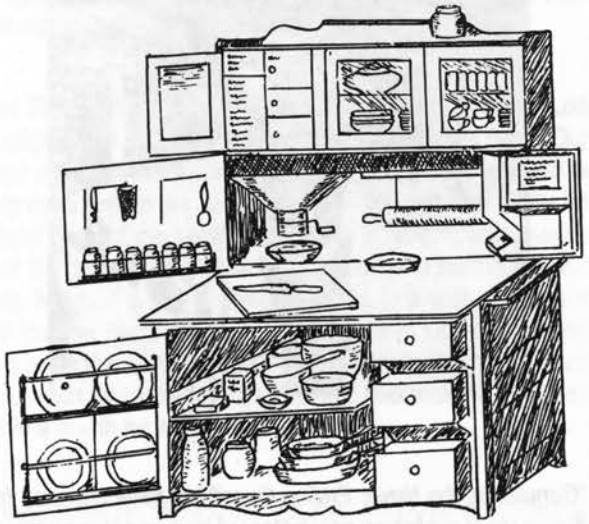
Lilian worked for Bishop Attorney Willis Smith, as secretary and paralegal, for more than thirty-five years, and retired when Smith did, in June 1986.

She resides in Bishop with her husband Jack, who is Chief of the Environmental Branch of Caltrans at Bishop.

Eddie Ford, author of "The Kittie Lee," is new to the writing field. By trade, she is a professional hairdresser, and co-owner, with her husband, of the Line Street West salon, but one day Eddie decided she wanted to go back to school. Working toward a degree at the local community college, she discovered it was literature to which her interest turned.

Eddie describes a typical morning in her life: "I go into my study and write in my journal about the winter. I write a short story, a poem, or an article... After I write I feed my llamas hay, break ice on top of their water, and say sweet nothings in their long banana ears. I talk of the hikes planned for the summer, exquisite sunrises, and of the sunsets that we will share each day. My two dogs, one old, one young, and my manx cat scamper around my feet as I feed. Finally I dress for work and head down to Line Street West... There I exchange stories with my friends."

A GOO-OOD COOK BOOK



Here are three more gems swiped from that wonderful publication, Palisade Glacier Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution Cook Book.

CORN (JOHNNY CAKE BREAD)
M. Lutz

1/2 c. melted butter
1/2 c. sugar
2/3 c. sweet milk
1 c. corn meal
1 tsp. salt
3 eggs
1 c. flour
2 tsp. baking powder
Mix well and bake.

CHEESE PUFFS
Emma Ratliff

1 c. flour
1/2 lb. butter
1/2 lb. grated American cheese

Mix together thoroughly, shape into small balls, place on greased baking sheet. Bake 10 minutes at 350. Serve with salads or soups.

ROSE HONEY

Cut the white heels from red roses. Place a lb. of prepared rose leaves in a stone jar, and pour over them 3 pt. of boiling water. Stir well. Let stand 12 hrs., then press off the liquor. Permit it to settle. Add 5 lbs. of honey. Boil well until the consistency of thick syrup. Pour into jars and seal for future use.

And these from "Here's What's Cooking at Town Hall," sent to me with tongue slightly in cheek by my traveling correspondent and railroad buff, John Drake of Estes Park, Colorado.

ELEPHANT STEW

1 med. elephant
1 rabbit
Salt and pepper to taste
Brown gravy, lots

Cut up elephant into bite-sized pieces, discarding feet. (This takes approximately 2 1/2 months, so allow plenty of time.) Cook in gravy over kerosene fire at 685 degrees until done. This recipe will serve 600. If more are expected, add the rabbit. Do this as a last resort, as most people do not like to find a hare in their stew.

HOW TO PRESERVE A HUSBAND

First get one. Not too young, but tender and a healthy growth. Make your selection carefully and let it be final, otherwise they will not keep. Like wine, they improve with age. Do not pickle or put in hot water. This makes them sour. Prepare as follows:

Sweeten with smiles according to variety. The sour, bitter kind are improved by a pinch of salt of common sense. Spice with patience. Wrap well in a mantle of charity. Preserve over a good fire of steady devotion. Serve with peaches and cream. The poorest varieties may be improved by this process and kept for years in any climate.

And then there is this hint:

Don't despair if you've oversalted the gravy. Stir in some instant mashed potatoes and you'll repair the damage. Just add a little more liquid to offset the thickening.

