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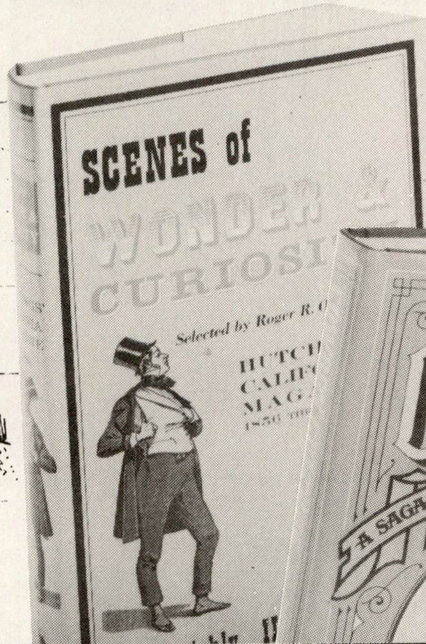

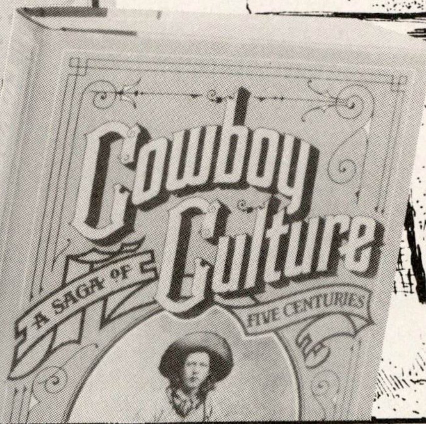

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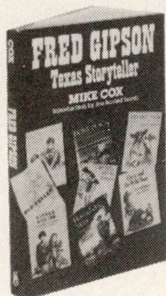

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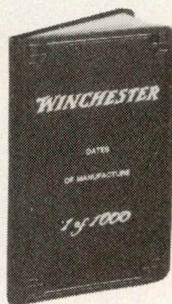

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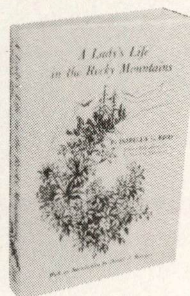

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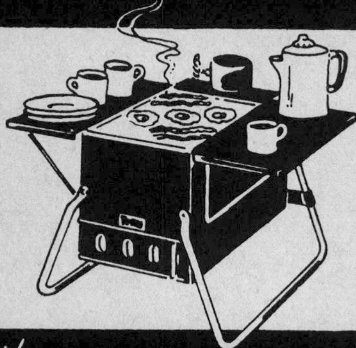

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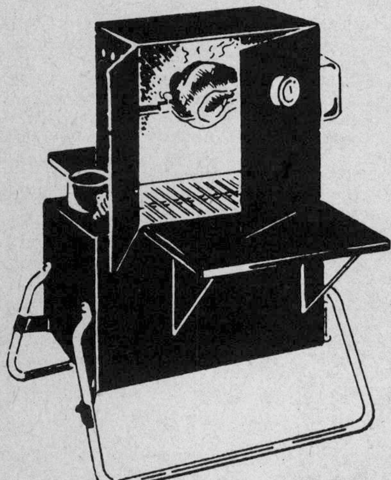

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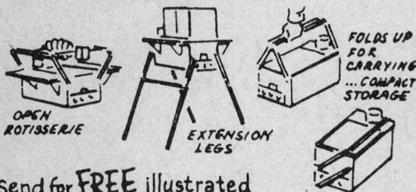

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Hosstail's "SMALL TALK"

THIS IS the second half of the passenger pigeon piece. This article appeared in the September 9, 1914 issue of *Forest & Stream* and was reprinted in August 1981 *Fins and Feathers.*

Enemies and Mishaps — Their enemies were legion. Wolves, foxes, and many other beasts frequented their roosts, birds of prey sought them alive or feasted on their dead bodies, both at the roosts, and over lakes. Mishaps overtook them on land and sea. On the land, storms rarely overwhelmed them. Over our Great Lakes sometimes entire flocks were overtaken by severe tempests, forced to alight, and consequently drowned. Many times when they reached the shore safely from a hard flight, they were so fatigued as to fall an easy prey to man.

For example, a whole British encampment in the Revolutionary War thus feasted for one day on pigeons which had just flown across Lake Champlain. Self-slaughter was another means of their destruction. The continual breaking of overladen limbs took its heavy toll of wounded and killed birds, and it was a common practice, to man and beast, to gather up and devour the dead and dying, which were found in cartloads. Occasionally, animals were said to have gone mad from feeding on their remains.

Their Uses — All observers seemed generally agreed that they were delicate food. During the shooting season, they were on every table. The hunters sold a part of their bag and kept the remainder. Often they fattened the live pigeons for the market. These commanded good prices but the dead birds sometimes sold as low as three pence per dozen, or a bushel for a pittance. In fact, one writer frequently saw them "at the market so cheap that, for a penny, you might have as many as you could carry away; and yet, from the extreme cheapness, you must not conclude that they are but ordinary food; on the contrary — they are excellent."

These birds furnished soups and fricassees, which were usually dressed with cream sauce and small onions. In some parts, they served as luxuries on the tables of the aristocrats. In requital for the damage they did. "The farmers, besides having plenty of them for home use, and giving them to their servants, and even to their dogs and pigs, salted caskfuls of them for the winter." The traveler found little else at the inns when pigeons were flying. The savages heaped their boards with a royal abundance of them. They could eat them fresh, dried, smoked, or any other way. On Lake Michigan, they often gathered the dead pigeons which floated on shore, usually smoking what were not needed for immediate use.

In the South, Lawson (1714) found "several Indian towns of not above seventeen houses that had more than one hundred gallons of pigeon's oil or fat; they were using it with pulse or bread as we do butter . . . . " Not infrequently in the Indian and Revolutionary wars, pigeons helped the commissary when supplies were low. For the hardy pioneers, their feathers made better beds than did corn husks, and one writer suggested a use for their dung. He held that, with little expense, great quantities of the best saltpetre could be extracted from their ordure. It is difficult to estimate the very important role of the pigeon in the economy of the early pioneers, yet it is striking enough to arrest the attention of all.

Their Food — Doubtless much of their excellent flavor and delicacy was due to the nature of their food. In the North and South alike they showed a marked preference for beechnuts and acorns of all kinds. They furnished an animated sight, indeed, when digging in the snow for the latter. In the earliest days, the colonists complained because they beat down and ate up great quantities of all sorts of English grain. They could subsist on wheat, rye, oats, corn, peas and other farm produce. Neither were they averse to garden fruits. In the summer, when the strawberries, raspberries, mulberries and currants were ripe, they showed a particular fondness for them. They were quite partial to the seeds of red maple and American elm, wild grapes, wild peas, and pokeberry (phytolacca), which was known in many parts as pigeon-berry.

A Mr. Bradbury, in 1810, "had an opportunity of observing the manner in which they feed; it affords a most singular spectacle, and is also an example of the rigid discipline maintained by gregarious animals. This species of pigeon associates in prodigious flocks; one of these flocks when on the ground, will cover an area of several acres in extent, and so close to each other that the ground can scarcely be seen. This phalanx moves through the woods with considerable celerity, picking, as it passes along, everything that will serve for food. It is evident that the foremost ranks must be more sucessful, and nothing will remain for the hindermost. That all may have an equal chance, the instant that any rank becomes last, they arise, and flying over the whole flock, alight exactly ahead of the foremost. They succeed each other with so much rapidity that there is a continued stream of them in the air; and side view of them exhibits the appearance of the segment of a large circle, moving through the woods. I observed that they cease to look for a food a considerable time before they become the last rank, but strictly adhere to their regulations, and never rise until there are none behind them."

If only the human species would emulate this communal spirit, act in unison for bird-protection without commercial quibbling, curb its mania for bird-adornment, check excessive "sport for sport's sake," and annihilate potting for market, some of our threatened birds would re-establish their slender hold and escape their impending extinction. In the early settlements, Pigeons, Turkeys, Paroquets, and Heath Hens were plentiful; civilization and culture came; the hills and valleys were deforested; the lowlands were cultivated; in short, the balance of nature was excessively disturbed; yet where have we collectively provided these original occupants refuge, or how have we restrained ourselves, to promote their greater increase, when they were most rapidly lessening? The conscience balm has always been, "They will be ever common."

That's it for this time. I hope you got as much out of the pigeon story as I did. See you later. — Hosstail

Truly Western

Two Braids

TWO BRAIDS

The picture shown is from a leaflet given the Ditmore family of August 18, 1906 by Tommy Stringfield (Two Braids). He and his daughter Nucki had stopped to water their horses at the Ditmore home, twenty-three miles northwest of San Angelo, Texas. They put on a trick riding show for my family and Tommy told the story of his boyhood capture by Indians and his life with the Indians in exchange for a "little food" and feed for his horses.

The leaflet, published by Wood-Brownlee Printing Co. in San Antonio, Texas, reads: "A Frontier Exhibition Coming soon. Don't miss it. Something that is educational and instructive to both the old and the young. This is a FREE show to everybody; carrying with it the greatest talent that has ever met the American public.

"We cordially invite the ladies and children to attend our entertainment. Nothing said or done to offend the most fastidious lady on earth. 'Two Braids' and Nucki, two of the world's famous trick riders, will give an exhibition in this city. It is a high class attraction; once seen, never forgotten.

"This little lady is ten years of age, and stands before the American public as the champion of the world for one of her age. She is a half-breed Apache Indian and is the only one of her tribe now on exhibition.

"She is the daughter of 'Two Braids' and a niece of Chief Geronimo. 'Two Braids' (Tommy Stringfield) is the man who has spent almost a lifetime with Apache Indians as a captive and who recently found the only member of his family now living — a sister — they being separated nearly forty years. He will give a brief sketch of his life while with the Red man."

The leaflet also has a picture of Nucki Two Braids on a horse with the caption, "As She Appeared in New York City." A picture of "Two Braids and Family" shows Tommy Stringfield with about twelve Indians in front of a tepee. Handwriting at the bottom of the leaflet indicates that Tommy and his daughter were at Carlsbad, Texas on August 17, 1906 at 8:30 p.m. They had also given a show recently in San Angelo, Texas and were on their way to Robert Lee, Texas.

I was only three years old when Two Braids and Nucki came by our home and I have only a faint remembrance of them. But my older brother was twelve years old, and he, with the help of our parents, wrote down the Two Braids' story.

When Mrs. Ligon wrote us we were reminded of a story we ran in the February 1974 issue of *True West*, "The Stringfield Massacre." It detailed the day in September 1870 when Thomas and Sarah Stringfield and their three children — Ida Alice, Adolphus, — and Thomas — were ambushed by a band of Mexicans and Comanches. Ida Alice saw her parents killed and her brothers abducted. It took years for Ida Alice to recover from lance wounds, and all the

while she sought information on her lost brothers.

In the fall of 1908 a San Antonio newspaper carried several stories about a traveling showman who called himself "Tom Three Moons," and claimed to be one of the missing Stringfield boys. Ida Alice met Tom Three Moons, who claimed to recognize her as his sister. But Ida was dubious because of his eye color and some flaws in his version of the massacre. Resulting investigations exposed Tom Three Moons as Ira Goodson. Ida Alice Stringfield Hatfield died in 1937 without feeling she'd ever found her brothers. After we ran "The Stringfield Massacre," the author, Jerry M. Sullivan, was applauded for his accuracy in a letter to us from Judge Hatfield, the grandson of Ida Alice Springfield Hatfield.

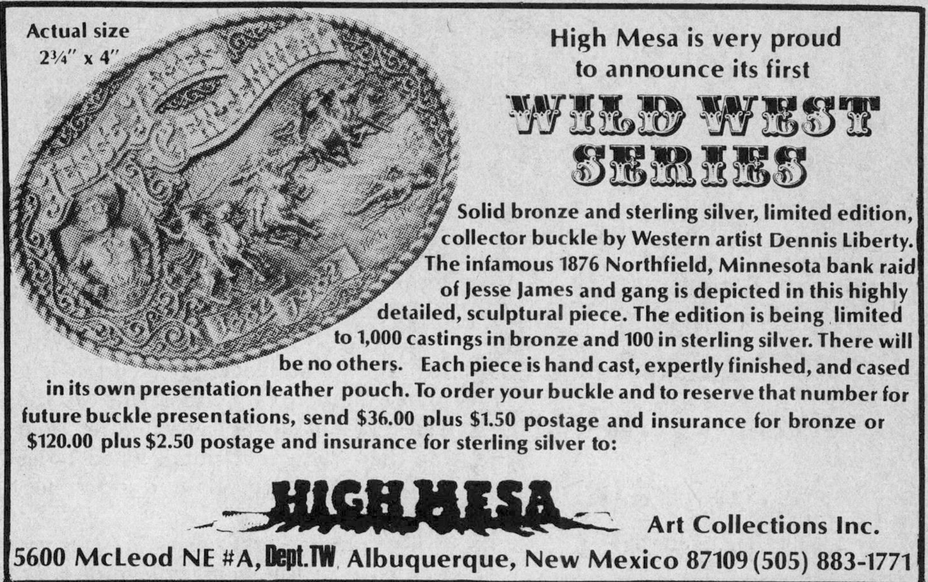
An additional note from Mrs. Ligon: Two Braids' story and show when he visited us in 1906, and the Tom Three Moons' 1908 story are too similar to be coincidental. The leaflet that Two Braids gave my family was printed in San Antonio, but he never mentioned San Antonio in his story.

Is it possible that he was in San Antonio and the South Texas area in 1908, and for some reason changed his name to Tom Three Moons? Or were there two men with daughters making the same claim and giving the same kind of show? If the Stringfield sister died and never found her brothers, then the Two Braids' story must also be a hoax? I would like to have answers to these mysterious questions. — Nora Ditmore Ligon, 4209 Emil Ave., Amarillo, Texas 79106.

AN ALERT IRISHMAN!

"Horse Wrangler On The Yellowstone" by Walter Mann (May 1982 *True West*) is a fine story which I enjoyed thoroughly. However, it says that "Michael (Micky) Mann was born in Limerick, County of Cork, Ireland in 1866." Limerick and Cork are counties in Ireland, separate and distinct, so it would be impossible to be born in two places at the same time. My guess is that he was born in Limerick County, the county capital of which is Limerick City, quite close to Shannon Airport. — Michael J. Sherlock, 906 Mary St., Copperas Cove, Texas 76522.

Mr. Sherlock is right. My father was born in Limerick, Limerick County, Ireland. This was my mistake. My sister Margaret has been back there several times but



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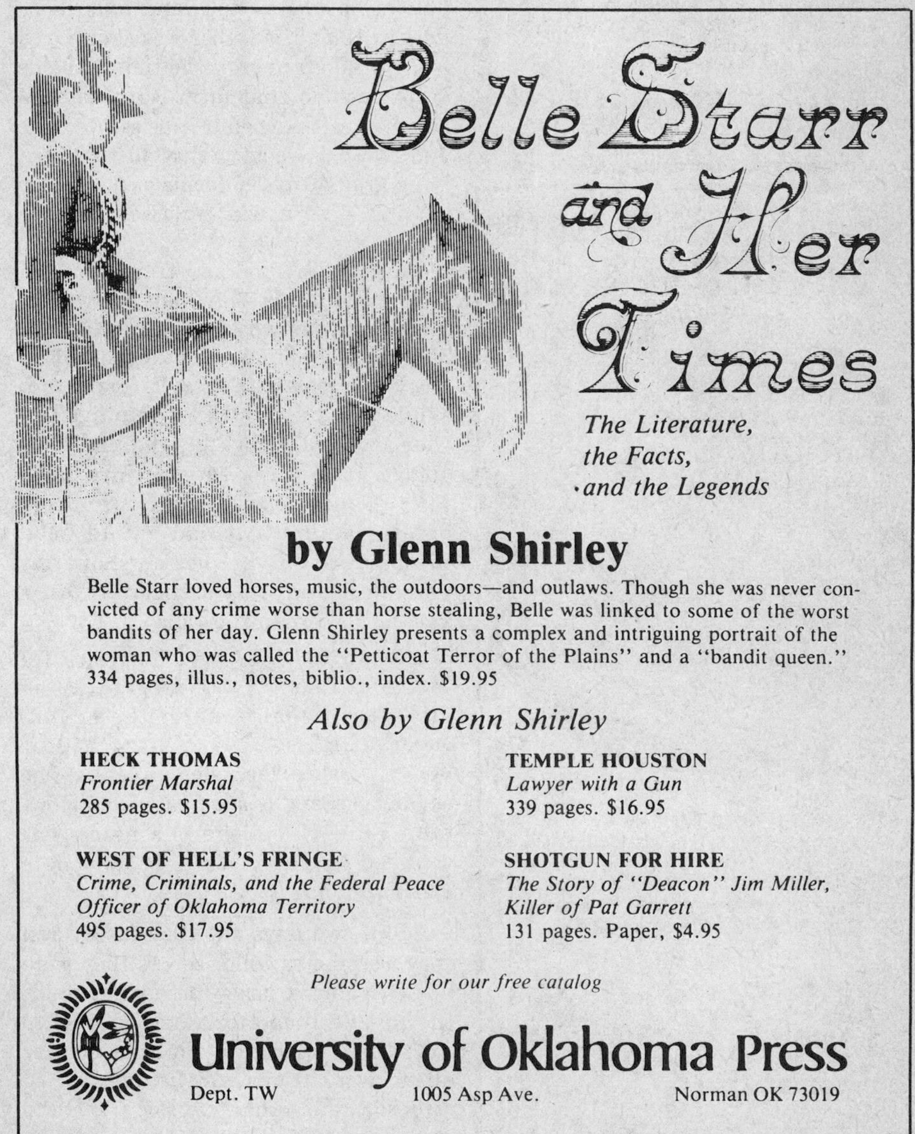

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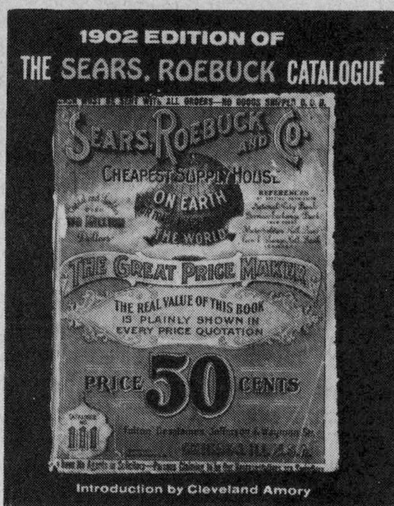

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I have been so busy trying to make a living that I have not had time to go. — Walter E. Mann

A GOLDSEEKING GRANDPA

I've been a subscriber to your various magazines for lots of years — got a garage chamber full of 'em — and now and then I pull out an old copy so I can read again about the hardships endured by many from the East who helped make the West what it was, and is, good or bad, and somehow I feel tied in with it through my grandfather whom I never saw. He was accidentally killed the very hour I was born. My father, who was the oldest of a family of eight children, told me the following incident when I was old enough to appreciate it and understand.

My grandfather, Charles M. Gregory, was born in the small village of Glen Cove, Maine which is on the coast about halfway between Rockland and Camden, in 1839. His father was considered a well-to-do farmer of the times, but he early decided that farm work held no adventures. So when he was eighteen he and two pals decided that all that gold lying around in California needed harvesting — so it was Westward Ho for them!

This was in 1856 and transportation being what it was, they went partway by train and partway by saddle horses. They finally wound up in the foothills of the Sierras where they prospected. While they didn't strike a vein five feet wide and a mile long, they did find some gold. I have one of several rings made from grandfather's diggings and my great-grandmother had a gold bead neaklace. A tintype picture shows my grandfather wearing a stickpin with a gold nugget ornamentation.

Around 1861 they got homesick for Maine and home. At least grandfather and Ben Clough (one of the adventurers) did, so they bought saddle horses, stashed their small pokes in the saddlebags, and headed east from Howland Flat. (I believe the name was changed to Table Rock. It may be a ghost town now.)

About two days out they discovered they were being followed. As they were not carrying a large amount of gold, they didn't intend for a darned thief to rob them of what they did have. Not far ahead was a river which they had to ford, so Grandfather told Ben Clough to cross over, ride on out of sight, and wait for him. He then hid his horse and himself in the bushes and waited. After about an hour, Grandfather, leading an extra mount, caught up with Ben. This was verified some years afterward by Ben when my father met him one day on the street in Rockland. Ben said he asked my Grandfather what happened and all Grandfather ever said was that he relieved the would-be thief of his transportation. Nothing like a little speculation. Anyways they were not followed any farther.

Back in 1863, when my grandfather left to go back to Maine, Angie Lancaster gave him a prayer book. The flyleaf bears this inscription: "Presented to Mr. Charles Gregory by his friend Angie Lancaster, Howland Flat, California 1863." Does anyone by the name of Lancaster know of this?

If I live until December 28 I will be ninety years old. — Mrs. Carolyn E. Tolman, P.O. Box 247, North Windham, Maine 04062

TEXAS INFORMATION

We place our copies of your magazines (when we can bear to part with them) in our Leon County Historical and Genealogical Research Center in Centerville, Texas 75833. Some of your readers may want to send a SASE to this Center for information on Leon County. — Mrs. Clovis Byars Herring, Rt. 1, Box 123A, Buffalo, Texas 75831

HISTORY OF THE LINCOLN COUNTY WAR

by Maurice G. Fulton

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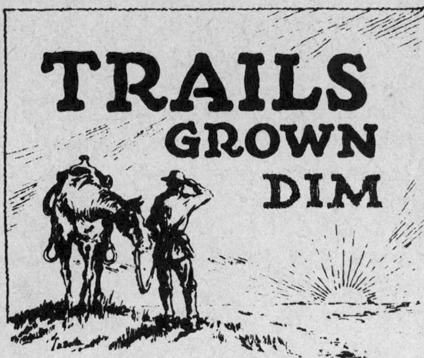

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose 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.

Maurer

My grandfather, Valentine Maurer, was born in Germany in 1848. In the late 1800s he moved to the United States. The last record I have is that he was living in Mt. Angel, Marion County, Oregon in 1900, according to the census of that year. His wife was Elizabeth Maurer and their children were: Valentine, Joseph (my father), Bertha, Vincent, Marcellus, Mathew, Anton, and Charles. My grandmother thought he may have been killed by Indians in Idaho. Any information will be appreciated. — Albert Maurer, Box 61, Newman Lake, Washington 99025.

Fletcher — Hoggard

I am searching for information on the family of James Fletcher who was born in 1810 in Missouri, and married Elizabeth Hoggard.

James and Elizabeth moved to Navarro County, Texas about 1845. At the time of the 1850 census the following children were listed: John R. (born in 1836 in Missouri), Mary J. (born in 1838 in Missouri), William (born in 1840 in Missouri), Jasper (born in 1842 in Missouri), George W. (born in 1844 in Missouri), Sarah A. (born in 1846 in Texas), and James B. (born in 1849 in Texas). Any information on James Fletcher and his family will be welcomed. — Scott Lyles, 424 East Iowa Street, Walters, Oklahoma 73572.

Wilder

I am looking for information about Marlin T. Wilder, his wife Sarah E. Wilder, and their family. Their children were: Walter W., Edgar E., Hattie, Oscar O., and Homer H. They lived in New Mexico while it was still a territory in the latter part of the 1800s — in the Carlsbad, Loving, Hope, and Artesia area — where they homesteaded land. Some or all of them moved to Texas in the early 1900s. Any information about descendants or the burial place of these people would be greatly appreciated. — Mrs. Mary Lee Wilder Adams, 334 Linkwood, Dr., Duncanville, Texas 75137.

Caddle — Sprinkler

I need information on General Caddle and his wife, Margaret Sprinkler, both born in Virginia. Their daughter, Sarah Ann Caddle, was born on August 15, 1859 in Virginia and married James William Jackson on Easter Sunday in 1880, probably in Lee County. Who were the parents of General and Margaret? Were there other children? I will exchange information. — Mrs. J. D. Sutton, Rt. 5, Box 216A, Russell Springs, Kentucky 42642.

Cobb — Miller

We are looking for Art Cobb, who hasn't been heard of for about twenty-five years. His brother, Henry C. Cobb, died in October. Art traveled the world but California seemed to be his home base.

We are also looking for Jessis Miller who used to mine up around Oran Lichty's ranch with him. Babe Lichty is nearing ninety years of age and would like to hear from him. All these people were ranchers years ago around Badwater and Lysite, Wyoming. — Tootie Cobb, 815 East 7th Street, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801.

Farrell — Nickerson

I am trying to trace my step-grandfather, Harvey Elmer Farrell, commonly

(Continued on page 61)

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The Tascosa townsite, looking toward the Canadian River from behind the frame school, with a view of the rear of the courthouse. Note the separate boys' and girls' outhouses. The school has been renovated into a residence. It and the courthouse are the only buildings which still exist of old Tascosa.

Tascosa

By BILL O'NEAL
Photos provided by author;
Courtesy the Panhandle-Plains
Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas

TASCOSA was one of the pioneer communities of the Texas Panhandle. The frontier town sprang up beside the Canadian River just as the buffalo herds and the Comanches and Kiowas disappeared. Great cattle ranches such as the LIT, LX, LS, the Frying Pan, and the vast XIT developed in the vicinity, and for nearly two decades Tascosa proudly claimed the sobriquet, "Cowboy Capital of the Panhandle."

