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—sixty years without a payday

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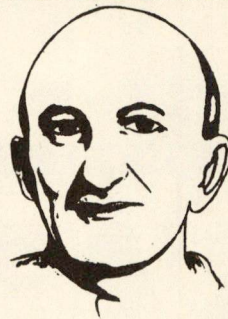


**HECK THOMAS BEGAN FIGHTING
AT AGE 12** —and never laid aside his gun

HERITAGE Of An OUTLAW

by Clyde C. Callahan and Byron B. Jones

— The story of Frank Nash —



Meet the authors:

The early days of Oklahoma were unique to history. It was the time and place solid settlers, outlaws and Indians rubbing elbows; a frontier, settled overnight; a century of struggle and progress condensed into a few years. The authors, both native Oklahomans remember - they were there.

Clyde C. Callahan: Pioneer resident of Kiowa County, historian and researcher, 1980 recipient of the Stanley Draper Distinguished Service Award of the Oklahoma Heritage Association in recognition of work done in preservation of state and local history; past president of the Kiowa County Historical Society, serving for three consecutive years, publisher of five volumes of Kiowa County history.

Byron B. Jones: Retired Lieutenant Colonel, former newspaper editor, feature writer and presently free lance magazine contributor, was born at Lawton, Okla. of Kiowa County pioneer parents.

Meet the Artist:

Grace Knox: Nationally known for her creations of a world on canvas that preserves moments from out of the West. The West that was, the West that is. Two illustrations, painted exclusively for "Heritage of an Outlaw" are destined to become classics of western art. Her interpretations in oil of one of the west's last train holdups, performed by Frank Nash and the Al Spencer gang, and Frank's capture by U.S. Marshalls while fording the Rio Grande from Mexico into Texas, are outstanding contributions to the history of the west, which included badmen as well as good.

For the first time ever — the story of Frank Nash and his activities which took him into the ranks of big time crime and to a violent death in 1933 as the central figure in the infamous Kansas City Massacre and is a very real part of Kiowa County history, especially Hobart's. With this in mind we are attempting in this new book to separate facts from legend and to record this particular chapter in our history as accurately as possible from the information available. The material has been gathered from old newspaper files, police and F.B.I. files, courthouse records, family records, and personal interviews. The most authentic story that could be written — some called him a hero, others a common criminal. Regardless, this book tells both sides. Read and make your own conclusions.

From the Jameses and the Youngers, who were cousins, there sprang the Dalton gang, the Doolin gange, the Belle Starr gang, the Cook gang, the Henry Starr gang, the Al Spencer gang and finally, the Frank Nash gang.

As a member of the Al Spencer gang, Frank helped bridge the gulf between the old and the new. With the death of Al Spencer, the hard shooting, old-time Western outlaw rode into history; only Frank Nash was left to ride over that bridge. Alone he entered into a new era of crime. His story is the last link in the unbroken chain, beyond him the trail grows dim, becoming unreadable in the trackless shadowland of today's underworld.

Frank Nash was a paradox in both life and death. Though he spent his life outside the law, in dying he did much to advance law enforcement. After the Union Station Massacre, congress quickly passed long needed laws giving the FBI authority to arm themselves and to track the criminal wherever he fled. For the first time agents were able to meet force with force, fire power with fire power. It was the beginning of the end of the rampant outlawry of the gangster era. All those who participated in the Union Station Massacre were either killed or brought to justice; all the big time gangsters of the period met similar fates. None escaped.

Truly, Frank Nash's life was exciting, his story has been interesting to write. We have stuck to the facts and have refrained from using the historical novel technique permitting the author free use of his imagination.

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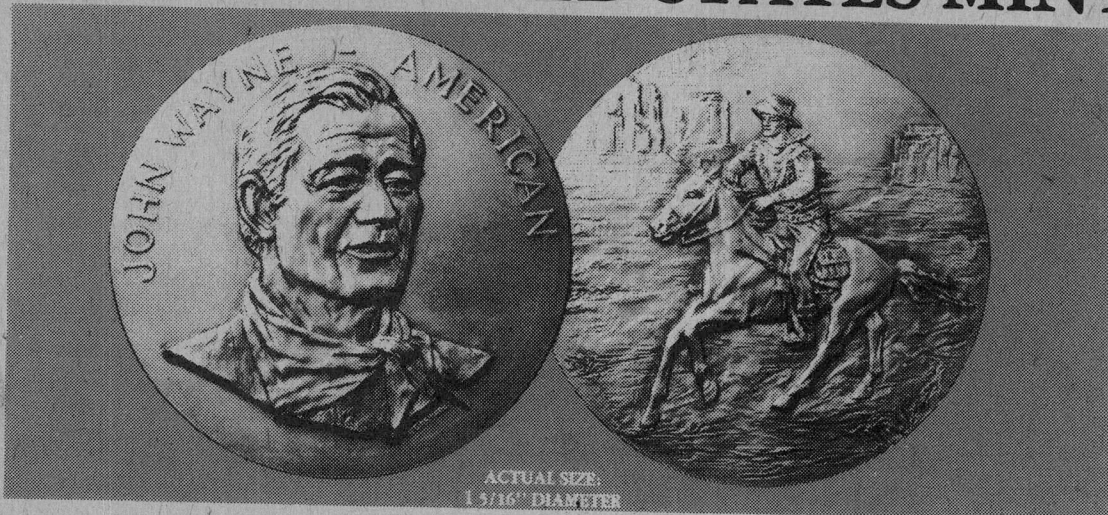
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 Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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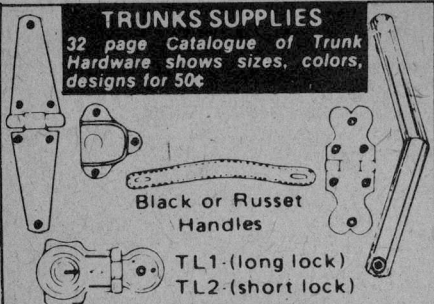
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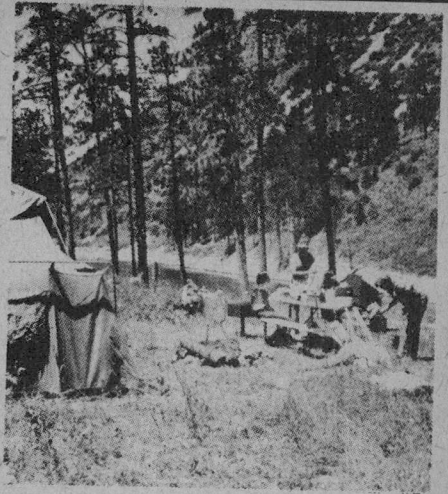
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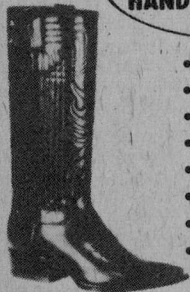


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Hosstail's "SMALL TALK"

My Friend, Fred Gipson

MIKE COX has spent seven years gathering material and writing a very good book on Fred Gipson. Fred did some editing on *True West* way back there in the beginning, you old-timers may remember, and did quite a bit of writing for us after he became a big shot by authoring *Old Yeller*, which Walt Disney turned into a "best selling" movie.

Fred and I had been very close friends since meeting at the University of Texas back in 1935. He died August 14, 1973 at his beautiful Recollection Creek Ranch on the Llano River near Mason, Texas. I flat can't get over it. Seems like about half of me went with him.

I was, of course, flattered when Mike asked me to do a foreword for the book. I know that such introductions are supposed to be short and to the point but I got to dreaming about those good old times we used to have together, and sort of pulled the bride off and ran wild.

The book will be off the press this fall, and as of this writing (May 29) I don't know how much of my "thinking back" Mike will have space for in the introduction. So I would like to run it all here since I believe it will interest you. I was as close to Fred Gipson as I have been to any person outside of my family in my entire lifetime.

FORWARD

FRED AND I were coming home from a trip on which we had bared our very souls to each other, and found that we were suddenly engrossed with the feel for a total honesty pledge. Sensing that we might be toying with something that wouldn't work, we decided to test this all-out honesty business on the spot. As a starter, what was the biggest fault that we saw in each other? I asked Fred to lead off.

"Well," he said with short thought, "you are always introducing me as the famous Fred Gipson, author of *Hound Dog Man*, *Fabulous Empire* and other notable books. People appear properly impressed and there I stand with my mouth hanging open and nothing to say. I wish you would just say, 'I want you to meet my friend, Fred Gipson,' and leave off the sugar topping."

I was astonished. Fred had often spoken of his constant need of a well-

fed ego. Perhaps I didn't know my "gut-honest" friend as well as I'd thought.

Fred then asked for my criticism. I mumbled something about fighting life too hard would make him an old man before his time. I voiced surprise at his revelation relative to my cake-topping. We agreed that there were probably still things we needed to learn about each other and promised to work on it. We did — and the more we opened ourselves up, the closer we became.

It got to be a regular thing. Every other week-end the Gipsons and Smalls were getting together. The goer would stop by Fredericksburg and pick up a jug of its well-known wine. In the beginning, I think we paid a full 75¢ a gallon! After a couple of glasses of this stimulating nectar and some polite conversation relative to what had happened in the interim, we started thrashing out problems of the world and invariably ended up independently rich. Upon those occasions wherein we had some trepidations relative to the wine remaining in an uncontaminated condition overnight, things got progressively merry. Almost invariably they would begin with, "I remember one time..."

Late one afternoon Fred was telling me about a bunch of hogs that would bed up under the house on unusually cold nights. He tried to imitate the hog-talk they made. It is a sound that a human simply cannot mimic, but I had heard it many times and decided I could do a better job than Fred. We took turns and finally gave forth with a chorus that grew louder as we warmed to the challenge.

I'll never forget the look on Elizabeth's and Tommie's faces when they rushed to see what had broken in and had hold of us.

OUR frequent visits gradually got more and more into sessions of complaining about life, and less fun and story telling. I decided to bring this to Fred's attention. Walter Webb was giving one of his parties at Friday Mountain Ranch. The Gipsons had come down for the week-end and Fred and I were on our way out to the ranch when Fred started talking about how bad things were. When he got to his first "starve to death," I interrupted. He reminisced a bit on how much fun and

satisfaction we had derived from knowing each other, and then I made a suggestion.

"Fred, our visits are turning more and more into profound analyses of our grievances against life and less and less on the good times we used to have. Why don't we bitch hard and deep for the first thirty minutes, then get back to a constructive line of thinking?"

To my surprise, Fred readily agreed. "You start," I invited. Fred didn't hesitate. He tore into Tommie and her constant spending with vehemence. It had gotten to be his most familiar line of late. When he finished one episode, I interrupted with, "Fred, Tommie doesn't throw around money like many women I know. I've never known her to spend any big money at all."

"Yeah," Fred's brow furrowed, "but she can nickel and dime you to death!"

FRED was the best bass fisherman I have ever known. We fished from deep within the interior of Mexico throughout most of the West and I could hold my own with him fairly well until we hit his own stomping grounds. There Fred was king and he knew it.

One afternoon we were fishing his favorite stream, the LLano. Fred had taught me how to fish the various creeks that flow into this small river, as well as the main stream itself. I was constantly amazed at the thoroughness of his knowledge of bassology in this particular maze of potholes, rock-studded shallows and deep, still-running water. We took turns at lead fishing. The follow-up man was playing clean-up role since he was working just-fished waters.

Fred had given me first turn at lead and I came up with a nice bass in less than ten minutes. This was always the signal to cross over, so Fred took the lead. Our kidding while fishing was merciless. "I always like to get the first one," I remarked. "Looks like this is going to be my day."

"Accidents happen to even the best of us," was Fred's dry comment.

If someone had told me what was in the immediate future for us that day, I could not have believed it!

Shortly, I had another strike and layed in a spotted native bass. I have always felt that if a man really enjoyed his sport, he should show it — like being quite vociferous in landing a fish. My exuberance was not lost on Fred. When I held up the fish and asked him to look, he barely glanced back and did not bother with the forced smile he sometimes displayed, even while fishing seriously and in a highly competitive mood.

When I caught bass No. 3, it really started getting under Fred's skin. This had never happened before. We both knew it could change suddenly. I was

always slow in starting and consistently came in a poor second. Even though it might mean nothing in the long run, this early lead plainly rankled Fred. One thing we both knew without bringing it up — never let up on raw-hiding each other. It would have been a definite show of weakness that neither would have approved of.

"Biggest one yet!" I chortled. "Say, Fred," I made this sound as sort of an afterthought, "maybe you ought to change places with me. Looks like they're hitting better back here..."

This little nicety brought exactly what was intended. "Oh, hush!" Fred said, and continued fishing feverishly.

He caught one finally. It wasn't a big fish and he didn't even call it to my attention — just strung the bass hurriedly and continued in his up-front position. I mumbled, barely loud enough for Fred to hear, "Makes company feel a shade bad playing follow-up man all the time..."

It was getting late when we came to the big hole. Fred's mood changed. He became talkative again. "Best fishing hole on the Llano," he explained. "More fish in this hole than on a mile of regular water." Fred moved into position and cautioned, "Let's fish this one right." He cast completely across the hole and reeled in slowly. "Look!" Fred pointed about half way across the hole after he had cranked in his lure. "Four of them just setting there. Nice ones too!"

I saw the four bass. They had followed the lure a ways and were lying at attention as if they had been disturbed from a siesta and were just now beginning to take notice of what was going on. I caught Fred's spirit of excitement. He cast again, hurriedly. I think that was the second time I had seen Fred backlash in years. His language was highly descriptive as he plucked at the crow's nest.

I was showing weakness in our fishing competition. I was hesitating to cast. "Go on!" Fred admonished. "They're not going to sit there forever!"

I dropped my lure about two feet ahead of the outside bass on my left and he struck immediately. This was a good one and I played him carefully. Quickly stringing the fish, I glanced at Fred. He was still pulling and fuming at the backlash. I felt sorry for him then, but I simply couldn't afford to show it. Even now I hardly know what it was, but it would have actually weakened something close between us if either had displayed compassion at a time like this.

I cast into the hole again and the strike was vicious. It was a beautiful fight. The aerial display was impress-

(Continued on Page 58)

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OF THE
OLD WEST

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Truly Western

us, anytime from Christmas on. — Ruth Fawcett, SAMA, 3801 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78209

Another Reunion

I was so thrilled to read "The Lowest Form of Murder" by Langford Johnston as told to Eve Ball in the April issue.

The Isham Holt mentioned in the story as being from Harrison, Arkansas was my great-grandfather, Larkin Holt's brother. I am very interested in family history and this is one branch I have been unable to contact. It seems, in those days, families who left for the "Far West" didn't keep in touch as those who stayed behind in the same community. My father knew a little about Isham Holt but couldn't give me much data.

I would like to get in touch with Langford Johnston, who would be a cousin of mine. It will mean a great deal to me and other members of the Holt family. I was born in Harrison and there are many Holt relatives still there.

I would also like to get in touch with descendants of Calvin Rogers Holt who moved to Texas about the time his brother Isham moved to New Mex-

Cool Spot From the Past

In December 1980, the old Lone Star Brewing Company in San Antonio, Texas will open its doors to a new kind of clientele. The former brewery has undergone a massive facelift from the days when it housed the vats and machinery for making beer to a museum with large collections of American art and artifacts, particularly featuring the Southwest.

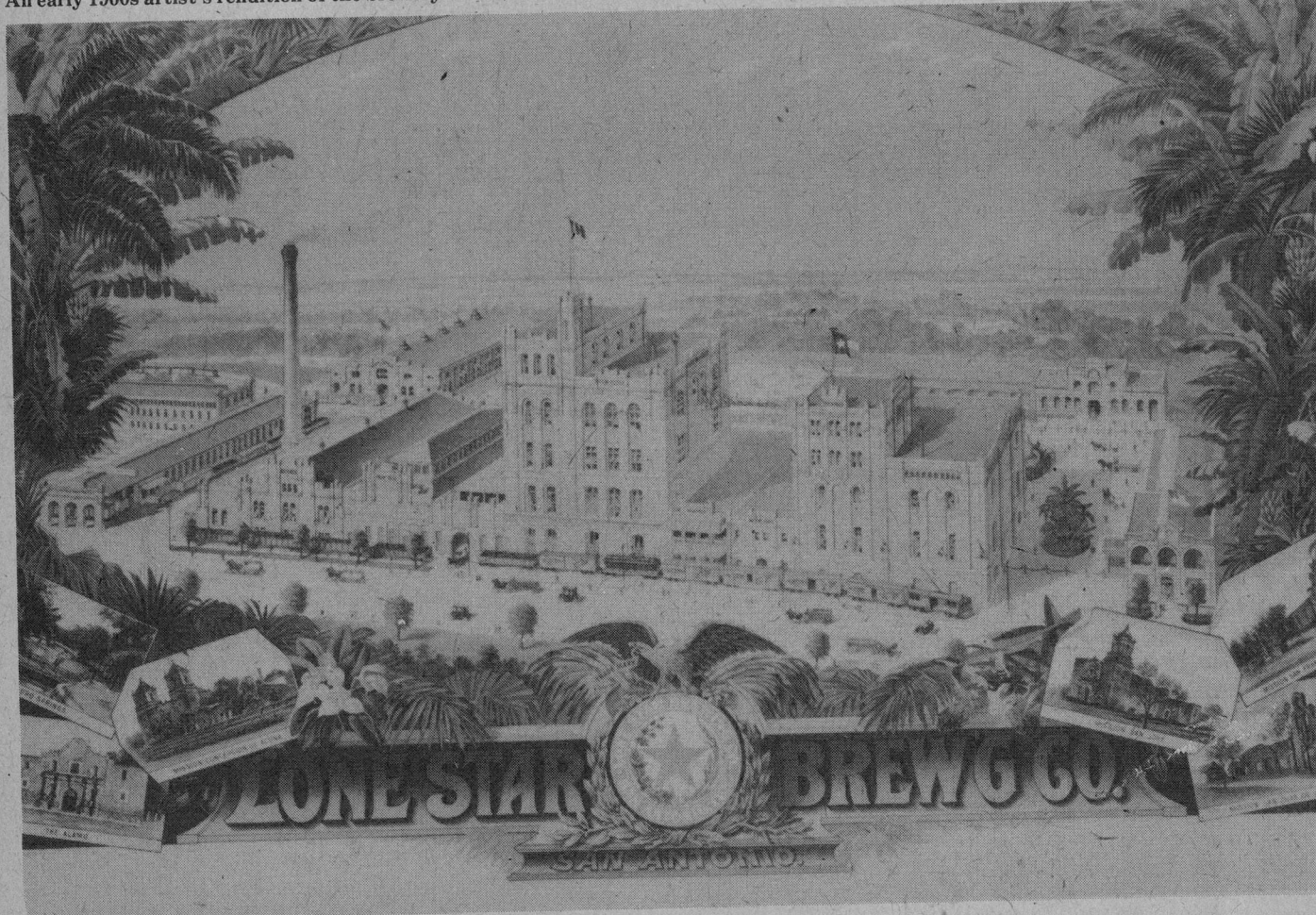
The former brewery, built by Adolphus Busch of Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association in the early part of this century, has been purchased by the San Antonio Museum Association. The spacious open rooms, high ceilings and numerous columns make the build-

ings especially suitable for reuse as a museum. The structures (consisting of 76,000 square feet) are of modified romanesque design with gracefully arched windows and decorative merrons, unique to San Antonio. At the height of its production, the brewery was one of the largest in Texas.

The project architects have carefully maintained and restored the distinctive design elements, blending the old with the new. A glass-enclosed sky walk will connect the two towers of the main structure, and glass elevators in each tower will carry visitors through the galleries. Skylights will illuminate the main entry area.

We are taking this way of inviting Western Publications readers to visit

An early 1900s artist's rendition of the brewery which, in its heyday, was one of the largest in the Southwest. Courtesy San Antonio Museum Association



ico. Calvin moved to Burleson County, Texas around 1870. — Betty Holt Hanna, 611 E. Freeman Avenue, Berryville, Arkansas 72616

Constable Charley Null

I have been reading with much interest the article appearing in the June *True West* entitled "Few Questions Were Asked of a Stranger" by Joe and Terry Cole.

Mr. Cole wrote me a letter inquiring about certain aspects of the assassination of my great-uncle, Constable Charley Null. I answered his letter and supplied him with the information at hand. However, since that time, while rummaging through some of my papers concerning family history, I found a copy (which I had previously made) from my grandmother's scrapbook of the newspaper report of the assassination. I am enclosing a copy. I am sure that some of your readers would be interested in the first-hand newspaper account of this incident. The clipping was marked *The Journal* and I presume was *LaGrange Journal* or the *Fayette County Journal*. — Dalton L. Null, 5711 West Bellfort, Houston, Texas 77035

ASSASSINATED

Constable C. H. Null of justice precinct No. 5 was brutally assassinated Saturday, while going from his home to Muldoon, where court was to convene that day. His body was found in the public road, face downward. Three shots took effect in his body and one in his head. The latter, it is believed, was fired after he had fallen. The assassins we put it in the plural for it is evident from all that can be ascertained, that there were three, if not four, participating in the foul crime) evidently went up to the prostrate body and fired the fourth shot, the ball entering the back of the head, passing clear through and blowing off the front part of the skull and scattering the brains.

The news was telegraphed here and Sheriff Loessin, Constable Lee Smith and Deputy Sheriff Will Loessin repaired to the scene of the murder and used every effort to discover who the assassins were, but up to this writing no satisfactory evidence has been elicited fixing the crime upon any one. But certain parties are suspected, for whom warrants have been issued, but up to this time no arrests have been made, as the suspects, from some cause, seem to be hard to find, which, to say the least, is a suspicious circumstance. Their arrest will follow soon, unless they have absconded beyond the confines of the States.

LATER

Since the above was put in type Sheriff Loessin and his deputies have brought to jail J.L. Stagner, Ras Phil-

lips and John Sheely, who are charged with having committed the crime. *The Journal* presumes an examining trial will be held soon at Muldoon before Justice Cole.

Elk

I have read with great interest Vera D. Saban's story "Elk are Back in the Big Horns." In her story she mentioned D.C. Nowlin, State Game Warden. C.L. Nowlin is my name and my father owned a ranch on Antelope Creek just across from the Wyoming border. The Jackson Hole elk would come over in the winter and eat our hay by the hundreds. At one time we had pictures of them covering a hay stack. I don't know where those tin-types are now.

In 1908 we left Idaho and came to Alberta, Canada where I grew up and still live. In the early 1950s I was President of the Calgary Fish and Game Ass'n. At that time when Banff National Park was overstocked with elk, we got permission to trap 100 head and move them out to areas that had lots of feed and no elk. We trapped them at Canmore Ranger Station, just outside the park.

We did it at a period when the cows were not too heavy with calf and the bulls had not shed their horns. We dehorned the bulls and took no old bulls and only three old cows. Ear-tagging had just come in then, so we ear-tagged them. We moved them sixty miles away from the park by road, less by crow-fly.

The three old cows were back inside the park in less than a month. One got killed on the highway, one on the railroad. The third one must have lived out her time in the park as she was not seen again after the first sighting at the gate. The first bunch were unloaded on the headwaters of the Little Red River, and that country is full of elk today.

The second year we were able to get a larger stock truck, so we took sixty head to Swan Hills in north-central Alberta, west of Edmonton, where they have done very well. I am enclosing three pictures of the dehorning and the unloading.

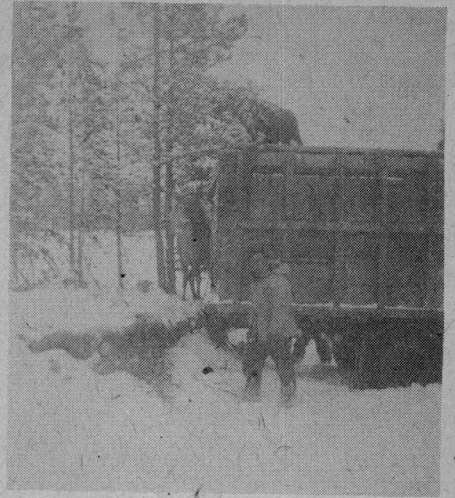
Sorry to hear "Hackberry Slim" Johnson has gone to the Happy Hunting Grounds. I enjoyed his stories very much. — C.L. Nowlin, 2516 Toronto Crescent, Calgary, Alta., Canada T2N 3V9

In Defense of a Railroad "Bull"

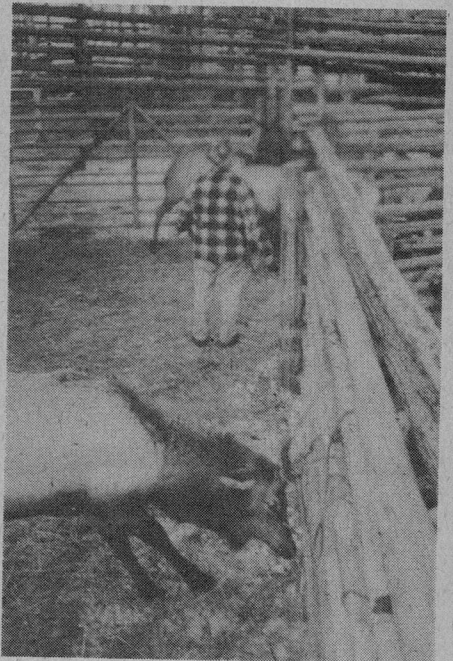
The stories told by the Knights of the Road are not always quite correct.

On page 11 of the June 1979 *True West* there is a sketch of Dave Camp-

(Continued on Page 61)



These photos show Mr. Nowlin and other Calgary Fish & Game workers back in the early 1950s, working with the elk.



By **DICK RANDALL**

Edited by
ROBERTA CHENEY
and
CLYDE ERSKINE

PIKE MOORE and

This account is taken directly from the unpublished Memoirs of Dick Randall, old-time Yellowstone Park stagecoach driver, cowboy, hunting guide and owner of Montana's first dude ranch. Because this section was written when Randall was eighty-eight years old, the story required considerable editing and organizing, but every effort was made to preserve his terminology and conversations.

After living fifty years as a mountain man, Horn Miller "settled in" with the Randalls, and Dick wrote down the experiences as Horn told them to him.

The manuscript and photos were made available by Randall's daughter, Bess Randall Erskine, and her husband, Clyde Erskine, who is co-author with Roberta Cheney of a recently published book, *Music, Saddles and Flapjacks* (Mountain Press, Missoula, Mont.) which tells the story of Dick Randall and his dude ranch.

Photos provided by Clyde Erskine

PIKE MOORE and Horn Miller were well known in Montana. These two old hunters had helped exterminate the buffalo. With the buffalo gone, they took up prospecting and followed the stampedes to different mining camps. They had come across the Plains with the Forty-niners, finally drifting back to the Yellowstone.

Pike and Horn, along with Bart Henderson, discovered gold in the Cooke City area of Montana. The New World Mining District grew up there right near the northwest corner of Yellowstone Park.

Pike was a meek, modest man that everybody liked. Horn was just the opposite, usually had a chip on his shoulder, ready to fight. Stories were that he had fought many ring bouts in the mining camps, and his cauliflower ears

and flat nose gave evidence.

The two men met when they were kids and a strange friendship grew up between them and lasted until they took the last Long Trail at ripe old ages.

Old Horn Miller lived with me for a number of winters. He had one of those big powderhorns, and he was from Pike County, Missouri too, along with Pike Moore. These men were Indian fighters, trappers, and hunters, as well as prospectors. You take old Horn Miller. If you heard his gun, you'd know whose shot it was; he poured his own powder. He had a .50 calibre rifle, an old buffalo gun it was. He was a dead shot with it and with his six-shooter, too. Never caught Horn Miller without both his guns.

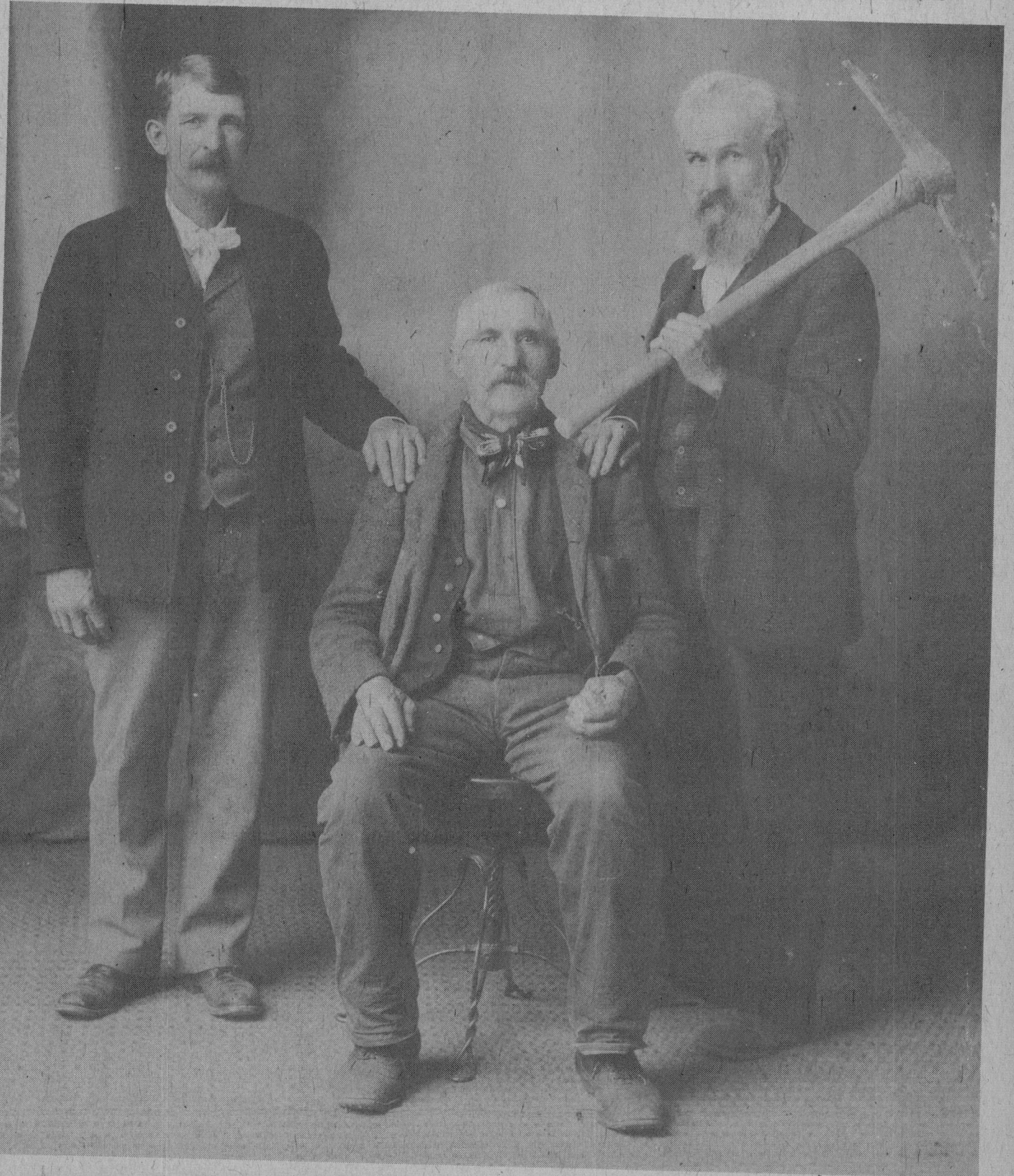
Horn wasn't very sweet tempered,

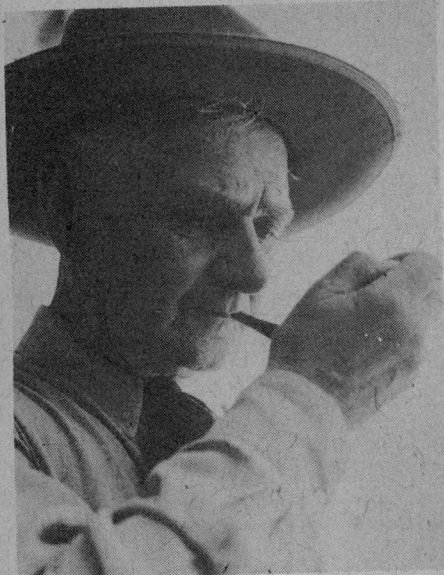
At right: (Left to right) John Curl; Horn Miller; Pike Moore. Below: A summer guest at Randall's O-T-O Dude Ranch shipped a piano out to Gardiner, Montana for Dick Randall's daughter, Bess. Randall and Horn Miller took a team and wagon to the railroad station to pick it up. For ten miles, over a mountain trail, Dick drove the team, while Horn followed putting rocks under the wheels in the really steep places. Horn is standing at the extreme right watching the Randall children sitting atop the piano crate. Randall is on the wagon seat.



WORN MILLER

— sixty years
without a
payday





Dick Randall

himself, but he vowed that Liver Eater Johnson was the surliest man he ever knew. [This man's story was the basis for the movie "Jeremiah Johnson," but his real name was John and he was born in New Jersey in 1824 of English parents. Johnson was in turn a sailor, prospector, army scout, hunter, wolf-er, whiskey smuggler and woodcutter.]