And then a little more salt... then some more instant mashed potatoes... and a little more liquid... and a little more...

Seriously Enough...

Are you all prepared for your earthquake now? To be absolutely honest, I figure we've already had all the practice we need, after those spring things awhile back. It could be argued that we have to start all over, I suppose. because of having our earthquakes and volcanoes all mixed up, but in my opinion, celebrating National Earthquake Week is just tempting fate.

Preparing for an earthquake is like preparing to go to the dentist. I don't want to think about it; I just want to get it over with. I'm tired of holding my breath. On the other hand, some geologists have delivered themselves of the exciting theory that we, being the earthquake generation, are to be treated to the migration of Los Angeles northward to become the island version of San Francisco, while it, in turn, becomes part of off-shore Alaska. Given the present state of the econo- my, it may be the only extended trip we can ever afford.

It could be fun. Humorous things do happen during earth- quakes — retrospectively speaking. Sides of buildings fall off, exposing dignified persons in odd situations. Divorces ensue. Telephones become disconnected in the midst of bill-collection calls. Identification is destroyed and the IRS can't find out any thing.

A friend told me she was in the bathtub during one of our volcanoish earthquakes and every time she tried to get out, it shook her back in, until she felt like a beached whale. It seemed fated that 1, too, found myself in the appalling position of being in the shower or a similarly compromising condition of minimum dress (gold chain and one earring) during all three of our major earthquake practices in that exciting spring of 1981.

In this house, the first warning is a deep, unmistakable rumble from interspace, so to speak. capable of raising the hair on the back of one's neck, followed immediately by the ear-splitting cacophony of clerestory windows, grandfather clocks and dirty dishes rattling in the kitchen sink.

I will admit it is definitely undignified for a person in public politics to be caught in nothing but a gold chain and half a set of earrings if the front of the house is going to fall off, so I suppose there is something to be said in favor of practicing. I also noticed that the very moment 1 decided to leave home and shower at my aunt's house (no clerestories. grandfather clocks, dirty dishes), the earthquakes ceased. Tells you something, doesn't it? Quit politics. Don't shower at home. Don't use dishes. Don't wear gold chains. Always keep both earrings on and wear a bathing suit in the bathtub. Indeed, we can learn many helpful earthquake survival techniques by simply practicing.

One really should be more appreciative of all our govern- ment does for us with its planning exercises. Coveys of legislators meet in conscientious frenzies to plan a disaster—which usually happens shortly thereafter. One must be grateful for those who protect us from poisoning ourselves with drugs so they can poison us with chemicals; protect us from boiling ourselves to death by soaking naked at Hot Creek so they can kill us in a war; those who protect us from God by legislating our morals and from greed by appropriating any money that might be considered above and beyond the minimum needs of the banks and credit card companies. So why does earth- quake practice suggest to me that perhaps our national bird should have been the turkey, after all?

My personal choice is actually the ostrich. It's hard for me to maintain a serious attitude about Mother Nature's tricks in view of reports like the one our favorite postmaster and sportscaster, Howard Frost, volunteered the other day. A local gentleman, he said, was wont to experiment with his 120-proof beer in an upstairs bathtub. As a matter of record, it was to his wife's everlasting irritation that he kept the aforesaid vessel filled with the potent, if unreliable, brew. Inevitably, as you have already guessed, the earthquake struck. The lively mash sloshed over the top of the tub and frothed in effervescent abundance down the stairway.

"You sonofagun," said the lady of the house (in the expurgated version), "I knew you'd blow the place up with that stuff someday!"

Nevertheless, inspired by some inexorable need to protect us from ourselves, nature, God, and the communist influence, our beloved bureaucrats

continue to plan. They have even enlisted my favorite park ranger. Yogi Bear.

'An earthquake is no picnic." he declares as he hikes off into the park with his picnic basket filled with emergency supplies. I faithfully tried to follow suit. I filled the trailer tanks with water. which promptly froze. I filled some buckets to take up the slack and they became swimming holes for mysterious micro-amphibians. Still having my earthquakes and volcanoes mixed up, I bought a face mask, through which I could not breathe. I inherited one of those dandy five gallon cans of government issue "carbohydrates" so benignly donated for storage in old mines to tide us over in a national crisis. It turned out to be twenty pounds of hard candy neither mouse nor rat. insect nor mold will inhabit. I don't think I have the proper attitude for this exercise.