Indeed, the West's only cowboy strike occurred in Tascosa, while herds in the region were owned by such legendary cattle barons as John Chisum, Charles Goodnight and George Littlefield. Tascosa's Boot Hill included victims from one of the deadliest saloon fights in frontier history. Billy the Kid, Pat Garrett, Henry Brown, Temple Houston and Jim East were among the lethal gunfighters who rode the town's dusty streets. When the cowboys and gunmen and gamblers and bartenders and soiled doves finally abandoned the site on the north bank of the Canadian River, Tascosa played the final role of the classic Western community, crumbling picturesquely into an adobe-piled ghost town.

In 1874 Henry Kimball, Theodore Briggs and several other soldiers from Fort Union, New Mexico hunted in the area which soon would become Tascosa. The Canadian River at this point ran from west to east, and a spring-fed creek trickled into it from the north. The creek was known as Atascosa, or "boggy," because a Comanchero supposedly had bogged down in quicksand while attempting a crossing. Kimball was impressed by the grassy, well-watered area, and when his enlistment was up in 1876 he returned to settle.

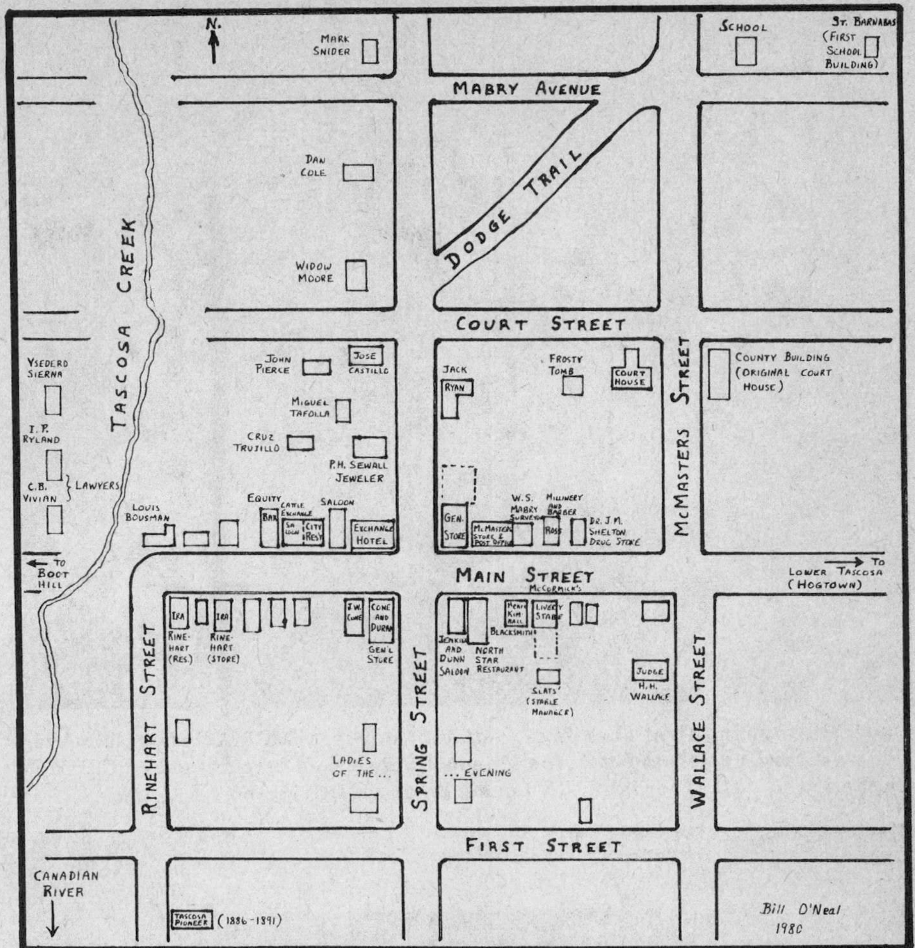
A blacksmith by trade, Kimball installed his forge and other equipment in a one-room adobe he erected beside a spring. His building was the first Anglo-American structure in the upper Panhandle. Theodore Briggs followed his friend into the vicinity, and others soon arrived.

During the mid-1870s, sheepherders from New Mexico had driven their

flocks to Panhandle grasslands recently cleared of buffaloes and Indians, establishing a dozen *plazas* near the Canadian. Their sheep periodically were driven into New Mexico, then back again a few months later because of a tax loophole. Property was assessed in Texas as of January 1, while the New Mexico assessment date was March 1. Flocks therefore were shifted to New Mexico late each year, then returned to Texas ahead of New Mexico's annual assessment.

In the fall of 1876 a large-scale sheepman, Casimero Romero, transferred his operation from crowded Mora County, New Mexico, to the Tascosa area. His people and possessions were packed into fourteen wagons, and Romero led his vehicles and thousands of sheep to a point half a mile east of Atascosa Creek. Romero supervised the construction of adobe buildings and sheep pens in a cottonwood grove just north of the river, which then was no more than twenty feet wide.

About the time that the Romero Plaza was taking shape, Tascosa's first merchants arrived. Jules Howard and Ira Rinehart, partners from Elizabethtown, New Mexico built a two-room, flat-roofed adobe facing north and located a couple of hundred yards east of Atascosa Creek. Their general store



The author's map of old Tascosa.

Rollicking trailtown of the Texas Panhandle

initially was stocked with three barrels of whisky and a few boxes of soda crackers, but soon far more varied and plentiful merchandise was available.

By 1877 cattle herds had been trailed to nearby grasslands, beginning with 3,500 head of Major George W. Littlefield's livestock wearing LIT brand. Charles Siringo, eventually to win fame as a Western detective and author, turned up as a drover with the LX herd, which ranged twenty miles south of Tascosa. Retired seaman Ellsworth Torrey began a spread south of the river, and the Torrey Peaks still bear his name.

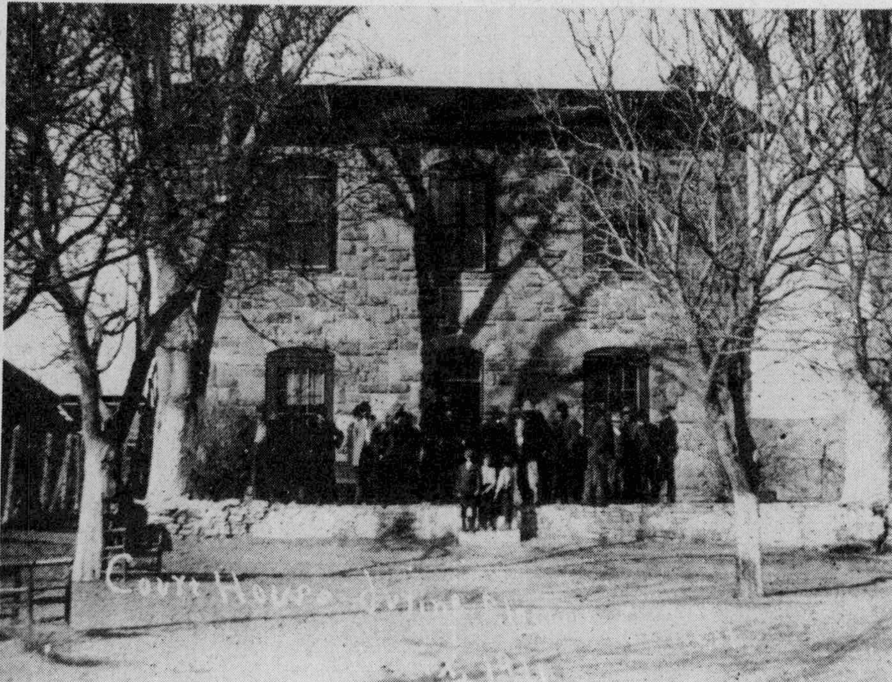
James McMasters drove a wagon loaded with merchandise from Taos, New Mexico and formed a partnership with Jules Howard, who sold out to Rinehart so that he could help organize the Howard and McMasters mercantile. Rinehart, Howard and McMasters soon held title to most of the desirable business property, and sold lots to other urban pioneers attracted to Tacosa. But when John Cone tried to buy a lot to establish another general store, he was at first turned down. Not to be thwarted, Cone purchased land from Casimero Romero and built a store a quarter mile east of the existing commercial buildings. In time there was a small cluster of dives in Lower Tascosa, or Hogtown, as the competitors to the west scornfully dubbed it.

THE TOWN officially received its name in 1878, when businessmen applied for a post office at "Atascosa." They were informed by the federal Post Office Department that another Texas community, near San Antonio, already was using the name. So the "A" was dropped from the spelling, as it already had been in pronunciation, and Tascosa's first postmaster, Jules Howard, began handling mail. Tascosa was on the 200-mile route of the "Lightning Express," which delivered mail on a daily basis from Mobeetie, Texas to Fort Bascom, New Mexico, a fifty-nine hour journey by horseback.

That same year, Billy the Kid and four other Lincoln County outlaws drove 150 stolen horses from New Mexico to Tascosa. The Kid and his henchmen — Henry Brown, John Middleton, Tom O'Folliard and Fred Waite — camped just below town in a cottonwood grove.

These young hardcases joined in community horse races and dances, occasionally indulged in whisky and frequently engaged in target practice. During October and November they moved their camp to the LX Ranch, where they became friends with Charles Siringo. When they sold all of their horses, the Kid and O'Folliard returned to New Mexico, and were hunted down and killed by Pat Garrett. Brown, Waite and Middleton prudently decided to avoid New Mexico, where they were wanted men. They drifted away, but

Cape Willingham, first sheriff of Oldham County, with officials of Wheeler County. Standing, left to right: Joe Mason, Captain G.W. Arrington and C.B. Willingham. Seated, left to right: N.F. Locke, Emanual Dubbs and J.J. Long.



The stone courthouse in 1911, when voters of the area assembled to maintain Tascosa as the seat of Oldham County. Four years later Vega won a similar election and Tascosa's only two-story building became a ranch house. Today the structure is a museum.

within a few months Brown came back to Tascosa to work variously as a cowboy, deputy and stock detective.

At Christmastime, 1879, Ira Rinehart, a Jew, was sufficiently encouraged by Tascosa's progress and by the spirit of the season to set up a yule tree in his living room. More than thirty people, including ten children, gathered to sing and decorate the tree with popcorn strings and balls, cranberry strings, and apples.

This festive occasion proved to be a fitting introduction to the next decade. The 1880s were the salad days of Tascosa. The population reached 600, with additional numbers of cowboys and ranchers who regularly rode in from the surrounding countryside to patronize the saloons, stores and services of Tascosa. All ten of Tascosa's gunfights erupted during the 1880s, along with other historic events, such as the cowboy strike and Pat Garrett's crusade against rustlers with the so-called "Home Rangers."

In the first year of this eventful decade Tascosa became the first county seat of newly organized Oldham County. Tascosa defeated Hogtown in the county seat election, and a night of revelry ensued along Main Street. Townsmen and cowpunchers imbibed freely at the saloons, fired revolvers into the air, and an LIT drover, Dud Pannell, was thrown from his horse as he rode back to the ranch that night. His mount bolted when Pannell joyously emptied his six-gun, and the luckless cowboy died within minutes.

Tascosa erected a large adobe building a block north of Main Street to handle county business. In 1884 a two-story stone courthouse was built, serving as the center of Oldham County affairs for three decades. Cape Willingham was elected the first county sheriff, and he appointed the lethal Henry Brown as deputy.

These two lawmen were involved in Tascosa's first fatal shooting. In June 1881, Brown and a companion encountered south of town a group of cowboys led by foreman Fred Leigh. Leigh and his men had pastured a trail herd near Tascosa, then had made the rounds in town and clashed with Sheriff Willingham. Leigh now unleashed a tirade against the community which Brown and his friend, outnumbered and on foot, had to swallow.

Back in town, Willingham, Brown and several aroused citizens made plans for united action against the arrogant cowboys. Shortly afterward Leigh led his men back into Tascosa to continue their spree. As they rode down Spring Street, Leigh shot the head off a duck, and nearby a pregnant Mexican woman shrieked, then fainted.

Although unarmed, Willingham confronted Leigh, who defiantly rode toward Tascosa's leading saloon, the Equity Bar. The sheriff ordered a prearranged signal to be spread, then he armed himself with a double-barrelled shotgun and hurried to the Equity. Willingham turned the corner of the saloon just as Leigh stepped to the ground. The peace officer threw the shotgun to his shoulder and demanded that Leigh surrender his pistol, but the foreman swung back into the saddle and went for his

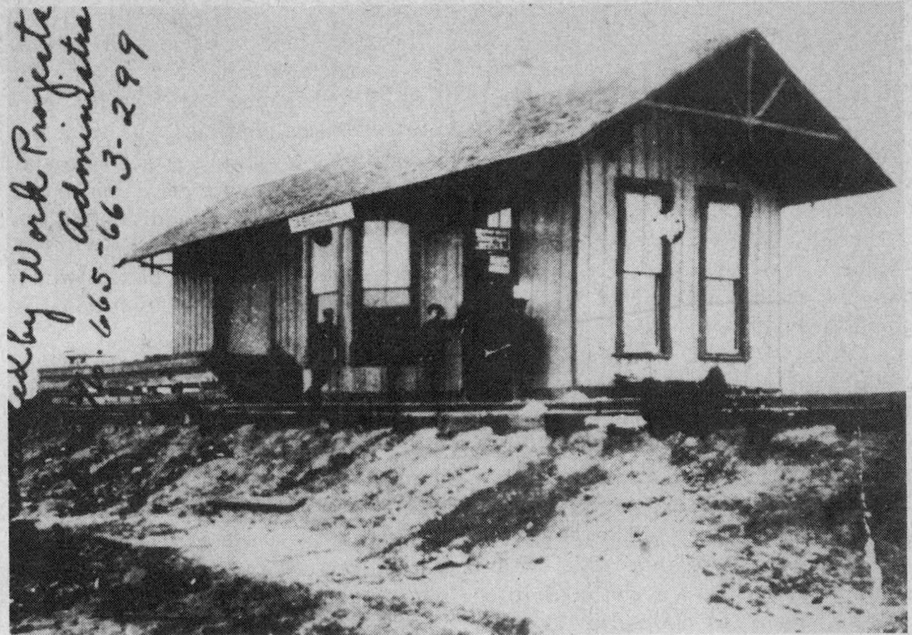
revolver. Willingham triggered both barrels, blasting Leigh off his horse and killing him instantly with massive wounds in the chest and side.

Brown and four citizens closed in, and under their guns the surviving cowboys tamely left town. An inquest was hurriedly conducted, then Leigh's body was deposited in Boot Hill, located on a knoll half a mile west of Tascosa.

Not long afterward Brown hauled a drunken drover into court, where he took offense at a slur from the cowboy. Brown angrily set out his sixgun, challenged the man to race him for it, and when the shocked cowboy failed to move, the lawman arbitrarily ordered him out of town. Willingham soon had to fire his hair-triggered deputy because of his dangerous temper. Brown hired on at the LIT, but after he was discharged for the same reason, he left Tascosa.

Tascosa saloonkeeper Bob Russell was another early inhabitant of Boot Hill. Russell, who proved to be his own most faithful patron, quarrelled with Jules Howard. One morning Russell, already inebriated, stumbled into the Howard and McMasters store with his revolver belted around his waist. But Howard stood ready with a leveled sixgun. The men exchanged words, Russell fumbled for his pistol, and Howard shot him fatally in the chest.

The following year, 1882, Texas Ranger Captain G.W. Arrington cleaned up Mobeetie, 135 miles west of Tascosa. The deposed gamblers, prostitutes and assorted sharpers shifted over to Tascosa, further enlivening the salty little town. The sporting women who began working Tascosa included Midnight Rose, Box Car Jane, Panhandle Nan, Slippery Sue, Rowdy Kate, Homely Ann, Gizzard Lip, Canadian Lilly and Frog Lip Sadie.



The Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad depot, south of Tascosa and across the Canadian River from town.

The Howard and McMasters General Store, at the northeast corner of Spring and Main.

BEFORE THE year was out there were four fatal shootings. Mobeetie outcast Henry McCullar was gunned down in the Edwards Hotel in Hogtown by a gambler named Mexican Frank Largue. Largue twisted his gun upward and fired through the bottom of his holster, felling McCullar with a slug in the stomach. McCullar crawled to the home of his mistress, but he died after several days of agony.

Largue fled for New Mexico after the shooting, but Sheriff Willingham chased him down and hauled him back to town under the twin barrels of his shotgun. District Attorney Temple Houston secured a twenty-one-year prison term.

Another fight erupted in a Hogtown dive over a card game. One player mortally wounded an ex-buffalo hunter, Louis Keyes. Bill Yandell, kibitzing behind Keyes, whipped out a pistol and shot Keyes' killer in the stomach. The wounded man expired moments later, and two more graves were dug in Boot Hill.

In the fall of 1882 a drunken cowboy fell asleep in a dance hall girl's room in Hogtown, where he was shot in the back of the head and robbed. Bartender Johnnie Maley was widely blamed, but the dead drover was deposited in Boot Hill with justice unsatisfied. Before the year ended, however, the murdered cowboy's brother, Ed Norwood, came to Hogtown, pretended to be drunk, flashed a large amount of money and

squired the dance hall girl. Norwood was put to bed where his brother had died, but when no attempt was made on his life or money, he impatiently stalked into the bar and shot Maley to death. The bartender was placed in Boot Hill and Norwood was placed in jail, but friends soon knocked a hole in the wall and put the prisoner on a fast horse.

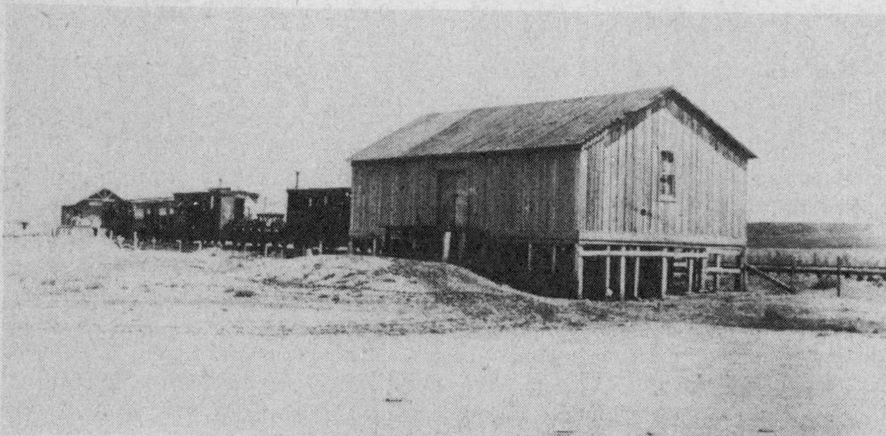
The biggest event of 1883 was the famous cowboy strike. The big ranch owners, who had organized the Panhandle Cattleman's Association three years earlier, had cooperated in keeping wages for the common cowboy at twenty-five dollars per month and in prohibiting mavericking, as well as establishing regulations foreign to independent-minded drovers. The cowboys felt little loyalty to absentee owners and cattle syndicates, and talk spread about organizing a strike. Finally two dozen drovers gathered together, agreed to set a strike for April 1, and signed a document demanding $50 per month for cowboys and cooks and $75 monthly for foremen. Leader of the movement was Tom Harris, who was being paid $100 monthly by W.M.D. Lee of the LS Ranch.

Lee came in from Leavenworth, Kansas to talk to Harris, who agreed that many ranch hands in the region were inexperienced plowboys who were not worth inflated wages. Lee offered to pay $50 monthly to any man Harris would name as a top hand, in addition to leaving Harris' salary at its high level. Harris determined not to back down on the original demands, whereupon Lee fired him.

When LE cowboys presented their demands, the ranch manager terminated them. The T-Anchor headquarters were fortified and rigged with gunpowder and a detonation device, and when a committee of strikers approached, they were abruptly scattered by rifle bullets kicking up dust at their horses' hooves. The range boss of the LIT offered $35 a month to his men, but was turned down.

Nearly 100 striking cowpunchers gathered in Tascosa, but after a few days in Hogtown their money vanished. There had been such a boom in the area that prospective cowboys constantly rode in looking for work, and area ranchers had no trouble staffing the range. Within the month the strike had collapsed. Many of the unsuccessful strikers drifted out of the country, although a few hung on, establishing their own little spreads and casting a long loop over unbranded calves of the big outfits.

St. Barnabas Church, 1911. This adobe building was Tascosa's first school. After a frame schoolhouse was erected, donations were collected to convert the old school into a Catholic chapel.



Ranch warehouse beside the railroad. Passenger depot is at far left.

When rustling grew rampant, the big ranchers took firm measures. They employed Pat Garrett for a year at $5,000, arranged with Governor Jim Hogg to appoint Garrett a captain of Texas Rangers, and enlisted a company of Home Rangers. The ranchers paid $60 a month to the Rangers, who were recruited in the spring of 1884. Garrett and his hard-bitten men, assisted by Oldham County Sheriff Jim East, scoured the countryside for rustlers.

Although a number of undesirables left the region, there was widespread resentment of the Rangers. When Garrett's year was up he resigned. As an added inducement to Garrett, the LS management had sold him cattle at a fraction of their value, and now they bought the animals back at market prices. When Garrett left, the Rangers became undisciplined and soon disbanded. Rustling was resumed and animosity continued against the former Rangers, who now were hired by the LS.

During the previous year the LS had loaned Oldham County $25,000 to replace the adobe county building with a stone courthouse and jail. Although this generosity had been repaid with 159 warrants for the Home Rangers to serve, the loan was utilized to construct a sturdy two-story building which still dominates the townsite.

THE COURTHOUSE was the only two-story structure in Tascosa, but the principal two blocks of Main Street, which ran east and west, was flanked by more than two dozen single-story commercial buildings and residences. The primary intersection was Spring and Main. On the northwest corner was the Exchange Hotel, with a cow's head over the sign. There were nine rooms, which rented for fifty cents a night, and meals were available at fifty cents apiece.

Directly across the street was the Cone and Duran Mercantile Store, operated by John Cone and Dolores Duran. Cone finally had secured a choice location, the southwest corner of Spring and Main. Tascosa's other big general store was the Howard and McMasters enterprise on the northeast corner. Jules Howard and J.E. McMasters sold out to Bob Wright, who operated Dodge City's most famous

mercantile. Wright's manager in Tascosa was a man named Farnsworth, and the operation became known as the Wright and Farnsworth General Store. Freight wagons would trundle down the Dodge Trail to Wright and Farnsworth's side entrance and corral on Spring Street, where they would disgorge great amounts of merchandise from Dodge City, 225 miles to the north.

At the other corner of Tascosa's main intersection was a long building which housed the Jenkins and Dunn Saloon. This tin-roofed structure, owned by Jess Jenkins and Sam Dunn, would be the scene of Tascosa's bloodiest shootout, but the most famous watering hole in town was the Equity Bar.

The Equity was the first saloon in Tascosa, and was a few doors west of the Exchange Hotel in a plastered adobe which had two rooms, each about eighteen feet long and twenty feet wide. In the front room there was a bar along the east side. A small raised platform stood in the northwest corner, where barrels of whisky were stored. An open archway led to the back room, in which saloon girls congregated and gambling was conducted at several tables. During Tascosa's prime there usually were two other saloons in operation.

The town's best-known restaurant was the North Star, one door east of the Jenkins and Dunn Saloon. The next building to the east was Henry Kimball's Blacksmith Shop. Next to Kimball was Mickey McCormick's Livery Stable and corral.

The office of surveyor W.S. Mabry was across the street from Kimball, and opposite the livery stable was a unique establishment run by Charley Ross and his wife. The business was a combination millinery house, barber shop and book store. East of the Rosses was the drug store of Dr. P.L. Shelton.

Elsewhere in town were the businesses of bootmaker George Stoll, house and sign painter F.G. Copeland, harnessmaker and saddler R.L. Marsh, and jeweler P.H. Sewall. Lawyers C.B. Vivian and I.P. Ryland lived in houses just across Tascosa Creek, and in time a footbridge connected the western fringe of the community with Main Street.

A couple of blocks north of town stood two buildings used as schools. The first, a small adobe school, was renovated in 1889 and became St. Barnabas Catholic chapel, Tascosa's only church. A more substantial wooden structure, complete with separate outhouses and up-to-date playground equipment, was erected nearby. South of the business section was the office of the Tascosa *Pioneer*, a typical frontier booster newspaper operated on a weekly basis from 1886-1891 by the enthusiastic C.F. Rudolph.

Civic improvements included a sturdy wagon bridge which spanned the Canadian River beginning in 1887. The following year saw the creation of the Tascosa Water Works. Most significantly, in 1888 the Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad extended its tracks past Tascosa just south of the Canadian. There was a little frame passenger depot and a warehouse which regularly was

The Jenkins and Dunn Saloon, site of the 1886 shootout in which four men were killed and two wounded.

The three tombstones still standing on Boot Hill mark the graves of Fred Chilton, Ed King and Frank Valley, the LS cowboys killed in the massive 1886 gunfight.

Casimero Romero (seated) and Jose Ynocenio. Romero moved to the Tascosa area in 1876. Hogtown was developed near his compound.

stocked with supplies for the big ranches of the area.

TASCOSA WAS in its full glory as the Cowboy Capital of the Panhandle, and drovers still kept things lively in town. In March 1886 LS riders Ed King, Fred Chilton, Frank Valley and John Lang attended a *baile* (dance) at Casimero Romero's Plaza. At two in the morning they rode into Tascosa and Ed King, probably the most detested of the former Home Rangers, dismounted to meet sporting lady Sally Emory. King's companions continued west in search of further recreation in a saloon, while Ed and Sally strolled arm in arm toward her house.

As they passed the Jenkins and Dunn Saloon, several men on the porch exchanged words with King. Suddenly a gunshot rang out, and King collapsed, dead when he hit the ground. Lem Woodruff, a cowboy who had been trying to win Sally's affections, ran out of the saloon and fired a Winchester slug into the fallen King's throat.