Horn and Johnson were both scouts for General [Nelson A.] Miles. But it was when General [O. O.] Howard was trailing Chief Joseph through Yellowstone Park that he hired Horn to scout for the Command. Even Howard didn't have much jurisdiction over him. Horn would do whatever he'd a mind to. The soldiers were close on Joseph at Crandall Creek near Cooke City, and Howard gave orders that no fires were to be lit. Horn camped for the night a ways from the main camp, and Howard woke up in the night to see a large campfire lighting up the sky. The General was furious and sent an officer to see who had started the fire. He came back with word that it was that contrary Horn. From then on he was called "Contrary Horn" by all the soldiers.

During the winters he lived with me, the name fit him!

HORN MILLER worked with Johnson and knew him well. Old Horn Miller was tough but he was honest and the story he told me about how Liver Eater got his name is probably nearer the fact than most stories that have grown up over the years:

The Indians called him Black Bear. He had them all scared and the Sioux and Blackfeet were after him. Seems he had killed more Indians for their scalps than any other white man. Stood 6½ feet high, weighed around 250 without an ounce of fat on his huge frame. He had tremendous strength

and more endurance than any other man in the Territory. Had a big head covered with shaggy long hair. Occasionally he trimmed it and his whiskers with a razor-sharp hunting knife. Whiskers was always stained with tobacco juice.

Was at the mouth of the Musselshell River that Johnson got his famous name. Captain Hawley kept a trading post there. On a day in July, Mrs. Hawley and a friendly squaw ventured some distance from the post to pick berries. Suddenly they were fired upon by a raiding party of Sioux warriors. Mrs. Hawley was shot through the neck and looked dead. The Indian woman ran for help and one of the men who responded was Johnson. They found that Mrs. Hawley was alive but had been scalped by the Indians. They carried her back to the Post and she lived for many years, always wearing a wig.

A battle ensued between the Indians and the wolfers, with the final outcome being 30 dead Indians. Johnson opened up the belly of one of the dead warriors and took out the liver. Holding it high in the air, he said, "Who will have their liver rare?" Several men came up to Johnson, pretending, but backed away sickened by the sight, when they saw that he was carving off slices of the still warm Indian liver and eating it raw.

The Liver Eater liked to demonstrate his strength and skill with a rifle. Like all mountain men, he lived off the land, but he took pride in killing animals with his bare hands.

Sometime in the late 1850's, Johnson decided it was time he got a wife, so he gathered his horses, the winter's catch of furs, and some extra guns and

headed for the Flathead country. He traded some of these things to Chief Bear's Head in return for a pretty teen-age daughter.

When fall came, Johnson's trapping partner, Del Gue, came to Johnson's cabin on the Little Snake and they made preparations for the winter's trapping expedition. Johnson had become very fond of his squaw who was now with child, and he hesitated to leave her alone, but a man had to earn his livelihood. When the first snow came he left. Swan was well provided for and comfortable in the log cabin.

It was a long hard winter for Johnson. He trapped harder than ever before, planning on the fine things he would buy for his child from the traders come spring when he sold his furs. But when they arrived back at the cabin, they found Swan had been killed and the cabin ransacked.

For the next ten years Johnson relentlessly sought out the Indians responsible for Swan's death and killed many others in avenging it. He again became the most feared man in the Territory. [In later years Johnson denied that he ever had an Indian wife. He also explained that he did not eat the liver but let the onlookers think he did, merely to shock them. His account of this latter incident can be found in the June 1966 *True West*, page 46.]

Horn Miller knew most of the old-time mountain men in Montana but he didn't very often talk about them. Only real friend he had was Pike Moore. He and Pike had mining claims in the New World Mining District at Cooke City. Each one had his own pack outfit and saddle horse. For sixty years, each summer they would travel the same trail up the Yellowstone to

Randall's O-T-O Dude Ranch.





John "Liver-Eater" Johnson. Born in 1824 of English parents, he was, in turn, a sailor, prospector, army scout, hunter, wolfer, whiskey smuggler, and mountain man.

their mines. They never traveled close enough together to talk, just kept in sight of each other. Their camps were always some distance apart. If one got packed up first, he would go on. They never visited each other's camp. Each had a cabin near the mines. They would watch each other's cabins of a morning and knew if there was smoke coming out of the stove pipe, all was well.

One morning there was no smoke from Horn's cabin. For all those years, Pike had never been in Horn's cabin, but he watched it all day and there was no sign of his partner. The next day there was still no smoke, so Pike concluded something must be wrong and he went to the cabin. Horn and his horse were gone. "Well, he's out after fresh meat," Pike said to himself. The third morning there was still no smoke, so Pike took his gun and started to hunt for Horn.

The second day out, he came to an old hunter's cabin. There on a pole punk was Horn, almost dead. He had

been poisoned and hadn't been able to kill any fresh meat, so had lived on roots. He had "lived Injun" for a good many years but this time he got the wrong medicine. Pike carried him back to Horn's own cabin and dropped him off. The next morning he looked over and saw smoke coming out of Horn's smokestack as usual.

THE prospectors' life was not a rosy one for Horn and Pike. Except for one sale, they went sixty years without a pay day. Horn was able to sell a thousand dollars worth of ore to a smelting company in Oregon from his lead mine, but their gold ore property, The Josephine, brought them no money in all those years. Horn said he was once offered \$60,000 for the Josephine but that wasn't enough money to drill a hole clear through Henderson Mountain and that was what he wanted to do. Before he died, Horn turned the property over to Johnny Curl who later sold it for \$35,000.

Sixty years was a long time to do assessment work on a claim and never have a pay day. Those two old pals thought a lot of each other but there would be months when never a word passed between them. No doubt as young men they were quite chummy, but as they grew older each became set in his ways and they found no need for communication in daily life, but they usually lived close enough to each other to give help if it was needed.

There had been something in Horn's early life that made him bitter against Man, and he wasn't backward about letting you know. If you happened to drop into his camp in the mountains, and it was eating time, you were welcome. But you didn't dare say anything about the cooking. Once I made the mistake of saying, "Horn, your bacon is burning."

He wheeled on me and said, "How in hell do you know but what I want it to burn?"

I have known others who were not wise to his ways and would try to give him a hand in the cooking. Horn would immediately throw out anything they touched.

Most everyone has a weak spot. Horn's weak spot was for children; they could handle him when nobody else could. It was the first winter that Horn lived with us that I discovered this. My daughter Bess who was six years old, was riding her pony up the creek from the ranch house. It was the first of December and winter was setting in. Snow was two feet deep on the level. In an aspen thicket she saw a tepee with smoke coming out the top. Her first thought was that it belonged to an Indian and that she had better run.

As she turned her horse to head for home, an old man came out of the flap of the tepee. "Don't be afraid, dear," he said gently. "I like to talk to little girls. You must be Dick Randall's daughter. I know your dad."

Bess reined in her horse but kept her distance. "I like to camp on the creek to be near my horses. They always winter well here," the man went on in a kind voice that belied his rough appearance.

"Well, I'll come back and see you later," Bess told him as she turned to ride back to the ranch house. She coaxed her pony through the deep snow, hurrying to tell her mother that there was an old man up the creek that didn't have any stockings, just sacks wrapped around his feet, and his shirt was all open in the front and the top of his hat was gone. "If you'll get me some of Dad's clothes, I'll take them up to him." Bess was never one to hesitate when something needed to be done.

As I listened to her story, I knew who the old man was and I also knew that Horn Miller would resent anything that smacked of charity. He had

Dick Randall wearing his suit of tanned elk hide.



lived like an Injun so long, he was happy in his tepee. His "California socks" (gunny sacks) were what most old-time prospectors wore.

"Now Bess," I said, "don't take any clothes up to Horn just yet, but get your brother to go with you and I think I can tell you how to get the old man to move his camp closer to the ranch buildings. Take a couple of pack horses and if you work it right, you two kids might get him to move down by the bunkhouse. Later we might even get him to move into the bunkhouse for the winter, but don't crowd him. He is gun-shy of adults, but he likes kids. You'll have to halter break him before you can lead him."

The kids were good with horses and they understood what I meant about handling the old man. They were friendly kids and I figured they might make it with Horn. I knew he wouldn't listen to me; probably just cuss me out for interfering.

Bess and her brother Gay took the ponies and pack horses and headed back toward the tepee. It was almost dark when I looked up the creek and here they came. They had Horn's camp outfit on the pack horses and the old fellow was trudging along behind them. They picked a nice spot in a clump of trees near the creek and near the ranch buildings.

It was fine for the kids to help put up the tepee, but I knew it wouldn't do for me to be seen until the camp was made and a fire going. My wife wanted me to go get the children because it was supper time, but I said, "No, those kids have done something no other person could do; they have won the old man's heart. By the noise they are making, it seems they are having a good time. I'll get them when it is their bedtime."

I could see Horn's shadow through the tepee cooking and could hear him talking and laughing with the kids. At bedtime I went to the camp and found them sitting on empty boxes near the fire and listening intently as Horn told them stories of his early life with the Indians.

I poked my head in the tepee door and said, "Hello, Horn, are the kids bothering you?"

"Naw, the kids and I get along fine," and for the first time in many years, I saw a big smile on the old prospector's face.

All the way back to our house, the kids talked about the wonderful supper Horn had cooked for them — hot biscuits, elk steak, fried potatoes, and coffee. Almost every afternoon after that the children went up to visit Horn and listen to his stories. It is too bad they couldn't have been written down because he would seldom talk to a grown person.

PIKE had holed up for the winter in a log cabin near Gardiner, and by the time cold weather really set in, the kids had won Horn over. They moved him into the bunkhouse and finally got him to take his meals with the family. Horn was not lazy and was a good handyman to have around. He was still gun shy of adults, but with the kids he was a real pal.

The week before Christmas, Horn spent three days trudging in the deep snow of the mountains looking for a tree that suited him to bring to the children. He helped them to decorate it with popcorn balls and little red net stockings full of candy. He had also helped me make a sled and some snowshoes for their presents.

Gruff old Horn entered into all the Christmas activities and seemed as excited as the children when Santa's sleigh bells were heard. I always hitched up a team to the cutter sleigh, put bells on the horses, and called out to Prancer and Dancer as we drove by the house in the dark. My old buffalo coat, and a wig and whiskers made of white horse tail, disguised me as I brought in the sack of presents and put them by the tree. The candles were lit and watched carefully as they flickered on the branches of the tree.

When I came back from putting the team away and stood in the door and watched those two children and Horn opening their packages, my heart was touched. It wasn't an old man who had fought Indians and killed buffalo; he was a child again believing in Santa Claus and Christmas. The children had gotten Horn two suits of red California underwear, the double-breasted kind with drawers tied down at the ankles. "Long handled" underwear we called them. They also had some socks for him, a warm cap, and a flannel shirt all wrapped in Christmas paper.

That evening after the children had gone to bed, Horn and I sat smoking in front of the fireplace. He looked up at one of my relics, an old long barrel squirrel gun and an ammunition pouch hanging on the wall. "Where did you get that gun, Dick?"

"From an old friend, Doc Comer. It was his father's gun. Why?"

"It looks like an old gun me and Pike had when we first met."

It was the first time Horn had been in a talking mood, and I was anxious to know how he and Pike had gotten together and to hear more of their early life.

"WAS on the banks of the Mississippi in 1849, first time I met up with Pike," Horn began. "I remember he thought I was a tough guy. Maybe I was, but I liked this kid right off and figured we might make a team.

"Pike come from Pike County, Missouri; his home was fifty miles from St. Louis. He had a one-blanket bedroll and his long barrel squirrel gun carryin' it over his shoulder. Second or third day out, he reached the edge of the city. He found a clump of willows along the river bank, sorta in a ravine. Pike spread his blanket out and fixed to go to sleep. Fore long he heard a crashing noise, so he grabbed his gun and opened his eyes and saw me standing there."

"How old were you boys then, Horn?" I asked.

"How old? Oh, fifteen, sixteen, I reckon. Anyway I said, 'Come quick, the cops are after me, and they will take you in, too. I got a boat hid in the willows near here and we can hit the river. Pike was a meek boy and never was looking for trouble, but that scared him and he came along. We found the boat and pushed out into the river ...

"What's the trouble, stranger?" Pike asked when we were safe in the river, so I told him I had knocked hell out of a cop and they were after me.

"What's yer name boy," I asked.

"Pike," come from Pike County, that's why. What's yours?"

"Horn. I come from Pike County, too, but I got my name 'cause I always load my gun from this special powder horn."

"When we got out in the middle of the river, Pike says, 'Where you goin', Horn?"

"I says, 'There's a bar in the river downstream a bit; we'll land there; my camp is a little ways back in the timber.'

"Do you live here all the time?" says Pike and I told him I stayed there summers.

"Pike had never been very far away from home before and couldn't figure out how I got along. 'I like to fish and hunt,' I told him. 'Whenever I want flour, bacon and coffee, I take fish across the river and sell them. If the fish don't bite, I get rabbits or quail. Made a lean-to shack out of some pieces of old tin I found in town. Keep my bedroll and all my grub under that.'

"Had anything to eat today, Pike?" I says to him and he said, 'Just a little bit left over from yesterday's lunch.'

"How far you come Pike?"

"Fifty miles."

"Bet you're hungry. Here's some kindlin'. You start a fire and I'll see what I can find to eat."

"We fried some spuds and cooked bacon. Had good black coffee to go along and we started talking about where we'd been and where we wanted to go. I knew where I wanted to go 'cause over in the town that day, I'd seen a bunch of covered wagons and ox

teams outfittin' for the Gold Rush to California.

"Pike," I says, 'do you think we could get on with one of them emigrant trains goin' West?' He got excited then, too, and we decided to talk to some of the wagon masters in the morning. We talked long into the night, talked of finding gold, about fighting Injuns and killin' buffalo.

"We were up at daylight trying out our guns. 'See that tree,' I says to Pike, 'take a bead on the knot-hole where a limb's been busted off.' Pike aimed and hit it dead center.

"'Good shot,' I says and raised my gun to take aim. I hit the mark dead center, too. 'That ought to get us a buffalo, Pike,' and I knew then that both of us could handle a gun, and the West was for us.

"I know a kid in town that wants to buy my boat. I'll go sell it and you go talk to the emigrants, Pike. See if they'll let us join up with their train.'

"I sold the boat and Pike found out we could go along if we would herd the oxen and help around the camps. That's how we come to be together and how we got out West."

Horn told the whole story as I sat quietly, smoking my pipe and listening but not interrupting his train of thought. Never again was Horn inclined to tell me any of his experiences. From this chance meeting the two boys developed a life-long friendship. It lasted until, as old men, they went across the Last Divide.

THE BOYS did not reach California but came to Montana instead. They hired out as buffalo hunters and later as army scouts. Finally they took up claims in the New World Mining District and for sixty years they worked those claims. Pike lived in his log cabin on Bear Creek during the winter, and when spring came and the snow waters ran off, he would pan for gold. Each year he seemed to get just enough to buy a grubstake that would see him through another winter. Horn would trap and hunt for his grubstake. Beaver and marten were plentiful.

I found out the first winter that Horn lived with us, not to cross him. Every spring his horses would be wild and hard to corral. I made the mistake of saying, "Horn, I will corral your horses for you."

"When I want 'em, I'll get 'em," he growled and I never offered again, but I could always tell when Horn was going after his horses. He would take the old .50 calibre buffalo gun; when he jumped the horses, they would give him a cloud of dust; he would follow them all day. When they stopped to feed, he would get close enough to the leader to shoot him through the top of

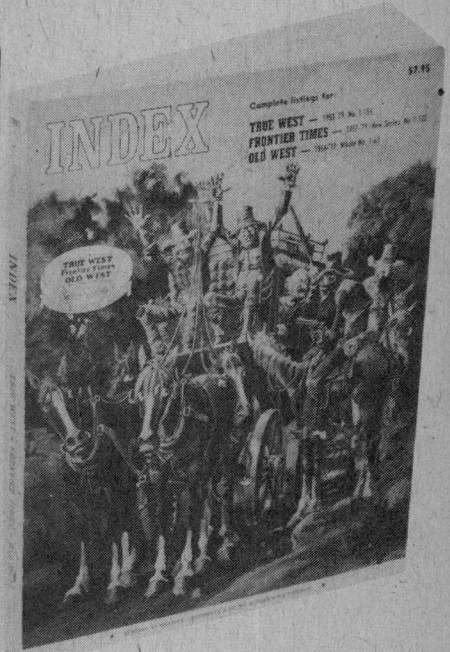
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the neck, and then neck him down with the remark, "Now, damn you, I guess you'll go in the corral."

Most of his horses were "necked" — that is, stiff-necked. With the horses corraled, he was ready to head for the mountains and another summer of prospecting.

During the winters at the ranch, Horn continued to enjoy the children and barely tolerate the rest of us. He said several times that he wanted Bess to have a half-interest in his mine when he died, but this never came to be.

Pike was eighty years old and living in Gardiner. Word came to me that he had pneumonia and was very sick. At the supper table that night, I said to Horn, "Pikes sick and they say he can't last long. I am going to town tomorrow and you'd better go with me to see him." Horn grunted but made no answer and soon left to go to his bunk house.

The next morning Horn came out to the buggy and said, "If you can get word to Pike, tell him that I'm saving all the old rusty nails I can find to put in his coffin so he can't scratch out and come back." It was typical of Horn, but we knew that down deep he still thought a lot of the man who had been his friend since boyhood.

With Pike gone, Horn seemed to lose interest in life. He sold his horses and his pack saddle equipment. He no longer wanted to work the Cooke City mines now that Pike would not be in the other cabin.

I KNEW that Horn had always been a hunter at heart, and the fall hunting season was on. I had a hunting lodge in the Hell Roaring country and took care of sixteen hunters at a time there. It was in the heart of the elk winter pasture. I said, "Horn, wouldn't you like to go out to my camp and see the elk and the country that you and Pike hunted for years?"

"Yes, I would like to make one more trip, and that's good elk country at Hell Roaring."

"Fine, I have a bunch of hunters coming today, and there's a good cook at the camp." I gave Horn a gentle mare to ride and told him to go ahead and that we would catch up with him. Horn knew that trail well.

It was some twenty-five miles from Gardiner to my hunting camp, and when we got there, Horn was already in camp. I think he had led the horse all the way. The old prospector was used to hiking on mountain trails.

The year was 1919 and the main elk herd from Yellowstone Park had migrated after a big storm hit the Park. This huge herd was now gathered in the open country at the mouth of Hell Roaring River. With binoculars I could



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see them from our camp.

"Horn," I said, "get on your horse and I'll show you something we may never see again." We rode out on a hill where we got a view of the open country and a moving mass of brown bodies and big antlers.

"What do you make of it, Horn?"

"Looks like the main herd on the move, must be thirty-five or forty thousand animals on that flat." Horn reined his horse up close to mine so we could talk. "Every year Pike and I came through here on our way from the mines. We would stop over a day and get our winter's supply of meat. Fine meat, too, a good young bull."

"Can't beat it," I said when the old man paused and seemed lost in past dreams.

A gun shot startled the herd and brought Horn back to the present. "Yes, sir, for sixty year my pardner and I traveled exactly the same trail the elk are taking. Elk never went further than Crevis Mountain down the Yellowstone River. When the bad storms hit, the main band would cross the Lamar River from Specimen Mountain and go back in the Jack Pines for shelter on Buffalo Fork of Slough Creek. Some of them went to Hell Roaring and some to Cottonwood Basin."

"They can't make it anymore, Horn, that's why I wanted us to have one last look at the elk herd like Nature intended it to be."

"I know, Dick. Damn sheep did it. Nothing left for elk to winter on."

"Every year, Horn, more elk starve; herds getting smaller. Worst thing ever happened to this country was when the Forest Service let a hundred thousand sheep graze on the Absoraka Range. Times are a changin', but for old-timers like us, it's hard to take."

We turned our horses and headed back to camp; the hunters were coming in and every one of them had gotten an elk. Easterners, they were, and excited about hunting in Montana. The cook had steaks sizzling on the stove and each hunter was eager to tell his story of the hunt. Horn listened and even added a few experiences of his own.

It took us two days then to get all the kill into camp and ready to pack out. Horn was like a boy again, excited in helping and using the skills acquired in many years of mountaineering. There were several elk in camp that had been killed by an earlier hunting party. These, too, had to be loaded and packed out. It took forty horses to pack out the meat and the trophy heads, as well as the camp equipment. This was my last hunt of the season, so everything had to be taken down to the ranch.

The trail over Speciman Mountain was a high one and steep. We bucked snow up to the horses bellies; they were good stout animals and we grained them twice a day. Our pack train got into Gardiner at ten o'clock that night. Horn had helped break trail all day. For him it was an exciting, sentimental trip, his last one over the old familiar trail through a country he knew and loved.

Horn went to Cooke City where his mines were and spent his last days there. He died at seventy-nine after turning his mine over to Johnny Curl. His final request was that he be rolled with his guns in his best blanket and buried on Henderson Mountain under a certain tree near his Josephine mine. Two landmarks on the map, Horn Miller Mountain and Miller Creek in Yellowstone Park, are memorials to Horn.

Two hardy trail blazers had taken that last Long Trail. They came West with the gold miners in '49, fought Indians, slaughtered buffalo during the time when the government thought that was the way to subdue the Indian; they staked out a claim and like so many other prospectors worked it year after year with only hope to sustain them. They were a special breed of men, those trail blazers who scouted with the army, hunted for food, and searched the mountains for gold, but never claiming land for homesteading or home.

Two kids from Pike County, Missouri, caught up by the gold fever that swept St. Louis, were friends and pardners for almost three-quarters of a century and saw the mountains of Montana change from wild-life havens to mining claims, to sheep pastures, and finally, in some places to dude ranches that again prompted a rush of Easterners to the West for adventure.

By C. WINN UPCHURCH

Photo provided by author

Left: A tintype of Heck Thomas taken in 1911 when he was Police Chief of Lawton, Oklahoma. Thomas died one year later, at the age of 62. In his youth, Heck had the distinction of being one of the youngest soldiers involved in the Civil War. He served in the 35th Georgia Volunteers as a drummer boy and courier, at age twelve.

HECK THOMAS is enshrined in the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City as a fearless U.S. Marshal who helped make the Old West safe for law-abiding citizens.

He, Chris Madsen and Bill Tilghman, were known as Judge Isaac Parker's "Three Guardsmen," but Heck preferred to work alone, and he often spent months tracking down an outlaw.

What is not generally known is that Heck Thomas was famous in his native Georgia long before he headed West to join the Texas Rangers and later Judge Parker. At the age of twelve he was a drummer boy-courier with the 35th Georgia Volunteers, and after the war he played a vital role with the Atlanta police force in putting down the insurrection that followed hostilities.

For most of my sixty-seven years I've had a great admiration for this remarkable man and his intense dislike of anyone who would flaunt the law, for he was my great-great uncle, my grandmother's brother.

I never knew Uncle Heck; he died in 1912, the year I was born, while serving as police chief of Lawton, Oklahoma. He "died with his boots on," at the age of sixty-two. By then Oklahoma, which he played such an impor-

tant part in taming, had been a state for five years. But I did hear many stories about Heck Thomas from my grandmother, Fannie Thomas Winn, while I was growing up in Atlanta.

Henry Andrew Thomas was born in 1850 in Athens, Georgia, the son of Lovick Pierce Thomas. Young Heck (nickname for Henry) was not yet a teen-ager when he went to war with his father and his uncle, Col. Edward Lloyd Thomas.

Edward Thomas had served under Gen. Winfield Scott in the war with Mexico in 1847. At the outbreak of the War Between the States, he was appointed colonel by President Jeff Davis and given authority to organize a regiment in Georgia, the 35th Georgia Volunteers.

Colonel Thomas immediately marched his regiment into the Battle of Seven Pines near Richmond, Virginia. Letters that my grandmother kept, and which are still in the family, record that when the battle began, Col. Thomas' men were poorly equipped and armed only with old flintlock guns, but they "came out bearing the best of arms." In this engagement Edward Thomas' commanding officers were killed, and he became brigadier general.

Although a mere boy, Heck served through some of the bloodiest confrontations of the war, including the Second Battle of Manassas in which 25,000 men lost their lives, reportedly the largest number to die in one battle. Years later, in a letter published in the *Atlanta Georgian*, in 1908, Heck recalled that terrible fight to the death.

HE wrote: "My pa was wounded through the right lung at the second day's battle around Richmond. He went home on furlough and when he returned he had Titey and John, two of our Negroes, with him to wait on Uncle Ed.

"The next day the Second Battle of Manassas was fought. I was pretty much in the middle of it. Well do I remember when I wrote home the pride I took in writing my address: 'Henry A. Thomas, 35th Regiment Georgia Volunteers, Thomas' Brigade, A.A. Hill's Division, Stonewall Jackson Corps.'

"Then if I could get hold of a soldier's envelope carrying something like this on it I was happy — happier than wise: 'Stand firmly by / Let ball and grapeshot fly / Trust in God and Davis / And keep your powder dry.'

"Stonewall Jackson crossed over into Maryland, capturing Frederick City, after taking Harper's Ferry and about 14,000 Federal troops. These men were held by Uncle Ed's brigade while the army was fighting the battle of Sharpsburg.



Heck Thomas Began Fighting At Age

12

— and never laid aside his gun

"We could see the smoke and hear the cannon from Harper's Ferry. While we were at the Ferry, General Lee sent an order to Uncle Ed for a fresh horse and equipment. I carried them forward and it was one of the proudest moments of my life when I found myself under the observation of Gen. Robert E. Lee."

The letter concluded with a graphic description of an engagement near a railroad cut. "The 35th Georgia had been posted in the cut. The Federals charged up to the edge of the cut five times. It was a command known as the Pennsylvania Buck Tails. For 400 to 500 yards you could walk on dead men, some places two and three feet deep. Nearly all of them were shot in the neck, face, or head.

"But the 35th held that cut just the same. They were Georgians to a man in that regiment."

Heck's brother, Lovick Pierce Thomas II, was commander of the famed 42nd Georgia Regiment of Volunteers, Stovall's Brigade, and was in twenty-one major battles including the siege of Vicksburg where, family letters show, to keep alive in the trenches the men ate rats. He fought, too, in the desperate campaign against Sherman's forces, all the way from Dalton,

Kennesaw, Resaca and Lost Mountain to Atlanta.

In the latter engagement the "Fighting 42nd" played a major role in capturing the Federal DeGress' batteries and is so depicted in the Cyclorama at Grant Park in Atlanta. In that giant circular painting Colonel Thomas is shown brandishing his sword in one hand and waving his hat in the other, urging his men up the ramparts. The commentator points out Colonel Thomas as one of the gallant defenders of the doomed city.

AFTER the war Heck returned to Atlanta and there he remained for a number of years. An article in the *Georgian*, dated March 9, 1908, relates: "It was during the days immediately after the war, when he was a teenager, that he [Heck] made his presence felt here and that for the good. Brave, fearless, not knowing the meaning of the word fear, he always used his valor in the interest of harmony and peace."

The article continued, "Although his father and afterwards his brother, Col. L.P. Thomas, were chiefs of police in Atlanta, Heck never officially joined the department yet he was ever in evidence when nerves and good judgment were needed."

Those were hectic days in Atlanta, days and nights of the carpetbaggers, rampaging ex-slaves, and outlaws in general on the loose. Trouble was always brewing — fights, vandalism, theft, rapes, were everyday occurrences. It was Heck Thomas and men with whom he had served in the war who quelled, often without bloodshed, outbreaks that threatened a city trying to rise from the destruction wrought by Sherman and his men. Once Heck was seriously wounded while trying to subdue a drunk, suffering a knife wound that left a permanent scar across his face.

Atlanta eventually quieted down, and one would have thought that Heck Thomas, now in his early twenties and having led an exciting life that saw him near death many times, would have enjoyed the peace and quiet of the Georgia countryside. But not this unusual man. The most noteworthy aspect of his life was about to begin.

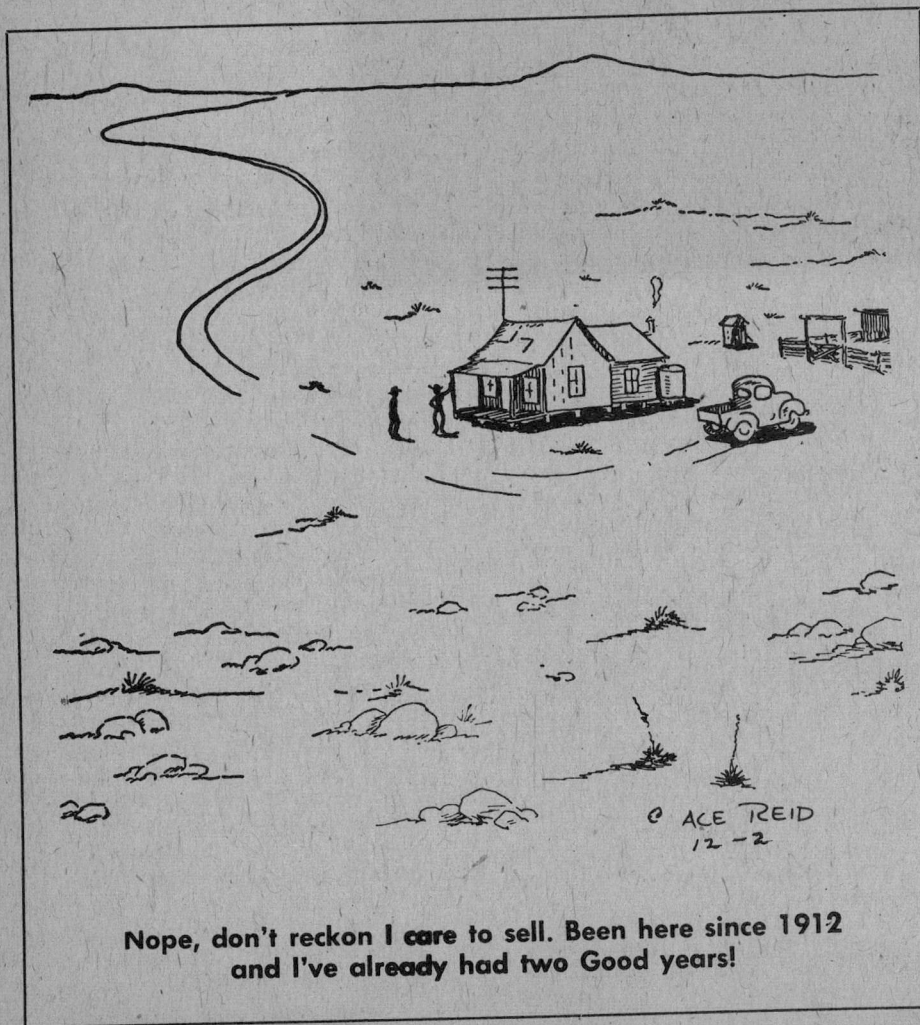
Though the *Georgian* reported, "Heck was known and recognized as a man of peace as well as a fearless one; his word and advice carried heavy weight in those days," Heck was restless and yearned for more adventures. With his bride, his cousin "Belle" Gray, they headed for Texas where Heck accepted a job as messenger for bank shipments. He was riding shotgun on a \$22,000 bank transfer when an incident occurred that was to project him into the national limelight and launch him into a distinguished career as one of the most feared lawmen in the Old West.

It was in a railroad express car, not a stagecoach, that Heck accompanied the large shipment. Heck was locked in the car when the train was stopped as it lumbered up a steep grade. He heard shots and pounding hoofbeats, signaling a holdup.

Newspaper accounts of the robbery described how Heck automatically reached for his rifle, then put it down. His job wasn't gunfighting; it was protecting the money. Perhaps he could fool the robbers. He knelt and twirled the safe's dial.

Minutes later shots rang out and the door lock fell apart as two men burst into the car. Heck, a tall, stocky man slouched wide-eyed in the corner. "Open the safe!" one of the men barked.

Acting terrified, Heck knelt and nervously twisted the dial. Breathing hard and working with painful slowness, he seemed unable to find the combination. He was stalling. But it didn't work. One of the bandits fired a shot that whistled past Heck's head. The men meant business, and Heck knew that it was either his life or the open safe. He swung open the door.



Nope, don't reckon I care to sell. Been here since 1912 and I've already had two Good years!

The robbers shoved him to one side and reached inside. They pulled out a large package. Tearing away the cover, they saw greenbacks inside.

The outlaws darted out the shattered door and leaped onto their horses. Three other men were waiting for them. As the five rode off, Heck rushed to the door and one of the outlaws fired several shots at him.

Heck reeled, his hand over his left eye. When train crewmen arrived they found the young Georgian stretched out on the floor, his head in a pool of blood.

The criminals were identified as Sam Bass and his gang, the most talked-about outlaws in Texas at that time.

For several days Heck Thomas lay at death's door. Only the finest medical care available, provided by his grateful employers, saved his life and his eyesight. For Sam Bass and his gang did not get the money that had been entrusted to Heck Thomas. All they got was a stack of old newspapers clippings sandwiched between a few real bills. Most of the \$22,000 came through the robbery untouched, hidden by Heck in the express car's stove.

His bravery and cunning in outwitting Bass made Heck a celebrity, but inside he was very angry. He had offered no resistance to the outlaws and yet, out of sheer viciousness, one had shot him anyway. Heck wanted to teach them a lesson, and he knew the best way to bring that to pass was to join the Texas Rangers. It was only a short time after the ill-fated express holdup that the Rangers sprang the trap that ended the career of Sam Bass and his gang. When Bass and his cronies tried to hold up the bank at Round Rock, Heck was among the Rangers discreetly scattered about the area. Bass did escape from the shoot-out in town, but the next day he was found dying alongside the trail.