I keep trying. I steadfastly refuse to attend the League of California Cities conferences until they are held in tents outside of the city. You will never catch me anywhere near a high-power line — I never believed in electricity, anyway. I may not be able to get calmly under a table, but I am prepared to dive under any bed in the house. I have carefully vacuumed under each one, stored a jug of my favorite beverage — which happens, by the sheerest coincidence, also to be my favorite snakebite antidote. cough medicine and pain-killer — in every set of bedsprings and I have made elaborate plans to meet my family and friends at their choices of Bishop's plentiful social rookeries, every Friday night until we are all back together again.

All things considered. I'm as prepared as I want to be.

from HOME TOWN IN THE HIGH COUNTRY
by Jane Fisher

Letters to the editor

STAYING IN TOUCH

My husband and I were recently vacationing at Big Rock, June Lake. Mike Sharkey, the owner, introduced us to THE ALBUM.

I was enchanted with the stories and history. My husband has been coming to the Owens Valley and the Sierras for seventy years. He started bringing me after he returned from service in World War II. After all these years we always find something new to explore.

Now, from reading THE ALBUM, many questions I have had for years are being answered – like who painted the chieftain at Lundy Lake on the rock? and who was the man at Deadman Creek? **Mrs. Stanley Constans, Huntington Beach**

We haven't answered all the questions yet, so if any of our readers have more stories to tell, we want to see them. Mrs. Constans later wrote this also:

We just returned from a wonderful trip exploring the Owens Valley, visiting the White Mountain City site and Lundy Lake where the fall colors were spectacular. This trip was based on stories we read in THE ALBUM.

I am enclosing a check for $14.00 for a gift subscription... our friend will be 80 and he spent many years of his life in the Owens Valley and the Sierras. We are sure he will also enjoy THE ALBUM.

* * *

Thank you for sending the two issues of THE ALBUM that I did not receive. I appreciate it far more than you know, because it makes living in Southern California a little more bearable!

I first came to the Sierra in the late 1930s to stay with my uncle and aunt, Bill and Dot Garner. Bill and Dot owned the Convict Lake Lodge and I was lucky enough to spend part of each summer there. I still remember the old store, slot machines (gambling was legal then), packing the mules every morning for the fishing trips up to the lakes, and the big cans of trout fingerlings that were packed into the upper lakes on the backs of the mules when it was time to do the plantings.

Bill Garner and Frank Arcularius were brothers-in-law, and Bill had worked with Frank at the Owens River Camp. There was a legal battle (I was never told any details) between Bill and Frank, resulting in Bill leaving the Owens River Camp and buying Convict Lake. As a child, I was delighted because I didn't think there was a prettier spot in the world.

My husband and I honeymooned in Mammoth thirty three years ago, camped in the area with our children almost every year, and finally bought a condo in Mammoth in 1977. I have often thought that it is just as well that my aunt and uncle did not live to see us with our condo - they would have teased us unmercifully for having gone "soft."

Thanks again, and please know that your ALBUM is saved in a very special part of our library. **Eugenia "Chick" Bernacchi, Camarillo, CA**

A NICE IDEA

Will you please accept my most sincere apologies? I don't know how my copies of THE ALBUM Vol V #2 and #3 got on the bottom of my stack, but there they were. Thank you for sending me those copies. The enclosed check is for the two copies you just sent me. I'll donate these duplicates to our local library. **William Miyashiro, San Juan Capistrano, CA**

INFORMATION, PLEASE

We love this publication! We are Mammoth/June Lake devotees since 1928. May I ask your editor if anyone else is interested in boning raw trout to stuff? stuffed trout appears on menus, but usually trout seems small to bone in the raw state.

I've solved it by sauteing the trout, removing the backbone as we are accustomed to doing. Then I stuff it and zap it in the microwave before serving. Perhaps restaurants do the same. I'd be interested to know. **Evelyn (and Don) Brubaker, Ventura, CA**

I hike quite a bit in the Glacier Lodge area. One of my favorite resting places is a cabin that I understand was built by actor Lon Chaney.

It would be interesting to know more about the history of how it was constructed, how the site was selected, etc.

Hopefully some of the readers of THE ALBUM could furnish some information for a future article. **Mike Daly, Ridgecrest, CA**

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