"Boys, they've killed Ed!" shouted John Lang. "Come on!"

Brandishing their revolvers, Lang, Chilton and Valley sprinted toward King's corpse. The angry trio slipped into the rear of the Jenkins and Dunn Saloon, and moments later a barrage of gunfire erupted inside. With Woodruff were the Catfish Kid, Charley and Tom Emory, Louis Bousman, and others, and these men blazed back at their attackers.

Woodruff caught two bullets low in the abdomen, and Charley Emory was hit in the leg. The wounded Woodruff stumbled away, still clutching his Winchester. Valley pursued Woodruff, but was stopped in his tracks by a slug in the left eye.

Jesse Sheets, owner of the North Star Restaurant next door, was awakened by the gunfire. When he unwisely appeared in the saloon doorway in his night clothes, he was gunned down by Chilton. As Sheets dropped with a hole in his forehead, two bullets ripped toward Chilton's gun flash. Both rounds tore into Chilton's chest. He handed his gun to Lang and died.

Lang now retreated to the west, exchanging a furious fire with the men in the saloon. Sheriff Jim East hurried to the scene, and his deputy shot at the Catfish Kid, who escaped into the night.

Woodruff and Emory survived their wounds, but the following afternoon a mass funeral was held for three LS men and Jesse Sheets, who left a widow and five children. Four coffins were built, the bodies were clad in new black suits, and the entire populace of Tascosa, along with numerous area cowboys, formed a half-mile-long procession to Boot Hill. At his widow's request, Sheets was buried away from King, Lang and Valley, but the only three markers which stand in Boot Hill today are above the graves of the LS riders.

Lang, Woodruff, Bousman, the Catfish Kid (whose real name was John Gough), and the surviving Emory brother were tried for murder, but eventually all were acquitted. The following year the Catfish Kid was involved in a fatal shooting behind Cone and Duran's store. At three o'clock on a June morning the Kid had words with Pete Fulton. The Kid whipped out his .45 and shot Fulton at point-blank range, but again he avoided a murder conviction.

The last fatal shootout in Tascosa

occurred on May 13, 1889. Sheriff Jim East clashed with gambler Tom Clark in the Equity Bar, and both men went for their revolvers. A cottonwood beam in the middle of the room supported the roof and had been dressed with a hexagon-shaped column of planks. East ducked behind the column for cover, and mortally wounded Clark.

Such excitement quickly faded, however, as the 1890s brought a rapid decline to Tascosa. Towns had grown up along the Fort Worth and Denver City tracks, and these trade centers diverted considerable business from Tascosa. There was a severe drouth during these years, further damaging the local economy. Buildings began to stand empty as businessmen moved their enterprises to more profitable communities. By 1891 only one saloon remained open, the school had been closed for two years, and C.F. Rudolph was forced to shut down *The Pioneer*.

THE DROUTH broke in 1893 with heavy rains which flooded the Canadian. The wagon bridge was swept away, never to be rebuilt, along with the footbridge across Tascosa Creek.The river channel was permanently widened, ruining the crossing which had attracted early visitors. Seventeen buildings were washed away or destroyed when their flat roofs caved in. Soon merely a handful of the remaining structures were occupied as Tascosa slumped into permanent decline.

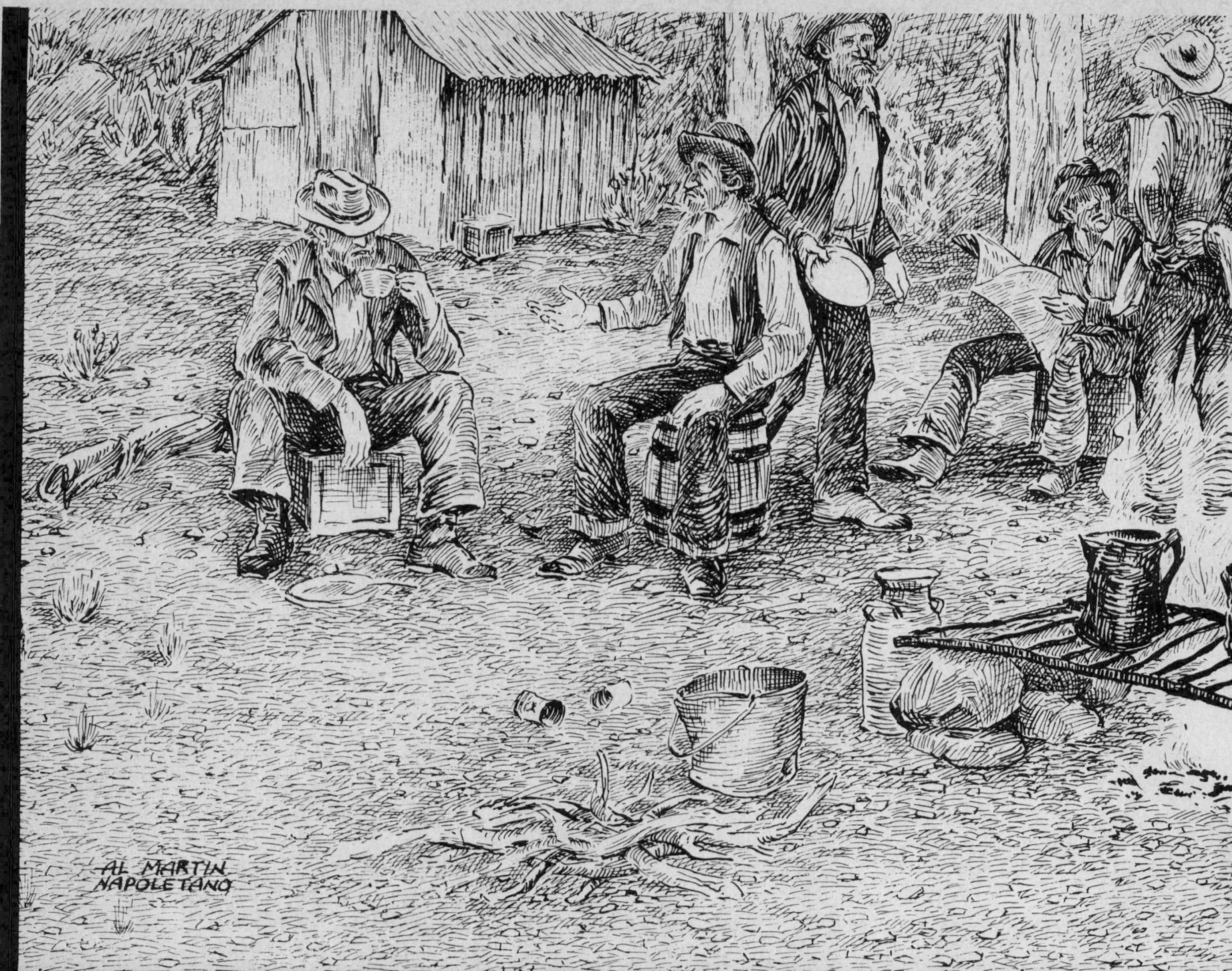
In 1908 the Rock Island Railroad built a line from bustling Amarillo into New Mexico. The tracks passed through Oldham County but missed dying Tascosa. Vega, twenty-eight miles south of Tascosa, sprang into life, and by 1911 offered a challenge for the county seat. Tascosa mustered a handful of voters and won the election, but four years later Vega was easily victorious in a second contest.

The adobe buildings lost their plaster and roofs, then slowly crumbled. Julian Bivins purchased the old stone courthouse, added a front porch and converted the landmark structure into his ranch headquarters. Frenchy McCormick who had come to Tascosa as a bride in 1880, stubbornly maintained her adobe home west of the creek. Her husband Mickey, who had owned the livery stable, had expired in 1912, and she stayed nearby until 1939. Now a feeble old woman, Frenchy was moved to a friend's house in Channing, where she died in her sleep two years later. She was buried beside Mickey at Casimero Romero's Cemetery in Tascosa.

Although the last old Tascosan left in 1939, that year marked an unexpected rebirth for the one-time cattle town. Philanthropist Cal Farley organized a Boys Ranch for unfortunate youths, and from a modest beginning the institution now boasts a complex of modern buildings and streets atop the former townsite, as well as a population which rivals Tascosa in its frontier heyday.

All that remains from the nineteenth century are the courthouse, now a museum, the frame school, which has been converted into an attractive residence, and Boot Hill, last home of the pioneers who lived, fought and died in the Cowboy Capital of the Panhandle.

Tascosa's declining Main Street about 1911, looking west toward Boot Hill. The old Howard and McMasters store building are at right. The long structure at left once housed the Jenkins and Dunn Saloon.



RIDING THE RAILS with Hood River

BUGHOUSE McCANN

MOST OF THE old-time hoboes who knew Bughouse McCann said he was the craziest character who ever lived and would never rest until he got even with whoever might wrong him in any way. I don't remember when I met him or really what hobo jungle it was in, but I knew him before World War II and for many years after.

Old Bugs always seemed to have a lopsided grin on his face as though he was thinking of something funny, which he probably was, and his eyes fairly danced with merriment, giving the casual observer the impression that he looked upon life in general as something of a joke. I remember when I was just a green kid traveling with Tex Medders along the smoky trail of the hobo. I spent as much time as I could around Bughouse McCann mainly to listen to his "tales of the rails" and find out what his latest escapade had been. He had a bunch of them, too. So while all the kids I talked to in the various places where I camped with old Tex looked upon such cowboy movie heroes as Buck Jones, Tom Mix, Ken Maynard, and maybe Tim McCoy as their idols, mine were such legendary hoboes as Tex Medders,

Blackie

Chicken Red, Amboy Fats, and of course Bughouse McCann.

Now I had a big edge on the town boys in one way. Their movie heroes were far away and in some ways unreal, but mine were very real as I was in contact with many of them and in fact took delight in telling some tale about a famous hobo, then pointing him out at some nearby campfire.

I only saw Bughouse mad on one occasion. It was at Wenatchee, Washington in 1963 and a bunch of us hoboes had jungled up behind the ice house on the banks of the Columbia River to await word from the local ranchers that the apples were ready to thin. This was in the days before there were any food stamps but there were surplus commodities to be had at the welfare office for anyone who needed them, even a tramp. We had come in to "make the apple thinning" as we called it, which means we were there to work.

But at the same time we showed up to work there would be some of what us hoboes called "mission bums" and winos showed up simply to bum the working man, which according to the hobo "code of the road" was strictly taboo. I've seen those mission bums show up at Winters, California and camp on the creek bank behind Charlie Cody's store and tell about how they would make money in the apricot orchards when the work started about April first. Then when the work would start they would be long gone. I've seen the same bunch at Winters, then on north at Ozwald for the peach thinning, then on up in Washington or Oregon for the apple thinning, and even on into the fall when it was time to pick the apples. Their story was always the same — down on their luck, temporarily of course, and needing some food and some drinking money. We called them jungle buzzards, stew bums, and asphalt men since they hung around big city skid rows so much.

Anyway, as you can imagine, those of us who did work and try to put back a little nest egg for winter didn't have much use for them and they didn't really like us either unless they could get money or food from us.

The time I'm going to tell about now was when a bunch of them camped along the mainline Great Northern railroad not far from us and they had been going up to the welfare office and coming back loaded with surplus commodities which they sold on the street to get some wine money. The butter, peanut butter, canned meat and fish would sell fast but they could not seem to sell the flour, beans, rice, cornmeal and such things at all and had a pile of them in their jungle about six feet high.

Bughouse McCann decided to go up to the welfare office and try to get in on some of the goodies but he must have said the wrong thing in some way or other, because he was turned down flat. When he got back to the jungle he was one mad old man and swore vengeance on everyone in that office.

Just about that time here came Montana Red and Black Swede over the rails out of Montana and they stopped a little ways off from the rest of us and made a fire of their own. This seemed strange to us until Red explained they had head lice and didn't want to give them to anyone else (code of the road).

I guess it didn't take Bughouse McCann very long to figure out what he was going to do to get even with the folks at the welfare office, for not long after Montana Red and Black Swede showed up, I saw old Bugs over at their campfire talking to them. In a little while he had hunted up an old newspaper, a small aspirin bottle, and a comb. Now anyone who has ever had head lice knows that an ordinary comb won't usually do much toward dislodging them from your head, but then Bughouse was no ordinary hobo.

He had first one and then the other sit on a bucket with his head hung down over the newspaper while he combed for lice, and he was getting them, too. I watched him for a while wondering what on earth he had in mind when he was putting the lice into the little bottle. I finally strolled over but not too close lest he let some of the bugs get away. Finally, he seemed satisfied or couldn't find any more bugs, for he got up and headed uptown with his old cronie Dutch Zorne.

Dutch told me later what Bugs did. It seems the folks in the welfare office stored their coats and hats in one room during working hours. This little room was located along the hall which led to the restrooms. Old Bugs took those lice into the coat room and scattered them around on the hats and coats of the workers with, as he said, the hats getting first priority as he couldn't be sure the ferocious little beasties could make their way northbound from a coat and get into someone's hair.

Before many weeks went by, word was out over the hobo grapevine that a certain welfare office was lousy, and it was said that the workers therein spent more time scratching than working.

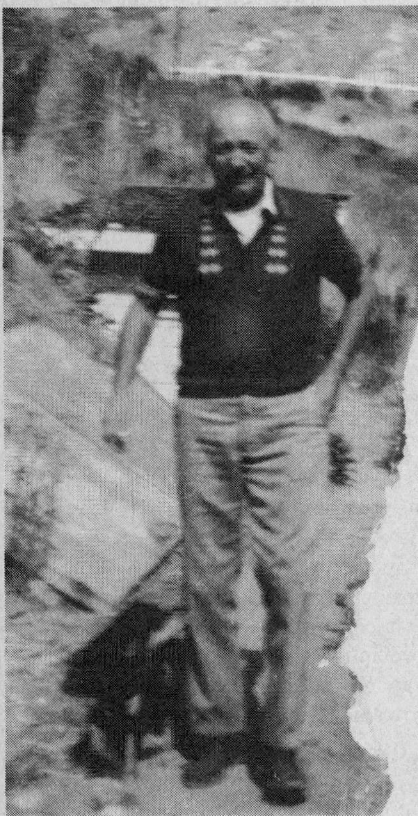
The hoboes were a humorous bunch of characters anyway, and got many a laugh over this escapade.

I HAD ALWAYS wanted to be in on one of Bughouse McCann's stunts as I thought it would be more fun than just hearing about it. Then one fine spring day in Wenatchee my chance came.

I was walking down an alley when all at once I saw Bughouse McCann start poking around in a trash can behind a beauty parlor. He had hardly started when some big woman with orange hair and enough paint on her to cover a barn, came out and jumped all over Bugs. I

couldn't hear all she said, but she was shaking her finger at him and giving him a lecture of some kind. When she was through he came walking up the alley toward where I had stepped behind a telephone pole and on seeing me he grinned and said, "All that fuss just cause a man is looking for something to read." He told me she had really been up in arms and had read his pedigree to him and even threatened to "holler bull" which in hobo slang means to call the cops.

Funny thing how a man's mind will work. When Bugs was telling me about the woman with the orange hair I



Bugs

thought of the lines from Lord Tennyson's poem about the charge of the light brigade. Somewhere in the poem it says, "someone had blundered" and I was figuring that the orange-haired lady had.

An hour or so later Bughouse and I was studying the front and back of the beauty parlor and though he didn't have much to say, I knew the ornery old devil was planning some mischief. Finally, grinning broadly, he asked me to walk down the alley in back of the place and see if the big air conditioner was turned on, which it was. So me and Bugs walked down to a little store and he bought two cans of powdered snuff and dumped them into a small sack. The kind Bugs bought was as fine as flour and just as dry. We went back up the street to a vacant lot across from the beauty parlor and hid behind a big board fence while we planned the attack.

Bugs intended to dump the powdered snuff into the air conditioner which was back near where he had been in the garbage can. Now I was a lot younger than he was and could run like a deer, but at no time did he so much as even hint for me to dump the snuff; he wanted to do it himself. So he went around back again while I waited across the street behind the wooden fence. I couldn't see him until I saw him pack a garbage can down to the side of the beauty parlor, climb up on it and dump the sack of snuff into the air conditioner which was on the side of the building in a little walkway. As soon as the dirty work was done, Bugs beat it out of there and down the alley to the next corner where he came up another alley and flopped down beside me all out of breath.

It didn't take long. In just a few minutes ladies in all stages of repair came running outside sneezing, coughing, and wiping their eyes. The big orange-haired one was going crazy at seeing all her customers suffer so and she was waving her arms and shouting for every agency in town to show up. The ladies were a sight to see. Some had curlers on one side of their head, some were half made up, some had soapsuds all over their heads, and one was barefooted and doing a right credible tango on the hot sidewalk. I thought I was going to die laughing or choke to death trying to laugh quietly as I was afraid they might hear me, even above their yelling. Then all at once here comes a police car with the fire department's emergency vehicle right behind it. Now I was scared; I hadn't counted on so much attention from the local authorities.

A couple of the firemen went into the beauty parlor but came out at once and put on gas masks, then went back in. Meanwhile the big lady with the orange hair was giving it to the cops but good, and acting out her part in the thing. I don't think she left anything out as one of the cops was writing furiously in a notebook. To make a long story short, the place finally cleared out, the cops went away as did the fire department, and all the ladies went back inside. After that I was never so anxious to get in on Bughouse McCann's escapades, but always felt proud when he would tell the tale around some jungle fire and mention that I had been in on it with him.

DUTCH ZORNE, who spent many years traveling with Bugs, told me that one time a judge had ordered Bugs into a state nut house for thirty days observation. The zany old rascal didn't care about that. He was a master locksmith, so after he had been in the place a day or so he fashioned a lock pick out of a metal pipe cleaner, opened the front door and went downtown where he bought a few pints of cheap wine. The wine cost him about 30¢ a bottle, but he was able to sell it to the nuts, as he called them, for as much as $2.

Bugs was making good money bootlegging to the inmates in the insane asylum until one day when the administrator called him into his office and said, "Mr. McCann, I can no longer tolerate your presence in this institution. I know you are somehow obtaining spirits and selling them to these people. Now you must be aware that the people in here are mentally deficient, and you are driving them completely nuts." So saying he kicked Bughouse McCann out into the cruel world.

Bugs told me later, "You never seen such carrying on in your life as them crazy people did when they got drunk." We always teased him about being kicked out of the nut house for being too crazy.

The metal lock pick he used to get into and out of the insane asylum lays near my pipe as I write this. Bugs is gone now but he will never be forgotten by those of us who knew him and heard about or saw his escapades all over the West.

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By NINA FARLEY WISHEK
submitted by
MAX A. WISHEK
Text and photos from
Along the Trails of Yesterday
Nina Farley Wishek © 1941

Sunday Churchgoing, GERMAN STYLE

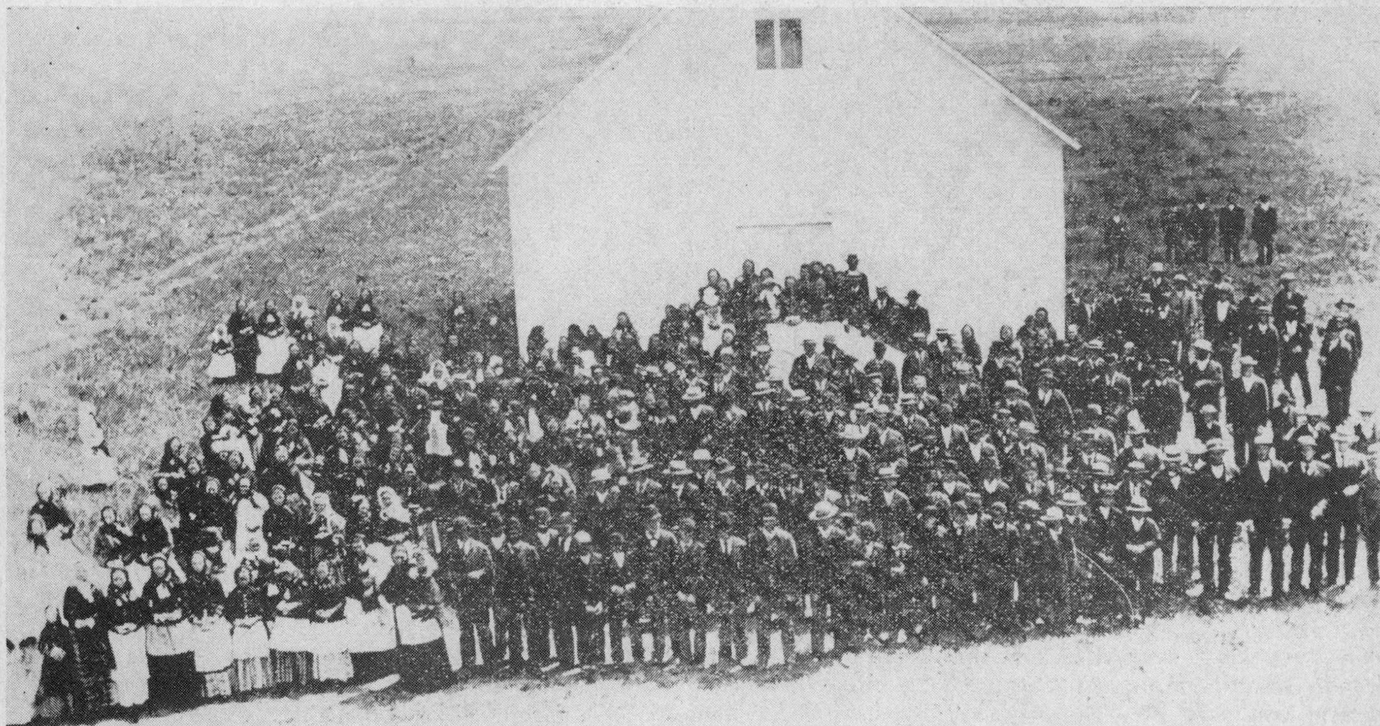
— as observed by a North Dakota schoolteacher

Explanatory Note

My interest in the churches of McIntosh County [North Dakota] dates back to 1889 and 1890, when I began teaching in the country schools. Sundays were strictly observed, and everyone, including the children and babies, went to church. Nearly all churches were built with an entry or room in the rear, where mothers could go and sit if their babies became too noisy.

My first school was at the home of Daniel Rienke and later in the Christian Becker home, east of Ashley. I always went to church with the family, although at that time I understood not a word of the German language which they spoke. I would sit, wondering and observant of all the different manners and habits of a people new to me. I would note every feature of the fixtures and pulpit, draped sometimes in white cloth embroidered and edged with lace, crocheted or knitted. As I had never seen such ornamentation in a church, it seemed somewhat out of place to me.

Also new to me was the general custom of sitting — the men on one side of the church and the women on the other. Even the singing was very different. Heard near at hand, the effect was somewhat piercing, for the women had strong voices and sang through their noses. From a distance, however, the music, without an organ in those days, was pleasing and harmonious. The men carried the bass and sometimes tenor, and the women soprano and alto, always



The first Catholic church in McIntosh County. Picture loaned by Fr. Bernard Strassmeier who organized it in the 1880s. A prairie trail goes off to the left.

Above: First church in Ashley, also used for school. Shown in picture is a group of schoolchildren with teacher Inez Lawhead, later Mrs. R.L. Linn. Below: Mr. and Mrs. C.C. Becker.

in a very slow drawn out meter but invariably melodious. I shall describe here my first Sunday in a German church. [This was written Sunday afternoon, March 17, 1890.]

I HAVE BEEN teaching in this community for three weeks. It is a real "Russian Settlement," so-called, located in the eastern part of McIntosh County, State of North Dakota. (In the early times, because the foreign-born settlers came from Russia, they were called Russians, but later we learned that they were not Russian but of pure German extraction.)

The house is the typical building of our McIntosh foreigners, sod, plastered inside and out with a native clay, and consisting of two rooms. There is also a little storm-house or entry way where fuel is kept and where they feed the "furnace." (This was not a furnace, but one of the stone and brick ovens which they built.) I have no recollection of ever seeing one of their houses built in any other manner, almost invariably facing the south, with the same number of windows set in just the same places. The house is long and low, probably three times longer than it is wide, with the entry about the center. There is usually but one outside door in a house, and inside and out, one house is a facsimile of the other.

Of their habits, customs, and different manner of living, I might write much, but that has no connection with the experience of today. The family of Christian Becker occupies one room of the house, while this room serves for a schoolroom by day and bedroom by night. This morning at 9:30 I started for the church one and one-half miles distant in the estimable company of Mr. and Mrs. Becker. We were obliged to walk, as their only wagon was filled with fuel. (This fuel was a homemade product, or sometimes gathered by the children from the prairies.)

Many times I had noticed with interest the style of walking which prevailed among the women, doubtless, too, among the men. It is difficult to describe this characteristic gait. With head and body inclined forward, they seemed to shuffle ahead in haste, in a highly awkward fashion. They appeared to have no thought whatsoever of themselves, being quite unconscious of their appearance and only thinking to cover that one and one-half miles in the shortest time possible.

We had gone about one-half mile when I found myself hurrying along with my arms swinging in such an undignified fashion that I should have laughed aloud except for the fact that every moment counted. I would have lost sight of my worthy companions altogether had I relaxed for an instant my strenuous efforts to "keep up." "Mine not to reason why" or how I looked doing it, my task was simply to cover the ground.

When we reached the church, I had neither breath nor strength left to do

anything but smile — at myself. I think some of my criticism had been removed; I was conscious only of the fact that their walking gait was a most effective means of locomotion.