HECK became a legend along the Red River in Texas. His daring exploit in apprehending the notorious Lee brothers was typical. Governor John Ireland called it the most remarkable feat in Ranger history. Pink and Jim Lee, murderous and elusive, had become such a public menace that the State Legislature offered \$1,000 for their capture. Alva Roff, a rancher who had suffered a great personal loss through the brothers, put up an additional \$2,500 each. Heck Thomas, in making plans for their capture, chose a long-time and trusted friend, Jim Taylor as a back-up and later shared the reward money with him. It was Heck Thomas, however, who out-thought and out-maneuvered the Lees.

After ten years as a Ranger, Heck again grew restless. He heard that in the Oklahoma Territory a lawman



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could find real action. That's how Heck came to join Judge Isaac Parker, known as the Hanging Judge, headquartered in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Heck was just the sort of man Judge Parker wanted. From his courthouse Judge Parker presided over a territory of thousands of square miles in which his court was the supreme authority, subject only to the President.

The Judge would make out a warrant and hand it to Heck with the words: "He's out there somewhere. Go get him." Heck, along with Chris Madsen and Bill Tilghman soon became known and feared throughout the territory as Judge Parker's "Three Guardsmen." But most of the time Heck worked alone.

His search for Ned Christie, a half-breed renegade wanted for murder, became one of the longest manhunts in the annals of the West. For ten months Heck tracked the desperado, finally cornering him in an abandoned fort. But Christie wouldn't come out. Heck solved the problem — with dynamite. That brought Christie out, running and shooting, but a salvo of shots from Heck's Winchester ended his infamous career.

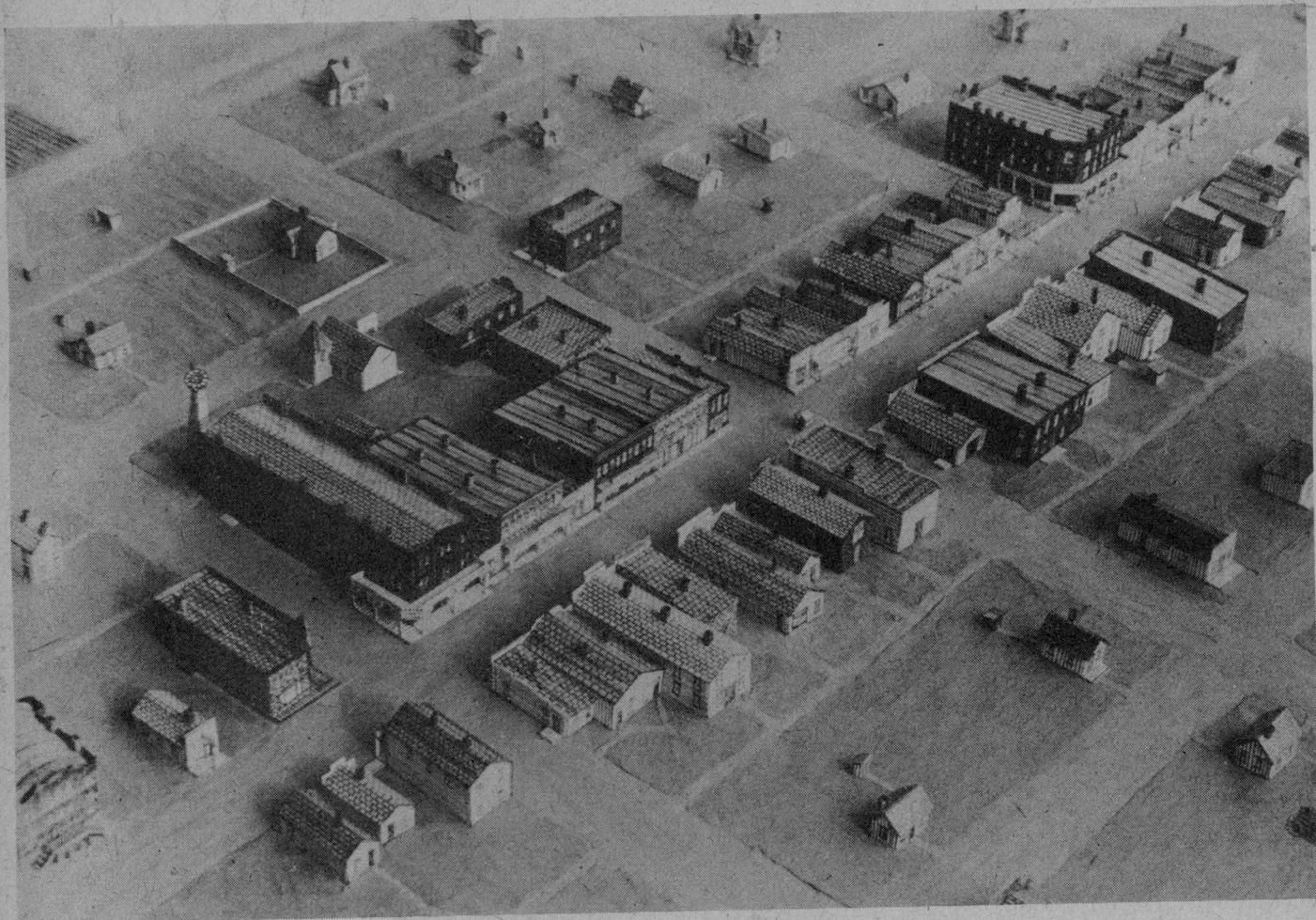
Dozens of outlaws were brought to bay by this courageous, though gentle, Georgian. NBC wanted to base a series

on Heck Thomas' life, but couldn't reach an agreement with members of his family, so the producers changed the series to Hec Ramsey, starring Richard Boone, in a highly fictionalized characterization that was nothing like the real Heck Thomas. (My protests to Boone, NBC, and Jack Lord Productions brought only an autographed photo of Boone.)

When Oklahoma Territory was finally cleaned up and settlers able to live there with their families, Heck was invited to organize and head the police department in the town of Lawton, Oklahoma. That's where he died, in office, in 1912.

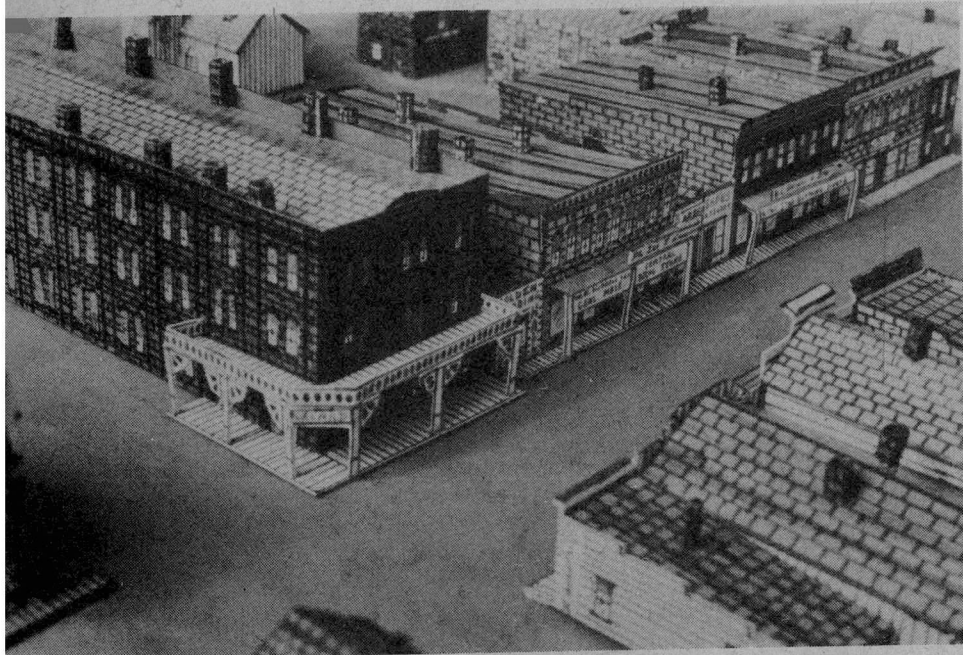
His obituary, which appeared in the *Georgian*, stated: "Heck Thomas was more than six feet, and a perfect specimen of the athlete. Cut to pieces by the Bowie knife, stabbed by the Mexican stiletto, and bullet-scarred by outlaws of all nations, Heck Thomas died with many wounds on his body, and yet he never took a life he could have saved. He never bore a grudge against a living being, and was always a Chesterfield and the true Southern gentleman in the presence of the 'gentle sex'."

The old-style journalism said it all, about a truly great American who put his love of country ahead of personal safety.



CALDWELL -- "The Border Queen"

"South-enders" built the three-story Leland Hotel, which had fifty rooms. A few doors to the right was Unsell's Lone Star Clothing House, a favorite of visiting cowboys.

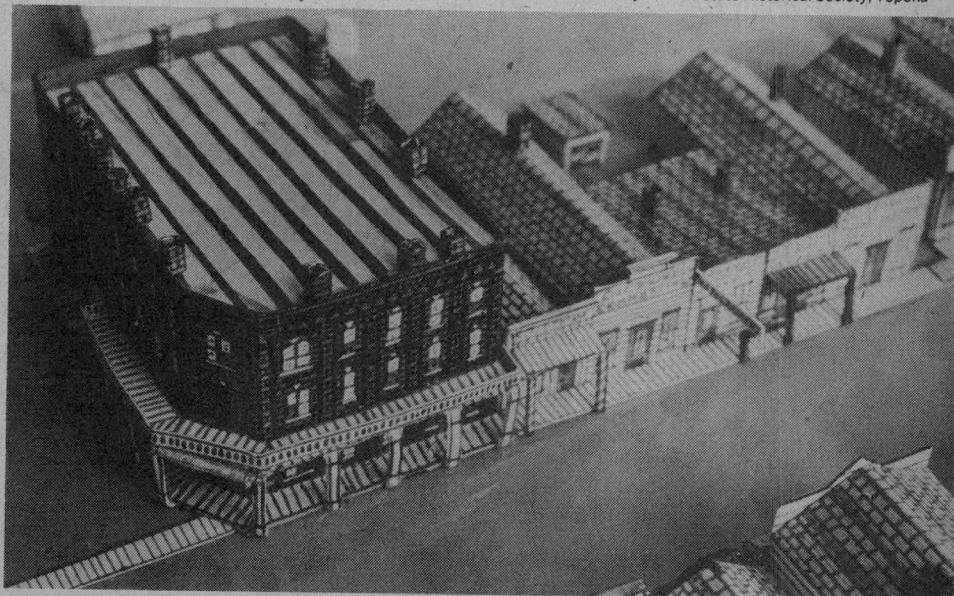


An exact reproduction except for the cowboys, the hard-cases, a lot of dust and a little powder smoke.

At left: A bird's-eye view of early Caldwell, Kansas in miniature. In this photo Main Street runs diagonally from lower left to upper right. The upper portion of Main Street was dominated by the Southwestern Hotel. This view depicts all of the main business section. At right (top): Caldwell as it appeared during the mid-1880s. The large building to right of center is the brick opera house. In the distance the two-story brick school can be seen. Below, right: The three-story brick Southwestern Hotel was erected by "north-enders." The hotel featured a ladies' parlor and had thirty-eight rooms. One of the residents was Marshal Henry Brown. Map at bottom of page shows some of the points of interest in old Caldwell.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka



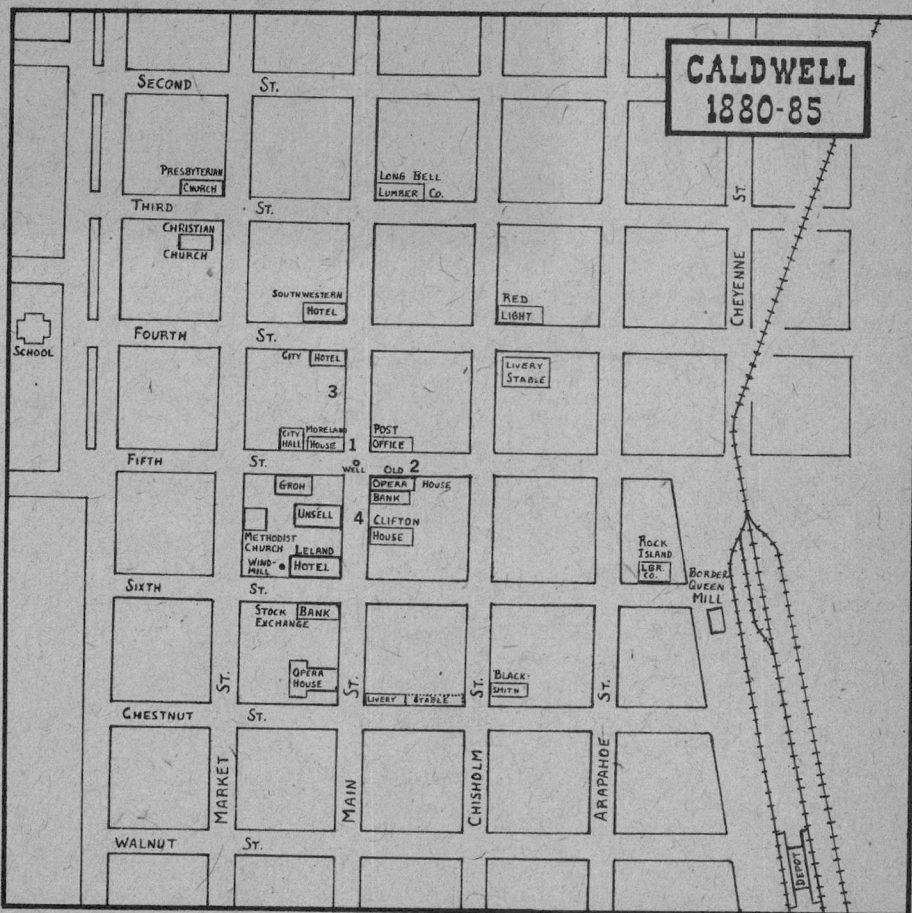
By BILL O'NEAL

Photos provided by author; model photos courtesy Lee Kelly, Carthage, Texas.

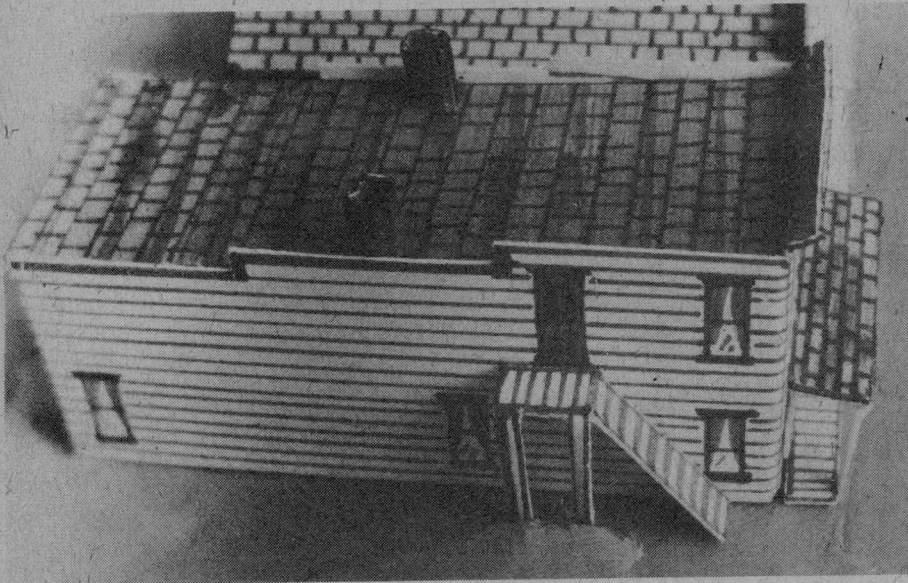
SEVERAL years ago, while researching the life of gunfighter Henry Brown, I visited Caldwell, Kansas, once a rowdy cattle town which Brown had tamed in the early 1880s. Unlike Abilene (6,661), Dodge City (14,127) or Wichita (276,554), Caldwell today maintains the same population level (1,540) as it did during its heyday. The business section of Main Street remains three blocks in length, although it has shifted a block to the south, and many of the stone or brick commercial buildings are the same ones visited by Texas cowboys of the 1880s and by anxious land rush participants in 1893.

Fascinated by the Old West atmosphere which still lingers in Caldwell, I began to search for old street maps, photographs, newspaper accounts and other information concerning the Border Queen during its turbulent frontier period. An unusual number of old photos (many of them unreproducible) turned up. A voluminous centennial edition of the *Caldwell Messenger* provided a mine of material. The Kansas State Historical Society furnished two nineteenth century street maps. Caldwell residents were cooperative and informative. My interest was further stimulated by the discovery that my great-grandfather rode through Caldwell in the 1870s while driving cattle up the Chisholm Trail.

In time I accumulated most of the material available on Caldwell during the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s. More captivated than ever by the former cattle town, I began to construct a scale model of Caldwell in the mid-



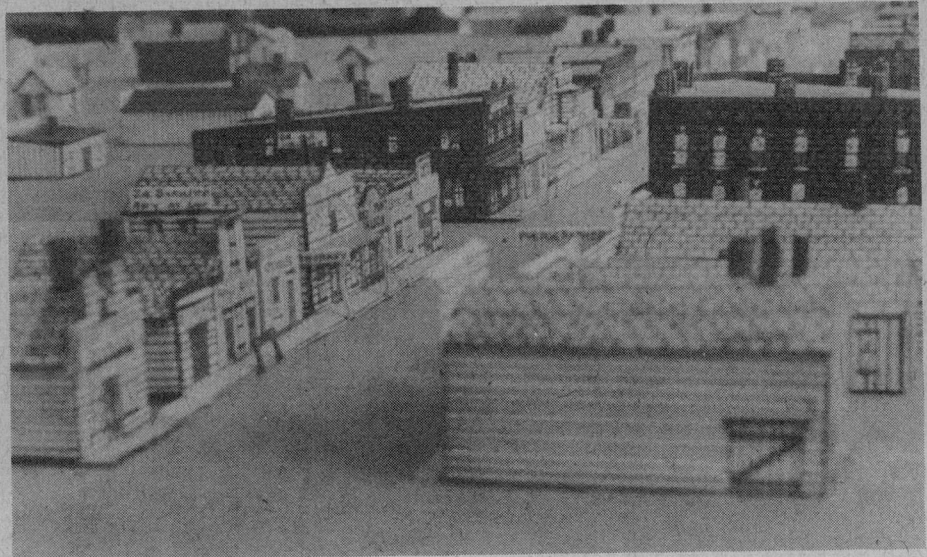
1. Where George Flatt shot Adams and Wood
2. Where Mike Meagher was shot
3. Where Henry Brown shot Spotted Horse
4. Where Henry Brown shot Newt Boyce



Above: Former Marshal and Mayor Mike Meagher was mortally wounded during a shootout as he stood at the outside stairway of the old frame opera house at the corner of Main and Fifth.

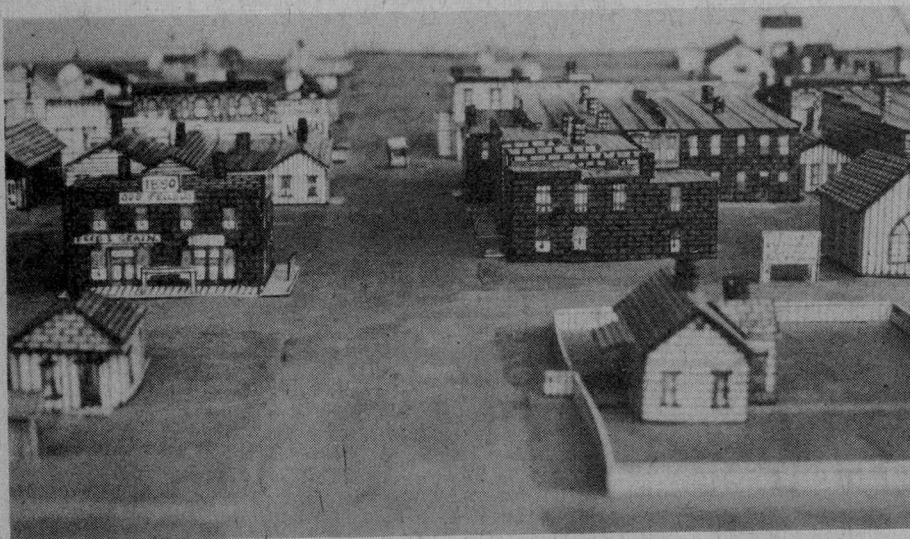
1880s. I attempted to reproduce thirty city blocks and two hundred structures of old Caldwell. In 1976 I donated the model to the Border Queen Museum, located in Caldwell's city park.

The Chisholm Trail was blazed from Texas to Abilene in 1867. Two years later some 350,000 Longhorns were driven up the trail, and an enterprising saloonkeeper named Curley Marshall erected Caldwell's first building. A cabin constructed of thick logs, the First Chance Saloon greeted Texas drovers just as they crossed the line into Kansas, and as they rode back toward the Lone Star State a Last Chance sign reminded them of the prohibition against liquor in Indian Terri-



Looking south on Main Street from the extreme north end of the business district.

Below: Looking east on Fifth Street. In center of street is the city well.



tory.

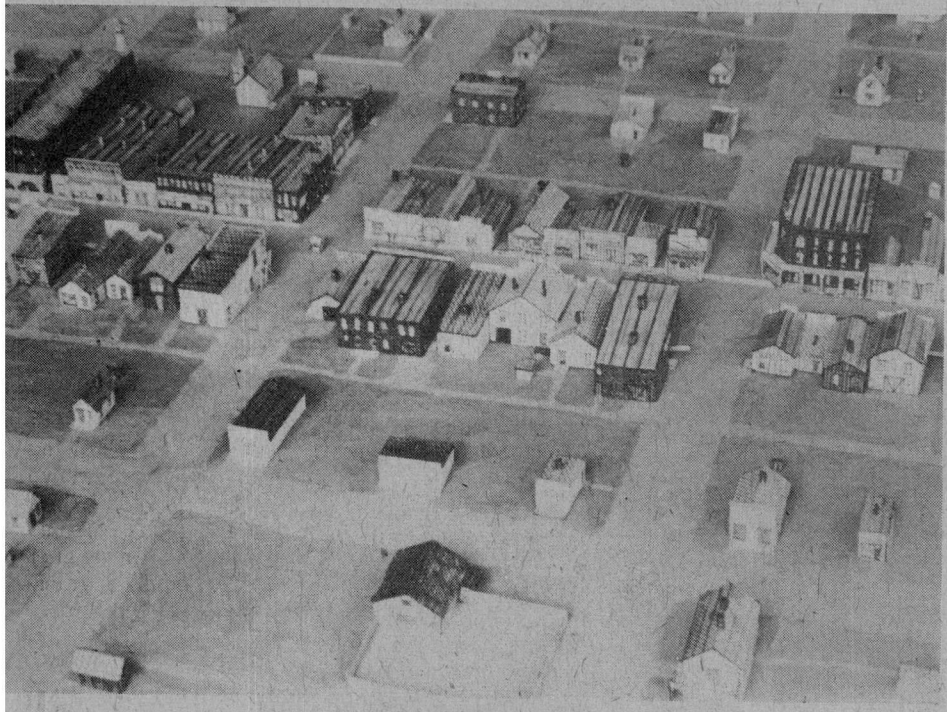
In 1871 a few log and frame buildings began to spring up about a mile north of the First Chance-Last Chance. The little community was named Caldwell in honor of a Kansas senator. Most of the ramshackle structures flanked the Chisholm Trail, and today a paved roadway designated Chisholm Street covers the ground trod a century ago by hundreds of thousands of Texas cattle.

ON July 2, 1871 a drummer named George Peas acquired the dubious distinction of becoming the first man shot to death in Caldwell. The following year Doc Anderson was gunned down while clerking in J.M. Thomas' store, and shortly afterward a man named Fiedler died in a gunfight. On August 20, 1874, the year in which a grass-

hopper plague swept through Caldwell, T.T. Oliver shot a citizen named McCarty to death, then was lynched after dark.

Caldwell's growing reputation as a rowdy trail town was cinched in 1879. In a spectacular shootout, two-gun man George Flatt barged into the Moreland House to confront the drawn revolvers of Texas cowboys Jake Adams and George Wood. When the smoke cleared Adams and Wood were dead. A year later Flatt was assassinated in Caldwell's Main Street.

Also in 1879 George and Mag Woods came down from Wichita to erect the Red Light on a prominent corner of Chisholm Street. The two-story frame gambling hall, saloon and



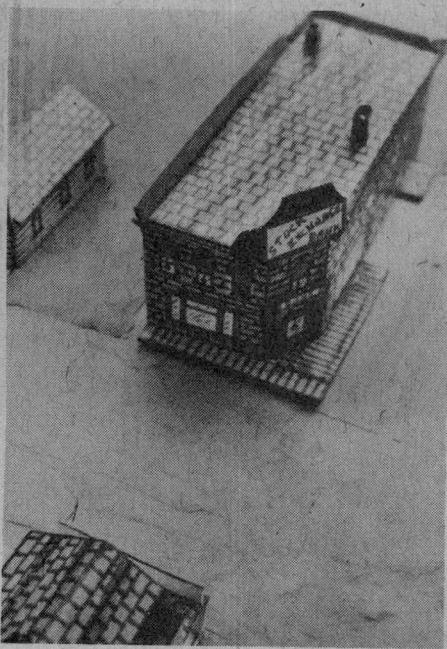
stock without violating the technicalities of the law. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe stretched its tracks into Caldwell, which then became the final terminus of the Chisholm Trail.

A boom promptly ensued, and the center of the town shifted uphill a block to the west. The flimsy buildings of Chisholm Street were forsaken for more substantial masonry structures, many of which still stand. A dozen saloons flourished: Fitzgerald's, the Occidental, the Red Front, Moore Brothers Saloon, the Golden Wedding, the Moreland House, the Kentucky Saloon, Phillips', the Exchange, Robison's Saloon, Flatt and Horseman's, and the Red Light, then thriving under the guiding hand of widow Mag Woods.

THE permanent population of Caldwell, as well as the numerous seasonal residents, were served by two banks; two newspapers; a two-story frame Opera House; Presbyterian, Methodist and Christian Churches; and a number of law and medical offices, several of which were located in the Odd-Fellows' "block." The most popular commercial establishment was A.S. Groh's Cheap Cash Chicago Store, which catered to Texas cowboys. So did the Lone Star Clothing House.

Other prominent businesses included H.A. Ross & Co. Dry Goods, Horner's Drug Store, W.N. Hubble & Co. Gen'l Mdse., Hulbert's Gun Shop, Hockaday's Tinware and Hardware, Levi Thrailkill's, Smith & Ross' Grocery Store, Charles H. Fay's Grocery, the Morris Grocery, and York-Parker-Draper Co.

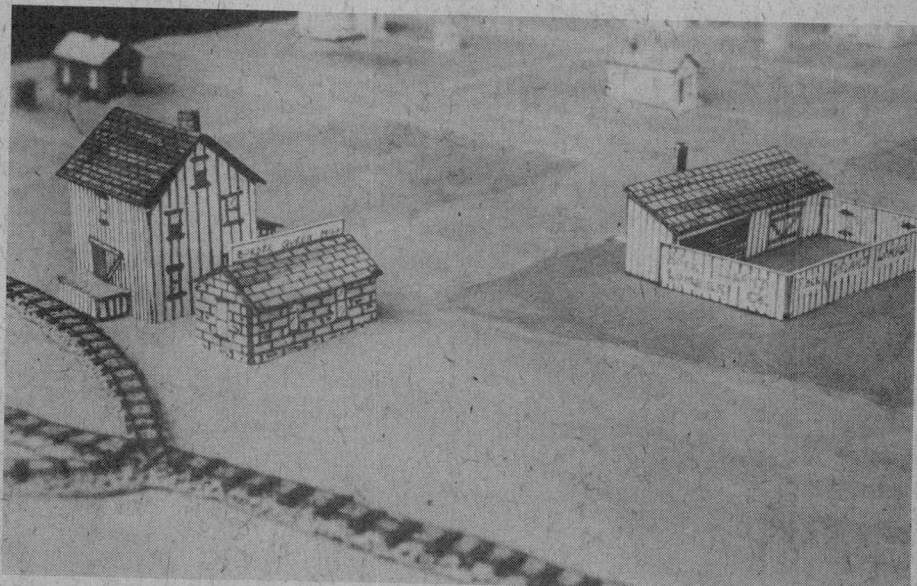
There were livery stables, restaurants, lumber yards, jewelry stores, a bookshop, tonsorial parlors and a Chinese laundry. A city well was dug at

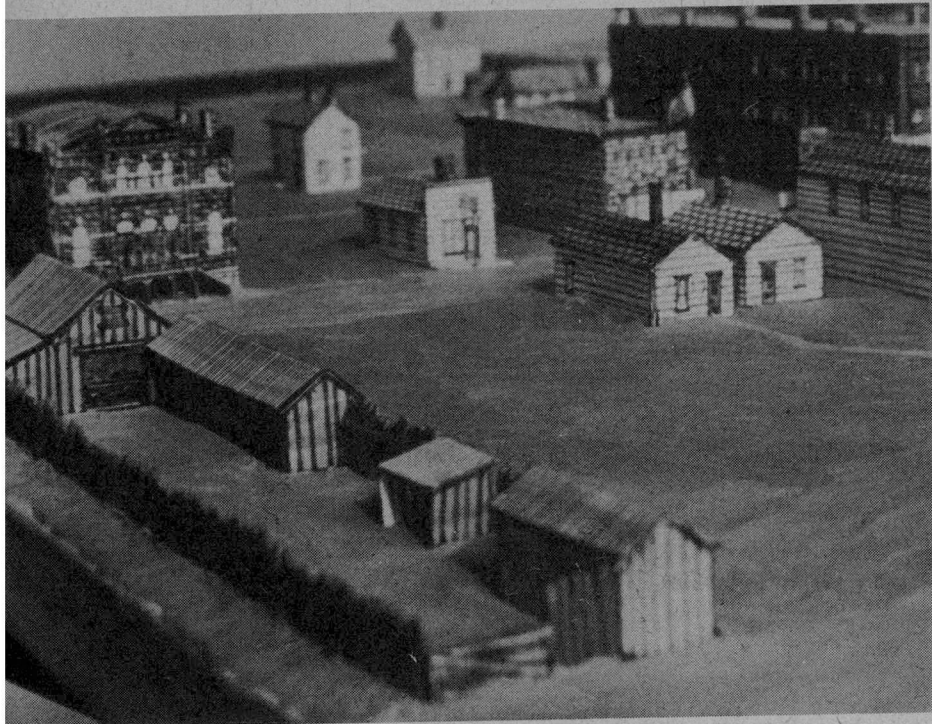


Above: Another aerial view. The street running left to right in foreground is Chisholm. After the railroad arrived in 1880, the business section moved a block west to Main Street. The city well can be seen at the intersection of Fifth and Main. At left: The "south-enders" established the Stock Exchange Bank in 1881. The building, somewhat remodeled, still occupies its corner of Main Street today. Below: Adjacent to the railroad tracks on Caldwell's east side was the Border Queen Mill. Nearby was the Rock Island Lumber Company.

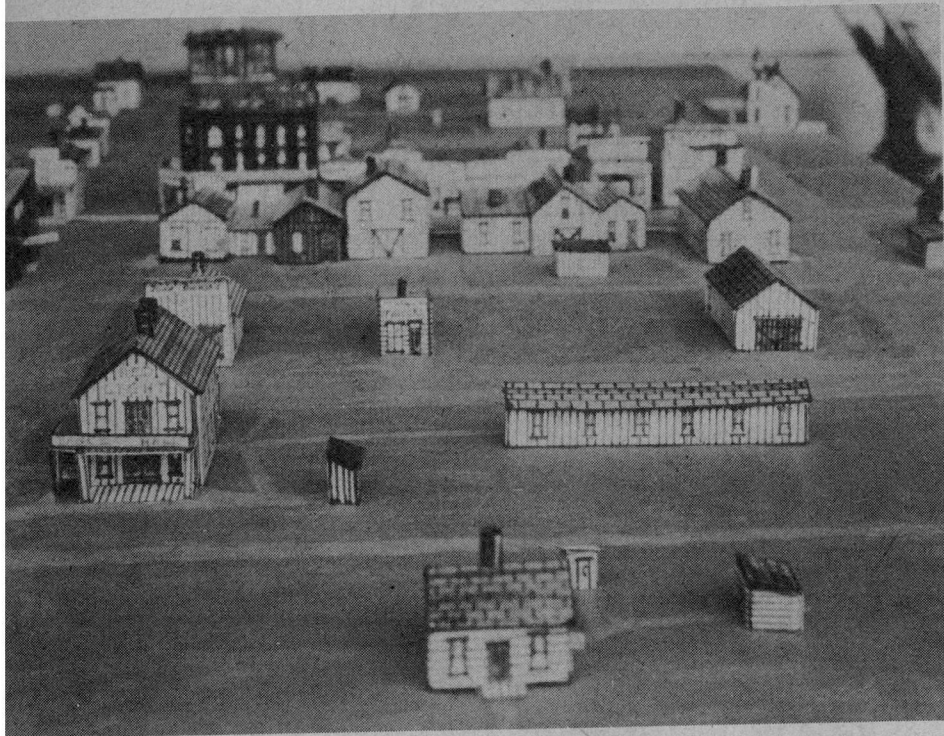
warehouse quickly became known as one of the West's most notorious dives. In 1880 Deputy Marshal Frank Hunt was shot to death in the Red Light, and two years later Marshal George S. Brown was brutally murdered there. Proprietor George Woods himself was shot dead in the Red Light in 1881.