THE CHURCH, a very good frame structure about sixteen by twenty-four, was painted white except for the roof, which was a light delicate green. There was a good-sized vestibule from which double doors led into the church. On entering, I noticed that each stood for a moment before being seated. Before the services began, I took a quiet survey of the interior. There were four windows on each side. The walls were tinted a faint blue, and the ceiling, a flat top with sloping sides, was a deep blue. The home-made seats and baseboards were a light decided yellow, while the double doors and the little contribution box near the entrance were the pretty pale green of the roof.

One of the first objects that took my attention (please remember that my mind was wandering because I understood no German) and which I least understood was located to the right of the place where the pulpit would stand in one of our own churches. The base was shaped like a tall square box, about four feet high and bright blue in color. An object of about the same size and a little higher, shaped like a hexagon, was placed upon the blue base. Its color was a mottled yellow and brown run together and nearly resembling marble. I could not determine the material of which it was made, but doubtless of wood. This object was crowned by a row of black fringe tacked around the upper edge. From the front and at the top of the hexagon, a little shelf projected about a foot. From it hung a small black banner, bordered all around by a vivid green fringe about one and one-half inches wide. On this black banner was a bright orange colored cross about six inches high. On the little square shelf lay a book which I presumed to be a Bible. Then, a few feet away, there stood a large table enveloped in black with some of the same black fringe around the top. On the front of the drapery was a deep peacock blue cross nearly two feet high.

These two rather strange ornamental structures were elevated on a double platform painted yellow. Steps of the same color wound up behind the hexagon, which I concluded could be entered from the back and therefore must be the pulpit. However, when the services began, the speaker stood in the opposite corner at a small stand with a white cover. At last I made up my mind that the other structure was purely decorative.

The minister came forward and spoke briefly and then a very long hymn was sung. When the song was finished, they all rose and stood with hands clasped in front while a prayer was read, several of them rather, with singing between the prayers. Next followed a rather lengthy sermon, then more prayer and singing. At the close they arose and all stood silent for a few minutes. Then the men were seated again until the women had left the church, when they followed after them.

It is rather an interesting thing, I think, that this short description of a church and the services held there a half century ago should have been preserved up to this time and only discovered again accidentally. I have since learned that the pulpit with the steps leading up at the rear was always reserved for the use of the minister alone. The man who spoke that day was doubtless a layman filling in during the absence of the minister. I know that it is still customary for a layman to perform this duty on those certain Sundays when the minister is away. The minister is able to preach in the Ashley church only about once a month as he has to serve several points. Thus is verified my statement that the German people are innately religious and strict in the observance of the Sabbath day.

Also I now wonder that I was able to record so carefully and completely the details of the decoration, even though I wrote it the afternoon of the same day. Later on, I taught a winter and spring term at a church in Antelope Valley. Here school was held in the little rear room reserved for women and crying babies on Sundays. This church was one of the finest and most pretentious that I have seen in the country districts. It was in Loewenthal district and was quite large, with real pews. There were painted mottoes on the wall on each side of the pulpit, and over the pulpit there was the one word "Willkommen." This was no crude home decorating but the work of some artist from the outside. The lumber must have been brought in from Ellendale, as it was the nearest railroad point at that time. Considering the fact that the community had probably been settled only five or six years, it was a church of which those people might well be proud.

Truly, the churches of McIntosh County have been a powerful, stabilizing factor for good, established and carried on by a staunch and loyal people.

Along the Trails of Yesterday **by Nina Farley Wishek may be ordered from Max A. Wishek, Ashley, North Dakota 58413 for $12 postpaid.**

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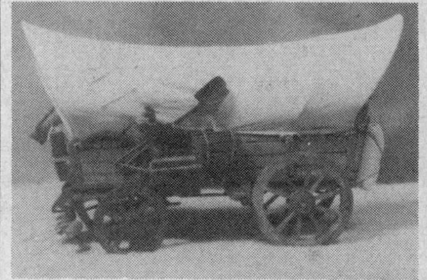

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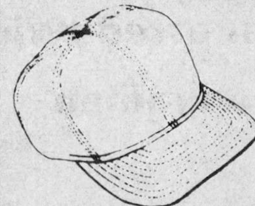

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A YUMA TRAGEDY

Yuma, Arizona around 1900.

Courtesy Yuma County Historical Society

Alexander erred twice with one shotgun blast — he killed a woman . . . and she was a King!

By B. JOHNNY RUBE
Photos provided by author

IN THE "Code of the West" was an unwritten law that no man should kill a woman, regardless of circumstances or provocation. A woman, even one with a loaded rifle and an apparent willingness to use it, was to be treated with proper respect.

Marian T. Alexander, a young Somerton, Arizona constable, disregarded this law on the morning of February 7, 1901 on a ranch approximately ten miles south of Yuma, in southern Arizona. Ownership and occupancy of that quarter of land had been the subject of contention for some time. Often referred to as the Powell Ranch, it had been owned by John Powell of Tucson for seven years. Joseph Burns and his wife Mary (King) Burns, a sister of Powell's wife, were occupying the ranch.

Frank B. Miller, who claimed ownership of the property by right of purchase from Powell, was also living on the ranch and attempting to evict the Burns family. Burns' horses were being pastured in Miller's alfalfa fields. Miller finally asked the law to remove the Burns family and their horses from the property.

According to accounts in local newspapers, Constable Alexander had gone to the Burns home on an earlier occasion to serve eviction notice but had been threatened at rifle point by Mary Burns and ordered to leave. On the morning of February 7, Constable Alexander returned to the ranch armed with a shotgun and accompanied by Miller and William B. Fain, who apparently had no official reason for joining the group.

Upon their arrival they were met at some distance from the house by Mary Burns with her rifle. Constable Alexander told his two companions to remain behind while he advanced to talk to her. Alexander later claimed that Mary Burns threatened to kill him if he attempted to remove the horses from Miller's alfalfa field. Surely Alexander believed that Mary Burns was ready to pull the trigger, for as his stunned companions watched, he raised his shotgun and fired both barrels into her body.

The three men returned immediately to Yuma and gave themselves up. One of the territorial newspapers stated that Alexander might well end up wishing he had drowned himself in the muddy water of the Colorado instead. Deputy Sheriff Henry H. McPhaul filed criminal complaints against Miller, Fain and Alexander, charging them with having maliciously, willfully and with malice aforethought, killed Mary Burns.

A warrant was issued and Yuma County Sheriff Gus Livingston, with Deputy Albert P. Behan, brought the prisoners before Justice of the Peace

George H. Miles. They were ordered to appear for arraignment on February 13, 1901. For their own protection the men were confined in the Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma rather than the Yuma County Jail. For Alexander, the handsome, twenty-four-year-old former Texan with an unblemished past, it was the first day of a nightmare from which there would be no awakening.

IN THAT area of Arizona in 1901, the shooting of any woman by a man would have created a storm of indignation. But the death of this particular woman set off a squall that reached hurricane proportions. Born Mary King, descendant of a pioneer family, Mary had been the granddaughter, daughter, niece and sister of men who believed in administering their concept of justice their own way.

Mary's grandfather, Samuel King, had served as sheriff of Delonega, Georgia for many years prior to his departure for New Mexico in 1849 with his three sons (Andrew Jackson, Samuel Houston and Francis Marion) and two daughters (Mary and Martha). The family moved on to El Monte, California in 1853, where a few years later Sam King was shot to death by a man named Johnson. Samuel Houston King, then only seventeen years old, trailed Johnson to Tehachipi Pass and killed him. Andrew Jackson King eventually became undersheriff of Los Angeles County, while Francis Marion King served as deputy sheriff.

In July of 1865, A.J. King became involved in a quarrel with Robert Carlisle over the outcome of a murder trial. On the following day Francis and Sam Houston followed Carlisle into the local barroom of the Bella Union Hotel and began firing at him. In the ensuing gun battle, Francis King was killed instantly and Sam Houston King was seriously wounded. Carlisle died a few hours later. One innocent bystander was also wounded, and several narrowly escaped injury.

The King brothers justified their actions on the grounds that Carlisle had threatened to shoot all of them during the quarrel with Andrew Jackson. When Sam Houston recovered, he stood trial for Carlisle's death but was acquitted. He later claimed that 100 mounted and heavily armed men were waiting to free him, had he been convicted of murder. He also claimed that, unknown to anyone else present at the shooting, a friend of Carlisle's had entered the hotel barroom and fired the shot that killed Francis King.

Sam Houston never mentioned the presence of the mysterious stranger during his trial; in fact he only confided the story to his son, Frank M. King, several years later. In his book, *Wranglin' the Past,* Frank published his father's version of the Bella Union Hotel gunfight, remarking that the incident "afforded a certain satisfaction, and that was the splendid exhibition of those qualities, in some respects heroic, so common among the old Californians of that time."

Author's Photo

Henry H. McPhaul, the deputy sheriff who signed the warrant on Alexander, Miller and Fain.

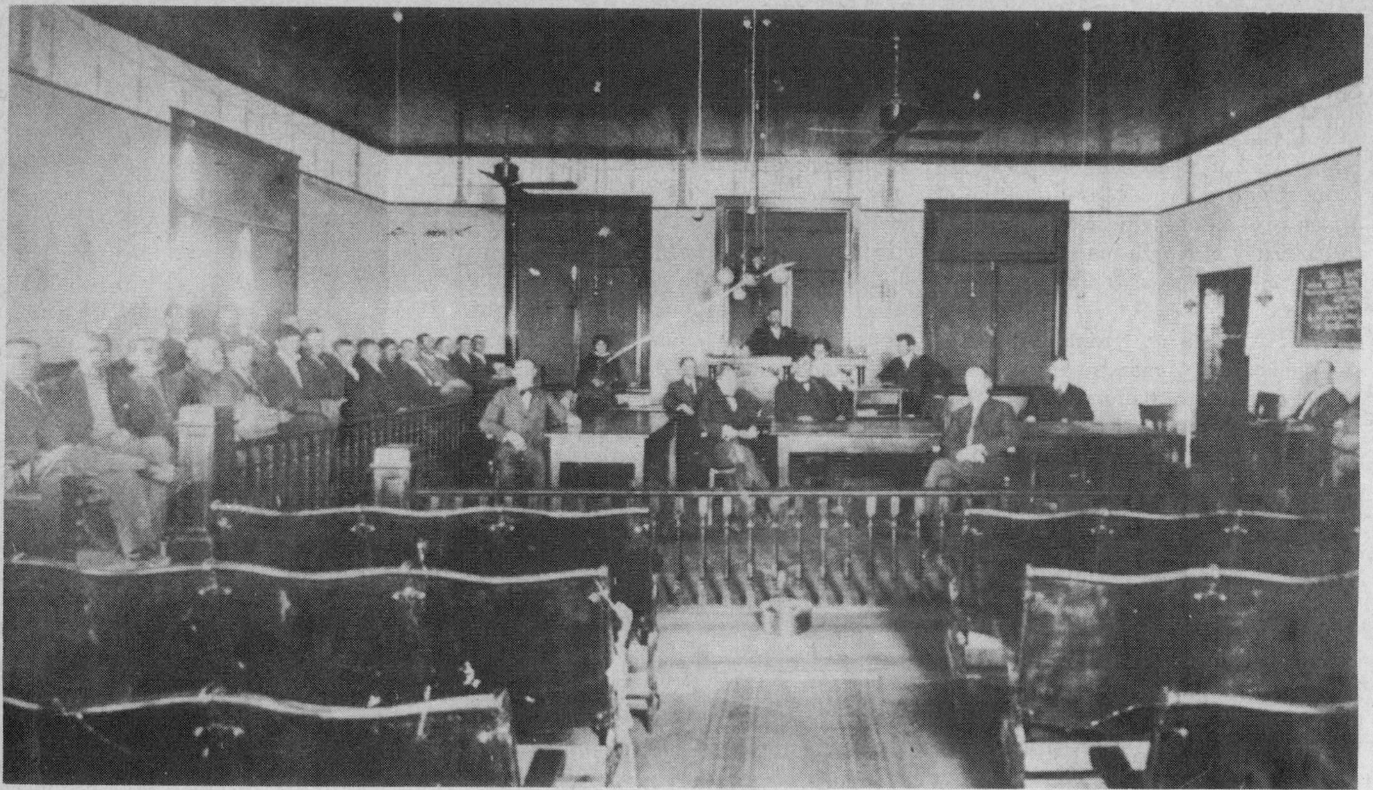
By the time Sam Houston was ready to leave Texas and head further West again, he had five children. Frank M. was the oldest, followed by Samuel, Mary, Edith and Annie. For several years the King family drifted through New Mexico and Arizona, until old Sam Houston finally settled on a ranch south of Yuma. By 1901 his son Frank, having worked variously as a cowboy, prison guard, newspaper writer and undersheriff of Maricopa County, was serving as customs officer in Nogales. Son Sam was working in the mines at Cananca, Sonora. Edith was married to M.C. Benton of Tombstone and Annie was Mrs. John Powell of Tucson. For seven years, Powell had owned the ranch south of Yuma which was the home of Annie's sister, Mary, and her husband Joseph Burns.

The findings of the Coroner's Jury, released on February 8, the day of Mary Burn's funeral, were that she had come to her death at the hands of Alexander "under circumstances not entirely excusable but under mitigating circumstances." In an editorial entitled "Not Entirely Excusable," the editor of the *Phoenix, Arizona Republican* commented that "the photographs of the gentlemen who composed this remarkable jury would, no doubt, be high prized by those persons engaged in the business of collecting curiosities." He could conceive of no circumstances in which the killing of a woman could have even the color of an excuse. "Few men of normal disposition," said the editor, "would even in a position of deadliest peril, kill a woman to save themselves." He could however, await a description of those "circumstances which the jury thought might be mitigating, though not wholly excusable."

By February 10 the incident was being referred to in the territorial press as "The Yuma Tragedy." As reports were printed that various members of the King family had departed for Yuma, it was darkly predicted that Tragedy would probably have an early sequel.

NO TWO accounts of the affair agreed. Miller was described as having purchased the ranch from Powell and as having filed a claim on it. Some accounts said that Alexander had made more than one trip to the ranch and had been driven away by Mary Burns. Joseph Burns seemed never to have been home to deal with the matter, and no mention was made of him in any of the newspaper stories. In some of the articles it was said that Alexander had gone to the ranch to serve a writ of eviction and in others that he had gone to impound the Burns' livestock. There was even disagreement over whether Mary Burns was armed.

On February 11, Mulford Winsor of Yuma, who was serving as Assistant Chief Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in Phoenix, returned to the capital city from his home. He informed the *Arizona Republican* that nothing more was known in Yuma than in Phoenix about the killing, but that because of Alexander's previously good reputation it was assumed that he had become rattled and did not know what he was doing. There is, perhaps, more than a grain of truth in that supposition. If there was no way for an officer of the law to arrest



Courtroom where Alexander's trial was held. Courtesy Yuma County Historical Society

a woman who was clearly in violation of the law, but was armed and determined to shoot if he persisted in his efforts, conceivably enough frustration and embarrassment could be created to interfere with the officer's good judgement and restraint.

There were also rumors that William Fain, whose presence on that fateful day was never adequately explained, had an old score to settle with the Burns family and used Alexander to achieve that end by taunting him about his inability to handle the situation.

Gossips said that the King family held Miller equally responsible for Mary's death, while others claimed that was not the case at all. In any event, residents of Yuma were apprehensive of what old Sam Houston King and his two sons, Frank and Sam, might do.

On February 13, 1901 William Fain escaped from custody of a special officer guarding him. Yuma County Sheriff Gus Livingston and his posse searched the brush and sloughs for twenty miles along the Colorado River without success. The Kings, father and sons, also conducted a search for the escaped prisoner. When Fain surrendered on February 24 to the same officer from whom he had escaped, he claimed that he had given himself up because he feared what the Kings would do to him if they found him.

Fain professed surprise at the charge of accessory to murder which had been lodged against him at his arraignment on the date of his escape, claiming that he had supposed he was only being held as a witness in the case. On February 15 Miller had been arraigned and was ordered to be held without bail on the same charge in the Yuma Territorial Prison to await the next session of the grand jury.

On March 25 the grand jurors impanelled for the spring session of the district court returned indictments for murder against the three defendants. One of the jurors was Samuel King.

The jury for Alexander's trial, which was first of the three to be scheduled, was selected on April 4, 1901, and apparently included no members of the King family. Defense attorneys were A.C. Baker and Walter Bennett of Phoenix, and Judge Henry C. Davis of Yuma, while the prosecution was conducted by Special Counsel Eugene S. Ives assisted by Pearce Evans. The courtroom was crowded to capacity each day of the trial. Many of the spectators were women, several of whom made no secret of their sympathy for the defendant, much to the consternation of the local press.

The hearing of evidence began on April 5 and by the 9th the jury had reached its verdict. In his instructions to the jury, Judge Webster Street pointed out that a constable was a peace officer and as such is duty bound to prevent the commission of crime in his presence. When a peace officer sees a person threatening to commit a crime with a deadly weapon, it is the duty of the officer to arrest that person. The judge further pointed out that if the deceased had a gun in her hand and was by word or action threatening to kill, the defendant had a right and a duty to arrest the deceased and that right was in no way diminished by the fact that the deceased happened to be a woman.

THE JURY brought in its verdict at about 9 a.m. April 9: "Guilty of murder in the first degree," with the penalty being imprisonment in the Arizona Territorial Prison.

By 9:30 Marian Alexander was on his way from Yuma County Court House to the nearby Territorial Prison, escorted by Sheriff Livingston, Deputy Robert Hatch and Avran Molina.

The little group reached a point on Third Street near the railroad tracks and just opposite the north end of the caboose shed when Sheriff Livingston sent Deputy Hatch back to ask Judge Street whether they were to bring Miller back with them from the prison. His trial was scheduled to follow Alexander's. The other three men waited in the street as Hatch retraced his steps to the courthouse. Suddenly a shot rang out in the clear morning air and Alex-

ander fell, mortally wounded. The shot was clearly heard in the courtroom where the jury for Miller's trial was being impanelled. The crowd broke the glass in the courthouse door in its rush to the street. The judge informed the nearly empty courtroom that court was adjourned until April 29.

The King family had made it clear that nothing less than the death penalty would be acceptable and there were those who claimed that their presence in the courtroom throughout Alexander's trial had caused the jurors no small discomfort. It was also claimed that immediately after the shooting of Alexander, the jurors scattered and were nowhere to be found. Judge Street took the next train out of Yuma, not knowing until he reached Phoenix whether Alexander lived.

Bleeding profusely, Alexander was moved to the county hospital where it was discovered that the bullet had entered near the spine and torn through his liver. Internal hemorrhaging could not be stopped. At 10 p.m. Alexander died.

No one witnessed the firing of the fatal shot that morning, but Sheriff Livingston had noted the direction from which it had come. He headed that way, rifle in hand, and spotted Sam King hurrying across the vacant lot away from the scene of the shooting. A few minutes later Deputy Hatch found Sam's father in the same lot. The young King was arrested and at three that afternoon was given a preliminary examination before Justice Miles. Since no evidence could be found against him, District Attorney W.F. Timmons advised that he be set free.

No action was ever taken against Sam's brother Frank, nor against the elder King, although records of Justice Court, Yuma County Precinct I, indicate that a complaint had been issued against them for assault to commit murder. The records remain incomplete. Old-timers in Yuma say that a rifle was later found hidden in a bale of hay near the spot where Sam King was arrested. If so, no official notice was ever taken of it.

The Yuma Sentinel regretfully announced that it could not apologize for murder, and conceded that Alexander's death was, indeed, murder. The editor seemed especially concerned that so much violence would likely have an adverse effect on Yuma's economic future.

On April 10 at 8 a.m. a coroner's jury determined that Marian T. Alexander was dead from "the effect of a bullet wound inflicted by unknown parties."

Attorneys for Miller and Fain immediately requested a change of venue for their clients. On May 25, 1901, Judge Webster Street granted the change of venue to Yavapai County and ordered Sheriff Livingston to deliver the two defendants into the custody of the Yavapai County sheriff.

Sheriff Livingston transferred the prisoners in strict secrecy, with only two other people in Yuma aware of their departure. On June 27 in Prescott, William Miller was acquitted of all charges against him. On July 16 the charges against Fain were dismissed and he also was discharged from custody.

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One view of the Arizona Territorial Prison in Yuma.

Courtesy Yuma Territorial Prison Museum

PIO PICO: California's Last Mexican Governor

By Marian G. Cannon

Ugly, poor, without education, he rose to California's highest office

PIO PICO, a genial man, who admired beautiful women, thoroughbred horses, and gracious living, through perseverance and luck became the last Mexican governor of California. He achieved this distinction in spite of a homely face, short stature, and a deficient education.

In his ninety-three years, he saw California under the rule of three different countries, Spain, Mexico and the United States. As the last Mexican governor, he starred on the political stage up to the time of the American takeover. Indeed, his fortune encompassed a full circle, from an impoverished youth, to the most powerful leader in California, and finally to a destitute old age.

His life epitomized the rancho period in California history and gives an insight into the dual cultural heritage, Mexican and American, of the western states.

Born at San Gabriel Mission on May 5, 1801, Pio was the fourth of ten children of Maria and Jose Gutierez Pico. Pio's father and grandfather came to California in 1776 with the de Anza Trek. Like many pioneer families, the Picos were of mixed ancestry, Spanish, Mexican, Indian and Negro.

Jose Pico, a sergeant in the Spanish army, had been sent from the San Diego Presideo to serve as one of the San Gabriel Mission guards. At that time Mexico, including California, was a colony of Spain. Only twenty years before Pio's birth, Governor Felipe de Neve founded Los Angeles. De Neve assigned the eleven colonizing families from Sonora, Mexico, parcels of land around a central square, or plaza, on a knoll not far from El Rio Porciuncula.

Courtesy The Silver Dons

Pio Pico in later years.

AS A BOY, Pio occasionally stopped in the small outpost pueblo of Los Angeles. His father's position as mission guard caused the family to vacillate between the San Gabriel and San Diego missions.

Pio spent his formative years in San Diego. As a youth, he learned to read Spanish under the guidance of an elderly sergeant's wife. Later he was taught to write by his sister's husband, Jose Antonio Carrillo, a man who was to play an important role in his life.

When Pio was twelve, his father was reassigned to the San Gabriel Mission. At seventeen, Pio's first taste of responsibility came when his father, called away on business, appointed Pio to take his place as head of the mission guard.

Unfortunately, Jose Pico died in 1819, leaving his large family practically destitute. After his death, the Picos returned to San Diego where each member of the family was forced to seek employment.

Pio operated a small general store, often traveling to Los Angeles and Baja California to obtain supplies. The Pico women sewed for more prosperous neighbors to augment the family's meager income.

Physically, Pio was not a handsome man, being short of stature and having large facial features. But he had a keen sense of humor and liked to tell how an old family friend, Tia Maria, when asked to comment upon the appearance of Pio and his brother, Andres, said, "When two caballeros are as ugly as you two, it is impossible to decide which is most ugly."

While living in San Diego, Pio gradually developed an interest in politics, and at twenty-five, became a voting member of the territorial assembly. Later, as the secretary to the attorney general, he gained legal experience and the opportunity to meet influential men by attending military trials in Los Angeles and San Diego.

SENSING that there was more opportunity for a political career in Los Angeles, Pio moved his entire family there. Life in the pueblo was carefree and revolved around the Plaza.

The idle days were punctuated by horse races, cock-fights and bull fights held in the roped-off plaza on Sundays. The evenings were enlivened by an occasional fandango for the young and games of monte played by the men at the local saloon.

The men took great pride in their

handsome horses, riding them even to cross the square.

When Mexico became an independent country in 1822, the event scarcely caused a ripple in the lives of the Angelenos.

The Pico family fit easily into the social scene and gradually began to play a major role in the affairs of the town. As Pio's political career advanced, Andres rose in the ranks of the Mexican army.

Andres was a brave, reckless, jovial man, well-liked by everyone. All Pio's sisters married prominent men. Estefana was the wife of flamboyant Jose Antonio Carrillo, one of the most influential rancheros in California. After her death, he married her sister, Jacinta.

AN EVENT in 1831, catapulted Pio to success. Enraged with dictatorial Governor Manuel Victoria, and his accomplice, the Alcalde of Los Angeles, who had banished Pio to San Diego, Pio and his allies organized troops to oppose these two autocrats. Pio succeeded in overthrowing Victoria, becoming temporary governor himself. He was soon replaced by General Figueroa from Mexico City.

At age thirty-three, Pio married Maria Ygnacia Alvarado in the most elaborate wedding ever held in Los Angeles. Fire-crackers exploded and church bells chimed. The bride was dressed in a black lace dress, as was the custom, and the groom in black bolero suit trimmed in gold braid.

The best man was the Governor of California, General Jose Figueroa. Mariachis playing guitars led the newly weds and guests across the square to the reception held at the home of Pio's brother-in-law, Jose Carrillo.

All of Los Angeles and guests from as far away as San Diego and Monterey attended the festive celebration, which lasted for an incredible eight days.

After his marriage, Pio was appointed administrator of Mission San Luis Rey near San Diego. Like most officials at that time, he took advantage of his position and acquired his first large rancho, Santa Margarita y Las Flores.

In a contest to control California in 1845, Pio once again became politically active. With his brother Andres he gathered troops to fight the hated Governor Micheltorena. At the Battle of Cahuenga, a comic opera combat, the Pico brothers emerged victorious. The total death count was one horse and one mule.

AFTER this triumph, Pio Pico was officially acknowledged governor of California. For many years, he had wanted to make Los Angeles the capital. Now he had the power to do so. For his official headquarters, he chose a one-story adobe building on Main Street, which later became the Bella Union Hotel. Pio and Maria lived nearby on the plaza.

Through Pico's initiative the government offices, the assembly and the official documents were moved from Monterey to Los Angeles. But, the main source of defense, the army, under the control of General Jose Castro, remained in Monterey, an arrangement which Pio later regretted.

As governor, Pio now found that his troubles were just beginning. In his autobiography he wrote, "I can say that from the moment I took charge of the government I led a very hazardous life . . ."

The source of his problems stemmed from the fact that in 1845, Mexico and the United States were maintaining a precarious peace. Open hostilities between the two countries broke out in Texas in May 1846. Thus, Mexico sent whatever armies and supplies it could to Texas, leaving California virtually undefended.

Courtesy The Silver Dons

Main house of Santa Margarita Rancho in 1913

Anticipating that the war would spread to California, Pio undertook to raise funds for the defense of the country. Upon his suggestion the Assembly gave its approval for the sale of both the San Gabriel and San Fernando Missions.

But, realizing his need of immediate help, Pico sent his representative to Mexico City to inform the government that California was totally unprepared. He went so far as to ask the authorities in Mexico to replace him as governor with someone more experienced at this crucial time.

His agent was instructed that in case the officials refused aid, that he should approach the British representatives in Mexico for help. His representative received no promise of aid from Mexico, and little encouragement from the British.

In desperation, Pio approached the British Vice Consul in Los Angeles, offering the British two million acres of land in the San Joaquin Valley. This eleventh hour request was too late, for the Americans had already arrived in Northern California.

Finally, Pico's hopes for support were dashed when an old and trusted associate betrayed him. After Pio became governor, General Castro, who was in charge of the Mexican army in Monterey, left a small force in Los Angeles under the command of Jose Carrillo.

Pico was dumbfounded when he learned that Carrillo, an old friend, mentor, and brother-in-law, had written to General Castro in Monterey with the purpose of ousting Pico as governor.

Carrillo then initiated a revolt against Pio in Los Angeles. Enraged, Pio ordered his brother, Andres, to organize a police force to quell the rebellion.

"I had my brother, Andrews, conduct the individuals to jail and put fetters on each one. Carrillo was taken to the barracks where he was manacled . . . I, as brother-in-law and friend, went to the jail to see him and . . . (said) I would help . . . He refused any kind of service and answered me by saying that it would not be long before I would be occupying his place," Pio later wrote.

Carrillo was then banished to Mexico, although later he returned to California and fought against the Americans. Still outraged, Pio went to San Luis Obispo to confront General Castro with Carrillo's defection. Just as Pio arrived, the Americans took Monterey.

Soon after, Commodore Robert F. Stockton and his forces set sail for San Pedro, and Major John C. Fremont and his troops sailed to San Diego.

Faced by the American invasion, Pico and Castro reconciled and marched their hastily gathered troops south to defend Los Angeles. Soon after they arrived, Fremont was preparing to storm the city.

Next, Pico was told that because of insufficient forces, General Castro planned to break camp and go to Mexico City for aid, advising Pio to leave too.

Surprised at Castro's lack of resistance, Pico convoked the deputies and that same night about nine or ten o'clock we were in session. I presented Castro's note and asked the cham ber . . . to authorize me to take command of the forces and fight Fremont. The deputies were emphatically

Courtest The Silver Dons

Pio Pico, his wife and two daughters.

opposed . . . The assembly resolved that I should leave the country . . . On the 13th day of August I started on my journey to Sonora . . . "

UNDOUBTEDLY, Pio felt he had done all he could to save Southern California from the American invasion. The morning before Pico left for Mexico, he sent for a Yankee friend, Benjamin Wilson, knowing that Wilson had been in touch with Commodore Stockton.

"You go tomorrow, meet Stockton wherever he may be, tell him of my intention to abandon the country, and that I hope he will not ill treat my people," Pico told Wilson.

The next day, August 13th, Fremont and Stockton advanced on Los Angeles, hoisted the stars and stripes in the plaza, and declared the city part of the United States.

After spending several days in San Juan Capistrano, Pio sailed for Guaymas. Arriving in Mexico, Pio was frustrated and disappointed that his requests for help from Mexico were completely ignored.

LATER, he learned from his brother, Andres, that the Angelenos revolted against young and inexperienced Captain Gillespie, who had been left in charge of the city. The Californios retook Los Angeles, and then fought valiantly to repossess all of Southern California in the battles of San Pasqual, San Gabriel, and La Mesa. But they failed.

Finally, the Americans under the command of Commodore Stockton and General Kearny recaptured Los Angeles on January 10, 1847. Andres related how he rode out to a ranch house near Cahuenga Pass on January 13th, met Colonel Fremont, and signed the articles of capitulation terminating all hostilities between the Americans and Californians.

Consequently, the controversial John C. Fremont became the first American governor of California, replacing Pio Pico. However, Fremont's term of office was brief, for he was recalled to Washington, D.C., and replaced by General Kearny.

PIO LONGED to return home to Southern California from exile in Mexico. After the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between Mexico and the United States was signed in 1848, he felt free to do so.

Pio purchased a nine-thousand-acre ranch Paso de Bartola in the present town of Whittier. There he built a luxurious thirty-three room home, "El Ranchito", where he and his family lived part of the year.

Maria was unable to have children, so they adopted two sons and three daughters. Maria died in 1853, leaving Pio a lonely widower. Although there were rumors that he would remarry, he remained single the rest of his life.

Resuming his interest in politics, Pio served as a Los Angeles councilman for many years. He also maintained several working ranches.

Pio had long dreamed of building a hotel in the heart of Los Angeles. In 1869, selling his interest in his mission property to finance it, he hired Architect Ezra F. Kysor to design a three story edifice on the plaza, known as the Pico House.

Heralded as the "best hotel south of San Francisco", for a decade it hosted every distinguished guest to visit the city. Unfortunately, Pio was oblivious to the fact that even as the Pico House was being built, the center of town was moving away from the plaza.

The demise of the rancho era in the 1860s was caused by the smallpox epidemic of 1862, followed by the disastrous drought of 1864, and finally by court disputes over the rancheros' land holdings.

Without much knowledge of business, the once powerful rancheros were propelled into the whirlpool of American finance.

Litigation over their property went on for years. Pio lost one ranch after another and felt that the courts were plucking him clean, like vultures consuming a carcass.

THE ULTIMATE BLOW came to Pio when, at eighty-two, he lost his home, El Ranchito. Having many debts, he borrowed $62,000 from a businessman, Bernard Cohn. As Pio spoke no English, an interpreter, Pancho Johnson, was employed during the negotiations. The deed on El Ranchito was put up as security for the loan.

After two months, Pico was able to repay Cohn and gave him $65,000 to cover the interest and principal. But, Cohn refused, claiming that he had bought Pio's property outright. Cohn said Pio signed a deed to that effect.

It was later proven that Pancho, the interpreter, had accepted a bribe of $2,000 to give false testimony. Sad and disillusioned, Pio took his case to a higher court. In 1890 the California Supreme Court decided against his claim, and the once famous governor became a destitute old man.

Pio haunted the plaza, sitting in front of his once elegant Pico House in a shabby black suit, bedecked with medals from his former days of glory.

Although often underestimated, Pico's contribution was of great significance to the development of California. Pio Pico personified the Californio era and bequeathed to the West some of his own characteristics, a generous, compassionate, fun-loving nature.

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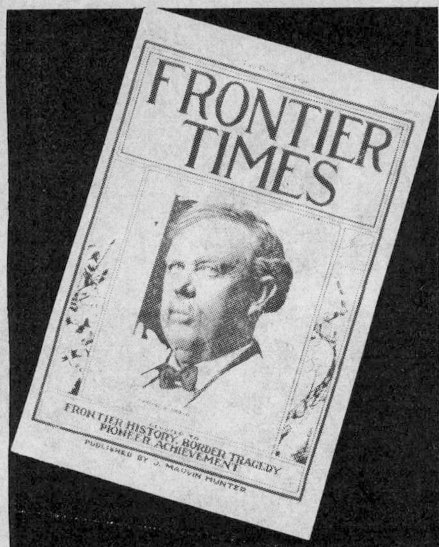

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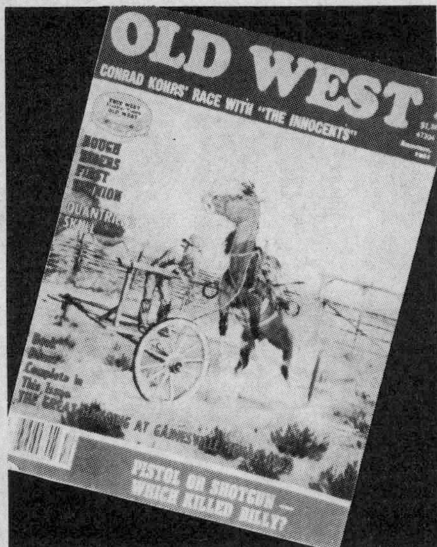

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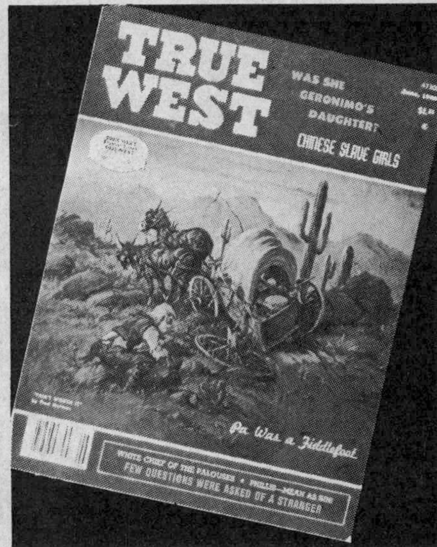

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The Man Who Sold Kansas

Courtesy Mennonite Library and Archives

Family of Cornelius Jansen, Mennonite leader.

His sales to European immigrants earned him the title of "Moses of the Mennonites"

By Edward W. Shannon

IF THEY ever create a real estate salesman's hall of fame, then one of the first nominees has to be a shrewd western land promoter named Carl Bernhard (or Bernard) Schmidt.

Schmidt helped to persuade thousands of people to leave Czarist Russia in the 1870s and then sold them thousands of acres of Kansas land for their new homes and farms. He helped change the lifestyle of the once wild prairie state. In the process he earned the unusual title of "Moses of the Mennonites."

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in 1872 completed construction across Kansas. This qualified the railroad for a federal land grant of about three million acres. The land consisted of alternate sections within a twenty-mile swath stradling the Santa Fe's tracks across Kansas.

But there wasn't much business for the Santa Fe in nearly uninhabited Kansas. About the only revenue came from shipping Texas cattle to eastern cities. The cattle were driven north from Texas to such notorious cow towns as Abilene and Dodge City.

What Kansas needed were a few good men, farmers, who would settle and cultivate the land. This would lead to development of new communities along the rail route and create business for the Santa Fe.

IN 1873, the Santa Fe inaugurated an extensive immigration and colonization program to sell off the three million acres of Kansas land it owned. A.E. Touzalin, formerly with the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, was put in charge.

Working out of a four-story building in Topeka, Touzalin organized the promotion efforts to sell the land. He appointed land agents in major American cities. He printed thousands of pieces of literature which described (with some exaggeration) the opportunities to be found in Kansas.

Land selling efforts weren't confined to the United States. Literature also was published in Swedish, German, Czech and other languages to persuade European immigrants to settle on the cheap Kansas land.

In 1873, Touzalin hired Carl Bernhard Schmidt of Lawrence as land agent and salesman. Schmidt was told to concentrate his efforts on immigrants. Within a few months, Schmidt became head of the foreign immigration department of the Santa Fe Railroad.

There wasn't much in Schmidt's background to indicate a talent for promoting real estate. He did, however, have two strong qualifications. He was a proven salesman — in farm implements — and he was fluent in German language.

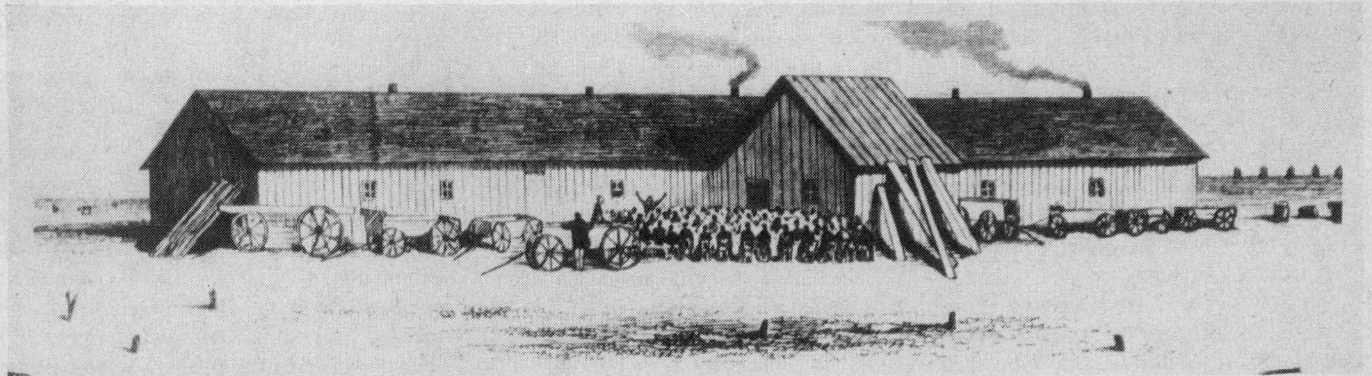
SCHMIDT was born on Sept. 7, 1843, in Saxony (now part of East Germany). His father was an architect for the King of Saxony. In 1863, he worked as a foreign correspondent for a large commercial house in Dresden. Within a year, Carl went to the United States and first settled in St. Louis.

In 1868, Schmidt went to Kansas with his new bride and became a grocer in Lawrence. Then he worked as an implement salesman before becoming a part of the Santa Fe's land-selling efforts.

Touzalin, Schmidt and their associates found that selling Kansas land would take some ingenuity. Despite the cheap prices and easy credit, many Americans weren't interested. Some incorrectly believed the state was part of the "Great American Desert." Others knew the state had good soil but feared the climate and the low annual rainfall. It also was difficult to convince people to buy land when they could get it free by homesteading.

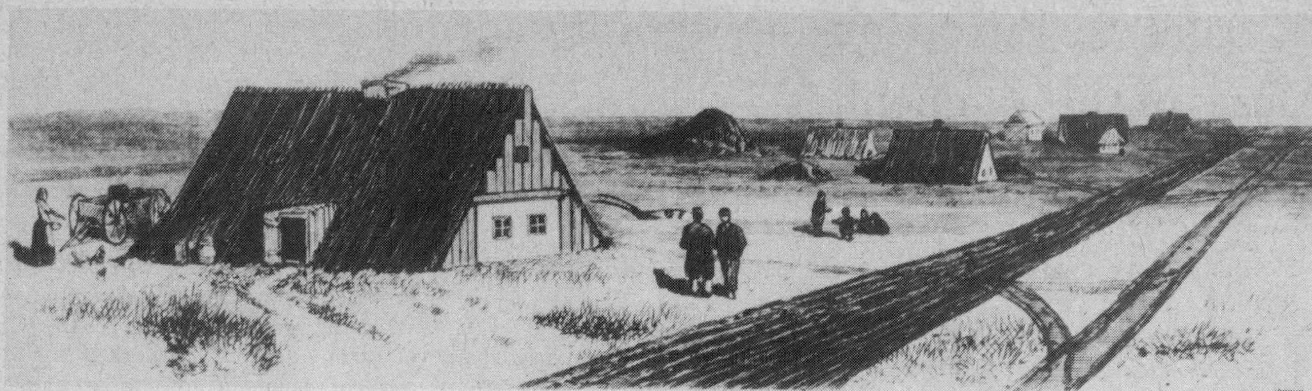
In the late summer of 1873, Schmidt became friendly with a Mennonite leader named Cornelius Jansen. Earlier in the year, Jansen had been the consular representative of the Kingdom of Prussia in Berdyansk, Russia. On May 26, 1873, he was exiled by the Czarist government for allegedly creating discontent among a colony of Mennonites.

Jansen emigrated to Kansas. He went there because he wanted to see if Kansas would be a good place for other Mennonites and because he had to find



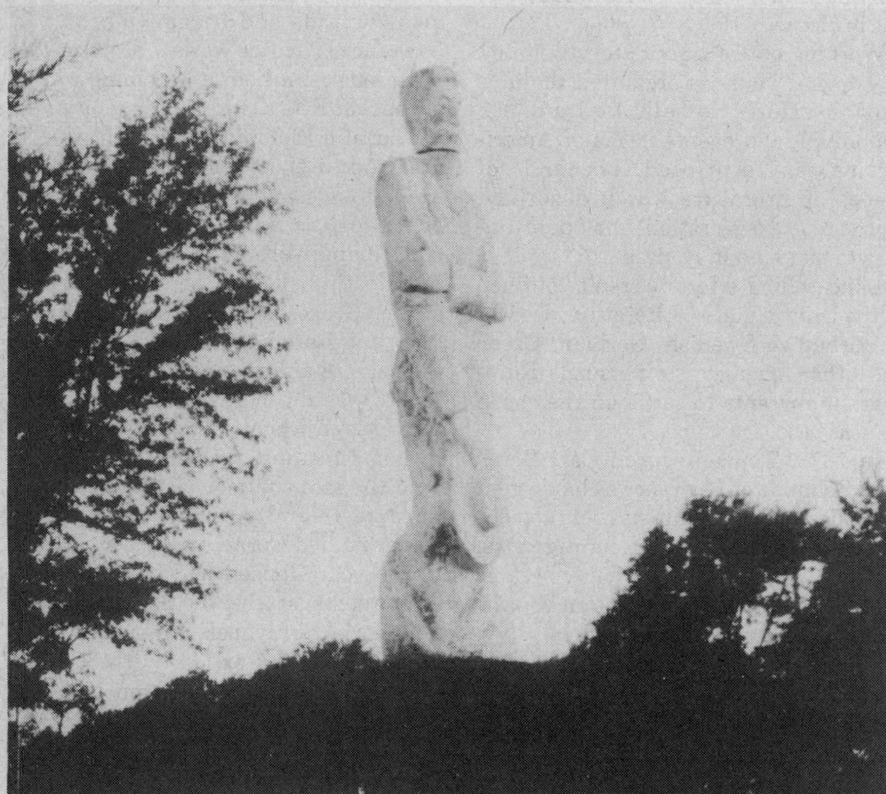
Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society

Mennonites at worship on Kansas prairie.



Homes in Gnadenau, Kansas, in 1875.

Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society



Courtesy Mennonite Library and Archives

"Wheat Memorial," or Mennonite statue in Newton, Kansas

land for about thirty Mennonite families from Crimea who had just arrived in Elkhart, Indiana.

Schmidt arranged the sale of twelve sections of railroad land in McPherson County, Kansas. The German-speaking Russian Mennonites left Elkhart and proceeded to establish two Kansas villages which were vastly different from other frontier settlements.

The new villages were named Gnadenau and Hoffnungstahl. Each occupied a section of land. The other ten sections were devoted to farm use. These Mennonites were setting up settlements similar to those they had left in Russia. The farmers lived together in the villages and then traveled to their land to do the farming.

But Gnadenau and Hoffungstahl didn't last very long. Both ceased to exist after the Mennonites decided to follow the American custom of each farmer living on his own land.

SCHMIDT became more and more involved with the Mennonites. He was dealing with Mennonites from Pennsylvania, Illinois, Russia, Prussia and elsewhere. He realized they were the right people for Kansas and the best answer for the Santa Fe's land-selling problems. They were good farmers and they were familiar with harsh conditions.

When Mennonite leaders would come to Topeka, Schmidt would take them on tours of the prairie land. On one such occasion, while showing some Mennonite ministers some land, they happened on an area infested with grasshoppers. One minister said they reminded him of locusts in the Bible. Another remarked the land must be good to attract so many grasshoppers. Schmidt said nothing.

A vexing question for the Mennonites were laws requiring military service. Schmidt got the Kansas legislature to exempt Mennonites from this requirement and that removed one of the major obstacles to Mennonite settlement.

Another problem was competition from Canada, where the government also encouraged Mennonite immigration. The Santa Fe helped Schmidt do everything possible to get the Mennonites to Kansas and keep them there.

The railroad even chartered ships to pick up the immigrants at the Russian port of Odessa and transport them to the United States. The Santa Fe then arranged transport on other railroads to Kansas. The Mennonites brought their household goods, farm implements and seed.

Their implements proved worthless in Kansas, but their hardy seeds revolutionized American agriculture.

BY 1874, the flow of immigrants was increasing and that was a busy year for Schmidt and his staff in Topeka. In September, several hundred families arrived in Topeka before their new living quarters on the prairies were ready. The Santa Fe had to find temporary quarters for about 600 people. The railroad did this by using the Topeka rail-

road buildings, the King Bridge shops.

The people of Topeka visited the shops to see all the newcomers from the Russian steppes. Kansans were fascinated with these foreigners, their strange customs and language and their ill-fitting clothes.

The garments were homespun from coarse wool and gave the men, in particular, a drab appearance. The men also wore flat cloth caps or the Russian-style fur headgear. The women and children tied old handkerchiefs around their heads, one of the few customs they had adopted from living in Eastern Europe.

As soon as the homes were ready, the 600 Mennonites left Topeka to start life in a new homeland.

The last large immigrant group of 1874 to arrive in the United States was a contingent of 700, 500 of whom were destitute. They came from the Russian portion of conquered Poland.

It was a bitterly cold Christmas Day in 1874 when the Polish Mennonites landed in Philadelphia. It was hoped they would stay in the Mennonite communities of eastern Pennsylvania until spring. But the group decided to go to Kansas.

It cost fifty dollars a day to feed these poor people as they tried to adjust to the wintery conditions in Kansas. For most of the winter they lived in quarters provided by the railroad, which also shipped in food free of charge.

By the spring of 1875, most of these families were settled on forty-acre plots at Canton, Kansas. Twenty-eight of their new homes were constructed at a cost of $40.35 a house!

It took several hard years for the Canton Mennonites to become self-sufficient. What was done for this group is considered by some historians to be the first successful accomplishment of the world-wide relief organization known today as the Mennonite Central Committee.

The Santa Fe Railroad cooperated fully with the Mennonite Board of Guardians and with leaders of various church and immigrant groups. Just how involved Schmidt was with the destitute Polish contingent is not known. It was during this period, early in 1875, that Schmidt was on his way to Russia.

A good salesman doesn't just sit in an office and wait for business to come to him. He goes out and finds it. Schmidt must have felt the same about selling railroad lands. Although 1874 had been a good year, there was still a lot of land to be sold. There also were some disturbing developments.

Many of the Mennonites were going to Manitoba. Other railroads also were luring the Russian-Germans to lands in Nebraska, Minnesota and the Dakotas. Worse news was coming from South Russia.

The Czarist government, in its own slow way, finally realized that some of the best farmers were leaving the Russian Empire. If something wasn't done, the desire to move would spread to other groups, such as the German Lutherans and Catholics.

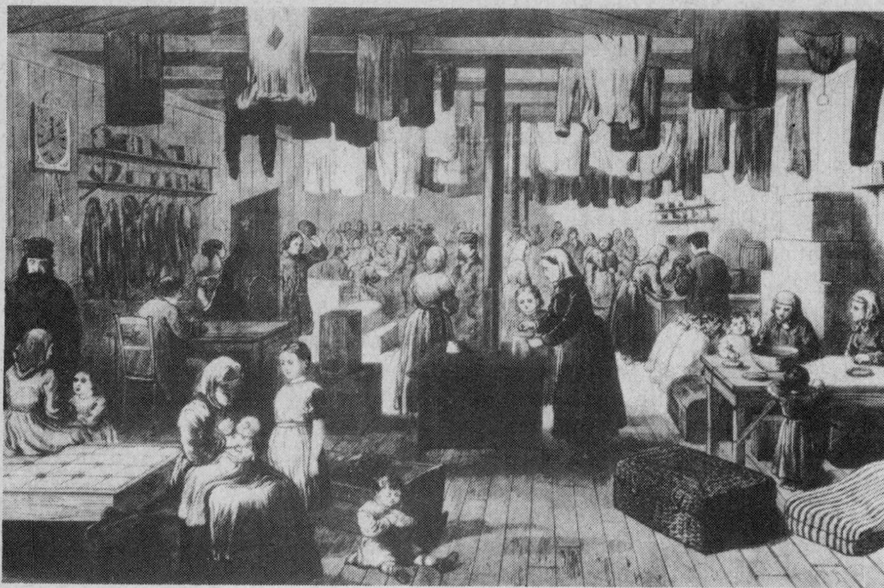
To combat this trend, the Russian government hinted that liberal policies granted by Catherine the Great previously would be extended. New lands also were offered along the Amur River in Siberia. But if all this didn't work, there were hints that other methods would be used to prevent the Germans from leaving Russia.

A Russian imperial army general, who happened to be a German Lutheran and respected war hero, was sent on an urgent mission to South Russia to calm the emigration fever.

TO PREPARE for his journey, Schmidt went to Gnadenau and Hoffnungsthal, Kansas, and obtained about a hundred letters of introduction to Mennonites then living in West Prussia and South Russia. He also asked other Mennonites in Kansas and elsewhere for help in meeting with their friends and relatives in Europe.