In 1880 a significant event in Caldwell's history occurred. Legislation had been secured by farmers to bar cattle from the Chisholm Trail. It was reasoned that if the railroad were extended from Wichita fifty miles south to Caldwell, stockyards built south of the Border Queen could handle live-





Above: A livery stable and outbuildings, surrounded by a picket fence, was across Main Street from the brick opera house. Below: George and Mag Woods' Red Light (at left foreground) was Caldwell's most notorious dive. It had a saloon on one end, a dance hall on the other, and the upstairs rooms were used by prostitutes. Two Caldwell lawmen and proprietor George Woods were shot to death in the Red Light.



the primary intersection of Main Street. A two-story brick school was erected west of the business section in 1881-82. Both itinerants and permanent guests found shelter in small hotels and boarding houses such as the City Hotel and the Clifton House.

By this time boom conditions had triggered a clash between cattlemen

and mercantilists, known respectively as "south-enders" and "north-enders." In 1881 stockmen built a vast brick Opera House which opened with a traveling troupe's version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The huge structure had a balcony and modern stage, and it dominated the south side of town until it burned in 1918. Mercantilists,

centered in the north end of the business district, enviously planned their own civic auditorium, but financial reality persuaded them to reconsider.

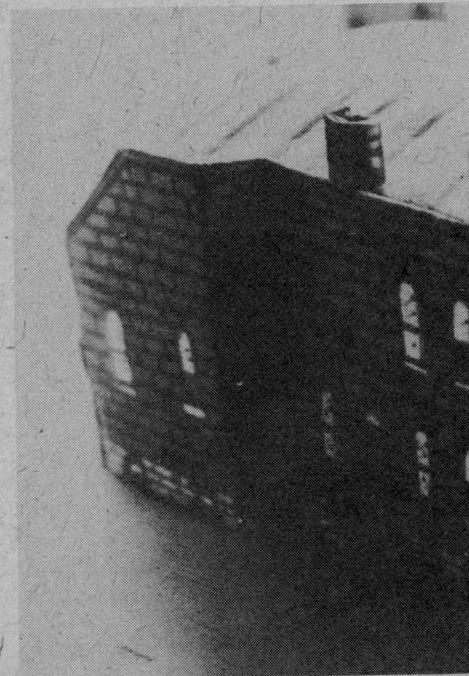
Late in 1881 south-enders established the Stock Exchange Bank, which would extend loans to cattlemen and which would be located in an impressive two-story stone building on a corner at the lower end of Main Street. Alarmed north-enders formed the Caldwell Savings Bank early in 1882.

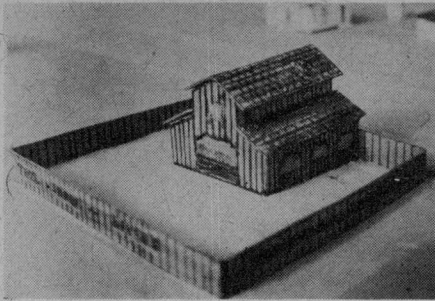
When, recognizing the inadequacies of Caldwell's hostelries, south-enders began to organize a group of backers for a substantial hotel, north-enders immediately countered with a hotel project of their own. Both three-story brick buildings were erected on corner lots on the west side of Main Street. The Leland Hotel, across the street from the Stock Exchange Bank, had fifty rooms, a view of Indian Territory, and the finest dining facilities in the community (excellent meals continued to be served in the Leland until the 1960s). A windmill behind the Leland provided a private water supply.

At the north end of town was the Southwestern Hotel, featuring a second-floor ladies' parlor and thirty-eight rooms. When a stone city hall and jail was constructed, it was diplomatically situated in the center of the business district just off Main Street.

NORTH-ENDERS and south-enders mutually agreed that if Eastern Cattle buyers were to be attracted to Caldwell, the town's homicide rate must be curbed. In 1881 Mayor Mike Meagher and another citizen had been

A traveling troupe gave the first performance in the opera house back in 1881 with the play, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The structure burned in 1918.

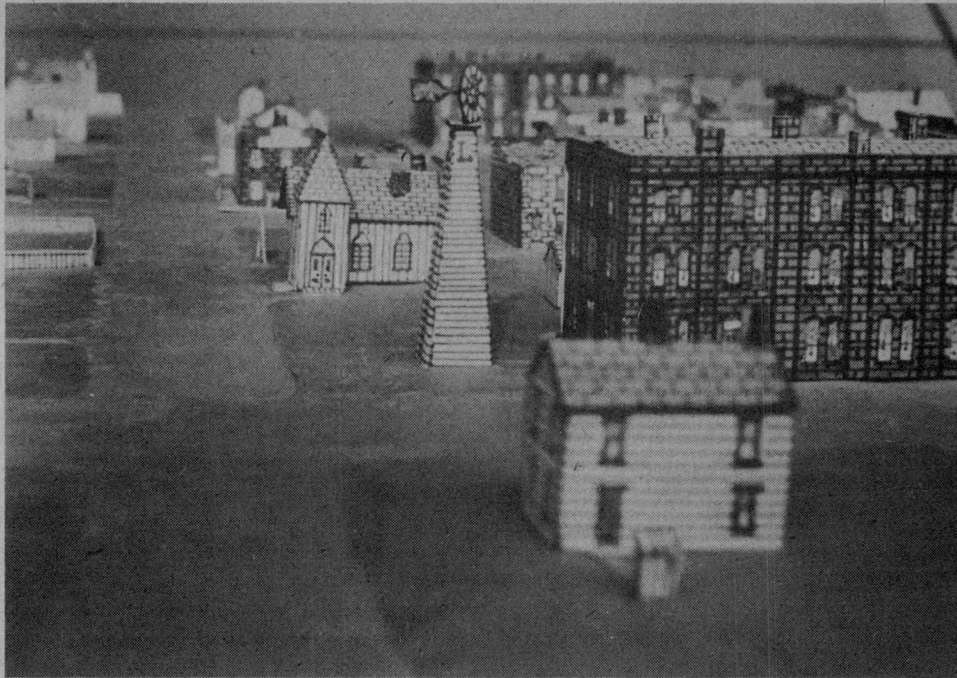




Thomas Snow operated one of several Caldwell livery stables.

slain in a street fight with Texas cowboys, and the following year drovers killed Marshall George Brown in the Red Light. If ranking city officials continued to be gunned down in street fights, buyers would shun the town and Caldwell's sudden prosperity would fade. Accordingly, complete backing was extended to new Marshal Bat Carr and his deputy, Henry Brown.

Brown, an able gunman who had ridden with Billy the Kid, intimidated Carr, who soon left town. Brown was promoted to the vacancy and imported a Texas hardcase who currently called himself Ben Wheeler. Brown shot two men to death in Caldwell, and for the remainder of his tenure the streets of the Border Queen were free from gunplay. In 1884 Brown and Wheeler slipped out of town and robbed a bank in neighboring Medicine Lodge. They killed two bank officials and were lynched, but by this time Caldwell had



Above: A windmill stood behind the Leland Hotel. The Methodist Church was just across from the hotel. Below: A two-story brick schoolhouse dominated the west side of town. Modern school buildings occupy the site today.

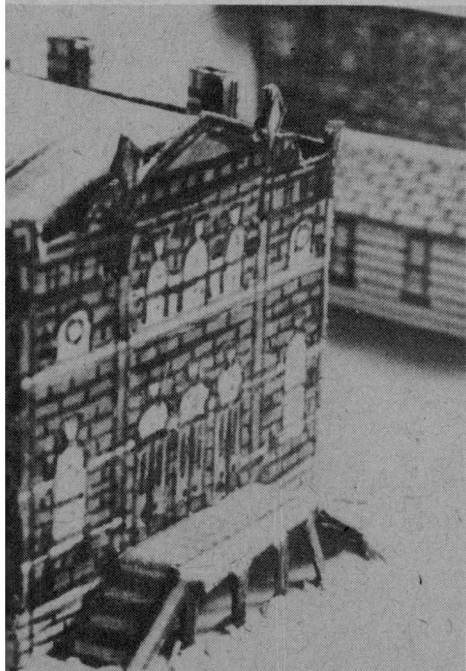


been on its good behavior for so long that it remained quiet.

Penetration of Texas by railroads virtually closed the Chisholm Trail by 1885, and only once more was the Border Queen to feel her old frontier exuberance. In 1893 the Cherokee Strip was opened to settlers. This six million-acre tract was located just below Caldwell, and for a while the town teemed with eager homesteaders. At noon, September 23, 1893, Caldwell witnessed the West's final tumultuous land rush.

Today Interstate 35, a major north-south artery, is routed fifteen miles east of Caldwell. Bypassed by traffic, the town is surrounded by wheat farms and is a quiet agricultural center of concrete sidewalks, paved streets, service stations, neon signs and towering grain elevators.

But a number of the old structures have withstood the changes of nearly a century, and in just the right light it is not difficult to imagine the sounds of a frontier saloon, of cattle hoofs, and gunfire.



CARGOES OF DEATH

By **DON MILLER**

Photos provided by author

**Endless — endless —
those who did not die
became carriers!**

THE IMPACT of smallpox on Native Americans in the West in the 19th century was deadly. Thousands of Indian men, women and children were cut down by the grim disease against which they had no defense. In fact, their usual anti-smallpox remedy of taking a sweat bath followed by a plunge into cold water probably gravely aggravated the sickness.

The Indians knew that smallpox was contagious, and they frequently deserted its victims. If a healthy Indian stayed with a stricken relative or friend during the ordeal, he or she applied a lotion made from berries of the sweet sumac. Sometimes, the Indian "nurse" crushed the berries into a powder and dusted it over the affected parts. In some cases, the "down" of cattails, fried in coyote grease, was used as a poultice.

Smallpox outbreaks were well-known along the Upper Missouri during the 1800s. But the big scourge that swept the High Plains in 1837, began with the deadliest boat run in the history of the Upper Missouri country.

Even as the pestilence ravaged the area, a trader of the American Fur Company briefly chronicled something of the horror, misery and death that smallpox wrought at and near the trading post of Fort Clark, located about fifty-four miles above present-day Bismarck, North Dakota.

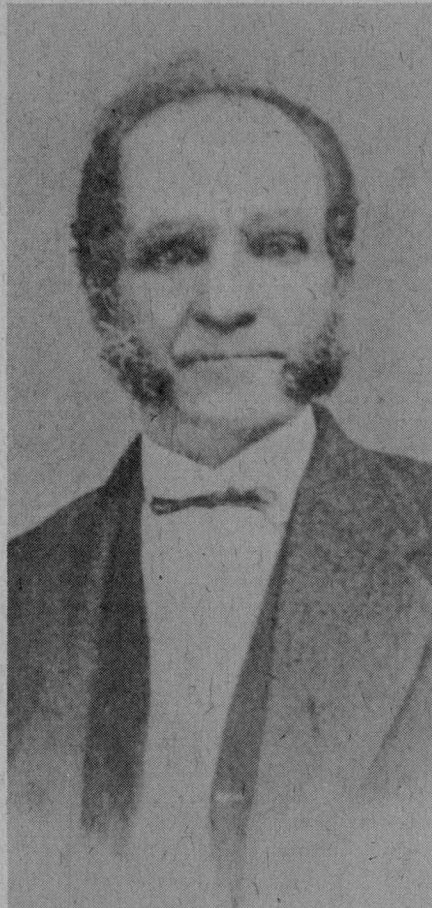
Francis Chardon, the keeper of the daily journal, apparently joined the American Fur Company in 1827. The following year found him toiling at

Fort Union. In 1834 Chardon came to Fort Clark.

Fort Clark had been established to serve the Mandan trade. It "served" them, all right — with a deadly blow that made them culturally extinct. Nearby Arikara and Gros Ventre tribes almost suffered a similar fate.

ABOUT April 17, 1837 the American Fur Company steamboat *St. Peter's* left St. Louis with 33-year-old Captain Bernard Pratte, Jr. at the helm. A dozen days later the *St. Peter's* arrived at the military post of

Montana Historical Society Photo



Above: Two Mandan survivors of the smallpox epidemic, circa 1872. At left: Charles Larpenteur.

Fort Leavenworth, where a deckhand fell ill. The steamboat unloaded and proceeded.

North of Fort Leavenworth, near Blacksnake Hills, Captain Pratte was urged by his passengers to put the sick man ashore, for he appeared to be suffering from smallpox. Instead, Pratte ordered full steam ahead.

By the time the steamboat reached the Council Bluffs Agency north of where the Platte and Missouri Rivers join, several new victims were agonized from quick pulse, insatiable thirst, high fever, chills, vomiting, constipation, and severe head and back aches.



Courtesy Provincial Archives of Manitoba

Rashes covered various parts of their bodies. Blisterlike vesicles popped up on the skin, filling with ugly pus. For some, the vesicles finally broke and dried up and formed scabs that left deep-pitted scars.

The crew infected three Arikara women who had boarded the *St. Peter's* to join their tribe living upstream near Fort Clark. By the time the death boat reached the Sioux Agency on June 5, the Arikaras and others aboard the *St. Peter's* were either victims of the pox or carriers of it.

Infected annuity goods from the steamboat were hurriedly distributed to the Yankton and Santee Sioux at the Agency; and just as hurriedly the *St. Peter's* pulled away from the dock and steamed upstream. On June 6 or 7

she made a brief stop at Fort Pierre to the northwest, and dropped off more tainted cargo.

By 3:00 p.m. Monday, June 19 the *St. Peter's* had reached Fort Clark and unloaded a year's supplies, as well as its cargo of smallpox implanted in red and white bodies. The following day the boat left for its final upriver destination — Fort Union — 300 miles to the northwest.

Among those to arrive at Fort Union was Jacob Halsey, who had boarded at Fort Pierre. Halsey had immediately come down with the disease, as had others.

The American Fur Company's Charles Larpenteur consulted a medical book, thought he knew what must be done, and took charge of attempting to halt the disease's spread. Since no serum was available for vaccination, he decided to use pus from Halsey's skin eruptions. This move proved fatal. Unsuspecting persons were inoculated — not vaccinated — as this ill-advised treatment literally placed death in the victim's veins.

Smallpox spread rapidly throughout the fort, striking almost all of the eighty-five to ninety people there. Major Alexander Culbertson was lucky, he got only a light case. Most were not as fortunate. At first the victims were buried, but soon the number of men equal to the task of gravedigging was so small that the bodies were consigned to the river.

MEANWHILE at Fort Clark, a group of rambunctious young Black-

feet scaled the pickets of the post in late June and drove off some of the fur company's horses. Men from the fort chased and caught them. The Indians gave up the horses, and took on the smallpox from their infected pursuers.

Next a band of Assiniboines returned from a hunting trip to find the fort closed. They demanded to be admitted, but were told that smallpox was raging within. The skeptical Indians didn't understand the situation and became frustrated, and then angry. Finally someone inside the fort showed the Assiniboines a small boy, his face covered with pox eruptions. The Assiniboines left, but took the disease with them.

Word came downstream to Fort Clark from Fort Union that ten out of every twelve Indians in the area were dead, meaning at least 700 Blackfeet and 800 Assiniboines. What little news got through to Fort Clark from the Sioux Agency to the south boded no better. By mid-July the Yankton and Santee Sioux were almost wiped out.

But Fort Clark, situated between Fort Union and the Sioux Agency, was clearly the epicenter of the horror. The Mandans, Arikaras and Gros Ventres near the fort suffered terribly.

Chardon's daily journal contained an exact record of the number of rats he killed each month. It also listed an approximate record — for awhile — of Indians killed by smallpox in and near Fort Clark.

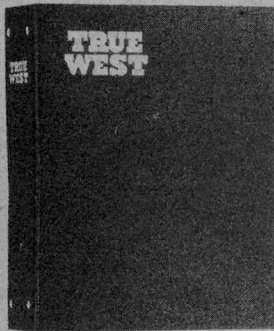
The Philadelphia-born trader stoically wrote of the first death: "Friday, July 14, 1837. A Young Mandan died

Major and Mrs. Alexander Culbertson and their son, Joe; circa 1863.

Montana Historical Society Photo



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today of the Smallpox — several others has caught it.”

The Thursday, July 26 entry noted: “The [Mandans] has caught the small pox, and got crazy and has disappeared from camp — the small pox has broke out among them, several has died.” The following day’s entry simply states: “four died today.”

On Friday, July 28, Chardon notes: “The Mandans & Rees gave us two splendid dances, they say they dance, on account of their not having a long time to live, so they expect to all die of the smallpox — and as long as they are alive, they will take it out in dancing.”

Chardon must have lost count of the casualties, for the Saturday, July 29 entry simply states: “Several more Mandans died last night.”

On Sunday, some news arrived. Chardon wrote: “Another report from the Gros Ventres today say, that they are arrived at their Village, and that 10 or 15 of them have died . . . they threaten Death and Distruction to us all at this place, saying that I was the cause of the smallpox making its appearance in this country.”

Mandan warrior Four Bears was certain that the white man had brought his people the disease. On July 30 he gave an impassioned address to the Arikaras and Mandans assembled at Fort Clark. He claimed he had always loved the whites, had never wronged one and that he always freely gave food, drink and shelter to his white brothers. He claimed his willingness to die for a white man was well known.

Chardon’s version of the speech records that Four Bears stated: “I have done everything that a red Skin could do for them, and how have they repaid it! With ingratitude! I have never

called a white man a dog, but today, I do pronounce them to be a set of black harted dogs, they have deceived me, them that I always considered as brothers, has turned out to be my worst enemies, I have been in many battles, and often wounded, but the wounds of my enemies, I exhalt in, but today I am wounded. And by whom, by those same white dogs that I have always considered, and treated as brothers, I do not fear death my friends, you know it, but to die with my face rotton, that even the Wolves will shrink with horror at seeing me, and say to themselves, that is the Four Bears the friend of the whites — listen well what I have to say, as it will be the last time you will hear me. Think of your wives, children, brothers, sisters, friends, and in fact all that you hold dear, are all dead, or dying, with their faces all rotton, caused by those dogs the whites, think of all that my friends, and rise all together and not leave one of them alive, the Four Bears will act his part.”

The called-for uprising never came, for Four Bears died of smallpox later that same day.

The Friday, August 11 entry in Chardon’s daily journal complained: “I keep no more a/c of the dead, as they die so fast that it is impossible.”

On Tuesday, August 15 Chardon noted: “it appears that the smallpox has broke out amongst the Sioux, as some of that Party, on there way back, was taken sick at Grand River [about 100 miles south of Fort Clark] having caught the disease from those that they butchered.”

SEVERAL journal entries dealt with how Indians coped with the dread disease, for example: “Sunday, Au-

gust 20. The wife of a young Mandan that caught the disease was suffering from pain, her husband looked at her, and held down his head, he jumped up, and said to his wife, when you was young, you were handsome, you are now ugly and going to leave me, but no, I will go with you, he took up his gun and shot her dead, and with his knife ripped open his own belly . . . [some say] A young Ree . . . thought that it was better to die, than to be in so much pain, he began to rub the scabs until blood was running all over his body, he rolled himself in the ashes, which almost burnt his soul out his body — two days after he was perfectly well, it is a severe operation, but few are disposed to try it.

“Tuesday, August 22: A Ree that has the smallpox and thinking that he was going to die, approached near his wife, a young woman of 19 — and struck her in the head with his tomahawk, with the intent to kill her, that she might go with him in the Outer World.

“Thursday, August 31: A young Mandan that died 4 days ago, his wife having the disease also — killed her two children, one a fine boy of eight years, and the other six, to complete the affair she hung herself . . . the number of deaths up to the present is very near five hundred — the Mandans are all cut up, except 23 young and old men.

“Saturday, September 30 (Thursday): two more Rees died today, with the smallpox, several more are sick at the Village. All the Rees and Mandans, men’s women’s and children, have had the disease, except a few Old Ones . . . it has destroyed the seven eights of the Mandans and one half of the Rees Nations, the Rees that are encamped with the Gros Ventres have just caught it. No doubt but the one half of them die also — as they talk of removing down to this place.

“If so, they cannot avoid catching it, as the peste is at this place. Killed 74 rats this month — 1941 [total]”

As the epidemix began winding down, Chardon closed out his diary for 1837 with his Sunday, December 31 entry indicating that he had no news from the Indians’ camp for two months and that “In all probability they are all Dead, the last News was that . . . 117 had died, and the disease was still raging. Killed 85 rats this month — total 2294.”

His count of rat mortality was substantially more accurate than his Indian death count. By the spring of 1838, of the 1600 Mandans in the area estimates of those still living varied from 31 to 145.

WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

ATTENTION

We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher, whose address is usually given in parentheses directly following the title of the book. Checks must be made payable to the publisher, not to us.



BLUE PARKA MAN

The Blue Parka Man by H.C. Landru (Dodd Mead & Co., 79 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016, 196 pages, \$8.95 hardcover, 6 x 8½ inches).

This is the true story of Charles Hendrickson, who became known as the "Blue Parka Man," an Alaskan gold rush bandit, early in this century. The author, who makes his home in Fairbanks, Alaska, began collecting material on Hendrickson several years ago when many of the men who witnessed or participated in the events described in this book were alive. In addition, Landru relied on official records and newspaper accounts to piece together the fascinating story of Hendrickson.

Armed and masked, identified only by his blue parka, Hendrickson became something of a legend as an outlaw in central Alaska. He eluded lawmen with the same ease that he robbed miners of their gold.

The story of Hendrickson's exploits is told in sixteen chapters. Nineteen photographs illustrate this well-written work. The author not only relates an accurate account of the outlaw but paints a vivid picture of the wild mountainous country of central Alaska.

It's a good book.

WILL JAMES

Will James: The Last Cowboy Legend by Anthony A. Amaral (University of Nevada Press, Reno, Nev. 89557; 175 pages, \$12.00 hardcover, 6 x 8½ inches).

This book is a revised and expanded version of the author's 1967 work titled *Will James: The Gilt Edged Cowboy*. It is essentially a biography of the well-known Western writer and artist who produced twenty-four self-illustrated books between 1924 and his death in 1942.

Although James claimed to have been born in a covered wagon in Montana, the truth is he was born in Canada (Quebec) in 1892. His given name was Ernest Dufault.

When he was fifteen years old, he left home and eventually appeared in Montana. James worked as a cowboy, captured wild horses in Nevada, entered rodeo competitions, and became a stunt rider for a number of Hollywood western films.

Author Anthony Amaral has improved upon his 1967 work in this new book. He had included nineteen illustrations including some of James' art, plus notes. He also provides readers with a list of the books written and illustrated by Will James. Unfortunately there is no index, yet the book is highly recommended.

EARLY ARIZONA

Samuel Peter Heintzelman and the Sonora Exploring & Mining Company by Diane M.T. North (University of Arizona Press, Box 3398, Tucson, Ariz. 85722, 248 pages, \$12.50 hardcover, \$7.95 paperback, 5½ x 8½ inches).

The subject of this book on early Arizona is a soldier and entrepreneur who founded Fort Yuma, but he is remembered more as the president of the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company. In his business role he helped the economic and political development of Arizona before it was a territory.

The author had relied heavily on Heintzelman's own journals that convey much of the pre-territorial story of Arizona. She relates the numerous and varied difficulties of life in the region and of the many cultural conflicts.

The book is divided into three parts. The first portion is introductory. The author paints a broad picture of pre-territorial Arizona and the contributions of the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company. The second portion contains excerpts from Heintzelman's journals, and the third is an epilogue telling the reader in so many words the value of Heintzelman's contributions to Arizona.

Ten illustrations including a two page map are included along with notes, a good bibliography and index. Recommended.

MAGIC CITY

Leadville: Colorado's Magic City by Edward Blair (Pruett Publishing Co., 3235 Prairie Ave., Boulder, Colo. 80301, 261 pages, \$27.95 hardcover, 9 x 11½ inches).

This large and nicely produced book is just what the title implies. It is a book detailing the history of Leadville, Colorado. And it is, according to the publisher, the first full-length book on one of the better known Colorado mining towns.

The author, a native of Leadville, has written what is primarily a word history of Leadville from earliest times to present day. Numerous illustrations, however, supplement and enhance the text.

Leadville's boom years were 1878 to 1881, and the author gives those years credit due. The town's population reached about 40,000 in 1880. Such well-known names as Horace Tabor, James J. Brown and his wife — "Unsinkable Molly Brown" — are part of Blair's, leadville history. But the author goes beyond the better known stories and relates much of the town's little known history. Leadville is located at an altitude of 10,188 feet in the Colorado Rockies.

The author has divided Leadville's history into twenty-six chapters plus a brief epilogue. Source notes and a good index end the book. Recommended.

ROCKING CHAIR RANCHE

Archibald John Writes the Rocking Chair Rancho Letters by Estelle Tinkler (Eakin Publications, P.O. Box 178, Burnet, Tex. 78611, 169 pages, \$8.95 hardcover, 5½ x 9 inches).

In 1883 the Rocking Chair Rancho — as the English spelled it — was established in the eastern Panhandle of Texas. Archibald John Marjoribanks, youngest son of a titled Scottish family, co-managed the ranch. Between 1883 and 1893, Archibald John wrote countless letters. Many have been preserved. Some concern ranching and life in the Texas Panhandle. Others concern the business of the Rocking Chair Rancho.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Estelle Tinkler read and copied the letters filed at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum at Canyon, Texas. Through the years she worked at editing them. Shortly before her death in 1978, she submitted them for publication. This volume is the published result.

The letters provide new insights into Archibald John Marjoribanks. His character and personality are captured. And the letters also provide interesting insights into cattle ranching

(Continued on Page 62)



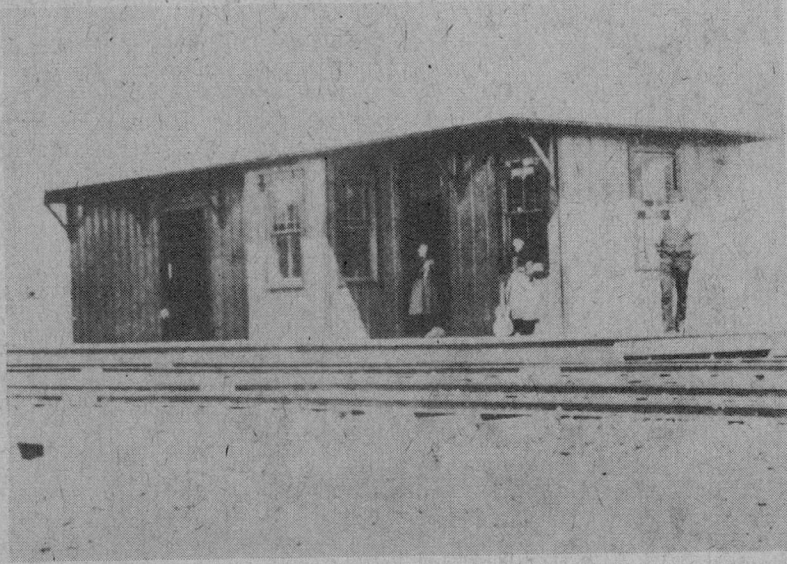
Mineral Wells, Texas around 1900. This is the view south on Mesquite Street.

All photos © 1975 by A.F. Weaver

THEY SAW WITH THEIR EYES SHUT

Vision that knows no boundaries? These children were so blessed (or cursed).

Below, left: Mineral Wells' unique Hexagon Hotel opened in December of 1897. Below, right: The town's first train station. Noble Nuttall, depot agent and telegraph operator, is standing at far right.



By DOROTHY WHITLEY

Photos provided by author;
courtesy A.F. Weaver

Belle and Jimmie Shrum were children of Mr. and Mrs. M.A. Shrum, who lived on a small farm near Mineral Wells, Palo Pinto County, Texas. They were two of ten children, and with the exception of being a little small for their age, were normal and healthy.

Belle and Jimmie Shrum were gifted with the power of clairvoyancy or "second sight." People who knew the children and watched them perform knew that their power was not faked. Mrs. Shrum explained: "These two were born 'with a veil over their face' [caul]."

They did unusual things, and if this strange ability had been developed, there is no telling what height of success they might have reached. But, in those days, long, long, ago — they were regarded with superstition.

The old doctor who brought Belle into the world predicted, "If she lives, she will be gifted with second sight." He was not aware that Jimmie had been born the same way several years before. But Mrs. Shrum knew, and a certain dread gripped her heart.

Mrs. Shrum watched these children carefully for several years, then when there seemed to be no difference between them and the rest of her brood she decided the old doctor had not known what he was talking about. No child of hers could have supernatural power.

However, a strange circumstance occurred when Belle and Jimmie were about six and nine years old which caused their mother to change her mind.

The family was living in Comanche County. Mr. Shrum had traveled to Brownwood to purchase land and was to return at dusk. When darkness arrived and Mr. Shrum had not returned home, his wife became increasingly uneasy. With her children she sat by the fire in the old farmhouse, awaiting the sounds from the wagon as it traveled down the lonely lane.

Jimmie, who was playing nearby, suddenly places his hands on his eyes and sat motionless.

"Are you sick, son? (Jimmie was subject to attacks of acute indigestion.)

"No, Ma, I am not sick," the boy replied as he removed his hands.

As soon as Mrs. Shrum's attention was drawn elsewhere, Jimmie once again raised his hands and pressed his eyes. His mother noticed his actions, decided he was ill, and kept him with her throughout the night. Once in bed, Jimmie quickly fell asleep.

The following morning the boy said hesitantly, "You know, Ma, I can see with my eyes shut."

"Of course you can't, son," she said. "Whoever heard of such a thing!"

"Yes, I can, Ma. It's easy. Press your hands to your eyes and look. You try it," he urged. Mrs. Shrum pressed her hands over her eyes, and Jimmie was greatly disappointed when she said, "I can't see anything at all. Put your hands over your eyes and tell me what you can see," Mrs. Shrum coaxed.

Jimmie pressed his eyes, sat quietly for a few moments, and whispered, "I can see the whole world."

"What is the whole world?" his mother asked.

"Towns and windmills."

"Can you see your papa? — this in

"Yes, I can see P. He is camped on a creek under a big tree."

"What is he doing?"

"He's handling cook vessels, and has just fed Brit [his horse] on the ground."

"Now I know you are wrong! Your father would never feed Brit on the ground!"

"Ask Pa when he comes home, and you'll find out."

When Mr. Shrum arrived, he explained that he had been late in leaving Brownwood and had camped along the way.

"Where did you camp?" his wife asked.

"Under a big tree on the creek bank."

"Why did you feed Brit on the ground?"

"How did you know that I fed Brit on the ground?" asked the startled Mr. Shrum.

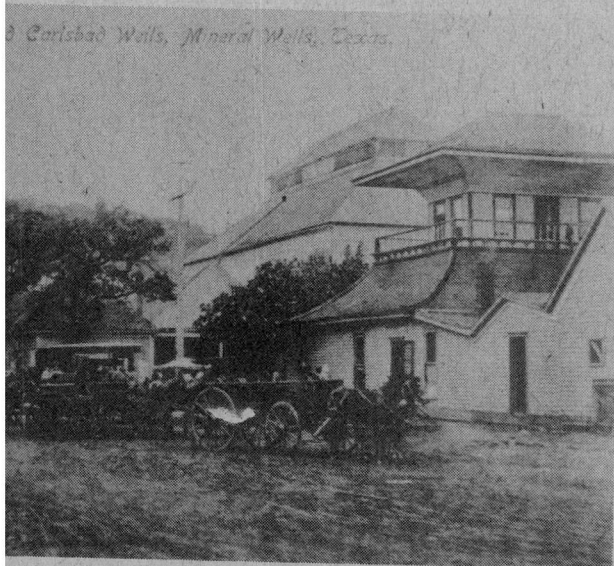
"Jimmie told me." Then she related her conversation with their son.

Mr. Shrum was not unduly excited. He admitted that Jimmie had described everything as it really happened, however. Mr. Shrum had fed Brit on the ground because the horse had aggravated him by trying to swipe oats from the wagon, and had torn a new wagon-sheet in the attempt. In a moment of pique the farmer had tossed some oats into the dirt.

Mr. Shrum then tested his son's ability to "see things with his eyes shut" by leaving the house and hiding his purse in a horse-collar under a shed. Returning, he called Jimmie and said, "I have lost something, find it for me."

Jimmie placed his hands over his eyes for a few minutes, and told his father, "You did not lose anything, but you hid your purse in a horse-collar

Below, left: Mineral Wells' many large and impressive buildings accommodated people who came to "take the waters." Below, right: The Wells Hotel.



under the shed."

The astonished Mr. Shrum summoned the rest of his children for a family consultation. "Jimmie can see with his eyes shut," Mr. Shrum announced. "Is there anyone else here who can do this?"