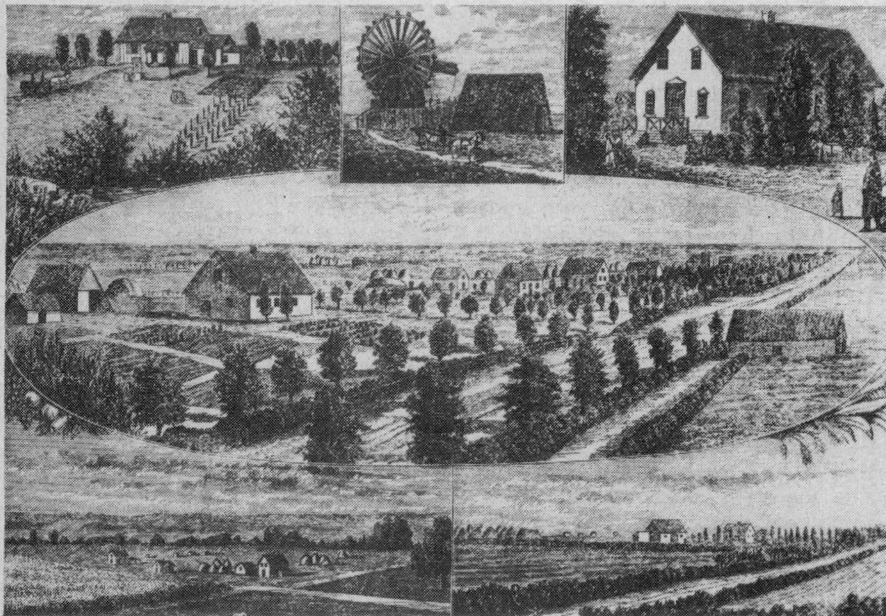
Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

Mennonites at public well in central Kansas.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

Mennonites in temporary quarters provided by Santa Fe Railroad.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society

Various scenes of Mennonite colony in Harvey County, Kansas, 1881.

Schmidt went overseas in early 1875 and met the Mennonites of West Prussia who lived near Danzig and Marienburg. He was able to persuade some to move to Kansas. Then he crossed the frontier into Czarist Russia.

Schmidt's first meeting with the Germans of South Russia was with some friendly Lutherans who lived in Friedrichfeld, about two hours sleigh ride from Alexandrovsk, in the Black Sea region. Schmidt was given information about other Germans in the area.

He traveled all day by sleigh to reach Alexanderwohl, the nearest Mennonite village. He had been told in Kansas to contact Herr Klaassen, a rich and influential merchant who was known to be opposed to the emigration project. Schmidt presented one of his letters to the man and began one of his sales talks in German on the opportunities in Kansas.

Schmidt discovered he was wasting his time. Klaassen coldly told the Santa Fe's super-salesman that the dissatisfied element had already moved to America. Those who remained were completely loyal to the Czar. Furthermore, Klaassen said, any further effort to incite the people to move would certainly bring problems from the Czarist authorities.

Schmidt told Klaassen that he had decided to give up further land selling and would leave Russia. He said he had to deliver a few family letters to some people in the next village and then he would return to Kansas. Schmidt actually intended to keep right on selling.

The next Mennonite Schmidt met was the driver of the sleigh taking Schmidt to the next village. The man told Schmidt that hundreds of families wanted to go to America, and his was one. He said many felt Klaassen was to blame for problems these people had in obtaining passports to emigrate.

Schmidt went to the next village and then kept right on going, through all fifty-six villages which made up the Molotschna (Milk River) colony. For nearly a month, his trip was like a triumphant tour of a foreign dignitary.

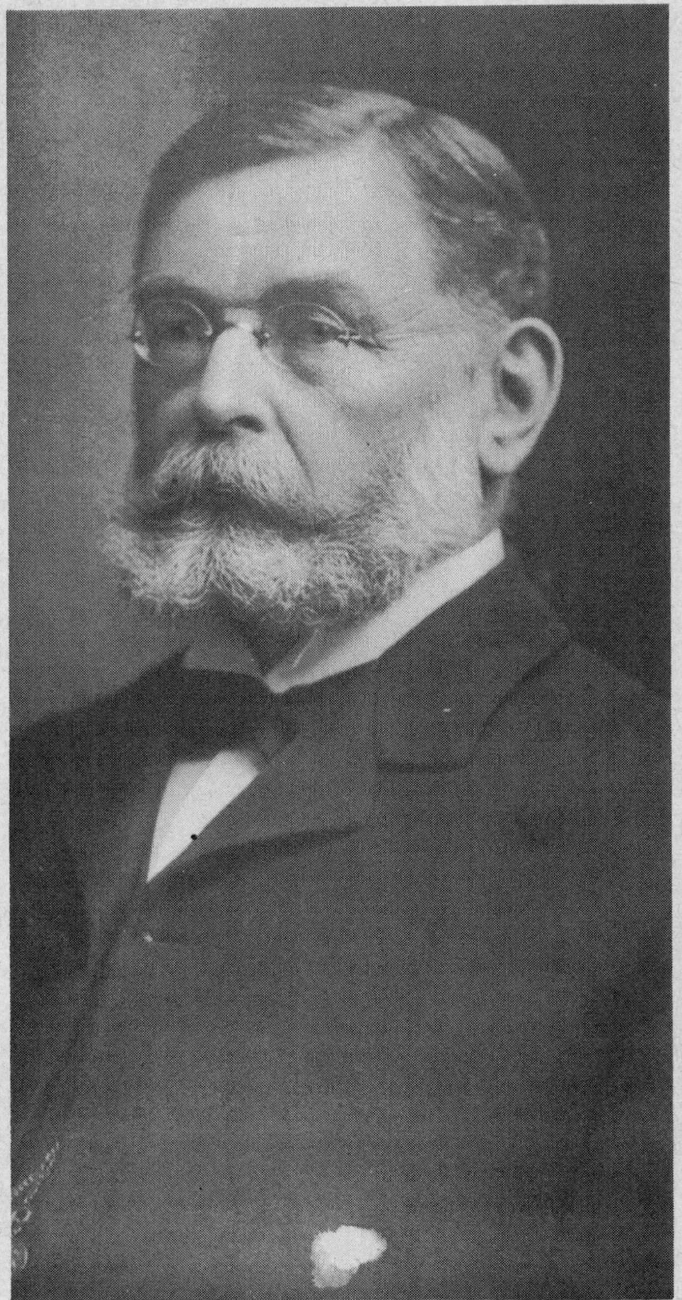
As he traveled through the Molotschna region, Schmidt became convinced the Mennonites were the right people to settle on the plains of Kansas. He was impressed with their sturdy houses and neat appearing villages.

ALONG THE WAY, Schmidt arranged for the sale of 60,000 acres of railroad land near Newton, Kansas, Four months later a Red Star Lines steamer chartered by the Santa Fe went to Berdyansk to pick up four hundred Molotschna Mennonite families and all their belongings. These people were transported to Kansas at the expense of the railroad.

It was during his Russian visit that Schmidt earned his appellation of "Moses of the Mennonites." Just who gave it to him isn't known, but Schmidt was certainly aware of it. In a 1905 speech to the Colorado State Realty Association, he said of his Russian trip, "I resumed my missionary work, preaching the gospel of emigration to Kansas, from village to village, and earning among the Mennonites the title of their Moses."

Schmidt intended to continue his tour of Russia, but there were rumors that the Czarist authorities were trying to locate and arrest him. He decided it was time to get out of the country.

Schmidt left Russia at the Austria-Hungary border and spent several months in Austria, Germany and Switzerland before returning to Kansas. In those countries he appointed agents to recruit more settlers for the Santa Fe lands.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society

Carl Bernhard Schmidt

By going to Russia, Schmidt attracted more Mennonites to Kansas. But 1875 was the last big year of the mass migrations from the steppes to the prairies. Schmidt's trip may have prompted the Czarist government to act to prevent the German minority from leaving South Russia. By 1879, the Russians moderated their harsh policies and continued special privileges granted by Catherine the Great and some of the czars who followed. These policies encouraged the Germans to stay.

Although smaller groups of Mennonites continued to move to the United States and Canada for about eight more years, the period of large land sales was over.

SCHMIDT CONTINUED to sell land for the Santa Fe until 1883. To get closer to his potential customers, Schmidt opened an office in London in 1880. When most of the land was sold, Schmidt returned to the United States and left the railroad.

In 1885, he moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where he became manager of the Equitable Trust Co. This lasted until 1893, when Schmidt became head of the German exhibit at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

Schmidt and his family moved to Pueblo, Colorado, in 1895. Here he returned to the real estate business. He also managed the Suburgan Land and Investment Co., was a director of the Bessemer Canal, and was an ardent booster of Colorado.

Eventually he went back to work for another railroad which had land to sell. This time it was the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Schmidt became their commissioner of emigration. How successful he was with this firm is not known. From 1914 to 1916, Schmidt was a colonization agent with the Wyoming Development Co. This made him a Wyoming booster as well. Little is known of the final years of the "Moses of the Mennonites," but several sources indicate he died in the early 1920s.

RESCUED BY A

By Roberta Green
Photos provided by author

MOST YOUNG girls grow up thinking their father is just about the grandest person in the world. Sadie Binkley Merritt, 89, doesn't think that way.

She was born in Pendleton, Oregon, and raised in a wagon. She seldom had enough to eat; her father beat her with chains. But just when the future seemed darkest and there was no hope, a man came into her life who changed everything.

Sadie bitterly recalls that before she was five, she had criss-crossed the West from Colorado to Boise, Idaho, and back to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Her father, W.S. Binkley, swindled his way through life, she said.

"He never worked if he could get someone to do it for him. The longest we ever lived in one place was five years at Jackson Hole. There he was duding and killing elk for their teeth and bones.

"He bragged to the wrong guy about how many elk he had killed and had to leave for awhile until the game warden left town," she recalls.

The Binkleys seldom lived in a house. Mostly they lived in tents in the woods. The children had little schooling.

"When I was eleven, I pitched a tent out by Jackson at a place called Zenith. There I cooked and took care of my two brothers and my sister. My mother would come in a wagon on Fridays and pick us up."

"The only happy time I recall in my childhood was one summer when my parents were taking tourists out of Jackson Hole to Yellowstone Park and left us for two months without getting in touch with us.

"Since I was the oldest it was up to me to look out for all of us. Before they came to get us, we ran out of food. So I had my brother take care of the babies, and I saddled up a horse and taking a packhorse, headed for Meaner's Trading Post forty miles away.

"It was on the Idaho side of the Snake River and I had to cross on a ferry. Meaner must have felt sorry for me — gossip traveled in those days too. He probably had heard of us kids left to fend for ourselves. He let me have credit for some beans, flour and other staples.

"I would have followed him to the ends of the earth"

Sadie Binkley Merritt at age 14.

"Then he said if I could throw a diamond hitch, he'd toss in the ferry rides and five pounds of candy.

"Searching his face to make sure he was not joking, I threw a rope over and under and soon had as good a diamond knot as any packer. That night we kids smacked candy far into the night."

"MY MOTHER never trusted my dad when he was away from her and with good reason. One time he was dodging the law. My mother, in order to be with him, gave all four kids to an orphanage.

"Fortunately, my grandparents heard about it and rescued the four. Just in time, too, because people were coming the next day to adopt my sister."

Another time, Sadie recalled, her parents left and took the kids to the neigh-

GALLANT COWBOY

bors. Sadie was eleven, but she had to wash clothes for the neighbor family, milk cows and do the chores. She said she got thinner by the day.

Another neighbor, a friend of the family, Bill Merritt, wrote to her folks and demanded he take the children. He said "if you don't you won't see Sadie by the time you get home." They agreed.

Sadie's father was given to fits of violent temper, she said. One time her father left her washing dishes saying "you'd better have them done when I get back." Just as she was trying to complete the task, she smelled smoke.

She rushed to a nearby tent and found the younger children playing with matches. They had set a fire. She frantically beat out the blaze and returned to the dishes. But she didn't have them done when her father returned.

"He flew into one of his rages. He scooped up a pair of chain hobbles and started beating me. In my pain, I screamed. A man who was camped above us came running through the brush, grabbed my dad's arm, and shook his fist saying, 'If you ever hit that girl again, I'll drop you where you stand.' "

BILL MERRITT, the neighbor, became a member of the Binkley family. Born in Michigan, he lost his mother at age six, acquired a step-mother at age seventeen and left home working his way west. Merritt worked on roundups, rode fences and bucked his share of broncs.

Although a cowboy, he learned the timbering trade during slack seasons and was working near the Binkleys when he interfered with Sadie's father.

He moved in with the Binkleys and for the next six years, Bill managed to make life a little easier for the family, especially his "little girl."

One evening, when Sadie was sixteen, she rode to the corral. She was tired, her thick, long blonde hair plastered to her head by perspiration, her face dirty and her blue eyes dulled by fear. She had searched all day for stray horses.

As she leaned against the corral bars, Bill materialized from some place. She turned to him and sobbed. "Oh Bill, I've ridden all day and I couldn't find them. Why can't he understand like you do? He always has something handy to hit me with."

Tall, slim Bill Merritt wrapped his arms around the frail girl to comfort her. Like a bolt of lightning, his encircled arms became magic. Forgotten were the horses as Sadie raised her tender young lips for her first kiss. What seemed like hours later and with pretended innocence, they entered the tent.

But Sadie's father returned and

The Binkley family, from left, back row, William S. Binkley, Sadie, and Eva, Sadie's mother; front row, Sadie's brothers and sisters.

Sadie at 89, seated front, with her children, Sadie Warren, William (Stub), and Stella Critchfield (all seated), and standing, Nellie Lanier and Myra Thompson.

snarled, "What took you all day and where are those horses?"

For the first time, Sadie was no longer afraid. She started to explain but Bill cut in, "They're gone and it will take more than one girl to find them. You and I'll go tomorrow."

From that time until the following January, Merritt courted Sadie. Somehow they managed to sneak tender moments as he helped her with her never-ending tasks.

When Bill asked Sadie to marry him, she admitted she had nothing to wear. Bill anticipated this and gave her some money. She recalls she bought a dark woolen skirt and frivolous white blouse.

Bill Merritt, 39, and Sadie Binkley, 16, were married on Jan. 11, 1906. She recalls "that was the happiest day of my life."

"Bill had stood between me and my father's wrath. He had fed us when we were starving. He had taken some of the heavy yoke from my shoulders. I would have gladly followed him to the ends of the earth."

AFTER THE WEDDING, the newlyweds returned to the ranch. During the previous week, they had repaired an old one-room cabin and furnished it with orange-crate cupboards and a beatup old bed.

Late that year, the snow was two feet

Bill Merritt

deep and falling and Sadie and Bill decided she should board in town and not risk the fifteen-mile trip to Jackson. That way, she would be near a doctor when the baby was born.

On Nov. 2, 1906, Sadie Eva was born. The next spring, the Merritts made a down payment to Sadie's father on the ranch. Binkley was itching to move on and Sadie and Bill wanted to settle there.

Sadie's parents loaded a wagon with a few pitiful belongings and Sadie bade a tearful goodbye to her brothers and sisters.

A few hours later, a strange wagon pulled up and the people started unloading furniture. The Merritts learned that Binkley had sold the place to this stranger as he stopped on his way through town.

WITH THEIR dreams shattered, the Merritts moved to Ely, Nevada, where Bill tried a mining venture. It failed but he made money selling wood and operating a stage to a mine.

On Jan. 22, 1908, while they were still in Ely, the Merritt's second little girl, Myrta, was born.

Bill heard the Sawtooth Valley in Idaho, much the same type of country as Jackson Hole, was open for homesteading. So the Merritts piled their household goods on a wagon and set out for Idaho.

Near Stanley, Idaho, they built a three-room cabin. For doors, windows and good boards, Bill tore down some houses at a mine. A kitchen-dining room was completed by fall and the family lived there. It was three years before two other rooms were added.

Those were hard years, Sadie says. She recalls "we thought twice before we bought a nail." Her husband worked on the Yankee Fork for a mining company. That fall the company left the country and never payed the wages it owed. It put the Merritts in a bind because they had already borrowed money.

During their years in Stanley, three more children followed, Nellie, Stella and William (Stub).

By 1912, the Merritts could buy some cows. Eventually, they had sixty head, but that still wasn't enough for a good living, so Bill worked summers for the Forest Service.

"There were times when we never seemed to get ahead," Sadie said. "I would think how nice it would be to move back to Jackson Hole." But we'd made many friends and put our roots down. Stanley was home to our kids."

THROUGH ALL THOSE Stanley years, Sadie and Bill had almost forgotten the Binkleys. Sadie's parents had escaped to Alaska. Her brother cared for them until their deaths. The elder Binkleys are buried in Alaska.

When Bill's father died, the Merritts were notified of the estate. Among the papers was an endorsed cancelled check for $1,000. It had been sent by Bill's father to the Merritts as a wedding gift. But Sadie's father handled all the mail, opened the letter and stole the check. He forged Bill's name, Sadie said.

Worn by years of hard work, Bill Merritt died on Nov. 16, 1938. His body was laid to rest in the Stanley mountains which he had loved.

Sadie and son, Stub, ran the ranch for eight years until he married Vella Williams Lee. That left Sadie free to travel. She made her living wherever she went. She cooked in a cannery in Alaska, worked in a bakery in Phoenix, Arizona. She spent several years nursing housebound invalids in Challis, Idaho, before she could no longer work.

Recalling the man she married so many years ago, a mist comes to Sadie's eyes:

"Until Bill left my side, he never let me down. He helped sit up nights when the kids were sick; rejoiced with us in all our triumphs. That man of mine made rough trails smoother; worked at any available job to make our lives brighter and for me he's never far away."

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"I can take care of my affairs by nine o'clock and spend the rest of the day tendin' to other people's business." That's just one example of

Charley Barger's Humor

By N. CHRISTINE
Photos provided by author

Charley and Anna Barger in their wedding attire at Cleburne, Texas in August 1888. He was 24 and she was 16.

"CHARLEY, where do you want to be buried?" Anna Barger asked.

"Hell, I don't want to be buried!" Charley exploded, not hankering to leave a sure paradise for one shrouded in mystery.

Life, to him, was simply too good to mar with the thought of its ever ending.

Charley Barger was born in the foothills of the Ozarks at the end of the Civil War. He was the seventh son of a seventh son, which, in that neck of the woods, was supposed to endow him with certain powers. He was often asked to locate underground water, which he did by witching with a Y-shaped green willow branch, and it was said he could cure ringworm with the medicinal fluid from his mouth. [Could it have been the nicotine?]

His big family lived in a two-room house with a roomy attic that served for sleeping quarters. Square footage per person was scarce. The older girls took care of the younger children.

"Charley was a rambunctious baby," his sister reported.

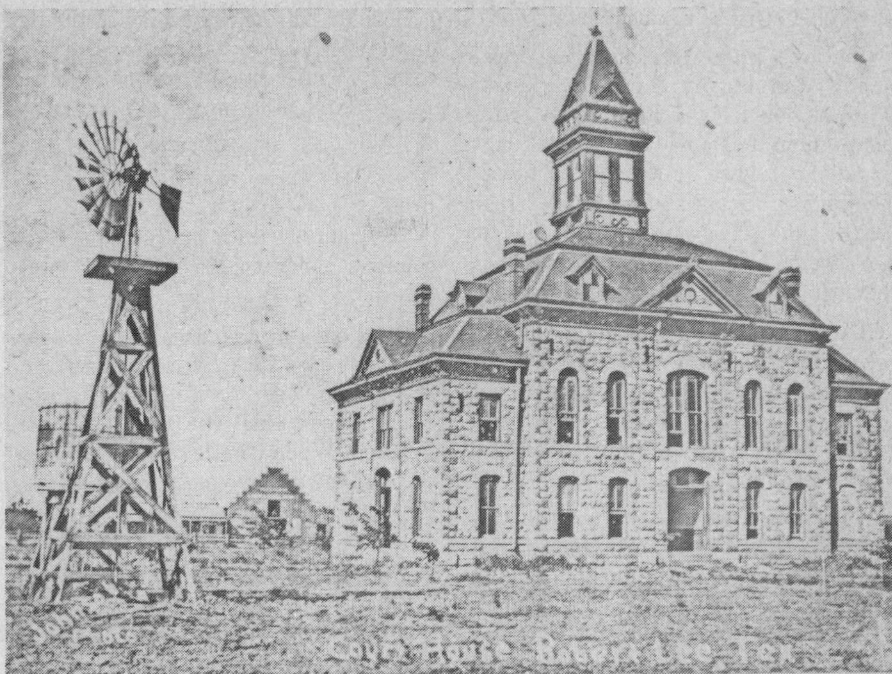
"When we got tired of his antics, we put the bed post on his dress to hold him down while we rested. When he was older we could tell him from the other boys clean across the field, 'cause his shirttail was out, and he was always

running."

This vigor and enthusiasm for life lasted all his life. He had been plagued with chills and fever in Arkansas, and used that as an excuse to leave. But the real reason he migrated Westward was his urge for adventure.

"Texas, here I come!" he whooped in 1886 when he received word of great opportunity from an older brother there. After hurried preparation, he climbed on his horse for the long, exciting ride. It did seem a far piece for a 22-year-old lad who had not been farther from home than the adjoining counties.

"No slouch this man. He was broad shouldered, six foot-two with eyes of bluest blue. He had a shock of brown wavy hair, a well-trimmed moustache, and the complexion of an outdoorsman," Anna described him. "Far more winning than his physical appearance was his magnetic personality. He had a sense of humor that was unique."



First courthouse in Robert Lee, Texas, built in 1889.

"I speak so anybody can understand me, and that is good English," Charley boasted. But sometimes his modifiers got misplaced and one had to think twice to get the clear meaning.

"Anna, here's a pin I saw as I went around the house a shinin'," Charley would say. Or "there's a rabbit, and if I had my gun, settin' in the furrow, I'd shoot him for supper."

Anybody who used unfamiliar words and precise English was, to him, a little *too tony*.

CHARLEY NEVER met a stranger — only a person whose name he didn't yet know. He was never at a loss for words; if he didn't know the correct word, he coined one which worked as well. Sometimes when he knew the right word, he just felt like using a different one. Most people said 'gravy' but not Charley.

"Malda has made enough 'big andy' to run Hamm's creek," he would say.

Charley seldom greeted people with a simple "Hello." He'd say: "Good morning, Virginia Sydneyham Martha Roberts Fummedittle Cawthrone Cheetam Jones, how do the muscles of your copporosity seem to be gasuating this fine morning?"

His words seemed to be understood and enjoyed.

After arriving in Texas, Charley tried his hand at various occupations. One was clearing new land of trees. Years later he bragged: "I've worked many a day from sun to set for fifty cents."

"He was better than Abe Lincoln at cutting wood," Anna said. "He kept his axe sharp and struck with force. He always had the biggest chips in the whole neighborhood. They were used not only in the kitchen range and fireplace, but also for fire around the big iron wash pot."

"I'd rather be a good farmer than to be president," Charley said. "Give me the simple life." He was so eager to see plants poke up their heads, that people accused him of planting a row in one direction, and stopping on the return row to scratch into the dirt of the previous row to see if the seeds had sprouted.

"That's not so," he said. "I go to the row I planted day before yesterday; with damp soil and hot sun any seed ought to sprout in that time."

Another, though short-lived, occupation Charley tried was running a bar or saloon in Alvarado, Texas.

"I'll bet I can sell whiskey all day long and not drink a drop," he told Anna — and he did.

"I got a taste for the stuff, but I ain't got no habit," he bragged.

Still looking for greener pastures, Charley pulled up stakes and took his wife and three children to New Mexico in the early 1900s, where he hoped to homestead.

They arrived in the late summer and were able to gather only scanty provisions to help them through the cold winter.

"Somebody tore down the barbed wire fence between us and the North Pole," Charley said. "We'll have to get out and gather some of that prairie coal (cow chips)."

They made it through the hard winter spurred on by the promise of spring. But with spring came a dry spell. Crops were sparse and poor. There was very little water even to irrigate a garden. They did well even to get their Saturday night bath, all bathing in the same washtub of water.

"Hell, by the time it gets to me there's no use to bathe, the water is dirtier than I am," Charley complained.

By the end of the summer Charley's endurance was badly strained. But Anna pleaded with him to stay on another winter, hoping that the spring would bring rain.

"I wouldn't stay here another winter if the whole top of this land was covered in gold!" Charley exploded. "I ain't no quitter, but I know when I've had enough. We're leaving tomorrow!"

THE FAMILY moved to Coke County in West Texas. Here the settlers were known as "Rabbit Twisters" because they twisted cottontails out of their holes with a wire, then dressed them to be fried.

"Now these cottontails are a real treat, but we leave those jack rabbits for the dogs unless we are hungrier than they are," Charley explained.

Here for the first time he really put down roots. He bought a small farm for $5 an acre, and built two large rooms with a fireplace in one. The lumber for the whole house cost $100. There was

plenty help with the house raising.

Charley located water and dug a well right by the side of the public road that ran between Robert Lee and Sterling City, adjoining county seats. The house was about midway between the towns. The highway was a much traveled road for the times. The well held good water and it served the house and the stock on the farm when the water holes dried up.

It was also a stopping place for travelers. Tramps and gypsies drank there as well as neighbors and friends. A circus with its fancy wagons, monkeys, lions, tigers, and elephants camped there overnight.

"By gannies, we couldn't get the kids stopped; they toted more water that evening than they had the last six months," Charley told the neighbors. Anna explained: "What usually amounted to a tiresome chore suddenly became a golden opportunity."

"Anybody who has ever tried to stay warm in a room heated only by a fireplace is bound to know what close contact means," Charley said, as the family sat in a tight circle. The fireplace was the very core of family life. This must have been where the term 'family circle' originated. The youngest child's place, called the pigpen, was between Father's knees.

Besides sharing the events of the day or listening to big sister read a good story, Charley sometimes sang funny songs for his children.

The aroma of a sweet potato roasting in the hot ashes would make Charley drool.

"By gannies, there ain't nothin' like a roasted tater to tie soul and body together."

Once back in Arkansas when the new crop was just in, Charley's father had the parson over to dinner. The boys couldn't eat until the grownups were finished. When Charley heard the guest being urged to have more, he said, "Yes, Parson, have another tater; there won't be a one left for us boys." The remark was plainly heard by all.