"I can," Belle yelled loudly.

"Why didn't you ever tell me?" asked her bewildered mother.

"I thought everyone could," Belle replied simply.

THEREAFTER, conversations among the neighbors about the "strange Shrum children" were commonplace. The embarrassed family moved to Johnson County. There another family conference was in order — this time to instill in the children's minds that their secret must be kept within the home circle.

Peace and quiet prevailed for several months, until the day Mr. Shrum traveled to Alvarado. Jimmie went along with him, and while the two were gone, Mrs. Shrum decided to visit her brother in Burleson — ten or twelve miles away.

They were attending church services there one night, and as many families did, Mrs. Shrum put the children to bed inside the wagon. Soon they were all fast asleep. After the services, Johnie Shrum, eight years of age, awoke and while still in a dazed condition, sighted a wagon driving away. Suddenly Johnie leaped from the Shrum wagon and dashed madly after the departing one, believing he was being left behind.

Mrs. Shrum was talking with friends under the arbor, and knew nothing of this until she returned to her wagon, counted the children, and discovered that Johnie was missing. A wide search by the congregation began. Mrs. Shrum was frantic, fearing he had fallen into a nearby creek. She knew that Belle could see him "with her eyes shut" if she could only have a chance for privacy. But Mrs. Shrum's sister-in-law remained by her side constantly, and Mrs. Shrum did not want their secret to become known.

When the search continued without success, Johnie's mother could stand the suspense no longer. She took Belle by the hand and led her away from the crowd. "Now tell me," she said, "where did Johnie go?"

Pressing her hands to her eyes, Belle replied, "Ma, he's gone in yonder direction, a-squalling after a wagon."

"Tell me where he is now," her mother demanded. "Is he safe?"

Belle pressed her eyes once again. "He's in town in a house — done gone to bed." When asked if she could locate the house, Belle assured her

mother that she could.

Mrs. Shrum returned to the anxious gathering and reluctantly revealed the secret that Belle could "see things" and that she knew where Johnie was.

The little girl led the way to a house that none of the family had seen before, and from the gate she called her brother. Johnie answered from inside the house where kindly strangers had put him to bed, after finding him crying on the roadside.

After this episode the fame of the Shrum children spread and, fearing that they might be stolen or perhaps even killed, the family again began packing. They moved to Eastland County, where they settled on a small farm.

One night Mrs. Shrum sat up with a sick neighbor, who was attended by Dr. Gilbert of Ranger. During the night the subject of second sight was brought into the conversation, and Mrs. Shrum cited the cases of her children to the doctor, pretending that they were children of friends.

"There are persons gifted with such power," the doctor explained. "Some call it mind reading; others, clairvoyance, second sight, etc. I, though, have never known such persons.

MRS. SHRUM had confidence in the doctor, and later revealed that the children were her very own. Dr. Gilbert was greatly interested, and arrived at the Shrum farm the following Sunday. He asked Jimmie to describe the medical college in Louisville, Kentucky where the doctor had attended school.

Jimmie went outside for a few minutes, returned, and asked his mother for pencil and paper. With drawings, Jim showed the doctor where the windows and doors were located on the main building, where the trees were situated on the lawn, the walks about the building, and described the number of stories the building had. Afterward, Dr. Gilbert presented a dollar to Jimmie who rushed happily outside to play.

"Wonderful!" said Dr. Gilbert, "He described the building as well as I could have done — and I went to college there!"

The doctor visited many Sundays with the family and gave the children tests. He was fascinated with the marvelous power that they demonstrated. Dr. Gilbert learned that they could find anything. One Sunday he wrapped his watch in paper before reaching the Shrum house and hid it by the roadside. When he arrived he called Belle and Jimmie, explaining, "I lost something. Can you tell me where it is?"

"You hid your watch, it is rolled up

in paper," Belle said, as she dashed out the door, followed by Jimmie. Jimmie, though, cut through the woodlands and arrived at the hiding-place much sooner than Belle. Dr. Gilbert had brought a friend along, and before the children returned he slipped the friend's watch upon his own watch-chain. When Belle and Jimmie arrived, Dr. Gilbert pulled the watch from his pocket and said, "And you say that it was my watch that was lost?"

Without hesitation Belle replied, "It was your watch unless you and Mr. Bowman have traded."

By this time, the doctor was a good friend to the family, and Mr. and Mrs. Shrum permitted the children to accompany him to Dallas to visit the fair. Dr. Gilbert's father was a doctor also, and lived in the Oak Cliff addition of the city. The children were guests in the home.

During their stay in Dallas, Jim and Belle were taken before the medical board and examined. They were pronounced normal, healthy children by the physicians.

After the visit the following article appeared in the Dallas *Morning News* on November 8, 1894:

TRULY PHENOMENAL

The Power of Clairvoyance or Mind Reading Possessed by Two Ranger Children

"Ranger, Eastland County, contains a couple of diminutive prodigies. They are brother and sister, aged respectively 12 and 14 years. Their name is Shrum, and their father is a farmer. They have enjoyed meager scholastic advantages, and for the most part have occupied themselves about the cotton fields of their father. But, although unskilled in book lore, and deficient in conventional training, they are singularly proficient in a special type of telepathy, clairvoyance or something, the manifestation of which has given rise to much curious speculation.

"The children were here to view the State Fair, and were the guests of Dr. Gilbert at Oak Cliff. The doctor soon became aware of their peculiar qualities and had them perform feats of the telepathic order, which he describes as little short of the miraculous. Let the doctor tell his experiences in his own words: 'The children,' he said, 'were brought here by my son from Eastland County to see the fair. In personal appearance they are not at all extraordinary. Aside from their one singular tendency, they possess nothing that would be called precocious. But, in mind reading, they can give pointers to many who have made a business of it.

"I will cite some remarkable in-

stances and you can think whatever you please," explained the doctor. "Having been informed of what they had done in this way, I immediately subjected them to a practical test. I hid a silver dollar in a remote part of the house, and then told them that I had lost something, which I would like to recover. The little boy then, I thought, acted very curiously. He seemed dazed, stood up and pressed his hands over his eyeballs. He repeated this action several times, then started, lifted his head, and without faltering a moment, marched directly toward the concealed article which he brought to me in great triumph. This was the first manifestation. On another occasion I wished to know what time it was, and before I consulted my watch the boy volunteered to tell me. Up went his hands to his eyes with the same motion, and he told me the time to the second.

"The children are much given to the performance of such acts at their home in Ranger. There they have been known to herald the approach of a visitor, and to give a detailed narrative of his experiences on the road. For instance, my son met them one day at their house, and one of the children remarked that he had left something behind. It was a correct surmise. My son had unhitched his horse from the buggy, and had left it under a great oak tree. The unhitching of the horse, its position under the tree, the character of the surrounding country, and other attendant circumstances were accurately detailed by these two singular children.

"The strangest thing about it all, is that they do not resort to physical contact in order to expedite their search for hidden articles. There is no apparent effort, no spasmodic straining, no contortion of the face, or twisting of the body. There are no gyrations of any sort. They are not conscious of the mysterious power they possess. It would require a good deal of study and speculation to account for these psychic manifestations. The children are not diseased in any way, have normal development, and have light and cheerful dispositions. Whether it is a species of clairvoyance, telepathy or mind reading I cannot say."

After their trip to Dallas, the Shrum children began to perform in a small way before the public. As they grew older, they traveled to nearby towns, and later to the States of Tennessee, Colorado and Arizona. But, having no experience in such matters and lacking the financial backing necessary for the success of the show, they were not a great success. When they were grown, they practiced their power less, though

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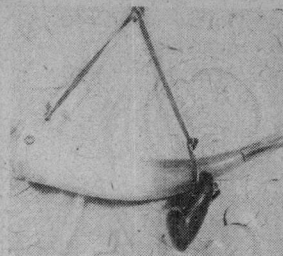
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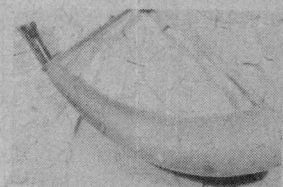
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at most any hour of the day one could see horses and rigs about the Shrum place near Mineral Wells, where they then lived, because many people came to have Jim and Belle "see things" for them.

At the age of eighteen, Belle married Shan O'Neal. Eight children were born to this union. As the years passed, Belle's health failed, and she died at forty-three. Jim Shrum died in his fif-

ties at his home in Cordell, Oklahoma.

Their parents lived in Mineral Wells, Texas the last thirty years of their lives. Mrs. Shrum spoke of the children's abilities honestly. She was not proud of their power, nor was she ashamed of it. She never seemed to understand it, but she believed with all her heart that they "could see things with their eyes shut" because they were born "with a veil over their face."

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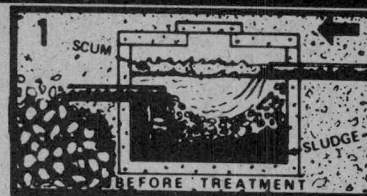
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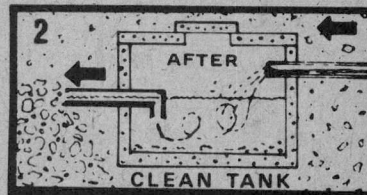
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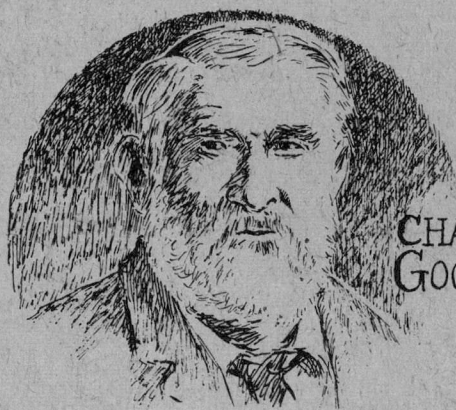
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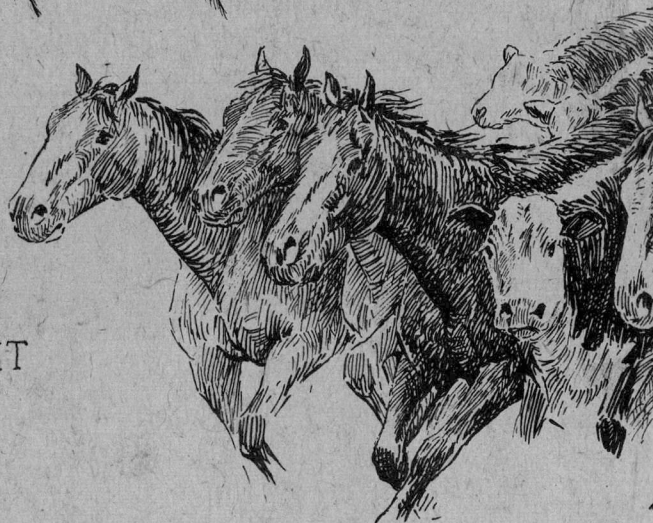
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CHARLES
GOODNIGHT



AT Russell Springs, Kansas, from the first of November 1919 to the first of May 1920, I wintered a herd of close to 2,500 steers for H. W. (Pat) Skinner of Medicine Lodge. I never saw the owner until a year later. George R. Fundis, a member of the Evans Snider Buell Livestock Commission Company in Kansas City, made the trade with me to handle the cattle. Our contract contained the stipulation that they would be delivered to me at my ranch near Russell Springs on or about November 1, 1919. Mr. Fundis told me that Mr. Skinner's son, Don, would make the delivery.

The herd originated on the fabulous J. A. Ranch in Texas established fifty

years before by Charles Goodnight, one of the foremost pioneer cowmen of the time. Ownership of the ranch had passed into other hands but the Goodnight pattern of selective breeding was continued. It developed one of the best, if not entirely the best, grade of range cattle ever produced. The original brand of J. A. adopted by Goodnight in deference to his partner, the Irish financier James Adair, was retained.

The steers were two years old when turned over to me, and they represented the male portion of the ranch's 1917 calf crop. They had been dehorned when yearlings and they all looked alike in their deep red color with

the traditional white face and breast of the Hereford breed. They had been brought up to Kansas and, during the summer of 1919, were held along the Arkansas River between Garden City and the Colorado state line.

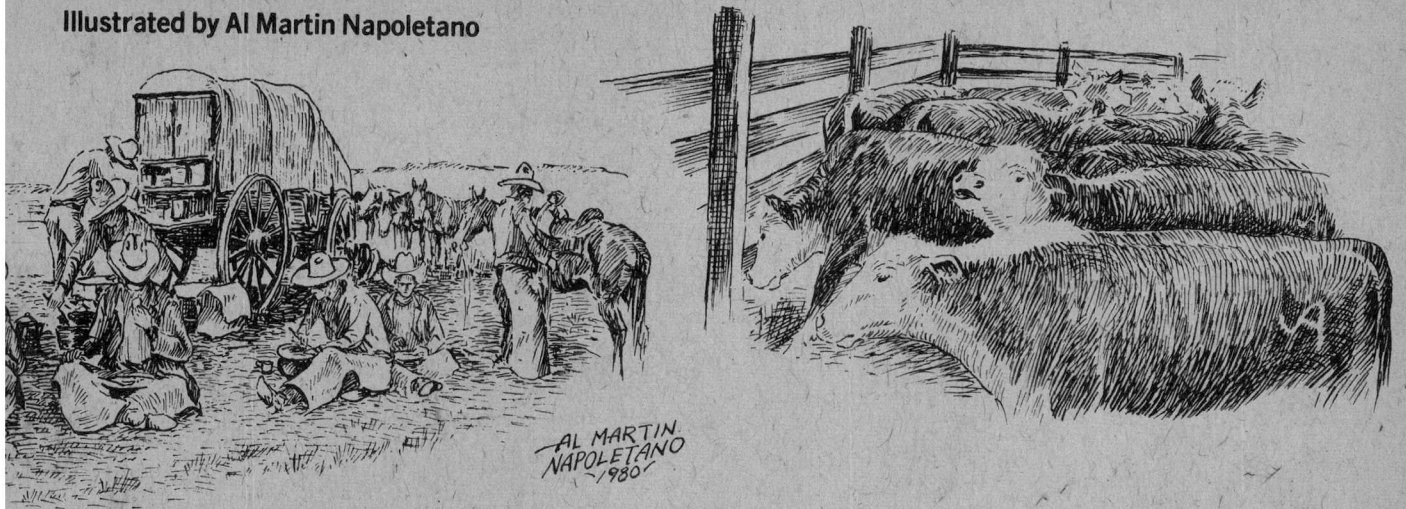
During the night of October 25, a severe snow and wind storm came up and it lasted most of the next day. That night I got a call from Don Skinner. He said the cattle had got away from him and scattered during the storm, and he asked me "to come and bring all the men and horses you can get."

Next morning I picked up a couple of men and we took off driving fifteen horses, with our beds packed on two of

By **WALTER GANN**

Photos provided by author

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano



them. We made it to the town of Leoti that night and kept the horses in the livery stable feed lot. We unrolled our bed and slept on the floor of the livery stable office. Next evening (28th) we met Don Skinner's outfit — if it could be called that.

It was indeed the saddest and poorest excuse for a cow outfit ever put together. I had seen some cheap and shabby ones in my time but that one took the cake. Skinner had only five riders besides himself and, amazingly, each had only one horse. All of those looked to be half-dead. He had some good cooking utensils and a good chuckbox, but very little food in it, and his cook didn't know enough to heat

dishwater. The beans he dished out for supper were like chewing on marbles and the bread was tasteless and tough as rawhide. Breakfast was no better.

I allotted two of my horses to Skinner and his men and this left two each for me and my men, one for day and one for night. We picked up the few stragglers that were missing and when we were ready to start out, Skinner asked me to take charge of the outfit. We intended to get within two miles of Leoti by evening and hold the herd in a section pasture he had arranged to use four nights earlier — but didn't make it.

SKINNER told me if I would make out a list for what groceries we needed

he would okay it. I told the cook to make an early dinner so he would have time to get the groceries in Leoti and come back to the designated camping place in time for supper. And then I decided to go along with him and see that he got everything we needed, as well as other items I hadn't said anything about. I traveled faster than he did and I had most of the order placed when he got there. I ordered about everything good to eat that could be used in a cow camp.

Firewood just didn't exist on that Kansas prairie. They had been using cow chips to cook with. I didn't propose to have men scouting around over the country picking up cow chips when



Above: Chuckwagon and stove cart. E. Sparks was the cook.

they might be needed with the cattle. While the cook was loading the groceries, I went across to a fuel yard and bought three twenty-five pound bags of pressed coal, and two bundles of kindling wood.

At a junk yard I found a piece of old grating that had come out of a furnace of some kind. It was about two feet long and fifteen inches wide, and cost me fifty cents. It would be used as a surface over the burning kindling wood, where the coal bricks would be spread out to ignite. The skillets had legs to hold them off the ground. A shovelful of burning bricks would be spread underneath the skillets and a like amount on the skillet lids. This way they served the purpose for bak-

ing just as well as the mesquite wood coals I had used in Texas.

I camped the wagon and then went on to meet the herd two or three miles away. When we put the herd through the gate into the pasture I had two of the men go in opposite directions around the fence to see that it was up in good shape and had no gates open for the cattle to get away during the night.

One of the men I had brought with me was a good cook and I sent him in to the wagon, not to do the cooking, but to show the cook how to do it. Between them they produced a feast. The way Skinner and his men went to town on the beef short ribs, the canned beans instead of the rattlers they had

Below: (From left) Vernon Michael; Walter Gann; C. Davis; Carl Whaley; Louis Gann; Roy Ishmael; Bert Ferris; Chuck Michael; one unidentified.



been eating, baked potatoes, and baking powder bread, golden brown on top and bottom and soft and palatable inside, and, in addition, canned fruit for dessert with canned evaporated milk poured over it, you would think they had been starved for a week.

That evening the only discord Don Skinner and I ever had, came up. He remarked that he didn't see why everyone had to have a night horse. I told him I wanted two men out in the pasture all night with the cattle. He said there was no use in that. I told him those cattle would be restless in a strange locality, and at different times during the night they would be inclined to walk around the fence looking for a way out. If a large number gathered in a fence corner and something frightened them into a stampede they would break through the fence and go everywhere. If we were all in camp asleep they might get ten miles away before we knew anything about it. I wanted to prevent that happening.

There were enough men to make four shifts of two hours, from eight P.M. to four A.M. In order to prolong the surveillance until five A.M. I wanted him and one of his men to take the first shift until eleven. I didn't propose to stand any night guard, myself, but I had my horse on stake, already saddled, in case something happened.

It took a little time to get coal bricks properly fired so I called the cook at four o'clock and told him to roll out and start his fire. I had arranged the night shift so the man with me, who was a good cook, would be on the last shift. I went out and relieved him so he could come in and help with breakfast. It was a good one — bacon, ham and scrambled eggs along with those hot, light-weight biscuits, and good strong coffee. I came in and called them all out for breakfast at five o'clock. Daylight came about six and by sunup, we were all packed, with the wagon hitched up and ready to go.

Skinner had winced a little when I presented him with my grocery and fuel bills, but when we crossed the railroad tracks west of Leoti later that morning he rode into town and paid them.

THE next two nights we were out were a repetition of the first. The weather had moderated into traditional Indian summer with warm sunny days and crisp, cold nights, the same as "when frost is on the pumpkin and the fodder is in the shock."

I kept the wagon out in front and Don Skinner with it, most of the time, so he could select camping spots for noon and could arrange for a pasture to hold the cattle at night. On the afternoon of November 1 we counted

through the gate into my pasture, 2,473 cattle.

Don and his men camped near Russell Springs that night and pulled out next morning. He never said anything about paying me for the help we had given him and the use of my horses and I didn't mention it either. My contract, made for his father Pat Skinner, by George Fundis, was fair, with reasonable monthly payments and I felt like they were entitled to any help I could give. Don was generous enough to give me the cooking utensils and the chuck box with what food there was left. He said he wouldn't need them any more as he intended to make it from one town to another until they got back to Garden City. Then we was going home to Medicine Lodge.

By May 1, 1920, Pat Skinner and I reached an agreement by correspondence for me to keep the cattle another six months. During the summer of 1920 I looked after a thousand head on my place and I put the remainder on a tract of leased land along the Smoky Hill River twenty-five miles below. Everything went along pretty well during the summer, except for one disturbing event.

Sometime during 1919 a fellow named Jess Dunn came down into Kansas and bought a ranch five miles southeast of Russell Springs. The ranch joined mine on the west. Jess Dunn brought with him about a hundred head of cattle. Nobody knew much about him, including his cousin, Bert Dunn, who had sold him the ranch without a down payment.

On a certain day in June when I came home in the evening there was a telegram which the depot in Winona, our nearest railroad point, had phoned down to my wife. The message was from George Fundis in Kansas City, the man who had made the trade with me to handle the cattle. It stated that ten head of J.A. steers had been caught by the brand inspector in a shipment of cattle made by Jess Dunn from Monument, Kansas. In order to get to Monument, Dunn would have to drive through my pasture. I barely had time to catch the night train for Kansas City.

On arrival at the stockyards next morning I contacted George Fundis at the Evans Snider Buell office. He told me when Dan Malloy, a brand inspector for the Colorado Livestock Association, had looked over the list of deliveries of cattle made by the various railroads during the night he discovered that Jess Dunn was on the market with three carloads of mixed cattle from Monument, Kansas. He either knew Jess Dunn personally or he knew his reputation, which was not good. When he saw those J.A. steers

with Dunn's cattle he knew something was wrong.

He did not have the J. A. brand listed in his book, but he knew the outfit handled cattle in large numbers, and that whoever owned those particular steers would not be shipping them to market piecemeal, ten head at a time. When he located Jess Dunn and questioned him, Dunn said it was all a mistake. His brother, who he said didn't know one brand from another, had driven the cattle to the railroad and loaded them in the cars, and that he, Jess, didn't see them until they were unloaded at the stockyards. To Dan Malloy that story was too thin to hold water but he didn't bother about that part. He had found the steers and whoever owned them could check on the validity of Dunn's claim.

PAT SKINNER was a member of the Texas Cattle Raisers Association and he had the brand listed in his name, claiming ownership of all J. A. cattle in Kansas. Lod Callahan was the inspector for the Texas Association. He and Dan Malloy had a spat and were at loggerheads. Callahan claimed that he knew where the steers were but was just waiting for Dunn to sell them so they would have a better base for prosecution, and that Dan Malloy had butted in where he had no business and let the cat out of the bag. As for myself I didn't care which one was wrong and which one was right, but I felt grateful to Dan Malloy. He was the one who exposed the deal. If Jess Dunn had got away with it, the loss would not have been Skinner's but my own. Under my contract I had to account for every one of those steers.

By a strange coincidence Pat Skinner happened to be on the Kansas City market that day. His claim of ownership was undisputed, and in order to prevent them from being sold, he bought enough other steers to make a carload and shipped them all to his ranch at Medicine Lodge. This relieved me of the responsibility. He was not in Kansas City when I arrived and he didn't know I was coming. He had heard that brother-mistake story, and suggested that I get a statement from the brother before they could contact each other. When the message was delivered to my house in Russell Springs next morning, I was in Kansas City.

I left Kansas City on a night train and when I arrived home next morning I went directly to the county attorney. We drove out to the Dunn ranch and questioned the brother. He told the same story told by Jess. It was full of inconsistencies and I urged the county attorney to get out a warrant for his arrest so the sheriff could put him in jail. The attorney said we had better

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wait until we had a talk with Jess.

We never got that opportunity. While we were talking to the brother, Jess was on a train coming to Monument which arrived about eleven P.M.

He had left his horse at the livery stable and he got the keeper out of bed to give him his horse. At some time that night or early next morning, Jess and his wife and brother pulled their freight in his little Model T Ford roadster. When the sheriff, the county attorney and I went out to the ranch to see him, nobody was there and nobody came.

The Farmer State Bank at Oakley had a mortgage on Jess Dunn's cattle as security for a loan they had made. When the cattle were sold in Kansas City, Jess had drawn the proceeds from the sale in cash, and the bank and all his other creditors were left holding empty sacks, even that poor old livery stable keeper who was kind enough to get out of bed in the middle of the night to accommodate him. And Bert Dunn, who had moved to Corpus Christi, Texas, had to come back and take possession of his ranch until he could sell it the second time.

Ten days or two weeks after Dunn's departure, we got a hearsay, unconfirmed report that the three of them were seen in Laredo, Texas as they were crossing the International Bridge into Mexico.

As it all turned out the only thing I lost in the transaction was a lot of worry and my expenses for that useless trip to Kansas City. On the other

hand, it might have been worth all of it to get Jess out of the country.

MY contract for holding the cattle was to expire November 1. Mr. Skinner wanted me to ship them to his ranch near Medicine Lodge in Barber County along the Oklahoma border. The only rail line serving that part of the country was the Santa Fe and the nearest Santa Fe point from me was the end of a branch line at Scott City, fifty miles away. I rigged up my chuckwagon, gathered all my saddle horses, and hired some extra men, including a cook.

I decided to make two shipments rather than try to handle the entire herd at one time. Since the 1,500 head were already half to Scott City it was feasible to take them first. After making the roundup and one day's drive we camped that night within nine miles of our destination. By making an early morning start at sunup, we reached Scott City shortly before nine o'clock.

There was an open space of prairie land on the north side of town which was a good place to hold up a herd provided they were not held there too long. I camped the wagon close by and then I scouted out the route we would travel to the stockyards or shipping pens. The road led through a residential district four blocks long, which wasn't good. Those steers were wild range animals and they had never seen a town. They would be mighty uneasy and skittish walking along between two rows of houses. The street ended at an open space about seventy-five

yards between two railroad tracks which ran parallel. The open space provided a good driveway and approach to the shipping pens a quarter of a mile to the right. I got a shock when I saw the size of the pens.

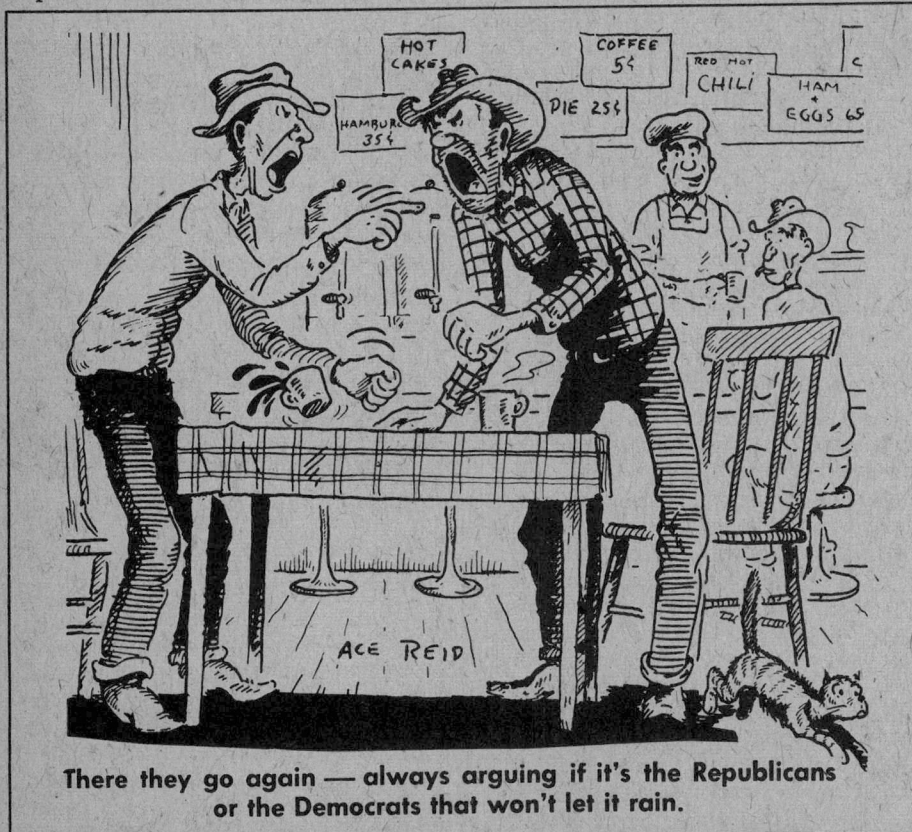
I hadn't expected them to be large enough to hold the entire herd, but I did think they would hold at least 500 head. To my dismay they would hold little more than 150. It meant that I would have to load the cattle piecemeal by bringing in a small bunch at a time. It promised to be a long hard day for me and the men and the cattle.

When the railroad men got the first car spotted at the loading chute, I cut off from the main herd about 150 and brought them into a small remuda of twelve or fifteen horses which I drove along with the cattle. I used the horses as a leader for the steers to follow. They were very nervous as they walked between two rows of houses with people standing on their porches watching. A barking dog in the vicinity added to their alarm. The horses leading the way quieted them and they followed along into the pens. That was only the first trip, with at least ten more to follow.

I loaded thirty-five to thirty-seven head to a car. There was only one loading chute and the train had to pull up and spot a new car for each loading. That took time and time was something I didn't have to waste. It took the biggest part of an hour to count off the required number to make four carloads and drive them to the pen for loading, but we kept whittling away on the main herd, slowly cutting down the number. We didn't stop for dinner but ate in relays of two and changed to fresh horses at the same time.

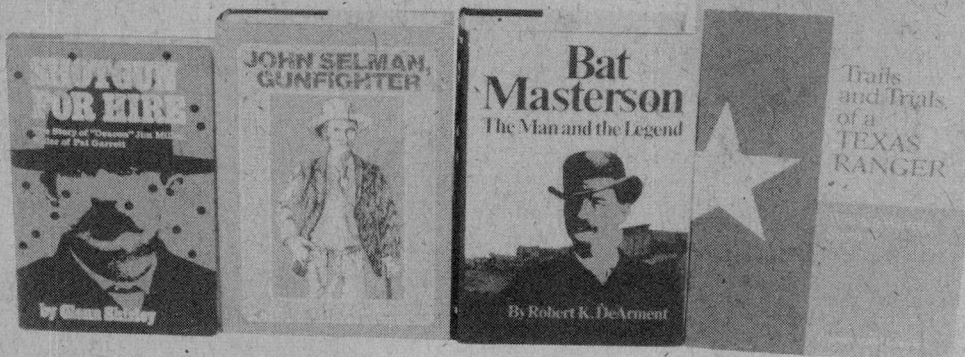
FROM the time I saw the size of the stock pen, I realized we would not finish loading in time for me to get anywhere with the outfit that night on my return home. There was a man with a farm and pasture that joined the town limits. He had a well and windmill out in the pasture that pumped water for his stock. He gave me permission to camp the wagon at the windmill that night and turn the saddle horses in the pasture. I was the last to get my noon meal, about one o'clock. Up to that time we had sixteen cars loaded, or about 600 head, with 900 more to go. Those cattle were getting hungry and thirsty and restless and harder to hold together. The saddle horses had also become more of a bother than a help. They served well at first but they tired of going back and forth to the stock pens and became inclined to lead off in most any direction.

I told the cook he need not make supper as there was no telling what time we could get to it. We would all go to a



There they go again — always arguing if it's the Republicans or the Democrats that won't let it rain.

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restaurant after the cattle were loaded. The cook was a town boy from back East, visiting relatives at Russell Springs. He wasn't much of a cook either. When I hired him he told me he had worked for a while in a restaurant and he was glad to get the job as a cook, but he really wanted to ride and help with the cattle. On the chance that he might get into some of the action he had borrowed a saddle and tuck it away in the chuckwagon. As things turned out, I was glad to give

him that chance for a short while.

I had one of the boys help the cook move camp to the windmill and to take the horses along. They caught a horse for the cook to ride and help hold the cattle together. This boy had never seen a large herd of cattle before and all he knew about cattle or horses could have been written on the back of a postage stamp with a single zero, but he could fill a gap and perhaps make a half-a-hand anyway. That arrangement pleased him very much.

Although taking the horses away left us without any kind of a leader I found a substitute that served as well or better. There was a family that had their milk cow staked out with a long rope on the prairie so she could graze during the day. The owner was kind enough to lend me the cow to use. One of the boys rode ahead at the stake rope, leading the cow, and the steers followed along. That scheme worked fine as long as it lasted, but finally time caught up with us. Evening and

sundown and milking time came and we had to give up our leader with about 400 more cattle to load. From then on we just did the best we could.

As darkness fell, the ones we drove to the pens became apprehensive of the surroundings. Lights in the houses we passed cast shadows into the street and the cattle shied away from them like they would from deep craters. Occasionally the leaders became frightened at something and charged back against those following, creating a jam, and each time a few would get away. It got to where we were lucky to get into the pens with three carloads instead of the four we had been handling. At the end we had about a hundred wild getaway outlaws that scattered like a flock of geese and went in every direction except the right one when we approached the pen. I decided to make one more attempt and, if it failed, I would have to hunt around for a willing rancher that would hold them until I brought up the next herd. To find such a person would be very hard to do after nine o'clock at night.

There was a fellow in Scott City named Armstrong who ran a feed barn and livery stable. He came down and offered his help and he also advanced an idea. "Them steers can't see where they're going."

I knew better than that. "Them" steers could see better than we could. They could see well enough not to go near the stock pen gate and they could see well enough to get away from us. Armstrong said, "I'll go uptown and get some fellows to bring their cars down and throw the lights on the pen." I told him flatly it wouldn't work but I was willing to try anything.