"Wipe off your chin, pull down your vest and begin," was an old Arkansas welcome that Charley always used when there were guests in his house. Then he'd add, "Anybody that eats anymore than I do is a glutton."

One time a Baptist preacher was eating with them. When they were ready for desert, Charley said, "Reverend, have some of the apple pie, if you're amind to eat it up from my wife and kids." The preacher, who had no sense of humor, got up and left the table. Charley got cussing mad trying to get him to sit down again. Charley was very hospitable — in his own way.

The Barger family. Standing, left to right: Nina Christine, Juanita Keith and Mary Velma. Seated: Charles Mount Barger and Mary Anna Hepzibah (Sparks) Barger. The photo was taken in the summer of 1923 at their second farm near Edith, Texas. The author, Velma B. Lovell, is using the pen name of N. Christine to honor her sister who was an unpublished writer.

A PEDDLER, named Arnold came to the community. He traded piecegoods and notions to housewives for frying-size chickens. He always managed to get to Charley's house about mealtime. Since he was very deaf, it was hard to communicate with him, but Charley did his best. He passed each dish shouting, "Mr. Arnold, would you have the ham! Would you like some beans!"

Then he passed the beans to his son, still shouting, "Homer, would you have the beans!" The children laughed until they were sent from the table.

Charley Barger was a people lover. One of his neighbors was his best crony. When George got a new Ford, one of the first in the county, Charley went over to have a ride. After George had cranked and cranked to start the car without success, Charley suggested, "George do it like grinding coffee." When they finally got the 'Tin Lizzie' going, they circled the pasture several times while George located the brakes and practiced stopping. When they neared the gate, Charley shouted, "Whoa, I shore don't want to mend no gate!"

The only movie Charley ever saw was with this friend. They were watching a Western and when the horses started toward them, Charley, dodging the onslaught, yelled, "Look out George, you're gonna get run over!"

Everybody in the theater laughed except Charley and George, and they got up and stomped out of danger.

Christmas was always special to Charley, even when times were hard. Gifts might be homemade — pin cushions, aprons, or a new dress for the old doll — but they always had something special on the table to eat. If there was no tree at home, there was a community tree. The Bargers were awakened early Christmas Eve morning and again Christmas morning by Charley's cheery calls of: "Christmas Eve gift" and "Christmas Gift." The one who called first was supposed to get the gift, and it was easy for Charley to win since he was an early riser.

The gifts Charley received usually turned out to be shirts and suspenders and, for sure, sox. When all the packages had been distributed and stripped of their ornamentation, he'd thank everyone saying, "I shore needed all this." Then he'd laugh and with a wink at Anna say, "I've wore my sox so long, they've gotten to be rights and lefts."

Still, he'd complain, "But I didn't get no gold watch."

One year his son did give him a gold watch and the rest of them refrained from the usual gifts. He was plainly pleased, but grumbled, "You know, I didn't get a dang sock!"

Though he held no office higher than County Commissioner, Charley was a staunch citizen. He was a Democrat because he thought that was the common man's party. Never did he fail to vote, and there was no doubt as to his choice, because he was a big talker, which sometimes put him in jeopardy.

One election year, when he was past middle age, a young red-headed lawyer in the town came into Charley's grocery store and started campaign talk. Charley was on the opposite side campaign-wise, but not on the opposite side of the counter, which would have been wiser.

They both became het up after a crossfire of cutting remarks and hot retorts. Charley fumed, "That highfalutin fool you are gonna vote for says he is for the common man, but he's a liar and so are you!"

For that, the young man knocked him down. Charley grabbed a can of tomatoes to throw at the lawyer, but a friend held on to him while the lawyer made his getaway.

After this blunder of hitting a poor old man, the lawyer couldn't get much business and had to leave town. Charley grumbled, "Young whippersnapper, I'd a learned him how to vote if they'd a let me alone."

"MY UPS AND downs have been a hell of a lot more down than up. Everytime I tried to improve the situation even nature seemed to repeal its laws and give me a kick in the pants. Well, all I knowed to do was to dust off my britches and try again; here I go," Charley told Anna.

He sold his small farm and bought a bigger one at old Edith, Texas. The soil was rich, he knew he was a good farmer, now if nature would cooperate, his dream could materialize. Once more he set his hand to the plow with high hopes.

After four dry years and below average crops, he felt he had to turn the land back to its former owner. He leased the same land the next year and made a bumper crop and could easily have paid for the land, but by now his health was failing and he decided to put the money into a grocery store in the county seat.

The store made a living for a few years, then the Great Depression struck — the worst blow of all.

"Hell, how can a man turn his friends away when they come to him with a sad story?" he asked Anna. His heart overpowered his judgment and he was forced to close the store. The family had to hie themselves to the cotton patch to avoid going on relief.

Charley missed the store — his livelihood was gone — and by now he was not able to make a comeback. Possibly even more than that he missed his friends, even the small fry who had grown up.

"I miss those kids," he'd say. "When I get to heaven, my job is gonna be passing out those peppermint sticks."

"It's more blessed to receive than to give," he had often said, reversing the proverb. He learned how to accept graciously when he needed help. He knew full well he'd paid in advance. This made the accepting easier. He was always able to get 'holt' of his bootstraps short of reaching despair.

Charley grew up believing in the Almighty and a life after death. One day he came home after a visit with an old friend who held a different view of man's fate.

"Anna," he said with disgust, "old man Bellew thinks when you die, you're just like a dead horse — that's the end.

"My mother was a devout Methodist, my father belonged to the Christian Church, and my wife is a Missionary Baptist," Charley told a friend. "But I got an idea the Good Lord ain't gonna divide em up that way. He'll judge each one ahead of time so when they get to those Pearly Gates, Saint Peter's a gonna know who to let in and then he'll mix 'em all up. So what's all the fuss about? And I reckon he'll change 'em all up so's we can be agreeable."

One day Charley came home from one of his frequent visits with his good friend, the sheriff.

"Anna, I need a change of clothes," he said.

"Where are you off to on such short notice?" she asked.

"I've made up my mind and I'm goin' to the river and get baptized. That verse 'believe and be baptized' — well I've been believing a long time and now I'm ready to be put under. That Primitive Baptist preacher is going to baptize me just like I want — in the river — with nobody but Frank Perciful, Syl, and Charley to watch."

Anna said the delay had been caused by confusion about the church.

"I may be an *old* codger, but I'm not through with living yet. I can take care of my affairs by nine o'clock and spend the rest of the day tendin' to other people's business," was one of Charley's favorite sayings.

Late in the afternoon, he played croquet with a group of oldsters or just 'knocked around' calling on some of his cronies. A grandson whom he loved to show off recalls, "It is one of my fondest memories, that knocking around with Granddad. I can see the old cane he carried; it was homemade, from the root of a mesquite tree."

Charley's last words were: "What time is it?" as if he had to meet a deadline. He rests in a country graveyard in Coke County, Texas.

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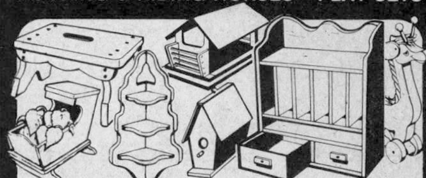

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WANTED: WOODHAWKS

— must chop faster than flying arrows —

By **DON MILLER**
Photos provided by author

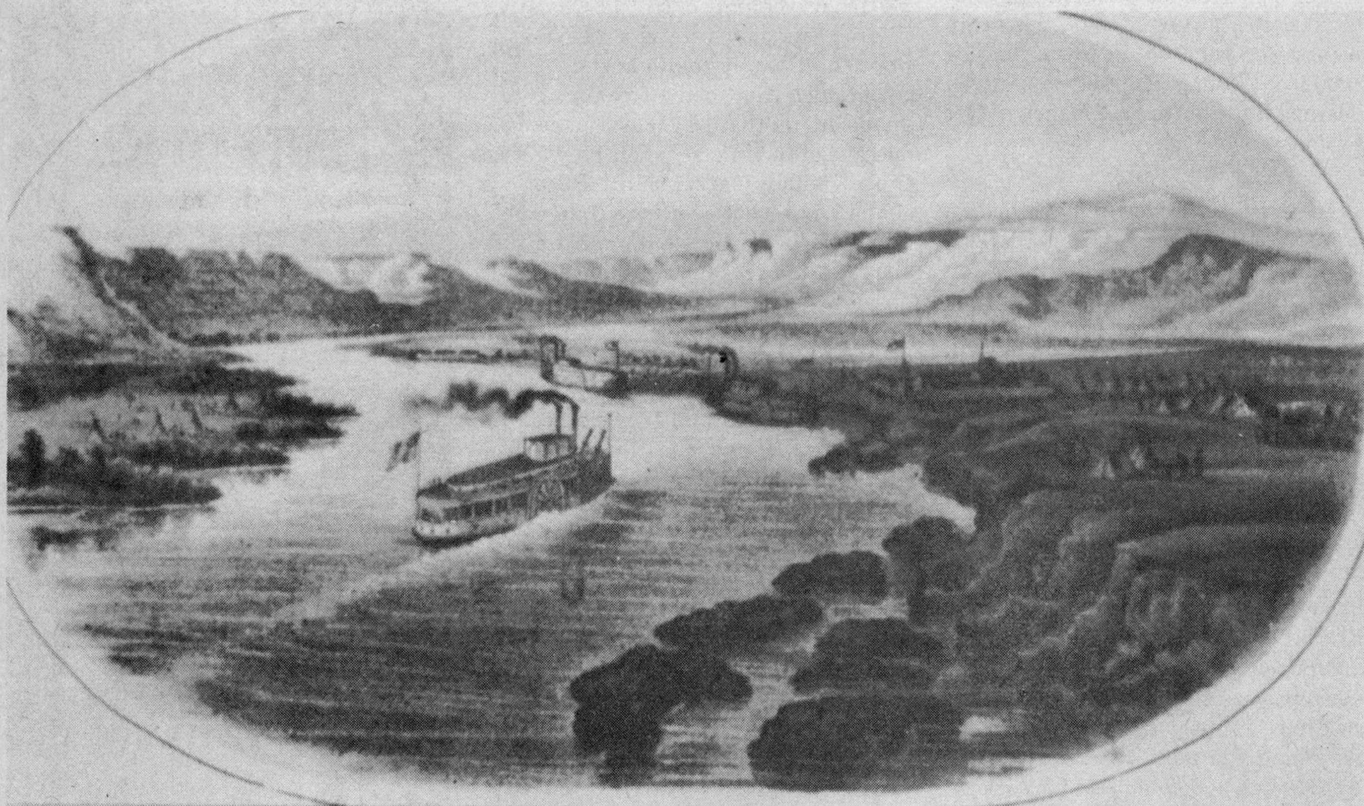
FEW MEN took on the lonely, dangerous job of woodhawking. Most who did died on the job, victims of violence at the hands of Indians, white desperadoes or harsh Western living.

The dangers to life and limb were great along the desolate, unspoiled, Indian-infested upper reaches of the Missouri River. The graves of most woodhawkers are perhaps known only to God.

In the 1860s, '70s and '80s, shallow draft mountain steamboats plied the upper Missouri to and from Fort Benton, Montana, the frontier outpost that was dubbed the world's innermost port of call. From there people and farm, ranch, military, mining and railroad supplies and machinery fanned out to "civilization" — as it was known at the time.

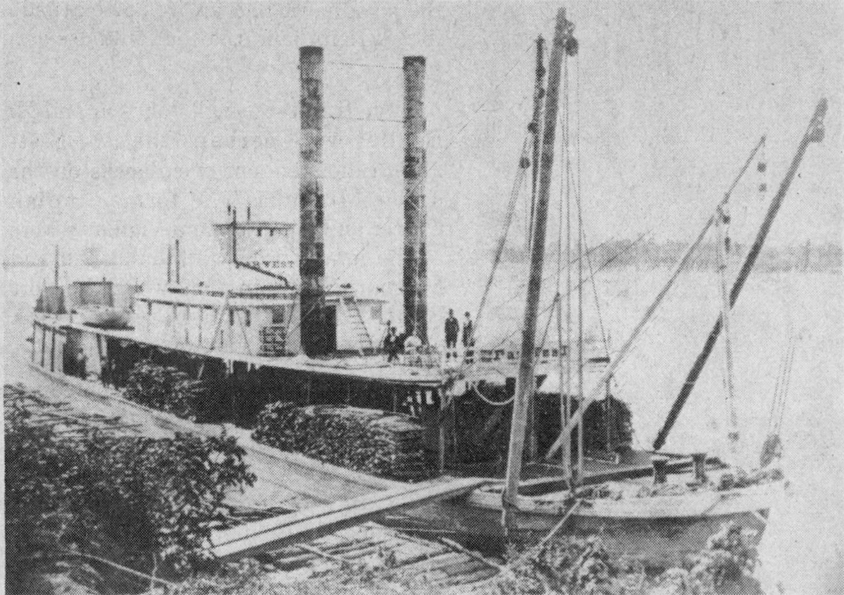
The most serious problem the upper Missouri steamboats confronted was the lack of long-lasting, hot-burning wood to fire hungry steam boilers.

Woodpiles were set up at roughly 50



Courtesy National Archives

An 1860 drawing of Fort Benton, head of steam navigation on the Missouri River, from a United States government document published in 1863.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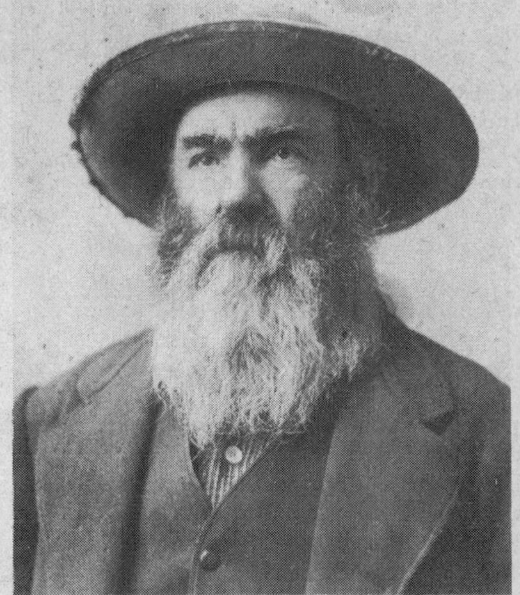

Courtesy Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, University of Montana

Left: The steamboat *Far West,* its deck laden with wood for the boiler. Right: One-time woodhawk "Liver Eating" Johnson.

to 75 mile intervals along the Missouri where the fuel dumps — mostly cottonwood piles — were located. The wood was usually cut in the winter and stored for use during the freighting season the following spring and summer.

Steamboat boilers had voracious appetites. The log book of the upriver-bound steamer *Benton,* owned by the T.C. Power Company, at Fort Benton on April 20, 1881 gives an idea of how many wooding stops were necessary: "Started at daylight 7 a.m. Took 6 cords wood at Snider's at 10 a.m. Wooded at Bedrock, took 12 cords. At 6 p.m. wooded at Warner's, 6 cords. At South Bend 12 o'clock, wooded and lay up for the night." Some days the sternwheelers spent more time wooding than traveling.

The average cost per steamboat per day for cordwood was $100. Woodhawks averaged about $4 to $5 return per cord.

During the early years of navigation the wood was cut by boat crews as the craft worked up and down the river. When woodhawks accompanied steamers, they were the definite majority group. W.B. Napton was on *Benton* in 1858 and reported that the passenger manifest included "two Indian agents and employees, trappers and voyageurs, an English sportsman and a companion, a man traveling for his health, an artist, the captain, two pilots, two cooks, cabin boys, 20 deck hands and 75 woodcutters. No women."

When traffic began to increase in the mid-1860s steamship owners established their own woodyards, but that scheme did not insure a wood supply. Captain Joseph LaBarge, probably the Missouri's most famous pilot and captain, found himself squared off against some Sioux at a trading post where the Indians refused to release the wood without payment. The Indians sat on the woodpiles so the crewman couldn't reach them. LaBarge grudgingly paid for the wood, although men employed by his company had cut it, and he really owed the Indians nothing. The crew hastily loaded the wood.

Afterward Captain LaBarge relaxed by reading a few lines from a newspaper, but he soon found "all of a sudden there was a heavy volley of firearms and the sound of splintered wood and broken glass. This was instantly followed by an Indian yell and a rush for the boat, and in the uproar someone cried out that a man had been killed. The Indians got full possession of the forward part of the boat and flooded the boiler grates with water, putting out the fires."

LaBarge claimed the Indians only wanted the boat and would release the crew if they got it. The Indians said they would spare no lives if LaBarge refused their demand.

LaBarge had a small cannon aboard which was quickly hauled to the white-controlled aft of the cabin. LaBarge found powder for the cannon, but no shot. Boiler rivets were hastily substituted and the gun was soon primed, ready for action. LaBarge lit a cigar in sight of the Indians, held it near the cannon and told the Sioux to get off the boat. LaBarge claimed: "The effect was complete and instantaneous. The Indians turned and fled and fairly fell over each other in their panic to get off the boat. In less time than it takes to tell it, not an Indian was in sight."

LaBarge had learned a valuable lesson and soon equipped at least one of his boats with a steam sawmill and a yoke of oxen. When his boat needed wood, he glided it to shore and swung a large platform to the bank. The ox team was driven ashore and quickly the men and oxen dragged several logs on board. The crew sawed the wood into proper boiler length as the steamer paddled on its way.

DRIFT LOGS were sometimes snagged from the river and used as fuel by LaBarge and others. Boat crews occasionally scrounged wood from abandoned trading posts to fire boilers.

For a while Indians found woodcutting for the "fire boats" to be profitable and tried to prevent the white men from taking the timber from their native lands.

At one Indian woodpile the captain of the steamer *Omega* took on eight cords of wood in exchange for a bargain of five tin cups of sugar and three of coffee.

The only known permanent, Indian-operated woodyard along the upper Missouri was situated below Fort Peck, which was about 200 miles downriver from Fort Benton, D.F. Slayton was a passenger on the steamboat *Far West* in

1880 and stopped at the woodyard and wrote: "there was a large body of the oldest Indians I have ever seen [there]. Many of them were toothless and almost blind and there was not a single young person to be seen in the whole camp, but they had the best supply of dry pitchpine wood to be found in any of the yards."

Boat captains also bought wood from independent woodhawkers who lived dangerous lives along the river. J.A. Wells worked at Fort Hawley as a woodhawk in 1867 and in the spring of 1868 went downriver to a point opposite the mouth of the Musselshell and Missouri Rivers where he helped build a stockade and open a woodyard. In the summer of 1868 he claimed that fifty-eight white men had been murdered between what is now the Montana-North Dakota border and the mouth of Montana's Judith River — a distance of less than 300 miles. Most of the casualties were woodhawks.

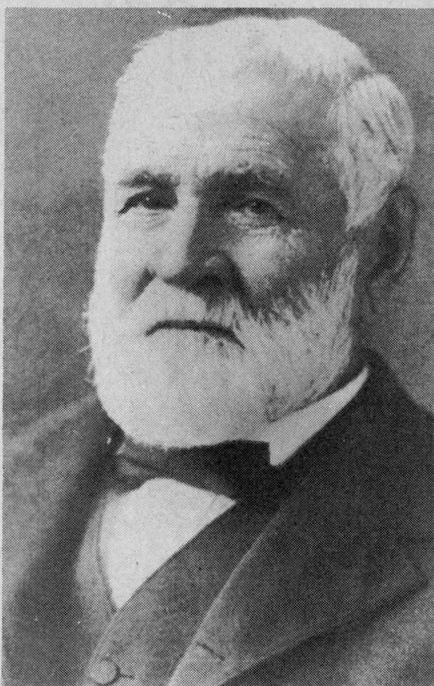
Wells claimed that he and his partners built strong cabins against Indian attacks that were "loop-holed for defense and [had] towers or lookouts that were bullet proof" and that the men procured repeating and breech (-) loading arms and kept constant battle watch. However, the woodcutters were not attacked in their cabins; the real danger was out in the woods where choppers might be ambushed.

One of Wells' fellow woodcutters had his head cut off and turned into a target; another was riddled with bullets; one was scalped to the neck and his skull was smashed with a club. Another man's eyes were gouged out with knives and his nose and upper lip were cut off while he was still alive; the palms of his hands were slit in numerous places from his efforts to catch the knife blade.

W.P. Wren was a perceptive observer who described events at a large wood camp in 1881. The woodyard was operated by "Old Man" Kountz who supplied steamers plying the waters between Bismarck and Fort Benton. Indians had ordered Kountz to vacate his premises. He refused to leave and was killed by three young Indians.

Kountz's body was placed in a grave under one end of his cabin. Woodhawks rode out of camp seeking vengeance.

Three Indians were surrendered to the white men by their tribe and the group returned to Kountz's cabin. The Indians were hanged from a nearby cottonwood tree. Their bodies were riddled



Courtesy Montana Historical Society

Captain Joseph LaBarge

with bullets and their remains were thrown into the Missouri.

If Woodhawks escaped Indian attacks, they could still be victims of white desperadoes. Sometimes after the woodchoppers had sold their season's cut, the men would swoop down on the camps, hang a woodhawk or two and ride off with their money.

Nor were woodhawks immune from accidents. At Fort Benton on a July 4 morning a small cannon was about to be set off to celebrate the "natal day." Gabrielle Benoist, a French-Canadian woodhawk, was ramming down the charge, when a premature explosion tore off his right hand. The rammer was driven against the wall with such violence that it shriveled into splinters, which flew back into Benoist's face, chest and arms, putting out his right eye and leaving him horribly mangled.

A journal indicated that an official at the post — Alexander Harvey — "with a razor and a carpenter's tenon-saw amputated the arm above the wrist, stopped the flow of blood with Peruvian bark, picked the splinters out of his flesh and treated the wounds so successfully with a poultice of flag-root, procurred from an adjacent swamp, that Benoist, despite the severity of his injuries, finally recovered and lived some thirty-five years afterwards."

Benoist's woodchopping days didn't completely end, for after he recovered the woodhawk had an iron hook made for his right hand that he could use as a saw.

John "Liver Eating" Johnson and X. Beidler were perhaps the two best-known independent woodhawks on the upper Missouri. The former Indian fighter and the Montana Vigilante were at the junction of the Musselshell and Missouri Rivers in 1869 when the Fort Benton-bound steamer *Nile* took aboard cordwood the two men had cut.

The woodhawks were welcomed on board the *Nile* and entertained while the boat churned toward Benton. The crew was being treated to ice cream in observance of the captain's birthday. Johnson and Beidler were offered generous portions of the delicacy.

One writer claimed that neither of the woodhawks had seen or heard of ice cream before, and that "its surprising frigidity" in the heat of a summer afternoon caused the woodchoppers to wonder about the unknown substance. Beidler refused to admit his ignorance, but Johnson was more open and asked his partner in a loud whisper, "X, where in hell does this stuff come from?"

"Shut up you fool," growled Beidler. "It comes in cans."

In 1880, A.K. Yerkes wrote of a strange, but perhaps typical, encounter with a woodhawk. Yerkes was on the steamer the *Bachelor* when suddenly a shot rang out. The bullet almost hit him and the captain.

Yerkes ducked for shelter, but the captain didn't move and observed that the shot was only fired at them to show the on-shore woodhawker's displeasure that the boat was apparently not going to tie up and buy some of his cordwood.

Yerkes thought about the situation and wrote: "Those woodchoppers, often alone all winter, and subject to attack from renegade Indians, led a most unenviable existence. No wonder they at times went berserk."

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

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WESTERN TREASURES

Treasures of the American West by Harrison Eiteljorg (Balance House, Ltd., distributed by Independent Publishers Group, One Pleasant Ave., Port Washington, NY 11050, 172 pages, $45.00 hardcover, 11½ x 10¾ inches.

This attractive coffee table type book contains selections from the author's fine collection of original Western art. The author, just after World War II, visited the American West. He fell in love with the land and with Western art.

Eiteljorg has since amassed an outstanding collection of late 19th and early 20th century American art. This beautifully produced work contains more than 200 full-color reproductions and 10 monochromes representing the work of more than 100 artists.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with early painters in the West including Alfred Jacob Miller, John Mix Stanley, Alfred Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, Charles Russell and William R. Leigh.

The second section focuses on artists on New Mexico including the works of the Taos Ten, a group of ten artists who settled in the New Mexico village around the turn of the century. The third section is devoted to contemporary American artists including Gerard Curtis Delano, Georgia O'Keeffe and George Carlson.

The author's fine collection is housed in his home and his office in Indianapolis, Indiana, and in the Indianapolis Museum of Art. Recommended.

FRONTIER GAMBLERS

Knights of the Green Cloth: The Saga of the Frontier Gamblers by Robert K. DeArment (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, OK 73019, 423 pages, $17.50 hardcover, 8½ x 5¾ inches.

This new book contains a vast amount of information on gambling and gamblers in the American West between 1850 and 1910. Author DeArment, who wrote the book *Bat Masterson: The Man and the Legend* (1979), provides readers with many stories about gamblers and the games they played. He has relied heavily on old newspaper accounts, old-timer recollections in published form plus many secondary sources.

The book is divided into four parts. One deals with gamblers including Ben Thompson, Rowdy Joe Lowe, Jack Harris, Luke Short and Horace Tabor. The second part deals with well-known gambling spots, and part three examines women gamblers. The fourth part looks at crooked gamblers, among others.

Notes, bibliography and index are included along with many historic illustrations. Recommended.

GUNS

America: The Men and Their Guns That Made Her Great edited by Craig Boddington (Petersen Publishing Co., 6725 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90028, 186 pages, $19.95 hardcover, 9½ x 7½ inches.