WHILE Armstrong was hustling around getting volunteers to help out with their car lights, I rounded up all the getaway outlaws and held them in the open space between the two railroad tracks some 300 yards away. Four men brought their cars down and Armstrong set them so the headlights lit up the stock pens and the area around them, like an athletic field during a night game. When they were all set up we brought the outlaws up on the run. From the way the boys yipped and yelled and whooped and hollered, it might have been a pack of Indians on the warpath.

As the cattle broke into the glare of the headlights, the sudden change from dark to light blinded them temporarily and they became confused. Instead of breaking away and scattering like they had been doing, they crowded close together and milled around. When their eyesight got adjusted to the light, they could see one dark hole that apparently they thought was a getaway route. The dark spot was the

inside of the pen through the open gate, and they made for it. They even crowded against each other getting through; instead of going free they found themselves securely locked in the place they had consistently avoided.

That was all there was to it. I found it was not because they could see that got them into the pens, but because they couldn't see where they were going. At any rate, no matter how I figured, it was the car lights that turned the trick and for that I was truly grateful. The men in the automobiles drove away and I didn't get to speak to any of them, but when I thanked "Red" Armstrong for his help, it didn't hurt my pride and self esteem one bit to tell him that he was a damn sight better cowman than I was, and that didn't displease him either.

When the trainmen got all the forty-odd cars coupled together in one string, the train rolled away on its trip to Medicine Lodge and I was glad to see it go. I sent my brother Louis and another man with the train as caretakers, and also to verify my head count when Skinner's men received them. Meanwhile I started back with the outfit next morning to gather and bring the next herd to Scott City six days later. The boys who went with the shipment got back to Scott City in time to help.

There was one animal among the second herd of a different color and sex. It was a black Angus cow — quite an oddity mixed with that herd of red, white face Hereford steers. She was in a different brand but she was counted to me as one of the herd. During the last part of the winter she gave birth to a calf. She was gentle, and before we broke up our winter camp the boys used her as a milk cow. She was a good milk provider and the calf got its full share. From the supplementary feed they gave the cow, which the calf learned to eat early, plus the milk, he grew big and fat and lazy. The cow and calf were to go with that last herd of steers.

If I had known the size of those Santa Fe pens I would have driven those two down and put them with the first herd. I could have used her as a leader and left her in Red Armstrong's feed barn and "fed her on the choicest hay" because, as it turned out, she would have been worth it.

We got to Scott City about the same time of day as with the other herd, and we stopped at the same place. I cut the cow and her calf from the herd and had one of the boys drive them down to the stock pens and back, and then down again to the pens, so she would know the route. The next time I put the calf in a pen all to himself and drove the cow back to the herd, holding her there

against her will, until we were to start loading.

If there is one thing that is a bigger fool about an offspring than a woman with an indolent, spoiled boy, it is an old cow with an overgrown suckling bull calf. He was old enough and able to forage for himself enough to be weaned, but she still provided him with a certain amount of milk. When we were ready to load I turned her loose in front of the bunch we were going to load and she struck a trot on a bee line for her calf. One of us had to ride in front and hold her back or she would have run away from the bunch of steers which were following her right into the pen. I didn't let the cow and calf get together, but I left her outside his pen while we loaded the steers so they could console each other through the fence.

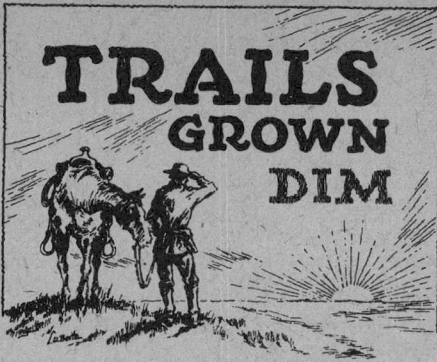
And that's the way it went. Every time I cut off a bunch of steers to load, I drove her back to lead them. Within three or four hours the calf got hungry for his milk and each time we took the cow away he would bawl for her and she would answer with a sad sort of a wail. The hungrier he got the louder he would bawl and he could be heard all over town. Evidently some of the neighbors thought we were torturing him. As we passed one house a woman walked down to her yard gate and asked one of the boys, "What are you doing to that poor calf?"

The boy replied, "It's just a baby crying for his mama."

With the last bunch of steers safely in the pen, I was able to make the cow and calf happy by turning them together and loading them in the last car of steers. We finished more than two hours before sundown that day. This gave the boys time to get back with the wagon and horses that night to where we had camped the night before. Red Armstrong came down to see if we needed any help — which we didn't. I think he really wanted to demonstrate again how easy it was to pen a bunch of cattle by car light.

My brother Louis and my wife's cousin, Tom Dibrell, had been with me most of the year helping me with the cattle. They were through and were homeward bound. The three of us rode that cattle train from Scott City to Medicine Lodge. I went along to make my final settlement with Skinner for holding his cattle a year, and the boys got about 400 miles of free transportation on their way back to Texas.

When I settled up with Skinner I told him I hoped he would take care of that old cow the balance of her natural life because she had been worth a lot to me. And, that is the final chapter, and "all she wrote" about them (J.A.) steers.



Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

**Staats — Dedman —
Young — Wright**

I would appreciate any information on the following: Hiram Leon Staats, born April 11, 1849; died April 22, 1930 near Mount Ayr, Iowa. He married Laura Dedman on June 29, 1869. She was born April 3, 1849 in Missouri and died May 15, 1892 at Nevinville, Iowa.

William Henry Young, born April 5, 1853 in Indiana; died in Iowa. I believe his father's name was Steven. He married Synthia Olive Wright who was born June 10, 1856 in Iowa and died near Portland, Oregon. Synthia's father was Henry Wright from Ohio. She had four children, Oscar Allen, Fred, Louie and May Young.

I am especially interested in the Wrights. — Genevieve Young Eaton, Rt. 1, Box 333, Doyline, Louisiana 71023.

Evans

I am seeking information on my great-grandfather, Joseph Chester Evans. He may have gone by Joe or J.C. Evans. He was a sheriff or deputy sheriff in or around Bowie, Texas in the 1880s. He may have been a Texas Ranger. — Dennis Lay Evans, 1016 SW 1st, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

Sibra — Sibray

My father, Ray William Sibra, was born in Holt, Michigan in 1885. My grandfather, William Sibra, a Great Northern railroad engineer, died in the

mid-1920s, perhaps at Fargo, North Dakota.

Any information on either of these names, past or present, will be appreciated. I will answer all letters and refund postage. — Dana Sibra, Big Sandy, Montana 59520.

Sands — Fain

I am seeking information on my great-grandfather Sands. His first name may have been William or Martian. I do not know when he was born or where but he may have died in 1965 or '66, perhaps in Kentucky.

At the time of his death his wife (and my great-grandmother) was Francy Ann Fain. She was born about 1833 or '35 in Virginia and died in 1902 in Benton County, Missouri.

Great-grandfather Sands had four sons: Harvy, born in Kentucky (?); Richard, born in Kentucky in 1858; George, born in Kentucky in 1859; and William, my grandfather, born in Benton County, Missouri in 1865 or '66.

After my great-grandfather died, my great-grandmother, Francy Ann Fain Sands, married a man named Thomas Crum of Benton County on December 4, 1867, Justice of the Peace A.J. Priestley officiating.

Any information will be appreciated. — Jerry D. Chastain, 2630 Downer Ave., Richmond, California 94804.

John Joseph Myers

My father was SFC John Joseph Myers, born November 8, 1912 in Austin, Texas. He died at Fort Huachuca, Arizona in 1957. It is my understanding that he was a professional fighter for a while before he went into the army. I have very little information about my father and would like to hear from anyone who knows anything about him or his parents. — Robert W. Myers #127121, P.O. Box 520, Walla Walla, Washington 99362.

Nolan — Lalande

I would appreciate any information on Gervacio Nolan or Jean Baptiste Lalande.

Gervacio Nolan was a native of St. Charles, Canada, born around 1800. His parents were Francisco Nolan and Maria Angela Coplotrur. Did he have brothers or sisters? In 1816 he went to work for Northwest Company.

Gervacio married Maria Dolores Lalande in 1828 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. One son, Eugenio, married Gregoria Ortiz. My grandfather, Albert Nolan, was their son, born in 1855. Did he have brothers or sisters? Did his family die when he was young? He lived with an uncle until he was about fourteen, then he left home.

Albert never spoke of his family.

Jean Baptiste Lalande left Kaskaskia, Illinois around 1804. He had a daughter who may have married a Ledoux and one son, Thomas Benito Lalande.

I would appreciate any information from descendants or anyone who might have knowledge of any of these people. All letters will be answered and I will exchange information. — Helen Nolan Butt, Box 272, Uravan, Colorado 81436.

Baker

My research indicates my great-great-great-grandfather was George Baker who married Margaret (Rhoda?) Miller on August 1, 1809 in Dandridge, Jefferson County, Tennessee. We believe they had four children: Mary Elizabeth born 1810 or 1823 and married Thomas Brimer in 1838; James Elijah born in 1812 and married Mary Henderson in 1830; John born in 1815 and married Mary E. Fain in 1839, and Jacob born 1818 and married Amanda Parrot in 1841. Mary Elizabeth and Jacob remained in Tennessee and John moved to Missouri. These three are traceable. James Elijah is believed to have moved to Texas but I have no trace. John Baker had eleven children: Rhoda Jane, John Fain, George W., Thomas Jackson, Jacob Wesley, James W., Josiah Elijah, Mary Elizabeth, Martha Melissa, Samuel Seigel, and Addison M.

My research has stalled at this point. I would very much be interested in hearing from anyone concerning any of the above persons. — James E. Baker, Rt. 2, Box 168, Louisiana, Missouri 63353.

Potter

Roxanne Umerhine Woodman Potter was born in Winnigance, Maine in the early 1800s. She married my grandfather, Isaac Jenkins Potter who was a ship's carpenter. They lived in Maine until three of their children were born they moved west to Minnesota and finally to South Dakota where Roxanne died in the spring of 1903. She is buried in the Troy cemetery in Grant County, South Dakota.

If any of her descendants are still living I would very much like to hear from them and will exchange information. — Mrs Lillian Block, Box 1253, Drayton Valley, Alberta, Canada 70E OMO.

**Roop — Alexander —
Grandirson
Smothers — Parrish**

Andrew Roop died in an accident, or was killed, in Illinois in 1877. Charles

(Continued on Page 62)

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By RITA HILL

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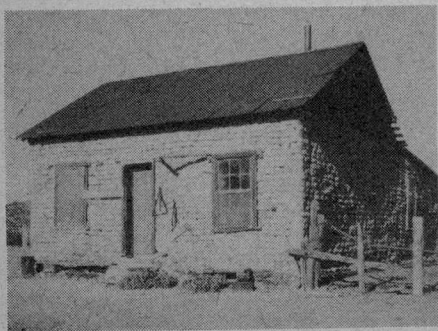
At right: What remains of Ralston (recently renamed Shakespeare), New Mexico. Mt. Aera is in distance.

NO ONE today knows much about Ralston City. Ralston, New Mexico, in the words of an old-time Westerner "shore drug out its tracts." But did any, except a very few, ever know much about this town? Some old history books say the place died almost as soon as it was born and never had over fifteen to eighteen men (which was probably its population before the Civil War when it was called Mexican Spring and was only a stage station). Other histories state there were over 3,000 people in Ralston City by the last of 1872. This could have been about right, for a surveyor's record made in the late summer of 1870 states there were, as early as that, forty houses in the town.

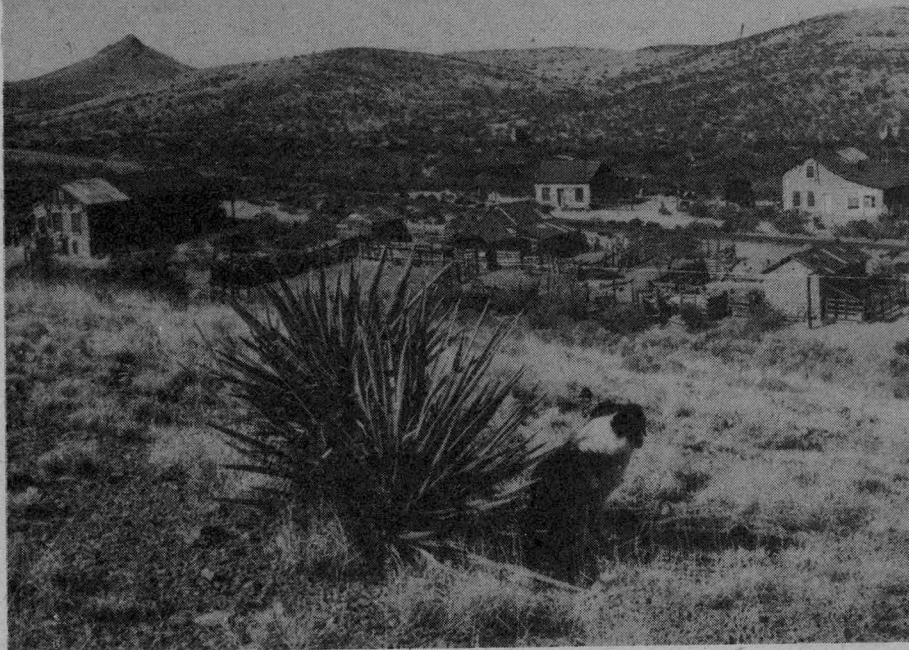
When I first came to Ralston in 1935 I knew practically nothing of its past, but I found its few remaining buildings intriguing and even haunting. I know they haunted me for I, asleep or half-asleep, dreamed of other buildings that were once here and of strange things that had happened. I may be imaginative but others have felt the same way about this town of a few old walls and many foundations. One friend claimed he knew he had been here in another life and described a cave — but there are many old stories told, or partly told.

One story that is a real challenge, in my opinion, is that of the "Diamond Hoax" or the great diamond swindle of 1871, 1872 and 1873. What happened here in Ralston and elsewhere? Why did it happen and how? My daughter and I have done a great deal of thinking about this and we have explored and searched through many books and papers and listened to many people. And in this exploration we acknow-

Below: The stage station at Ralston.



A different view of the Great Swindle of 1871-72 . . .



MYSTERIES SET

ledge our debts to all the others who have had time and money to research more fully in many libraries for contemporary accounts.

I first heard of the diamond fraud in the early 1940s. I became acquainted with Emma Marble Muir and she was soon a dear friend. She had been raised in Ralston and she told the story as John Evensen (Uncle Johnny to the old-timers) had told her, and her mother, sixty years before. John Evensen was a stage station keeper at Ralston (recently renamed Shakespeare) when the Marble family came in 1882. He had been station keeper since 1865 so, of course, he was present during the diamond swindle days.

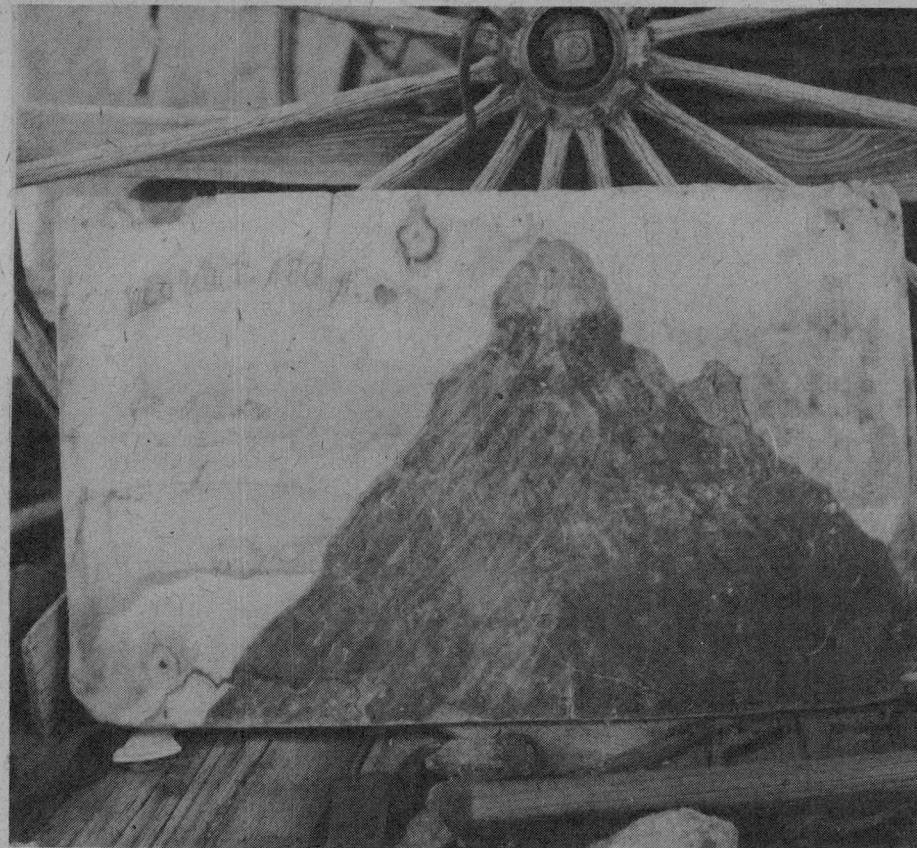
His story was of a cigar box brought to Ralston containing some rough diamonds, how many or what quality he either did not know, did not say, or his words on that have been lost. It is said these diamonds were brought by way of Mexico (Tampico) up the traders' trail to Ralston. A strike of rich silver had come first, and the controlling company hired a group of men (called by different ones "Vigilantes"

or Hired Fighting Men) to protect company interests.

The rough diamonds were entrusted to these men. When they received word that a prospective buyer of mining stock was in town, or coming, they would secretly ride to a sharp peak a couple of miles away and place a diamond here and there in ant beds. Then these same men would act as guides in the ensuing search for diamonds.

THIS story is sensible and possible. Uncle Johnny was not himself involved in this fraud — he was only an on-looker. He seems not to have been worried about the right or wrong of this business and he certainly had no reason not to tell the truth as he saw it. According to him and others, the hired company men also acted as careful guardians of the diamond fields on this peak. Obviously no one would buy valuable stones and leave them for just anyone to pick up, nor would they allow the fraud to be exposed by unsupervised searchers.

Emma Muir was not the only one



A painting found in the old Stratford Hotel. The title painted in upper left corner is "Mount Aera." Just below that is a sailing ship firing its cannon. To the right of the mountain is a tall building with many windows, perhaps the envisioned headquarters of the San Francisco and New York Mining & Commercial Company? The several bullet holes in the painting reflect the bad habit Ralstonites are said to have had — that of shooting at flies!

mental in the renaming of this place "Ralston City" in honor of his employer, but we do know that William Ralston was considered, at that time, the most important man in California. I am quite sure he never visited this town that bore his name, but his influence and money were needed and used in the silver strike here and the diamond swindle that followed. After reading Mr. Harpending's book, I too fail to understand how anyone could believe such a ridiculous story.

In May 1946, *True The Man's Magazine*, printed a story called "The Great Diamond Discovery" by Tom Bailey. It was an interesting and well written story but was entirely based on Mr. Harpending's old book. It told of the two prospectors, Arnold and Slack, and how they brought diamonds to the bank of California (Ralston's bank) for deposit. It told of the prospectors' journey back east to Wyoming or Colorado on the new Union Pacific Railroad to get more diamonds from the fields they had discovered. Then there were accounts of the journeys of the experts to the fields and of the fields' purchase by a company composed of wealthy men, including Ralston and Harpending. And the story told of the later discovery that the fields had been salted, but did not mention Ralston City or New Mexico.

The May 1964 issue of *Frontier Times* contained a story "Stage Stop" by Marjorie White. It told about Ralston (Shakespeare) and about the diamond swindle as we had repeated the story to Marjorie. There were follow-up letters to the editor indignantly claiming the diamonds were

The Stratford Hotel today. Mr. Harpending stayed here, as well as many other important people.



WITH DIAMONDS

who told me about the diamond salting here. Old-time miners who had arrived around the turn of the century, when some of the miners of the '70s were still alive and able to laugh (they all thought selling bogus mining stock to rich men a good joke), told how much money this one or that one made in the swindle. And they seemed not to be afraid to talk freely, nor was Uncle Johnny afraid.

Yet later, I found that fear — real fear — was one of the legacies left in Ralston in the wake of the diamond fraud. People who were here then, were warned so emphatically upon leaving to tell nothing they had seen or heard, that their descendents were afraid sixty or seventy years later to repeat the recollections of their fathers and grandfathers. For a long time I thought this stemmed from fear of the law but now I know it did not. So I wonder, conjecture, and speculate.

I believe Emma Muir's and Uncle Johnny Evensen's story of the Diamond Fraud as it happened here. I believe it implicitly. In the 1940s I repeated this story to some visitors

and I was told by one man that I had things all wrong — that I should read Asbury Harpending's book *The Great Diamond Hoax* if I wanted to know what really happened, and that no diamonds were ever salted in or near Ralston.

I was rather taken aback. I told Emma Muir about this conversation and she laughed heartily. She lent me her old copy of Harpending's book which she hadn't thought worth mentioning before. The Marbles and Muirs considered this book a joke. Asbury Harpending had written it about forty years after the swindle, as he stated to clear his name. He doesn't explain why he waited so long in a foreign land before he decided to act. And in clearing his name he blames two simple prospectors, Philip Arnold and John Slack, both dead, as being the actual perpetrators of the swindle — that they managed the entire scheme.

Now Mr. Harpending was, in the 1870s, a sort of field man for William Ralston, and was here when the early silver excitement began in March 1870. We do not know if he was instru-

actually salted near the Union Pacific Railroad (in Wyoming, Colorado, or Utah) as Mr. Harpending had claimed. Yet *Desert Magazine* in 1966 gave the location of the salting as Shakespeare as did two later stories in *New Mexico Magazine*. What should people believe?

SO MUCH smoke near the Union Pacific Railroad indicated there really must have been some sort of fire thereabouts. Could diamonds have been salted to the North, too? And if so, how? The cost of strewing many, many diamonds plus rubies and sapphires, all over the ground, as the stories have it, would have been prohibitive. And, of course, real diamonds could not have been left unguarded; the villain or villains in this plot were not fools.

A few years ago Bruce Woodard became interested enough in the diamond fraud to write a book called *Diamonds in the Salt*. This is another retelling of Mr. Harpending's book, but it has a great deal more material. Mr. Woodard did a great amount of research. There are accounts of trips made by important men (to Colorado, he says), including Henry Janin, famous mining engineer, and of the large quantities of stones found. One account gives 1,000 pounds of diamonds plus 4 pounds of rubies and large sapphires. Another gives 500 diamonds, another 60 pounds of diamonds and rubies to the value of \$600,000.

Then there is the account of work done by two men in four days. It seems they dug 256 karats of diamonds of first quality, 568 karats of diamonds of second quality and 814 karats of lesser value. This is quite interesting and enlightening in itself. Who judged these stones and classified them? This is not told. Who had the knowledge and experience? I think the answer to this is no one. Rough diamonds were something very few people had ever seen. The diamond fields of South Africa were of recent discovery and it is quite possible even Tiffany's experts were not at all sure of themselves and made a big mistake in evaluating the stones sent to them. And all of the stories published at the time in the newspapers, and reprinted in the book, seem to be news stories — not first-hand accounts by those who had visited the fields.

Judging from the news stories Mr. Woodard collected, there must have been plenty of action to and from and in these diamond fields near the Union Pacific in 1872 and plenty of publicity. Far from trying to hide the location of these fields, as some say, it seems everything was done to attract attention to them. One wonders which ones

besides Harpending, Arnold, Slack and Roberts worked on this publicity. Then to attract more attention, it would appear, the company sent a group of men from a railroad station in Colorado south to northern Arizona. They said these men were to hunt for diamonds. Perhaps publicity wasn't all they hoped for here. One of the men in this group may have been a person at least one member of the company hoped would not return, for he knew too much. This group of men did come near starving and thirsting to death.

But by the fall of 1872 apparently the stage was to be set for the third act. Someone felt all had been done with the diamond scheme along the Union Pacific and elsewhere that could be done. A denouement was in order. And who to make it? None other than a prominent and highly regarded surveyor, Clarence King. Handily, he was in that area surveying and he probably had little knowledge about diamonds.

So a group of company men went, the stories say, to the diamond fields and they must have set the stage for the final act. Evidently they concocted saltings which loudly announced what they were. No one, amateur or not, could fail to recognize that this was salted ground. So King exposed the dastardly hoax, immediately telegraphing from the nearest railroad station.

The important men of the company were shocked. Restitution was made, it was said. I fear most or all of any restitution was made by Ralston. His name had been needed and used in this diamond fraud and, of course, his integrity was at stake. But no one was arrested, certainly not Arnold or Slack.

All those pounds and pounds and karats of diamonds and other precious stones that had been gathered — where did they go? There should be a great many of them left today but I understand there is one — only one — a pea-sized diamond on exhibit in California that is "said" to be one of those found in the diamond field. So instead of flooding the market with precious gems, the diamonds found near the Union Pacific must have quietly disappeared.

We understand that the country cornering Utah and Wyoming and running into Colorado contains even today many beautiful specimens of semi-precious stones. This solves part of the mystery, I think, for surely these stones were mistaken by many for more valuable ones. Most of the so-called "experts" who went to the fields in 1872 could easily have made this mistake. David Lavender, in his excellent book on William Ralston, *Nothing*

Seemed Impossible, reaches the same conclusion. But still, there is the mystery of what became of all the semi-precious stones gathered. We presume they were packed out, or were they?

And about guilt, perhaps Arnold and Slack were not the crooks. Harpending declares them to have been. Perhaps they were set up to receive blame. They may have thought the stones in the Union Pacific country genuine and valuable. They were not educated men and it is certain they were not too familiar with the Colorado country or with diamonds.

Arnold is mentioned as being in El Paso in the 1850s and Slack is on the Ralston census of 1870. There is no real evidence that either man was ever in England. Harpending states that Arnold went to England in the fall of 1870 but a Tucson newspaper of November 1870 says Mr. Arnold and Mr. Cowper passed through Tucson on their way from Ralston to San Francisco. (It also states Arnold and Cowper were carrying some stones, believed to be diamonds, found at Ralston.)

WHILE all this diamond excitement was taking place between Colorado and California what was happening in far-off, isolated Ralston City? One would think the town would have died quietly since its silver claims were not producing. But, no, it was much alive. Maybe an effort was made to sort of cover over its existence at this time — its post office was closed and not one new mining claim was filed in the district. But from advertisements at least three stage lines were still operating out of Ralston. And the company boys were riding up on Mt. Area and placing a diamond here and there in ant beds when a prospective diamond stock buyer arrived. Even while the ordinary townspeople were told the boys were hunting diamonds for the company, there was a rumor something illegal was going on; but all was prosperity in Ralston until early 1873 when news of the fraud poisoned things here. Suddenly there were no new arrivals on the coaches. Workmen found themselves without jobs. Businesses closed and big wagons pulled out daily. Each and every family leaving town was warned not to talk. How this warning was worded and backed we would like to know. But the effect was lasting.

So we ask ourselves just what all went on in Ralston City in 1871 and 1872? Someone connected with the company must have been making money here in some way. Payrolls were met and there continued to be building and improvements in the town. Some have suggested people were killed for

their money — money they planned to invest in diamond mines. If so, some of these should have been important enough for relatives to make inquiries. But there are no records here to tell us anything. Someone made sure of that.

Again speaking of the company's hired men, the Texas boys who actually did the diamond salting at Ralston, didn't they talk when they were off the payroll? Not much! Even the man who nearly died in the ill-fated Arizona diamond hunt said nothing. Most of them scattered to different springs and waters around, built cabins and became ranchers. There were numbers of Mexican cattle in this area and the Indian reservations needed beef. Friends and relatives of the boys came to New Mexico and Southeast Arizona as ranchers, too, and Ralston was the place to go for supplies. Seven or eight years later, as the Southern Pacific Railroad moved in, several of these boys helped the new town of Tombstone its wildest events, and one of them became a prominent citizen of that place. But there was never any talk of diamond salting. Perhaps Shakespeare himself was extra sensitive and perhaps one of its most famous hangings might have had its origin traced to the diamond fraud.

In 1874 Ralston, with a much smaller population, became comparatively quiet, so quiet one man called it a ghost town. There were only two stage coaches a week and Uncle Johnny added a saloon to the stage station to help make a living. Of course, a few hopeful miners stayed on and new claims were filed occasionally. Ranchers came for supplies as did people from northern Mexico, since the big freight wagons were still bringing in goods. Thus the town remained until the railroad brought a new name, Shakespeare, and a new boom.

Meanwhile what of the other actors in the diamond story? Philip Arnold was killed in Kentucky and whether his death was connected in any way with the diamond swindle is not known; John Slack settled in White Oaks, New Mexico; Harpending went to South America for a long stay. They were forgotten by most everyone.

The mystery of what happened near the Union Pacific Railroad in 1872 and why it happened, and where all of those stones, precious or not, ended up seems at this late date beyond solution. And the mystery of what all happened in Ralston City is hidden even more thoroughly. Dead men tell no tales — except those men who put what they know in writing and count on someone's curiosity and luck to bring it to light some day.

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14	Mar./Apr. 1956	Rare*	67	Feb. 1965	1.25	119	Oct. 1973	1.25
15	May/June 1956	5.00	68	April 1965	1.25	120	Dec. 1973	1.25
16	July/Aug. 1956	Rare*	69	June 1965	5.00	121	Feb. 1974	1.25
17	Sept./Oct. 1956	Rare*	70	Aug. 1965	1.25	122	April 1974	1.25
18	Nov./Dec. 1956	3.50	71	Oct. 1965	1.25	123	June 1974	1.25
19	Feb. 1957	Rare*	72	Dec. 1965	1.25	124	Aug. 1974	1.25
20	April 1957	5.00	73	Feb. 1966	1.25	125	Oct. 1974	1.25
21	June 1957	Rare*	74	April 1966	1.25	126	Dec. 1974	1.25
22	Aug. 1957	5.00	75	June 1966	1.25	127	Feb. 1975	1.25
23	Oct. 1957	Rare*	76	Aug. 1966	1.25	128	April 1975	1.25
24	Dec. 1957	Rare*	77	Oct. 1966	1.25	129	June 1975	Rare*
25	Feb. 1958	5.00	78	Dec. 1966	1.25	130	Aug. 1975	1.25
26	April 1958	Rare*	79	Feb. 1967	1.25	131	Oct. 1975	1.25
27	June 1958	3.50	80	April 1967	1.25	132	Dec. 1975	1.25
28	Aug. 1958	Rare*	81	June 1967	1.25	133	Feb. 1976	1.25
29	Oct. 1958	Rare*	82	Aug. 1967	3.50	134	April 1976	1.25
30	Dec. 1958	5.00	83	Oct. 1967	1.25	135	June 1976	1.25
31	Feb. 1959	Rare*	84	Dec. 1967	1.25	136	Aug. 1976	Rare*
32	April 1959	5.00	85	Feb. 1968	1.25	137	Oct. 1976	Rare*
33	June 1959	5.00	86	April 1968	1.25	138	Dec. 1976	1.25
34	Aug. 1959	5.00	87	June 1968	1.25	139	Feb. 1977	Rare*
35	Oct. 1959	5.00	88	Aug. 1968	1.25	140	April 1977	1.25
36	Dec. 1959	3.50	89	Oct. 1968	1.25	141	June 1977	1.25
37	Feb. 1960	5.00	90	Dec. 1968	1.25	142	Aug. 1977	Rare*
38	April 1960	5.00	91	Feb. 1969	1.25	143	Oct. 1977	1.25
39	June 1960	Rare*	92	April 1969	1.25	144	Dec. 1977	1.25
40	Aug. 1960	3.50	93	June 1969	1.25	145	Feb. 1978	1.25
41	Oct. 1960	5.00	94	Aug. 1969	1.25	146	April 1978	1.25
42	Dec. 1960	5.00	95	Oct. 1969	1.25	147	June 1978	Rare*
43	Feb. 1961	3.50	96	Dec. 1969	1.25	148	Aug. 1978	Rare*
44	April 1961	Rare*	97	Feb. 1970	1.25	149	Oct. 1978	1.25
45	June 1961	5.00	98	April 1970	1.25	150	Dec. 1978	1.25
46	Aug. 1961	Rare*	99	June 1970	3.50	151	Feb. 1979	1.25
47	Oct. 1961	3.50	100	Aug. 1970	1.25	152	April 1979	1.25
48	Dec. 1961	Rare*	101	Oct. 1970	1.25	153	June 1979	1.25
49	Feb. 1962	3.50	102	Dec. 1970	1.25	154	Aug. 1979	1.25
50	April 1962	1.25	103	Feb. 1971	1.25	155	Oct. 1979	1.25
51	June 1962	Rare*	104	April 1971	1.25	156	Dec. 1979	1.25
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2	Spring 1958	Rare*	27	Jan. 1964	3.50	52	March 1968	1.25	77	May 1972	1.25	102	July 1976	1.25
3	Summer 1958	Rare*	28	March 1964	3.50	53	May 1968	1.25	78	July 1972	1.25	103	Sept. 1976	1.25
4	Fall 1958	3.50	29	May 1964	3.50	54	July 1968	1.25	79	Sept. 1972	1.25	104	Nov. 1976	1.25
5	Winter 1958	3.50	30	July 1964	3.50	55	Sept. 1968	1.25	80	Nov. 1972	1.25	105	Jan. 1977	1.25
6	Spring 1959	3.50	31	Sept. 1964	1.25	56	Nov. 1968	1.25	81	Jan. 1973	1.25	106	March 1977	1.25
7	Summer 1959	3.50	32	Nov. 1964	1.25	57	Jan. 1969	1.25	82	March 1973	1.25	107	May 1977	1.25
8	Fall 1959	3.50	33	Jan. 1965	1.25	58	March 1969	1.25	83	May 1973	1.25	108	July 1977	1.25
9	Winter 1959	Rare*	34	March 1965	1.25	59	May 1969	1.25	84	July 1973	1.25	109	Sept. 1977	1.25
10	Spring 1960	3.50	35	May 1965	1.25	60	July 1969	1.25	85	Sept. 1973	1.25	110	Nov. 1977	1.25
11	Summer 1960	3.50	36	July 1965	1.25	61	Sept. 1969	1.25	86	Nov. 1973	1.25	111	Jan. 1978	1.25
12	Fall 1960	3.50	37	Sept. 1965	1.25	62	Nov. 1969	1.25	87	Jan. 1974	1.25	112	March 1978	1.25
13	Winter 1960	Rare*	38	Nov. 1965	1.25	63	Jan. 1970	1.25	88	March 1974	1.25	113	May 1978	1.25
14	Spring 1961	3.50	39	Jan. 1966	1.25	64	March 1970	1.25	89	May 1974	1.25	114	July 1978	1.25
15	Summer 1961	1.25	40	March 1966	1.25	65	May 1970	1.25	90	July 1974	1.25	115	Sept. 1978	1.25
16	Fall 1961	1.25	41	May 1966	3.50	66	July 1970	1.25	91	Sept. 1974	1.25	116	Nov. 1978	1.25
17	Winter 1961	Rare*	42	July 1966	3.50	67	Sept. 1970	1.25	92	Nov. 1974	Rare*	117	Jan. 1979	1.25
18	Spring 1962	3.50	43	Sept. 1966	3.50	68	Nov. 1970	1.25	93	Jan. 1975	1.25	118	March 1979	1.25
19	Summer 1962	3.50	44	Nov. 1966	1.25	69	Jan. 1971	1.25	94	March 1975	1.25	119	May 1979	1.25
20	Fall 1962	3.50	45	Jan. 1967	1.25	70	March 1971	1.25	95	May 1975	1.25	120	July 1979	1.25
21	Jan. 1963	3.50	46	March 1967	1.25	71	May 1971	3.50	96	July 1975	1.25	121	Sept. 1979	1.25
22	March 1963	3.50	47	May 1967	1.25	72	July 1971	1.25	97	Sept. 1975	1.25	122	Nov. 1979	1.25
23	May 1963	3.50	48	July 1967	1.25	73	Sept. 1971	1.25	98	Nov. 1975	1.25	123	Jan. 1980	1.25
24	July 1963	Rare*	49	Sept. 1967	1.25	74	Nov. 1971	1.25	99	Jan. 1976	1.25	124	March 1980	1.25
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BROOMCORN AND MULES

**“Dear Reader” — however you’re making your living,
it’s got to be easier than this!**

NO ONE should write anything about early Baca County, Colorado without writing something about broomcorn. For years broomcorn was the cash crop. So much of it was grown here that Baca County became known as the “Broomcorn Capital” of the world. Then the area around Lindsay, Oklahoma got into the act and the two

places would trade the title of broomcorn capital from year to year depending upon which area received the most moisture.

Handling broomcorn has to be the most “itchy” thing anyone has ever done. Yes, it will itch you worse than picking peaches.

There were two types of broomcorn

grown in Baca County and so far as I know they were the only two types ever grown anywhere. They were called standard and dwarf. To raise either of them in Baca County before 1929, when tractors came onto the scene, you needed two or three items.

First, you needed at least four horses or mules, and second, you



By IKE OSTEEN

Excerpted from *A PLACE CALLED BACA*, by Ike Osteen; Copyright 1979 by Ike Osteen. Photos from the book.

needed to get up in the morning. By "morning" I mean about daylight. When your feet hit the floor of the old dugout you got into your bib overalls, grabbed a couple of milk buckets, and headed for the barn yard.

If the horses or mules were around the barn you were lucky. As we always had at least eight head of long-eared, long-legged cotton-field type mules to do our farming with, I will just refer to mules from here on. If the mules were not around the barn, then you had to saddle up the night horse and go wrangle the mules. When you brought them into the barn in a high lope, they would go into their own stalls and usually get on the same side of the stall as they would be worked under harness. You then put a halter on each mule and tied it to the manger.

We kept two mules in each stall and a separate feed or grain box and a small salt box for each. The bundle feed or loose hay was put into the man-

ger between the feed boxes and the two mules ate from the same manger. On a peg in the wall directly behind each mule hung that mule's collar and harness. We were very particular about the fit of a mule's collar and seldom had to use a collar pad.

By this time it was light enough you could see the milk cows, so you got in action with the milk buckets. Then you could head for the house and all the breakfast you could eat. Surely I don't need to tell you what farmers had for breakfast in that day and time.

Immediately after breakfast you started up the old hand-cranked cream separator to take care of the milk before the cream had raised to the top of it. Then slop the hogs and perhaps feed some of the skimmed milk to one or two bucket calves. We called them bucket calves because the bucket of milk was a substitute for their mothers.

Some farmers tried to get baby calves to drink milk from a bucket by placing or tying a rag on the end of a stick. Dip the rag in the milk and put it in the calf's mouth. It would suck the milk from the rag. Then, if they were lucky, they could lower the rag into the bucket of milk, and the calf by trying to suck milk from the rag would maybe learn to drink from the bucket.

Here is the proper way to feed a "pinko" calf. You straddle its neck with your legs and back the calf into a corner of the corral, shed or barn. Hold the bucket in one hand and stick two fingers in the calf's mouth so it can draw milk between your fingers. When the calf gets the first mouthful or taste of the warm milk it will give a "hunch" that will always knock the hide off the back of the hand that's in the bucket and splash milk all over your face.

When that happens you lower the

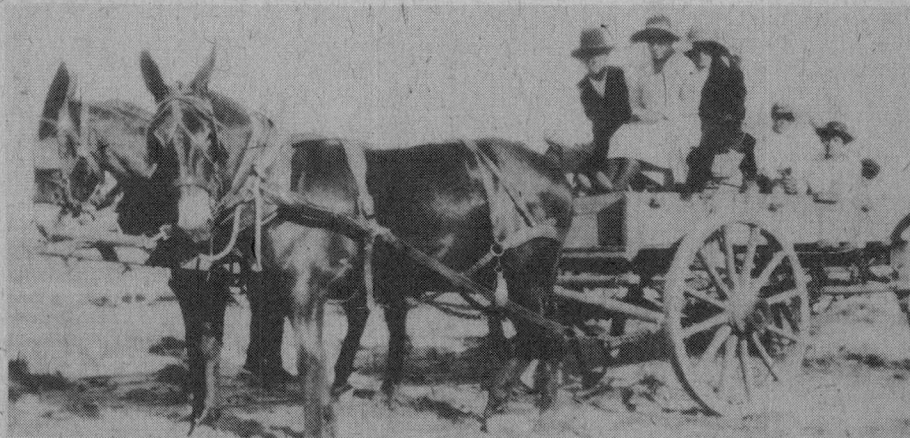
bucket, and with your good hand you slap the calf about half way across the corral, and start the whole thing over again. Keep it up and in a couple of weeks you will have the prettiest little old pot-bellied calf you ever saw.

NOW you headed back to the barn and the mules. From the peg behind the mule you took his collar and put it around his neck. It fastened at the top with a strap and buckle. Then putting your right arm under the breeching and back band of the harness you took hold of the right hame on the harness with your right hand and the left hame with your left hand. Lifting the harness off the pegs and going up on the left side of the mule you placed the harness on.

The hames were placed in the grooves on the collar and the bottom of the hames drawn tight against the collar with the hame string, which was a strap with a buckle on one end of it. From that strap came the saying "I'll do it or break a hame string trying." If that mule was to be worked on one side of a tongue, the harness would have a breast chain snapped in the bottom ring on one of the hames. The breast chain, also made from heavy leather as well as chain, had a large snap on each end plus another large snap sliding free on the chain between the two end snaps. You unsnapped one end of the chain and going across the breast of the mule would snap the chain into the bottom ring on the other hame. The free sliding snap on the chain was then ready for snapping into the end ring of the neck-yoke on the front end of the wagon tongue or other piece of farming equipment.

Going back on the mule from the hames, you reached under the mule just behind his front legs and caught

Upper left: A broomcorn seeder and crew. A "baler" horse was used to pull, sweep, and compress bales. Man with whip and four horses furnished the power to turn cylinder. Seed pile at left, finished bales in center. Ricks to be seeded are in background. Below: The Osteen family used mules for both work and play. This is the old spring seat wagon Ike rode on his first trip to Elkhart.





Wagons full of broomcorn bales.

the belly band which was strap fixed at one end to the back band on the right side of the mule and long enough to come under the belly of the mule and be buckled onto a short strap on the back band on the left side of the mule.

Then you pushed the breeching of the harness over the rear end of the mule, and pulled his tail outside the breeching. If the harness had a crupper on it, you put it in place by taking the loose end and bringing it under the tail of the mule from the right side. It buckled to make a loop around the tail, and the other end of the crupper was a strap that ran up the back of the mule, sometimes through a loop on the top of the back band, and then ended around the top hame string on the top of the collar.

A rather short strap with a snap in the end was still hanging loose from a ring on each side of the breeching. These straps were snapped into the ring on the end of a strap which came back between the front legs of the mule from the bottom of the collar. As mules had a way of being hard on harness, we quite often used only collar, hames, traces or tugs and a back band across the back from one tug to the other. The next step was to take the bridle with the blinds back of each eye, off the hame of the harness and put the bridle on the mule. If the mule was "dodgy" about his ears being handled, then you better watch out after the bit was in his mouth and you reached up to pull an ear under the headstall of the bridle. That was when the mule would sling his head into yours and you had to be pretty tough if your head was harder than that of the mule. If you got the mules bridled, you were ready to lead them from the barn and head for the field for a full day's work of planting broomcorn.

LET me tell you here about just one of those eight mules and how my dad offered to give the mule to anyone who could bridle him. (This is how I wrote about that ten years ago.)

"Many of you old wagon freighters who were on the road from Colorado to Elkhart, Kansas will remember the big red barn of O. K. Osteen where you could put up your teams and obtain feed and water for them. You drivers were also welcome to bed down in the barn and if the weather was too bad you could spread your bedroll in the dugout if you could find room.

"The next day you would travel the thirty miles into Elkhart, sell your load, get your supplies loaded and bed down in the wagon yards in Elkhart. The following day found you back at our barn for another night stop and then on home the next day. Do any of you remember the monkey at the yards in Elkhart that caused so much trouble to anyone with a green team?"

"About daylight one morning as everybody was harnessing up, one of the freighters hollered at me and said, 'Ike, tell your dad I'm a-gonna bridle old Pete when I come back from Elkhart.' That freighter sure is staying in Elkhart a long time. He made the statement to me many years ago. It is now 1969 and I haven't seen him yet!

"He could have been one of the few unfortunate ones who didn't survive the wagon yards in Elkhart, or maybe the monkey got him. This offer to bridle old Pete was made by more than one freighter who had heard of my dad's proposition to any man who would walk into our barn with a black-snake whip in one hand and a bridle in the other. If he could put the bridle on Pete and lead him from the barn, the mule was his to keep.

"Old Pete, as we called him, was not

the Pete mule for which a monument was erected in Muleshoe, Texas in 1965. He was the smallest, most cantankerous, ornery, and just downright mean mule of the eight we always had around. Pete was yellow in color, but the stripe down his back was black and he never ran from a fight. I could read a lot of his intended actions by the way he held or moved those long buckskin ears. Generally they signaled trouble. I don't know where my dad got Pete and his mate Jerry but I know I was a happy and proud boy the day I tied them one on each side of another span of bigger and better mules and delivered them to the buyer in the new railhead town of Walsh, Colorado.

"Old Pete was like any cowboy turned outlaw. You couldn't remember just when it happened, but suddenly he was over the line of no return. Maybe we four brothers had something to do with Pete's decision to go bad. I can recall that the kick boards behind his stall were full of holes where we tried taking some of the vinegar out of him by hanging a sack of straw on a wire through a pulley in the top of the barn and lowering it for him to practice his kicking on.

"Pete just delighted in finding a newborn, wobbly-legged calf and playing with it until all of a sudden it was dead. Now old Pete didn't think he was killing calves; he was just playing with them. If he picked one up by its neck and shook it like a dog shakes a rat, he was only playing with it.

"We kept the old Long Tom 36" barrel 12 gauge shotgun in the barn with some shells loaded with stock salt instead of the regular buckshot. We tried salting old Pete's hide time and again, but he still loved the new-born calves.

"Just who or when Pete found out the barn was his, if he used two hind feet, I don't know. Like all mules Pete was smart and when he turned mean you had quite a critter to contend with. The first time Pete took over the barn from a man, was when one of my brothers entered the barn with a whip in one hand and a halter in the other to straighten out another mule.

"Suddenly here came Pete backing out of his stall with both hind feet aimed at my brother's head and going like a trip hammer. Pete had his head down looking back between his front legs and was backing as he kicked. My brother was cut off from the barn door and had to back up and fall over into the manger to keep Pete from getting him.

"There stood Pete with his head down and both hind feet splintering

the 2 x 6 top of the manger above my brother, who was flattened out in the bottom. I lost no time in getting the barn door open. Old Pete stopped kicking and headed out the door like a cat hit in the tail by a boot jack. After that, whenever anyone entered the barn with a whip in his hand if Pete wasn't, tied in his stall you had better be prepared to get out of his way. If you did not have a whip in your hand you could go into Pete's stall and bridle or halter him.

"Thus my dad made the standing offer to any teamster who thought he was a whizz of a mule skinner, to enter the barn with a whip in one hand and a bridle in the other. If he brought Pete out with the bridle on, he could have the mule."

Lest some of you modern readers think we were rough on our mules, let me say that Pete received the same treatment as the other seven. Shucks, we were so sentimental about them we had all eight of them named. I will always remember those eight names but I can't tell you how or where the names originated.

Jess and Jim were two mare mules who pulled more wagons out of the quicksand of the Cimarron River than any other two mules or horses on the road. When they tightened their tugs and you rattled a trace chain behind them, they did not stop until something broke or the wagon was out of the hole and rolling free and easy.

Kit and Jack was the span we boys had broke to saddle as well as bareback under harness, to and from the field.

Dick and Mike were the biggest span of cotton-field type mules we ever owned. One of them we could ride but the other one bucked like the little white mule Chris Duivan bucked in his rodeo string.

Each span had their own stall in the barn and each mule had his side of the stall. If he entered the stall on the wrong side, the other mule generally straightened him out with a kick or two. If that didn't do it, the whip we kept by the barn door did.

Yes sir, we used those eight long-eared son's of Satan but we didn't abuse them. All the mules and horses are long since gone and most of the freighters. If two that I know are still around, Lee Rosengrants and Elmer Terry of Springfield, Colorado read this, I hope they get a chuckle out of the antics of anyone who tried to bridle Old Pete.

If you went to the field with just four long eared mules then you were planting with the old one-row lister. In

a few years you were taking six mules to the field and using a two-row lister. Brother, that was really farming! Then in 1929 the tractors came along and you started using an old drag three-row lister where you could just about farm all the land you could buy or rent.

Well, maybe not quite that much, as those first tractors were not on rubber tires and the old steel lugs on the rear wheels and the knife-like band of tread in the center of the front wheels did not roll as easy, nor did the tractor have the power to go as fast as the later models. To this day I have never driven a tractor on rubber tires. We planted more broomcorn with those old mules than we ever did with a tractor. Now that we have the broomcorn planted, sledged or knifed, harrowed and then "laid by" with the old cultivators, we are just waiting for it to grow and be ready to cut.

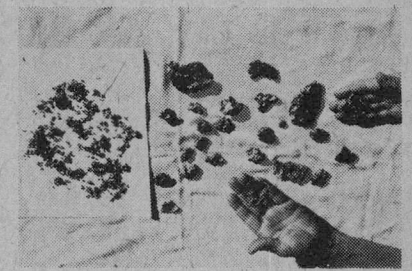
I mentioned the two varieties of broomcorn being standard and dwarf. The standard grew quite tall, six to seven feet, and had to be broken or cradled before the heads could be cut from the top end of the stalks. The standard variety was always cut with a knife. For many years just plain old pocket knives were used. Then someone thought of making a knife for that purpose with a larger wooden handle and a much wider blade than the pocket knives.

A head of good brush would be from 18 to 24 inches long, with the seed on each individual straw in the head. If the seed all matured and ripened, it generally would be heavy enough to crook the head of brush and turn it downward. This we call crooknecks and it would not make good brooms as the brush was bent in the middle of the head.

To keep the individual straws in the head, the stalk was cut off about 4 inches below where the brush or straws ended or 4 inches below the bottom of the head. When the heads were made into brooms the 4 inches of stalk could be cut off up close to the head and only the brush part would be in the brooms. Before the brush reached the broom stage it was handled many times and usually hauled or transported for many miles. We had no broom factories in Baca County.

I mentioned the weight of the seed would crook the head. A rain on the head would crook it faster than just the seed. If we were cutting standard corn and got a rain, we would sometimes break the whole field then cut it out later. By breaking, I mean you would walk along, taking one row at a time, and bending the stalk over sharply about a foot below the bottom end of the brush. This would let the head or brush hang down and it would

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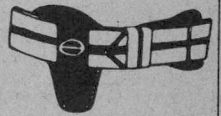
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not crook. Neither would the tough stalk break off.

You could walk along and cut the heads off much easier and faster than when you had to reach up with your hands above your head, cutting off one head at a time. Tall corn was quite often broken just to make it easier to reach for cutting. There was a last leaf growing around the stalk just below the brush and it was quite an art to remove this leaf at the same time you cut the stalk with your knife and not have to make an extra move by pulling the leaf, or "boot" as we called it, off after you had the brush in your hand.

Generally this boot could be removed and left hanging on the stalk by simply pulling on the head with your left hand while the knife in your right hand cut through the stalk about 4 inches below the brush. Of course the knife hand would vary according to whether the cutter was right or left handed.

If the corn was pretty thick you could use one arm to break two, three or more stalks at one time by bending them over your other arm from the elbow to your hand. A good breaker could break corn about as fast as he wanted to walk.

If you tabled the corn, you would take two rows, and with your left hand, break the row on your left in front of you, while at the same time your right hand was breaking the row on your right. We never tabled much of our corn.

In later years a different variety of standard was developed that didn't grow as tall as the type we planted the first years we raised it. When this variety came along it was no longer necessary to break the corn before you could reach it to cut in the proper place.

THE dwarf corn never got as tall as the standard and didn't grow out of the boot as far. Since the boot of dwarf corn came about half-way up on the brush of the head, it couldn't be cut and "booted" with a knife. You caught hold of the boot with one hand and the brush or head with the other, and jerked or pulled the head out of the boot and off the stalk at the same time. We always pulled the dwarf and cut the standard.

Also, the dwarf had more moisture in the boot and of course many more small bugs. Before you reached the end of a half mile row of dwarf corn you would have the front of your shirt and pants covered with moisture and bugs, making you one slick broomcorn woolie.

The brush near the bottom of the head of dwarf was not as good as the brush on the standard variety, since the boot kept it tender. Sometimes a

head would break off just where the brush came out from the end of the stalk. This left no stub of the stalk to work with and the brush of heads could tangle and was harder to put in piles, ricks and bales.

The piles were just that. We always put five rows in the pile row. One man would have the pile row and when his hand filled up with the heads of brush he would break down some of the stalks, generally two from each direction in the row, about a foot or two above the ground. Where the broken stalks crossed each other, he would place his handful of heads on the stalks with the brush part up and the butts, or the 4 inch part of the stalks, on the ground. This would let air circulate around the pile of corn and dry it out while keeping it off the ground so it would not mould or rot.

The men cutting the two rows on either side of the pile row would then place their corn on the same pile. That way you would have a small armfull of corn in each pile. Naturally the men rotated on who would cut the pile row, or the down row as it was also called. Breaking the stalks for the piles took extra work, and it would not be fair for the same man to take that row all day long.

After a week, or even less if the weather was dry and windy, the piles were dry enough to be hauled to the end of the field where they were placed into ricks or stacks. A low bed wagon without sides was used to pick up the piles and haul them to the end of the field where the ricks for an entire field were placed in one location. This, so the broomcorn seeder would not have to set up location but one time when they came around to seed the corn.

Two men, one on each side of the wagon, would walk along picking up the piles until they had an armload. Then they would holler whoa, for the team to stop, and they would place the corn on the flat wagon bed with the brush ends out and the butts to the center of the wagon bed. The man on the other side would be placing his armload in the same manner.

They would stack a rick as high on the wagon as they could reach from the ground and then go to the ricks at the end of the field and take the corn off the wagon the same way they had placed it on the wagon. They would then place it on the ground in the same order as removed from the wagon, brush to outside and the butts to the inside. A rick would be as high as a man could reach comfortably, with a last row of piles laid on top of the rick with the brush lapping over the center of the rick and the butts almost to the outer edges of the rick. This helped to keep moisture from running down into

the rick before it could be seeded.

If you think cutting, pulling or hauling in the brush was a nasty, itching and rattlesnake experience (snakes liked to get under the piles on the stalks before it was hauled into the ricks) then you had only to work the seed pile to know you had been working in the broomcorn fields.

The seeding was done later in the fall after all fields had been cut and the brush ricked. As I write this in January of 1979, I can look out my kitchen window to my backyard where I have the only hand-cylinder broomcorn seeder that I know of anywhere. I have the sorting table, the little gasoline powered motor to turn the cylinder, the old horse-drawn baler, a cradle, and even the butting table.

I do not have the very first method of turning the cylinder which was called "horse power." I do have a picture of that method where you can see the four horses walking around the turntable which turned a drive shaft which in turn rotated the hand-cylinder.

Broomcorn seeding was like threshing machines; not every farmer had a broomcorn seeder. Generally, the man with the seeder charged so much per bale and several farmers would furnish the labor in their community. Each man helped as many neighbors as helped when his own was seeded. In later years the seeder also furnished all the labor. The old hand-cylinder gave way to what was called a chain seeder and the horse-drawn baler was converted to hydraulic cylinders to compress the bale.

When the old hand-seeder arrived at a field, the sorting table was set up. The baler was staked down to keep it from turning over when the sweep was pulled around to compress the bale. Any number of men could carry corn from the rick to the sorting table, then two or three spread the corn out on the sorting table and pushed it along to the end of the table. Here, two men picked up as much as they could hold in their hands, and held the brush end over the cylinder to remove the seeds from the brush.

The cylinder was just two by four pieces of lumber with nails (spike nails) driven through them. The pieces were then fastened to round drums on each end to form a cylinder. A belt pulley was on the end of a shaft through this cylinder. The shaft fastened to a support with bearings so it would turn with as little friction as possible.

This cylinder was about knee high off the ground and as it turned, the nails would pick the seeds off the heads of brush. It took quite a lot of power in your hands and wrists to hold

a handful of corn to the cylinder, twisting or turning it to remove all the seed and not letting the nails pull any of the heads out of your hands.

Even so, many of the heads did catch on a nail and went sailing out into the seed pile. There a man with goggles on, to protect his eyes from the flying seeds, had a pitchfork and he would "fish" the heads out of the seed pile and they would be placed in order and put back on the sorting table again.

A small cradle was near the cylinder and the cylinder men (generally two) would place the seeded corn in the cradle. Then two other men would pick up an armload from the cradle and carry it to the butting table. Here they would "butt" or drop it up and down on the small table to get the ends even. Then they would hand the armload up to the man in the baler.

The baler was a heavy, well built box-like affair with a door in the front and another door or lid on top. The bottom of the baler, or floor, was built on the end of the sweep or tongue which was pulled by a horse or mule to squeeze the corn into a bale.

When the baler was ready to use, the floor was as far down in the bottom as possible. Then, five wires cut to required lengths with loops on one end of each wire were laid in the bottom of the boards of the baler box. When the baler was filled about half-way up, the front door was closed and latched. Then the top, which was hinged, was laid back and the baler man stood inside the baler on the corn and the men from the butting table stepped up on a box or steps so they could hand the corn over the top to the baler man.

When the baler was full, the top was closed and latched down. Then the horse on the sweep pulled the sweep around and squeezed the corn up tight inside the baler. When the horse had pulled the sweep to its desired position, a chain was hooked to it to hold it and the horse was unhitched to walk back around the baler to wait until another bale was ready to be compressed into a bale of about 350 to 375 pounds.

While the bale was compressed, the front door was opened and the five wires were pulled down over the bale. The loose end of the wire was pulled through the end loop and a pipe about three feet long with holes in one end and a T handle on the other was used to twist the wires down tight.

Just put the end of the wire through a hole in the pipe and twist the other end until the wire was tight, then tie it and move on to another. When all five wires had been tied, the bale was finished and could be rolled out of the baler and the process repeated on

another bale. The bales were placed in rows in the field on their sides to keep any rain or snow from entering through the ends.

The buyers could pull out a few heads from each bale with pliers to check the quality. They would haggle with the farmer to buy the corn as cheap as possible. Generally the selling price included delivery in Elkhart, Kansas; Springfield, Colorado; and in later years after the towns of Walsh and Pritchett came into being, the corn could be shipped from those places as well.

For many years broomcorn cutters came from Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma. They were mostly men with families back home. They came to work and to save their money to feed their families through the winter. They were a different type of worker than the "winos" of more recent years. This latter is one of the reasons farmers have quit raising broomcorn in Baca County.

We had a rather large barn and had several beds in the hay loft. The men slept there but ate with our family, or at least they ate at the same table our family used. Generally there would be a number of them and they could fill up quite a table by themselves. Sometimes they had to eat in shifts, as we might have more than could get around the table at one time. Even so, we were small operators compared to some broomcorn farmers of a few years ago.

It always amazed me that a few fellows in each group could cut broomcorn all day long and tell stories all day long, without telling the same story over and over. I wondered if they went home to Arkansas and spent the winter just thinking up new stories to tell us the next fall.

Some of those men were good musicians too and Saturday nights and Sundays saw and heard a lot of good hillbilly music. Fiddle, guitar, French harp, jews harp, etc. Many also had other talents — such as artists, mechanics and carpenters — but all were paid the same wage in the broomcorn fields.

We are told history repeats itself. If that is so, will Baca County go from where it is today when no broomcorn is planted, back to being called once again The Broomcorn Capital of The World? Will we run out of natural gas and be using coal and cow chips for fuel for heating and cooking? Will we run out of gasoline and see the mules with buggies, hacks and wagons being used for transportation? I'd sure feel right at home if it ever happened, but I'm willing to put it off for awhile!

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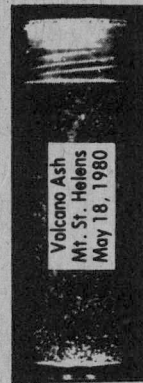
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Wild Old Days!

ST. HELENS IN THE 1850s

By Victor H. White

Photos provided by author

I spoke to an old gentleman, who was standing alongside me on the street corner and seemed to be admiring Mt. St. Helens, which we could see in the distance on this beautiful summer day. "It looks almost like a giant ice-cream cone, doesn't it?" I remarked.

He turned to slowly appraise me, "You should see it some time when the sun strikes it just right and turns all that cold snow to a delightful pink," he smiled, "like strawberry ice-cream." Then he added with a twinkle in his eye, "Or you should see it erupting. You'll never live long enough to see any fireworks display like St. Helens can provide on a clear night."

I said nothing. I just looked at him unbelievably.

He continued, "When it erupted in the late 1850s, I tried to watch it every night. Everyone around here did. There weren't many people living here then.

"The mountain was pretty well cloud-covered most of the time. But some nights we got a real show. It threw shower after shower of red hot ash, cinders and rocks thousands of feet into the air, like hundreds of Fourth-of-July skyrockets, roman candles and bombs, all exploding at once, continuously, and a thousand times more brightly. It gave you a feeling like it might set heaven on fire. In the daytime, when it was clear enough to see it, it was a dark brown plume of ash and cinders, with occasional belches that made you wonder if it was going to blow to pieces and scatter itself all over creation.

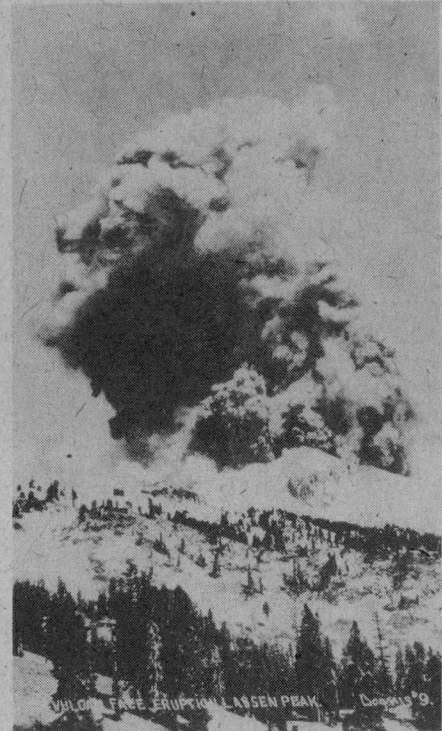
"We heard rumors that some ash and cinders fell in Portland during the several months it was active. We had a couple of days here that gave us a smoky, sooty feeling, but it never really hurt anyone, and the wind was almost always the other way."

Thus is my recollection of a conversation I had in the town of St. Helens, Oregon, with a man who said he had been about seventeen when he watched the last eruption of St. Helens. I was traveling in Oregon as a fire insurance salesman. It was in 1925 and I was twenty-six years old. Thus, the space of a hundred and twenty years can be covered so a person now living could talk to a man who saw St. Helens erupt in 1857 or 1858 — perhaps during parts of both years or longer.

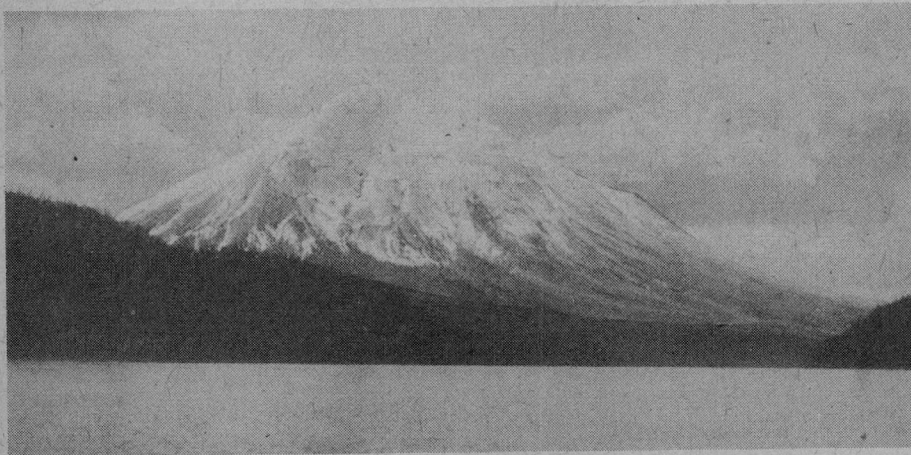
There is a small steam crater at the top of Mt. Baker. Hundreds of penny post cards were sold showing its steady stream of escaping steam. Although both the forest and geodetic service deny it, I have reliable, intelligent friends, who lived in Olympia, Washington, who would swear that for two or three days around 1907 to 1910 Mount Rainier actually threw out a limited amount of ash and steam, and that the city of Olympia was overcast and the sun darkened. I personally recall rumors of this at the time. But these *volcanic mountains do*, like Hamlet in Shakespeare's play, sometimes "put an antic disposition on."

I have seen Rainier when gusts of wind threw soft new snow into the air near the top in such a way that a setting sun would cause appearances like flames. A forest fire on a slope of the mountain could have caused such an illusion back in the early days of this century. In any case, it is certain that there are live steam vents always active on Rainier; and a few years ago scientists, with all their modern instruments, put out published reports that they had detected *temperature changes and other phenomena that might indicate fairly imminent eruption.*

There is certain evidence that Hood was active enough after 1860 to cast an easily discernible red glow from volcanic activity which was visible from Portland. I have no knowledge as to possible steam vents on Adams. It seems to be rather a mystery mountain that no one pays much attention to.



Above: The 1914 eruption of California's Mt. Lassen. At left: Mt. St. Helens, seen from Spirit Lake, Washington.



There are hot vents on Shasta and a large area of steaming earth and hot springs on the south side of Lassen. These vents on Lassen are not at the top crater, which erupted in 1914. The last time I observed the top of Lassen close-up, as an itinerant mountain climber, I personally saw no evidence

of steaming life at the top, just the molten rock that blocked the several acres of the concave crater after the 1914 activity. There is some wind hazard in the gentle climb up Lassen. At times, the wind is strong enough to literally blow one off the mountain.

I am not a geologist or any kind of expert but I can vouch for what I have seen with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears. I doubt if many of the experts have tried talking first-hand with those who have seen both St. Helens and Lassen in previous eruptions.

Explanatory Note: The following short article arrived in our office May 14, marked "Immediate Attention."

Our offer for the reminiscence and the curtain of ashes from St. Helens crossed in the mail.

A reply from the author dated May 19, the day after the devastating eruption, stated: "I realize that it will take considerable time to get it into print but I also know my mountains. St. Helens will still be erupting or, at the very least, throwing smoke and cinders, even a year from now and likely longer. I am not an expert but am just putting common sense reasoning in proper relationship to known facts. Lassen erupted for about three years — from 1914 until 1917. It is true that we may have it get much quieter or it could get even wilder.

"The eruption of St. Helens volcano brings home to all of us that the West Coast has a long line of sleeping volcanoes, one one of which may begin erupting today or tomorrow or all of which may remain quiet for a few hundred years, but we do know that Lassen has erupted once and St. Helens has erupted twice since 1850 and that there are live steam vents in many of the others.

"Rainier, Baker, Adams and St. Helens are volcanic peaks in Washington State but the town of St. Helens is in Oregon, located on the south or west bank of the Columbia River. The Columbia River runs westward but at the town of St. Helens it runs north and this causes a good deal of confusion because it is thought of at this location as a westward flowing river and it is — but it turns just west of Portland and flows north for almost fifty miles before turning westward again. The mountain, St. Helens, in Washington is plainly visible from the town of St. Helens in Oregon almost fifty miles distant. Mt. Hood is a volcanic peak in Oregon. Shasta and Lassen are volcanic peaks in California.

"Scientists were really worried about Rainier three or four years ago, when they detected some sort of rumblings. For sure — whether it is ten months, ten years, or a few hundred — there is more to come someplace in the Cascades."

LUCERNE VALLEY

By C. O. Peterson

Photos provided by author

SIXTY years ago, Lucerne Valley, that small portion of the Mojave desert just north of the San Bernardino Mountains, looked quite different from today. There were a few fairly successful dairy and alfalfa ranches near what is Lucerne, but much of the valley land was a patchwork of very slightly improved homesteads claimed by World War I veterans. The rest of the land was rather poor stock-range.

The Shays wintered their cattle out of Cushenberry Ranch. Dad Grimes of Holcomb Valley wintered in Grapevine Canyon miles to the west, and his stock-ranged Apple Valley. Charlie Weiss' bands of half-wild horses ranged across the valley to the Old Woman Mountains and came to water at Rabbit Springs.

Lucerne was then little other than the old Box S Ranch with its very important water-trough and a tiny store run by the old-time ranch-owner. And I recall an early-day garage and residence on the south side of the road.

Roads were mostly sandy ruts that ran fairly straight through the valley, and when the main road westward from the Box S reached the dry lake (that is, dry about nine months of the year), the hard smooth surface of the playa was a relief from the ruts and bumps. It also became a safe speedway, at times, for testing autos — even as today.

Travel from the San Bernardino Mountains to Victorville, then southward through Cajon Pass to San Bernardino, was considered something of an adventure by the unexperienced, but actually was rather tiresome and

uneventful except for punctures, boiling radiators and such problems.

However, I do remember well one incident concerning that Lucerne Valley road and a guy I'll call "Haybaler." It was first told to me by the old gentleman who owned the Box S Ranch. He knew the story first-hand.

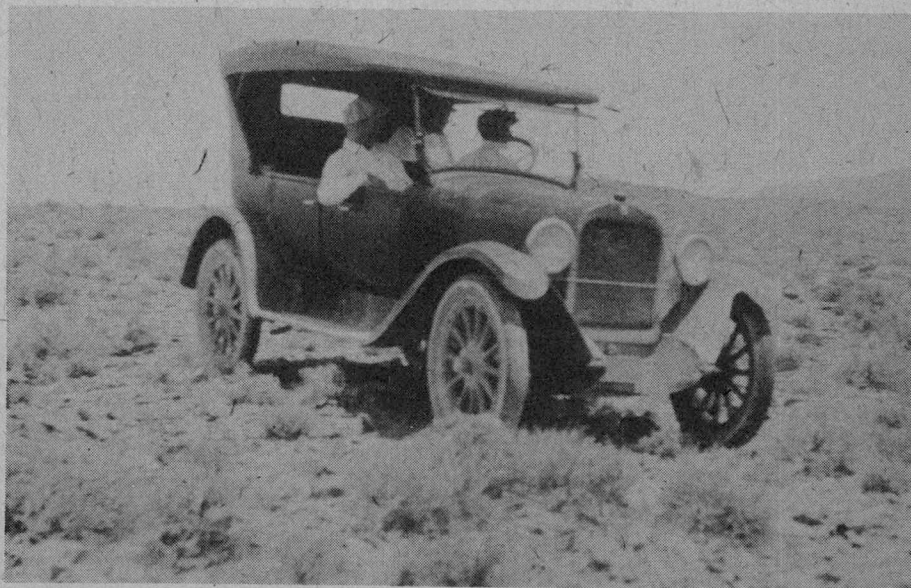
I'LL not mention the real name of "Haybaler." It's enough to say that he was a pleasant and friendly sort of guy who lived in Barstow and was a salesman of hay-baling machines and other farm equipment. Naturally his job required a lot of desert travel. He made his rounds of Victor Valley and Lucerne Valley in one of those four-cylinder Dodge touring cars that were almost as popular as the Model T Fords.

The Dodge was a dependable car and would roll along smoothly and quietly at a speed of thirty-five miles an hour — or less.

There were a number of irrigated ranches along the Mojave River and up the length of Lucerne Valley, but other than a few cattle, hogs, turkeys, and kids (with a little hell as a sideline), the main crop was alfalfa hay. Therefore, there was a need for hay-baling machines and the services of the guy I call Haybaler.

During the '20s a long-time desert man and his Shoshone wife had a ranch in a little cove of the Ord Mountains a couple of miles north from Deadman's Point. He was a well-liked and industrious guy who made a good living. He contracted fence-building and hauled juniper fenceposts from the foothills of the San Bernardinos. He also raised pigs that thrived on a ration of boiled-out mash from his moonshine still. Of course, his violation of the Volstead Act (laughingly called Prohibition) was very secret — and known to only about a hundred paying friends. As far

The author and friends in a 1923 touring car, like the one Haybaler drove.





A "highway" of the 1920s. This is the foot of Cushenbury Grade in the San Bernardino Mountains.

as I know, though, he was never molested by 'prohis'.

Quite naturally that ranch was one of Haybaler's ports-of-call. In those days it wouldn't have been said that he was addicted to liquor — but he would take a drink, or two, or three, with friends — or strangers.

According to the story told to me a couple of years after his famous mistake, Haybaler had visited the ranch one afternoon to quench his thirst. When he finally continued his drive up the valley in the shank of the evening he must have been in a mellow and bemused condition. An unkind or exacting person might have considered him drunk. Probably he was. Nevertheless, he managed to navigate the ruts past Deadman's Point and on eastward to the dry lake. There he made his famous mistake.

When the faithful touring car rolled out onto the hard smooth surface of the dry lakebed, the combination of smooth riding, night breezes and Haybaler's befuddled condition somehow gave him the idea that the engine had quit and the car had stopped — so he opened the door and stepped out.

Remembering those old cars (I used to drive one), I'd say that it was probably rolling along at about twenty miles an hour. Disembarking from any vehicle at that speed is certainly not a safe and simple matter. Quite possibly Haybaler unpeeped a few times before he slid to a stop, using the left side of his face; meanwhile the car purred away in a gentle curve northeastward across the playa and finally stalled

among the hummocks and creosote bushes.

Came the dawn and the Box S Ranch owner and a friend were on their way to Victorville in a Baby Grand Chevrolet. When they reached the dry lake they spotted a figure wandering along the edge of the playa. It was Haybaler trying to find his car. He was described as "helluva mess" — hatless, clothes torn and smeared with a mixture of blood and sand, and his left ear and side pretty well torn up.

The Samaritans helped him to find his undamaged car and drove it, with Haybaler as passenger, to a doctor's office in Victorville. En route they got the story of the night's happenings in disconnected bits.

A couple of years later, during one of my regular stops for water at the Box S Ranch, the old-timer introduced a pleasant quiet guy whose face, from temple to chin on the left side, bore what appeared to be the scar of a burn. After the man left for Barstow via the Stoddard Well road, the Box S owner told me the story of the cause of that scar as I have retold it here.

Many years later, during the summer of 1938 — the year of the big spring flood — I was with a U.S. Forest Service carpenter-crew at what is now Barton Flats Campground. We lived in big tents with board floors and sidewalls, six to eight men in each tent. A quiet middle-aged man in my tent looked vaguely familiar — but I couldn't place him.

During the evenings yarn-swapping session I told of Haybaler and his his-

toric mistake. When I finished the story the quiet middle-aged man grinned sheepishly and said, "That was me — and that's what happened — but I didn't know that anyone around here remembered it."

About then it occurred to me that though many incidents of early desert travel have been told and retold, there are still some that are almost forgotten. (And it's probably better that way!)

During my forty years in the San Bernardino Mountains and along the desert rim I knew many old-timers now long gone. Haybaler passed away about twenty years ago and for many years had been "on the wagon." He once told me, "One mistake of that kind was enough."

Hosstails Small Talk

(Continued from Page 7)

ive. When I finally got my thumb in its mouth and held that fish up, I knew it was the biggest bass I had ever caught on the Llano.

I glanced at Fred. He had crocheted the wrinkles out of his backlash and was fishing that hole as if his very life depended upon catching a fish fast. We both knew that my snagging the second bass was mostly luck since a fish that big is nearly always spooked by landing another fish nearby — my first one. The commotion the big fish made had put the others on guard. They had gotten the message that we were not passing out free chow.

Fred looked at the sun. "Time to go home," he said flatly. Then he glanced at my string of fish. With a genuine ring of sincerity in his voice, Fred said, "You're not that good, you little bastard — and you know it!"

ONE afternoon I got a phone call from Fred. "Let's just haul off and do some of these things we are always talking about and never do. Why don't we go down to that spa in Mexico you are always talking about and soak some of the nicotine and alcohol out of us?"

I generally had an excuse for such impromptu trips since I was ever-busy trying to make a bare living in those days, but to the last day I live I will be happy that I replied, "We should be half way down there by now — what's holding you up?" Fred came to Austin and we got an early start next morning.

Somehow smoking was one of the few vices that never attracted me. I would bum one off Fred now and then as we sipped our drinks and it actually tasted good, but as for regular smoking, it held no appeal whatsoever. Fred got a thing going about how many cig-

arettes I had bummed off him and when he brought it up around a group (sometimes when I had asked him for a cigarette just to get him started), I would sit there in deep admiration of his descriptions of the shameless bum that I had become and how my constant need of tobacco was all but sending him to the poorhouse.

As we pulled out that morning, Fred mentioned that he was about out of cigarettes. I stopped at a little drive-in and said, "Sit still, I'll be right back." I noticed the quizzical look on Fred's face. It turned into downright astonishment as I threw a carton of cigarettes into his lap with a brief statement. "Now, that ought to take care of some I've bummed off you during the past ten years!"

Fred didn't say a word. It dawned upon me then that I had made a gross error. I had stabbed one of his choice bantering subjects and ruined a pot full of fun. Sure enough, Fred didn't mention bumming again. It took me almost year of persistent bumming before Fred seemed to feel free to dwell on this subject again. I made sure this time that I wouldn't dirty the water.

I have never enjoyed long trips in automobiles. This one I enjoyed thoroughly, going and coming. We took it leisurely, stopping anywhere at any time that we saw something interesting to explore. In order to make sure that we got our full money's worth, we sipped on Scotch and water and Fred would offer me a cigarette every time he took a pack out of his pocket. "We need to store up as much impurity as possible," he said. No telling when we'll get such a chance to clobber so much poison at one time again."

We stayed in Monterrey that night and got off to a leisurely start the next morning, angling Southeasterly toward Tampico. We both agreed that this was the way to make a trip — enjoy anything that looked enjoyable. About two o'clock in the afternoon we started getting hungry and decided to pick out a good looking eatery and partake of some Mexican food. We had hit that lonesome stretch between Monterrey and Ciudad Valles, our destination, where you see nothing but pavement and mesquite for long, monotonous hours. Finally, we pulled into a place that read "Food" even though it might not have met out standards two hours earlier.

A Mexican woman and her daughter appeared and we were having quite a hassle with our ordering until a lanky Texan strolled up and let it be known that he owned the place, that this was his wife and daughter, and he would be glad to help out. We settled for huevos con carne, which turned out to be a pure delight. We invited the man to

have a beer with us and he accepted.

As the half cool fluid found its mark in empty stomachs, we grew fascinated with talking to this particular person. It became evident that he didn't intend to return to Texas for some good reasons. He had bought some land down here in the semi-wilderness and was content to raise a family and run his little business far away from any rat race. We asked him about the country and got a good history of it and that whole part of Mexico. We became so interested that we spent nearly three hours in this place and suddenly realized that we would arrive at our destination a couple of hours after dark. We had been told many times that it wasn't a good idea to be caught with car trouble on this lonely stretch — especially after dark. Our new-found friend confirmed our information.

There is a fascination to this type of travel that many Americans never discover. Most trips are laid out with timetables as strict almost as airline travel. If there is anything in between to see — too bad. Sometimes the in-betweens and the unlooked-for prove to be more interesting than the main course.

We arrived in C. Valles, and it was only a short drive to Hotel Taninul, where we got a good night's sleep. We were ready for our first steaming bath next morning. I'll never forget it! It was a scenic thing — a big pool of naturally hot water that boiled up out of the earth at a temperature that I do not recall, but I do know it was hot! The pool was surrounded by tropical growth and a great cave that formed a miniature amphitheater wherein an orchestra played to the customers on various occasions. You could stand shoulder deep in that water and pretty soon the sweat was rolling off your head right down into your eyes and you could just feel the poison seeping out of your body!

We were warned against staying in too long and withdrew to our room after about forty minutes. I could tell that something was on Fred's mind. He would get up and go to the bathroom, pace around the floor and look out the windows. Finally, I asked him, "All right, Gipson, what's gnawing on you?"

He replied, "I'm worried about our health. I think we lost more poison than a man's body can stand at one time. Wouldn't be surprised if we had some reaction. It might be that we ought to mosey over and get a bottle of good Mexican rum just to make sure we taper off gradually."

So we went and got a bottle of rum. In fact, we got two, just to make sure.

ONE morning while we were eating breakfast a distinguished looking man

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walked up to Fred and exclaimed, "Fred Gipson! Why you old hound dog man!" This person turned out to be an executive from New York and I still don't remember how he knew Fred personally but it really doesn't matter in the long haul, as Fred would say. The man (of course I have forgotten his name too) told us that he was leaving with a party in an hour for his place on the Rio Tamesi and that we simply *had* to see it. He promised fishing that we would never forget. That sold us.

The trip out there was a story in itself. Even with writers' imagination it was hard for us to fashion a road in our minds out of what we were going over, but it was worth the trip! There was an absolute mansion on a high cliff overlooking the river — one of those "get away from it all" places you have dreamed about all your life. It came complete with servants, every type of drink you could imagine and incomparable food.

We were surprised after supper that night when the man told us he had to rush away the next morning and get back to New York but that we were welcome to stay there as long as we wished. Surely we should remain a week, a month, or just stay there until he got back if we wished and use the servants and everything he had as if it were ours. Now a chance comes like that maybe once in a lifetime and maybe only once in five or six lifetimes. We stayed and we fished and we were waited on hand and foot.

One incident will never fade from my mind. We started fishing downstream and Fred got a couple hundred yards ahead of me. I got fascinated with a certain part of the river and was making slow time. I heard Fred yell and saw him motioning for me to come on. After two or three yells and motions, I quickened my pace and noticed what could best be explained as an "I can't believe it" look on Fred's face.

"Just hit that spot of water right over there at the swirl with your lure," Fred said. I looked at him and there must have been a question mark on my face. "Cast into that swirl." Fred pointed to a spot below a waterfall that was both picturesque and noisy. I did. There was a miniature explosion. All I saw then was a streak of silver and a broken line. "Tarpon?" I asked incredulously. "Try again," Fred said.

After the fourth cast, I quit. They were tarpon all right. I succeeded in getting a small one into shallow water, but he made a run for it, then threw my plug in a leaping arc. Fred laughed. "I've had so much fun that I've about run out of plugs. Never thought I'd hang onto a tarpon in fresh water." They had migrated upstream from the Gulf and that pool below the falls was

full of them. We never landed even one. They were too big for our light tackle, but what an outstanding experience!

We fished upstream from then on to avoid the tarpon and climbed back up to our little mansion with heavy stringers. The head man met us with a smile, asking how we would like the fish prepared. Fred and I sat out on the veranda overlooking the river and sipped on our drinks.

"I have always heard of paradise," Fred said, "and I suppose this is as close as I will ever get to it. Couldn't a man stay here for the rest of his life and write and fish and drink and flat *live*? Don't see how anybody could ever get tired of this, but isn't it just like life — my friend can only spend one night and he's got to rush back to New York. Looks like if you can *afford* something like this, you can't afford not to use it."

I couldn't believe it next morning when Fred said we ought to think about starting back home. I tried to talk him out of it, reminding him that this might be our last and only chance to live like barons but Fred persisted and we pulled out of paradise and back into the world of reality.

This was a part of Fred that I was to become accustomed to in the future. He simply couldn't be away from home long at a time. No homing pigeon could have had a stronger and more emotional desire to return than Fred Gipson. It would come at the oddest times.

We were making a long-talked-about trip up into what we called the real West. I was publishing *Western Sportsman* then and had a lady reader who was a fishing writer and quite a fisherman of note herself. She promised us some of the best trout fishing in the West if we would come up to Montana. We picked up young son Robert, who had been doing some summer work at El Vado Ranch in northern New Mexico, on the way and were about half-way through Yellowstone Park headed for Montana when it first hit Fred. I could always tell when the urge for Mason County grew strong within him. I learned not to fight it since it did nothing but grow stronger. I turned the car around and headed for Mason County . . .

WHO of us that could be called a writer of any sort could ever forget Dee Woods and the Southwest Writers Conferences? Dee would mark up her program, put some of our names on it and then inform us that we were to be there at a certain time and perform certain tasks. Dee was a lovable person who got things done. She never incited our resentment by presuming that we would attend her Writers Conferences every year.

I remember one in particular — I think it was in May 1952. J. Frank Dobie made this one and was the head honcho. A part of the schedule was a day at the King Ranch. Somehow Fred and I managed to miss the bus and they went on without us — a considerable blow to our ego in itself, although Fred reasoned they probably didn't notice that we weren't aboard.

At any rate, we got in my old Plymouth and broke some speed records trying to catch that bus. We caught up about twenty miles down the line and when they saw us, our fellow writers directed to bus driver to pull over. He did, by a little beer stop. We locked up my car and joined them.

A day at the King Ranch is always interesting. It ended with barbecue but no beer. In those days alcohol in any form was prohibited on the King Ranch.

On numerous occasions Fred and I would allow ourselves to be persuaded to entertain certain individuals or even a small gathering with our questionably melodious refrains of "Crowdad Hole" or maybe something like "Red River Valley." Fred had a high nasal twang that lent just the right note to off-key singing and I was strong on volume and short on just about everything else. Nevertheless when the beer started flowing and people got in a gay mood, invariably they would ask for the two troubadors to give forth with our God-given vocal talents. But this was one time we didn't want to perform. After a long day and a heavy meal we were muchly content to listen to Emcee Dobie relate some stories and do his thing.

When he announced that next on the program would be Fred Gipson and Joe Small singing the crowdad song, we tried to melt behind a convenient log. I believe that was one of the most embarrassing moments in our respective lives. As we were walking up to the loud speaker, I reminded Fred that he had always said, "We don't sing good, but we sing loud" and, for God's sake, sing loud NOW.

I think it was the first time we had heard ourselves sing while we were cold sober. It was horrendous. For the first time, in a cold sweat, we fully realized why people wanted us to sing — we were so bad that we *might* have been actually good. Anyhow, we sang five cowboy songs. We both learned something that night that we hadn't thought much about in the past — if you can't be the best at something, do it with such a will, so strong and determined that you might just get away with it after all.

By the time we got back to my car that night everybody was so dry a wet floor could have been mopped clean by

using any one of our shriveling bodies. Everyone on the bus started getting out when we took our leave. It was evident that an old worn-out Plymouth couldn't carry a bus load of people so we had to eliminate by certain types of games and finally got down to ten people.

We walked into the little beer joint and Gene Arrington, who started out in the magazine publishing business with me in 1936, ordered three beers each. I'll never forget the look on that waitress' face as she stacked three beautiful, cold, sweating bottles of beer in front of each of ten people. We had a re-order, of course, then wedged ourselves into that car of mine. There was barely enough working space left for the driver to move his elbows. Everyone was singing by then. It is probably just as well that I do not have a tape of that particular ride back to Corpus Christi.

THERE has been much speculation as to what mark Fred would have left on the world of writing if the latter part of his life had evolved without so much pain, sorrow, complications and tragedy. I believe that Fred was just hitting his stride with *Old Yeller* and could have had fifteen to twenty more years of productive writing. We had talked about goals, ambitions and a number of projected writings. Such books as *Hound Dog Man* and *Old Yeller* will be very much alive in the future as our lifestyle changes. They will portray vividly a life that no longer exists and could very well be valued as history as well as top class entertainment. I believe Fred would have written more books of this caliber and some even better.

Inevitably he was to be compared with Mark Twain. I believe Fred would have been classed with Twain if he had been able to continue his writing career, uninterrupted by tragedies that he suffered. In my opinion, some of the things Fred wrote are as good as the best of Mark Twain. One thing for sure, Fred Gipson could get into the very inside of a little boy and his dog perhaps as no other author ever has. He could make you live, and think and feel the story as if you were the central character yourself — and that is one of the things that puts the "great" into authors. In my estimation Fred Gipson is a great author. Just how great he will be rated by future generations is a question I am not going to try to forecast right now. I'd rather relive one of those days on the Llano with him, followed by a fireside session beginning with "I remember one time ..."

See you later — Hosstail.

Fred Gipson: Texas Story Teller by Mike Cox will be available in bookstores in early November, or you may reserve a copy from Shoal Creek Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box 9737, Austin, Texas 78766. Cost to out-of-state residents — \$15.75 pp; Texas residents — \$16.50 pp (sales tax has been included).

Truly Western

(Continued from Page 9)

bell's Bar. In 1926 I found myself in this building — a ten-year-old waif. I shined shoes for Mr. LaPaz and met Mr. Denver "Bob," special agent for the Fort Worth-Denver railroad. Mr. Bob was the only name I knew him by.

The "bums" all told me what a tough "Bull" he was and I heard many stories about what happened to them when Bob found them riding his train. However to me Mr. Bob was the best of the "Bulls." With his help I became a man, a 32nd Degree Mason and Shriner and 32nd Degree Scottish Rite. May he rest in peace. — John G. Kirby, 2307 W. Idlewild Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33603

Correction

I read Robert M. Stegmaier's "Artillery Has Never Been Given Its Due" in the February *True West*. The map shows the Killdeer Mountains in northwest Minnesota and they should be in western North Dakota. Also Fort Ridgely is shown in southern Wisconsin and it should be in southern Minnesota. — Eugene W. DeMenge, 815 Oak Street, Hutchinson, Minnesota 55350

Author's reply: Mr. DeMenge is to be commended for his sharp vision in detecting an erroneous location of Fort Ridgely and Killdeer Mountains in the February issue. On page 25 of that issue Fort Ridgely should be in Minnesota and Killdeer Mountain in northwest North Dakota. I acknowledge and regret the discrepancy. — R.M.S.

Arthur Dodge

Congratulations on Bill King's story of Arthur Dodge and the X-U horses in the April issue. For years I have collected information on Arthur Dodge and now find most of it incorrect. So I am indebted to Mr. King for clearing up these errors.

I grew up in Nowata County and had heard of Arthur Dodge all my life, however he had long since gone to Colorado. So the trail was pretty cold by the time I got there.

I first ran into Dodge in a story about Henry Starr — "King of the Bank Robbers." As I recall the story

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Henry had been to see Arthur Dodge and when U.S. Marshal Floyd Wilson trailed him to the Dodge ranch they met on horseback and shot it out, with Henry the winner. Henry was arrested and tried for murder in 1893. Judge Parker sentenced him to hang. Starr cheated the gallows by his heroic deed of talking Cherokee Bill out after an attempted jail break and murder of a guard. His sentence was commuted to life. Dodge testified at the trial. This was Henry's only killing in his twenty-year crime career. Although he was a dead shot he never again elected to shoot his way out.

Another Cherokee boy who rode the owlhoot trail is also mentioned in this story. In 1905 when Arthur got his trail crew to drive the horses to Colorado one of the drovers was Al Spencer. After serving a sentence at McAlester as a cell mate of Henry Starr, he was known as the Phantom of the Osage, bank robber and holdup man. At the time he worked for Arthur Dodge he was straight and worked for many ranches in Nowata and Washington counties. He pulled off the last train robbery in Oklahoma in September 1923. He really didn't pull it off as he was betrayed, slain by a gang member for the reward.

It is mentioned Arthur Dodge worked for a rancher named Robison Gadison — was this in Nowata County? And who signed his work permit to work in the Cherokee Nation? As a white man and before he intermarried, some one had to sign for him. Just exactly where was the Dodge ranch in Nowata County?

One last thing, when Dodge's stepson Jack Smith was killed at the Dewey Roundup, Joe Bartles almost quit the rodeo he was so hurt. It was a terrible accident. When Smith threw himself down to bulldog the steer the left horn went through his chest. I sure didn't know he was raised in Nowata County. I have heard many eyewitness reports of this accident.

Anyway thanks for publishing this worthwhile story of a real cowboy and horseman. — Robert Cotton, 4100 Limestone Road, Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74003

Western Book Roundup

(Continued from Page 29)

in the Texas Panhandle during the late 19th century.

Collectors of books on the cattle trade will want a copy for their library. And the book is highly recommended to anyone interested in ranch life during the last century.

CENTRAL CITY OPERA HOUSE

The Central City Opera House: A 100 Year History by Charlie H. Johnson, Jr. (Little London Press, 716 E. Washington St., Colorado Springs, Colo. 80900, 78 pages, \$4.95 paperback, 5½ x 8½ inches).

Anyone who has ever traveled to Central City, Colorado and walked the streets of that old mining town undoubtedly remembers the opera house. You can't miss it. This little volume details the history of what is one of Colorado's best known landmarks.

With an introduction by Miss Lillian Gish, the well-known actress, Charlie Johnson, a Colorado native, has brought together the history and color of the Central City Opera House built in 1877. Johnson includes many old photographs of Central City and especially the opera house. He also includes an appendix listing the productions and stars appearing at the opera house since 1932, the year the structure was restored after years of decay.

Notes and a good bibliography are included. Two thousand copies of the book were published.

TEXAS BACK ROADS

Back Roads of Texas by Earl Thollander (Northland Press, P.O. Box N, Flagstaff, Ariz. 86002, 204 pages, \$17.50 hardcover, \$9.95 paperback, 8 x 8 inches).

If you have ever left the superhighways to travel the back roads of the West, you will enjoy this book. The author-artist rambled through the hill country of central Texas to the Davis Mountains and from the Rio Grande to the Red River along the northern boundary of Texas. As he traveled, he frequently stopped to produce a drawing or watercolor of interesting scenes including historic buildings and sites. He also drew maps of the areas visited.

Thollander includes drawings of log houses and mansions. And he includes a drawing of the old home of John Peter Tatsch, a cabinetmaker who built a fireplace big enough to roast an entire cow inside.

This nicely produced book provides an armchair adventure or it can be used as a guide along with official state maps to explore many interesting back roads in the Lone Star State. Recommended.

DOBIE REPRINTS

The Longhorns (338 pages, \$7.95 paperback) and *Some Part of Myself* (282 pages, \$6.95 paperback) by J. Frank Dobie (University of Texas Press, Box 7819, Austin, Tex. 78712, 8½ x 5½ inches).

These are reprints of two well-known books by the late Texas author J.

Frank Dobie. *The Longhorns*, considered by many to be a classic on the history and lore of the famous Texas breed, was first published about 1940. This reprint edition appears to be a photocopy of the first edition but in wrappers. The type style is the same as are the numerous drawings and the collection of photos of Longhorns in the back of the book.

Some Part of Myself was first published in 1967, about three years after Dobie died in his Austin, Texas home. The author's widow wrote the foreword after editing sixteen pieces of writing by her late husband that are autobiographical in nature. The collection of articles gives the reader insights into J. Frank Dobie, the man and author.

It is good to see both books available in paperback and published in Dobie's native state.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from Page 41)

Alexander, a Baptist minister, deserted in the Civil War and changed his name to Charles Grandirson. Both men were my greatgrandfathers.

I would also like to correspond with anyone named Smothers who has some Indian blood, and with any Parrish whose family lived in Illinois or Kentucky about 1900. I will answer all letters. — Loraine Roop Gregory, c/o Eakins, P.O. Box 87, Malin, Oregon 97632.

Engle-Alkire

My grandfather, Minor Milem Engle, was born in 1863 at Sweetwater, Illinois. By 1885 he had ventured to Kingman, Kansas and married Nettie Bonebrake. During the year of 1908 he was discovered from an Ollie? at Reno, Nevada. In 1918 he was in El Reno, Oklahoma where his parents had gone. Minor's sister, Lizzie, married a John Alkire and moved to Los Angeles, California in the early 1900s. They had two sons, Stuart E. and Frederick. early 1900s. They had two sons, Stuart E. and Frederick.

Minor Engle had two brothers, Lewis F. W. and Henry Sterling. They also disappeared in the early 1900s. Minor showed up in Portland, Ore. in 1925, then in San Francisco in 1926. Even at the age of sixty-two Minor still had a way with the ladies. In 1925 my grandmother, age thirty-nine, gave birth to my mother, Frances Rae Engle.

I am searching for Minor Engle's descendants or those of his brothers and sisters. — Charlene Devereaux, 24152 Bolton Hill Road, Veneta, Oregon 97487

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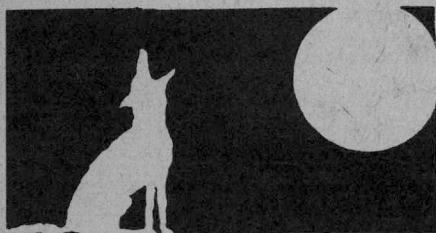
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See Page 42



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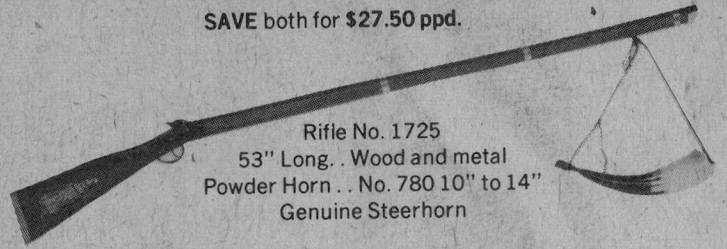


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- 2—A Tight Dally & Loose Latigo, 13½x9½
- 3—A Loose Cinch, 11x8
- 4—A Wounded Grizzly, 8½x11
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- 7—Bronc to Breakfast, 15x8½
- 8—Blackfeet Burning Crow Buffalo Range, 11½x8
- 9—Bucking Bronco, 8x11½
- 10—Better Than Bacon, 11x8½ (watercolor)
- 11—On the Move, 13½x9½
- 12—Buffalo Hunt (arrows), 12½x8½ (wtrclr)
- 13—On the Trail, 11x7½
- 14—The Pony Raid, 10½x8
- 15—At Close Quarters, 11x8½
- 16—Capturing the Grizzly, 15x8½
- 17—Cinch Ring, 15x8½
- 18—Caught with the Goods, 14x9½
- 19—Cowboy Life, 10x14
- 20—Call of the Law, 13½x9½
- 21—Carson's Men (Kit Carson), 14x9½
- 22—Return of the Warriors, 13½x9½
- 23—The Water Girl, 9x10½ (watercolor)
- 24—Renegades Return, 13½x9½
- 25—Chief Joseph (Indian Head), 8x11 (wtrclr)
- 26—Deadline on the Range, 14x9½
- 27—Disputed Trail, 11x14
- 28—Dangerous Cripple, 14x9½
- 29—In the Wake of the Buffalo Runners, 10x8
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- 34—Finding the Trail, 13½x9½
- 35—Heads or Tails, 15x8½
- 36—Heading the Right Way, 13½x9½
- 37—The Cattle Drive, 13½x9½
- 38—Women of the Plains, 8x6
- 39—Invocation To The Sun, 13½x9½

- 40—Indian Love Call, 13½x9½
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- 42—The Jerkline, 14x9½
- 43—Loops & Swift Horses Are Surer Than Lead, 10½x7
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- 68—Smoke of a 45, 12x9
- 69—Sage Brush Sport, 13½x8½
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- 78—The Drifter, 13½x9½

- 79—The Tenderfoot, 11x8
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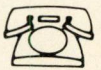
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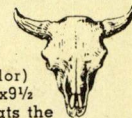
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