This nicely produced book provides an overview of the role played by guns and men in American history. In fifteen chapters, each written by one or more different writers, the book's contents span the period from the American Revolution to World War I. Each chapter focuses on events, men and their weapons.

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(Continued on page 53)

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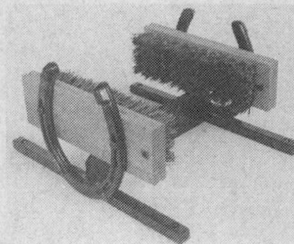

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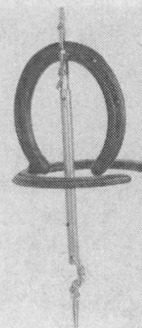

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Bottles Carted of pioneer priorities

THE BOTTLES shown here were among artifacts recovered as a result of archaeological investigations at two great posts of the United States Army in the nineteenth-century trans-Mississippi West. Both Fort Laramie and Fort Union were established during the middle of the nineteenth century (Fort Laramie was purchased for an army garrison in 1849; Fort Union was founded in 1851). They were abandoned almost simultaneously, in 1890 and 1891 respectively.

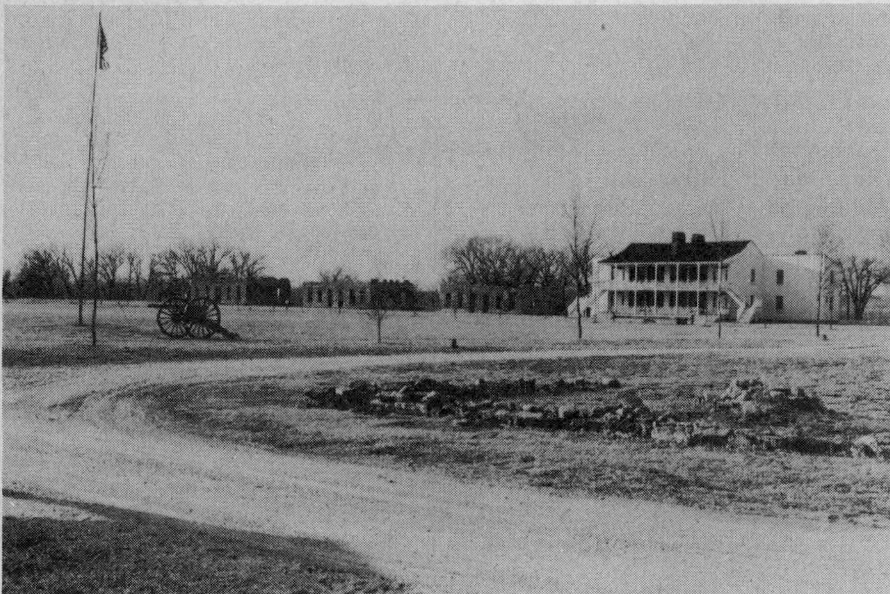
Both forts were founded in response to the Westward drive of Americans in the first half of the century, and the role of both was to guard important routes of communication: roads, wires and mails. Fort Laramie was located beside the various overland trails of the all-important central route, the California, Oregon and Mormon roads. Fort Union was situated in the midst of the great Santa Fe trade route to the Southwest.

Excavated bottle types, left to right: beer, mineral water, ale and culinary.

Although the mission of both posts was to guard the routes of Westward movement, the nature of the journeys of those whom each guarded was quite distinct. Past Fort Laramie flowed thousands of men, women and children emigrating to the Far West. These were families with worldly goods in search of new homes and lives in a far land, people not fully aware that their actions were so expressive of the national will.

But the caravans of canvas-covered wagons which struggled past Fort Union were vehicles of commercial expansion backed by men who consciously coveted the Southwest. Goods, not people, were the principal freight of the Santa Fe Trail, and the Southwest was added to the Union through economic association rather than by ties of blood. Despite these differences, Fort Laramie and Fort Union were both primary federal installations, for achieving the political goal of the nineteenth century — a continental nation.

The forts were located in the high arid plains, just under the mountains forming the continental divide, but little else in their physical nature was similar. There was only one Fort Laramie, although two privately owned fur trading posts of the same name had preceded the military installation. The army post was begun in 1849 with construction of a single building, and from that time grew in a random pattern. At its peak, in the 1870s, Fort Laramie resembled a small, untidy city. Its layout never experienced the hand of a planner. Its architecture displayed every conceivable variety and vicissitude of army style.



View across Fort Laramie parade ground to Old Bedlam (restored). The enlisted men's quarters are at left.

There were three Fort Unions too, but

West —unique indicators

all were the work and property of the army. Each surpassed its predecessor in grandeur. The first was a hastily built hodgepodge of unbarked logs. The second was a true fortification of earth. The third, on which construction began in 1863, was an unparalled example of army power and prestige of the time.

By the 1870s, Fort Union was a small city. Its buildings, from Officers' Quarters to Quartermaster Shops, were laid out in orderly clusters, displaying precise logic in the relationship of one building to another. Fort Union was the work of a master army planner who kept a tight grip on his compass and straightedge. It sprang, full-grown, from his mind and changed little over the years.

LIFE AT THE two posts was probably very similar for garrison officers and their wives, enlisted men, laundresses and the children. Militarily, however, the histories were quite different. Fort Laramie was always a fighting post — a place where the gun-carrying enlisted man was typical. The energies of Fort Laramie involved mounting patrols, military escorts, scouts and expeditions for field service. Its troops were engaged in regular if not always intense confrontations with the Indian enemy, and they were killed to a man in the Grattan fight of 1854.

Although not under siege, the post was constantly harassed by Indians throughout the period of the Civil War. Troops were sent from Fort Laramie to the Rosebud as well as countless lesser engagements, and John "Portugee" Phillips directed his horse toward Fort Laramie to aid Fort Phil Kearny. Even in the late 1870s, when the front line of Indian confrontation had receded far north of the post, Fort Laramie's primary mission was the support and replacement of troops actively engaged in the business of war.

Fort Union, on the other hand, was built to serve as a supply depot for the entire army of the Southwest. While troopers and soldiers from Fort Union participated in several important Southwestern campaigns (notably the Red River War of 1874 and the Battle of Soldier Spring in 1868), its overriding role, especially after construction of the vast third post, was to serve as an enormous regional supply depot for more remote posts engaged in most of the actual Indian fighting. Troopers at Fort Union were often outnumbered by civilian employees of the Quartermaster and Commissary Department.

Both forts were key establishments serving the cause of Westward expansion. Both were abandoned when railroads replaced the wagon roads and settlement was well under way. Fort Union lay desolate from 1891 until 1956, becoming a vast acreage of standing walls and chimneys. Fort Laramie fell into civilian hands when the army marched away in 1890. Sold to settlers, some of its buildings were carried off to become parts of ranches and homesteads. Others were occupied at their original sites by families and businesses. Parts of Fort Laramie survived almost intact, but most have vanished.

By the 1930s, the sites of both posts were considered important indicators of the pioneering work which had helped to shape the nation. Fort Laramie and Fort Union were viewed as historically

Bottle types, left to right: toiletry, wine and soda water.

Bottles and other artifacts turned up in excavations at the Fort Union army post in New Mexico.

Recovered from excavations at Fort Union, New Mexico and Fort Laramie, Wyoming were bottles which contained (left to right): medicine, bitters, ink, ginger and liquor.

significant and were reclaimed by the United States and set aside as monuments to the past. Fort Laramie was designated a National Historic Site of the National Park Service in 1938, and Fort Union was established as a National Monument in 1956. The mission of the National Park Service at both was to interpret the role of the United States Army in the settlement of the trans-Mississippi West.

To fulfill this mission, the Park Service has attempted to retain and restore the buildings or fragments of remaining buildings. At Fort Union, these ruins have been stabilized and sprayed with a wind-and water-resistant compound. Those few buildings left intact at Fort Laramie are restored to their appearance during the heyday of the army, and some have been refurnished to help interpret the quality of life there. At both forts the larger story of their service is told in museum visitor centers.

Development of historic sites such as Fort Union and Fort Laramie depends almost wholly upon the fullest possible knowledge and understanding of their past. There is no shortage of information relating to their work, role, or physical characteristics: army records are voluminous, and civilian sources of information are numerous. But National Park Service researchers during the 1940s and early 1950s found a serious information gap on the quality of individual life at these places, and about the material details of life. Journals, diaries, and letters written by those who served at the posts contain material which fill portions of the gap, but no serious study has been made. It was evident that, while primary sources were indispensable, they did not contain enough data to permit proper interpretation of the sites. In short, information on the precise quality of life was limited and, as a consequence, the true human measure of service or sacrifice exacted by this phase of Westward expansion was insufficiently known.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL work was then undertaken at both forts to shed light on this dim area, as well as to assist in documenting the larger physical and structural environment. A methodical excavation was planned and executed at Fort Union between 1956 and 1960. It included work at the site of the first rude post, and extensive digging at the last great fort. The work at the third post was undertaken for two reasons: to uncover and facilitate the stabilization of building walls, and to recover artifacts. All but nine of the ruins were excavated, and no important or representative feature was neglected. Particular attention was directed to the location of privies, and a number of these were fully excavated, yielding a remarkable quantity of excellent specimens.

Archaeological investigation at Fort Laramie has been less comprehensive and more problem than project-oriented. Excavation has been undertaken on a sporadic basis since addition of the area to those of the National Park Service. Individual structures were excavated in the course of their restoration, a considerable amount of work has been directed to defining the limits of the first Fort Laramie, and the site of the second installation has been confirmed by archaeology. The site of the sutler's store has been excavated, as have the sites of several other trading posts in the vicinity of the fort.

Fort Laramie has not, however, been the subject of a carefully planned, exhaustive archaelogical investigation and, if we may judge by the wealth of artifacts that come to ground surface with every rain, a rich store of material and information is still recoverable.

The bottles shown here are the results of limited excavations and surface finds. While great numbers of other artifacts were found, the profusion and variety of bottles at both posts strongly impelled some study and report on them.

In addition to their importance as objects that can be used to date other historic sites, the bottles possess potential for contributing to broader areas of material culture studies, including questions of diet, recreation, medicine, and subtle social changes. In addition, they shed light on manufacturing processes and thus on the growth of the Industrial Revolution in this country.

Furthermore, their very presence at these sites is eloquent testimony to the penetration of commercial systems of distribution and transportation. The primary concerns, however, have been with identification and dating of the specimens.

The bottles now form part of the collections at Fort Union and Fort Laramie. While the abundance and excellence of the specimens are such that some may be placed as study collections in other institutions, notably the Smithsonian Institution, the collections of the National Park Service are representative and available to any interested scholar for further study.

Western Book Roundup
(Continued from page 49)

enjoy the chapters on Billy Dixon, Elfego Baca, Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley and Teddy Roosevelt. Authors include Angela Hynes, James Bellah, Lee A. Silva, Jim Earle and Joe D. Huddleston.

A bibliography and index are included.

TERRELL'S TEXAS CAVALRY

Terrell's Texas Cavalry by John W. Spencer (Eakin Press, P.O. Box AG, Burnet, TX 78611, 199 pages, $12.95 hardcover, 8¾ x 5¾ inches.

This new book contains the story of the 34th (sometimes labeled the 37th) Texas Cavalry Regiment. The unit was often referred to as Terrell's Texas Cavalry. The leader was Colonel Alexander W. Terrell.

The regiment was organized in mid-1863 and existed until early 1864. John Spencer, after extensive research, has pulled together most of what is known about this unit. It is organized into five chapters plus nine appendices containing documentation uncovered in his research.

Historic illustrations are included along with endpaper maps of Texas (1863-1865). A bibliography and index make this a handy reference work.

NEVADA PLANTS

Medicinal Uses of Plants by Indian Tribes of Nevada by Percy Train, James R. Henrichs and W. Andrew Archer (Quarterman Publications, 5 South Union St., Lawrence, MA 01843, 139 pages, $25.00 hardcover, 6 x 9¼ inches.

This is a new facsimile reprint of the revised edition of 1957, which included a summary of pharmacological research by Archer. The original edition was published in 1941.

The book examines the value and type of plants used for medicine by the Nevada Indians. Research on the subject began in 1935. The authors examine approximately 200 native plants considered to be of medicinal value by the Paiute, Shoshone and Washoe tribes of Nevada. They describe the purpose for which the plants were used, but the authors make no attempt to substantiate the claims of the Indians.

Although scholarly in nature, the book provides interesting reading. The

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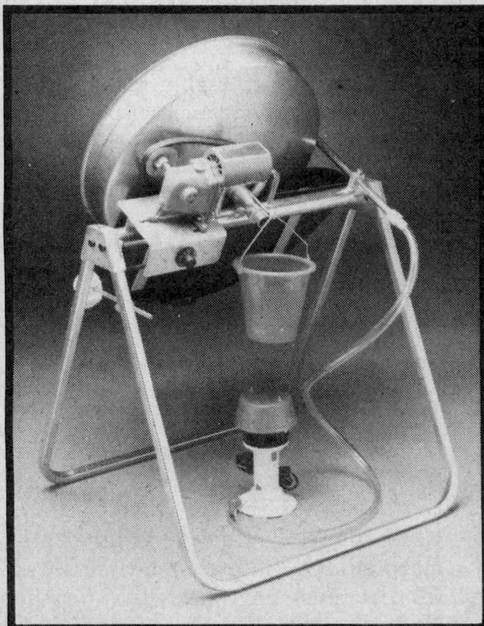

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authors obtained their information from interviews with the Indians.

KIT CARSON CAMPAIGN

The Kit Carson Campaign: The Last Great Navajo War by Clifford E. Trafzer (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, OK 73019, 292 pages, $14.95 hardcover, 8½ x 5¾ inches.

This is the story of Kit Carson's campaign against the Navajo Indians in the 1860s and the Indians' doomed efforts to resist. The author notes in his preface that it is also the story of the "ideas and decisions that shaped the policy of the United States and the New Mexico Territory toward the Navajos."

Trafzer used not only library research but oral history records preserved and provided by Navajos in the preparation of this book.

"The Indian's view of their own history is too often ignored," wrote Trafzer, who has attempted to include both white and Navajo accounts of the war "and its tragic aftermath."

There are eight chapters plus notes, bibliography and index. Sixty-eight illustrations are included. Recommended.

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PERMIAN BASIN

Oil in West Texas and New Mexico: A Pictorial History of the Permian Basin by Walter Rundell, Jr. (Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843, 183 pages, $24.50 hardcover, 11¼ x 8¾ inches.

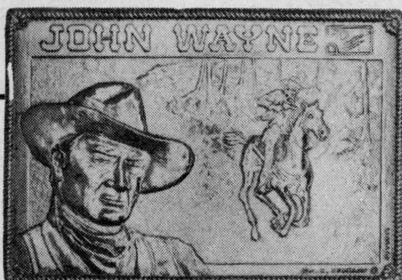
This work was published for the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum, Library and Hall of Fame located in Midland, Texas. It is, as the title suggests, a picture history of the Permian Basin with an emphasis on the oil industry.

The book conveys the history of oil in the region beginning with the Santa Rita No. 1 well in 1923. The historic photographs and highly readable text provide for fascinating reading and looking.

Anyone who lives in or near the Permian Basin or who has been associated at any time with the oil industry will find this book of much interest. A good bibliography and index are included.

SOUTHWEST INNS

Country Inns of America: The Southwest by Roberta Homan Gardner and Peter Andres (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 383 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017, $10.95 heavy paper wrappers, 7¾ x 10 inches.



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This handsome new book with more than 100 color photographs is a guide to 35 country inns located in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

Among the inns described and pictured are El Tovar Hotel and Phantom Ranch (Grand Canyon, Arizona), Dancing Apache Guest Ranch and Garland's Oak Creek Lodge (Sedona, Arizona), Cochise Hotel (Cochise, Arizona), Sagebrush Inn and Hotel Edelweiss (Taos, New Mexico), Inn at Loretto and La Fonda (Santa Fe), Rancho Encantado (Tesuque, New Mexico), Bear Mountain Guest Ranch (Silver City, New Mexico), Pride House and Excelsior House (Jefferson, Texas), The Faust Hotel (New Braunfels, Texas), Landmark Inn (Castroville, Texas), and Indian Lodge and Sutler's Limpia Hotel (Fort Davis, Texas).

The book includes a map of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas and it locates each inn described. Recommended.

MONTANA TALES

Many Strange Characters: Montana Frontier Tales by James Willard Schultz, edited by Eugene Lee Silliman (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp, Norman, OK 73019, 143 pages, $10.95 hardcover, 8½ x 5¾ inches.

This new work contains a collection of little-known tales written by James Willard Schultz, who traveled by steamboat to Montana in 1877. He spent six years trading and living with the Blackfeet and later established a ranch on their reservation. Before his death in 1947, he had written thirty-seven books.

Editor Silliman became interested in Schultz many years ago and started searching for his stories in old newspapers and magazines. The nine stories included were located by Silliman in this manner.

The stories are highly readable and enjoyable. They add another page to the story of Schultz' work as a Western writer.

THE ROAD WEST

The Road West by Bertha S. Dodge (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, N.M. 87131, 222 pages, $15.95 hardcover, 6½ x 9½ inches).

The author tells the interesting story of the men and women who followed the 35th parallel on their treks west from the 17th until the late 19th century. Using diaries, journals, and other primary source material, she recreates what it must have been like for the reader to stand near the sheer sandstone

face of a New Mexico mesa called El Morro or "Inscription Rock" and watch the countless travelers pass.

Bertha Dodge tells of Juan de Onate's arrival in 1605 and of many other travelers who passed El Morro before 1861. And she probes the reasons why they made journeys westward — ambition, curiosity, restlessness and even escape.

The book is divided into eighteen chapters. There are two appendices, bibliography and index. Illustrations are limited to one map.

DULL KNIFE BATTLE

The Dull Knife Battle by Fred H. Werner (copies available from the author, 2020 — 18th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631, 119 pages, $5.95 paperback, 9 x 6 inches).

Fred Werner, who wrote *The Slim Buttes Battle,* has turned his attention to the Dull Knife battle in this attractive and nicely illustrated booklet. The battle came only five months after the defeat of General George Custer on the Little Big Horn River in Montana in 1876. The route of the Northern Cheyennes in this battle was, according to the author, "a prime factor in most of the Plains Indian tribes' decision to give up the battle with the whites and move onto the reservations."

Werner tells of the bravery of the Northern Cheyenne warriors and that of Colonel R.S. Mackenzie's cavalrymen. He tells the story of the battle in nine chapters plus an appendix containing reports and materials relating to the Powder River Expedition.

A bibliography is included. Unfortunately there is no index.

WINCHESTER COLLECTION

Sights West: Selections from the Winchester Museum Collection by Richard Rattenbury and Thomas E. Hall (published by the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming, in association with the University of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, NE 68588, 80 pages, sorry no price given, heavy paper wrappers, 8½ x 11 inches.

In late 1975 the Winchester Gun Museum collection was presented to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center by the Winchester Group of Olin Corporation. The collection contains more than 3,500 different projectile arms, some dating back as far as 600 years. The collection, according to tradition, was started about 1860 by Oliver F. Winchester, the founder and first president of the Winchester Repeating Arms Co.

This book highlights weapons in the collection. A fine text accompanies the many photos. The book is nicely produced and contains four chapters. The weapons included are not limited to Winchester products. Recommended.

LINE CAMP LORE

The Fiddleback: Lore of the Line Camp by Owen Ulph (Dream Garden Press, 1199 Iola Ave., Salt Lake City, UT 84104, 234 pages, $10.95 hardcover, $6.95 paper, 6 x 9 inches).

The 19th century history of the American West is filled with stories of Englishmen who made good. Some of the more prominent cattlemen of the era were born in England. During the 20th century, however, few Englishmen have made their mark on the Western range. One who has is Owen Ulph, and this new book — something of a classic in modern cowboy literature — tells of his experiences as a cowboy.

In 1951 the author, in his late '30s, became disillusioned with university life and quit the teaching profession. He took a job as a cowboy on an old-time Nevada ranch he calls Fiddleback (not its real name). He remained three years and soon acquired part ownership in the ranch. Eventually he returned to teaching and later sold out to a ranch partner in 1964.

His book abounds in insights into the life of the modern cowboy. For instance, Ulph writes that a "cowhand does not enjoy riding." In a simple terms, the cowhand considers the horse to be nothing more than an animated tool.

Ulph hopes to write three more "tributes" to the cowboy before, as he says, "they shut the gate." Recommended.

EARLY OREGON

Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon, 1818-1862 by Malcolm Clark, Jr. (Houghton Mifflin, One Beacon St., Boston, MA 02107, 327 pages, $15.00 hardcover, 9 x 6½ inches).

This is a compelling account of the Westward movement and in particular the settlement of Oregon Territory. Clark uses the word "Eden" in his book's title to describe what many 19th century Americans were seeking. Clark's writing, rich in description and detail, tells of Oregon when the British Hudson's Bay Company struggled against American mountain men for the benefits of the rich fur trade. And he tells of the arrival of missionaries and then the settlers drawn to the new land for any one of a multitude of reasons.

The book is one of the better accounts of the settlement of Oregon. The author relied extensively on primary sources, and he uses archaic modes, words, and spellings used in the last century to help capture the flavor of the period.

There are eleven chapters, notes, bibliography and index. Highly recommended.

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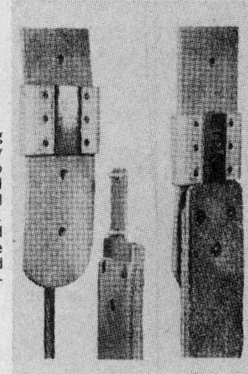

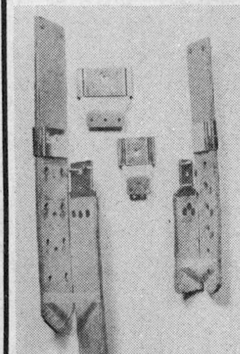

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Wild Old Days!

HEROIC SUSAN PARKS
By Ron Hamm
Photos provided by author

WHEN Susan Parks began working as the village switchborad operator for the sleepy New Mexico border town of Columbus, little did she realize that imminent events would lead to her becoming a genuine, if unlikely heroine. But then neither did she dream that the infamous Mexican guerilla leader Pancho Villa would send his men into United States territory.

It was in the pre-dawn hours of March 9, 1916 when Susan, a young mother of nineteen, stirred suddenly from her sleep in the quarters where she lived and worked in her husband's newspaper-cum-print shop. Garnet Parks, publisher of the weekly *Columbus Courier*, was out of town on business.

Despite weeks of rumor, speculation, and dozens of reported sightings of Villa in the vicinity of Palomas, just across the international boundary from Columbus, Susan was still startled when she spied a small group of Mexicans, whom she immediately recognized as Villistas, lurking outside her window.

Without hesitation, she scooped up her eighteen-month-old daughter, Gwen, and crept across the office to the switchboard. With the baby in her lap Susan struck a match so she could see to plug in the jack to her board; she knew she had to summon help in a hurry.

The small light from the flame, brief as it was, alerted the Mexicans outside, and they quickly rained bullets through the window. Shards of glass ripped into Susan's face, neck, and arms, and into the infant's face and arms as well.

With the baby clutched to her breast, Susan hastily made her way back across the small room to the bed and tucked the child under it out of harm's way. If thoughts of taking shelter with the baby crossed her mind, Susan gave no evidence of it, and resolutely returned to her switchboard.

Aided now by the coming dawn, she quickly contacted Fort Bliss in El Paso, less than 100 miles away, where she reached the Army's sleepy night duty officer.

"Villa's men are here!" she cried into her headset. "Please send help, and hurry!"

Convinced that there was no more she could do at the moment, and knowing that to venture outside would be foolhardy, Susan crept back to her bed where she remained in the relative security of the building. Bleeding from a score or more wounds, Susan felt faint and nauseated, but she grimly waited for the Army to come to her's and the town's rescue.

Outside the wanton shooting, killing, looting, and burning continued. According to Buck Chadborn, a cattle inspector and deputy sheriff who hastened into Columbus after being awakened about 4 a.m. by sounds of gunfire: "By the time we got into town there were several buildings burning. Bullets were flying everywhere. In the light from the fires we could see a milling mob of Mexicans wearing the big sombreros and crossed gunbelts of Pancho Villa's followers. There were bands of them shooting and yelling, 'Viva Villa! Viva Mexico!'

"The raiders were plundering and looting the burning stores of everything they could carry out," Chadborn was to recall later. "Many of them were just kids. I found one dead boy of about fourteen holding a pair of women's black patent shoes. Another youngster had his hands full of candy." He, too, was dead.

When the bullets finally quit crashing through Susan's window, after what seemed like hours, she decided to seek the safety of the Commercial Hotel, down the street from the newspaper office.

Peering into the battle-strewn street, she spotted a dead Mexican. Overcoming her revulsion at touching the "muerto hombre," she dashed outside and snatched off the raider's serape and sombrero.

To disguise herself, Susan put on the big hat, pulled it down low on her head, wrapped the cape around herself and the baby, then headed for the hotel. There a emergency first aid station had been set up, and doctors labored feverishly in their makeshift lobby-clinic to save the townspeople and defenders who had been hurt in the fighting.

While physicians attended to Susan's wounds, she glanced around the floor, littered with the wounded, and saw a few feet away the lifeless body of a young woman — her best friend had been shot through the head.

SIXTEEN Americans lost their lives, and while accounts vary, some 200 Villistas were killed. Their bodies were dragged by ponies into the desert, doused with gasoline by the angry townspeople, and burned.

Historians cite various reasons for the raid, but all are agreed that the Mexicans were hungry and desperate after months of fighting in their own country. Whether Villa was even at their side is another matter for conjecture.

Susan finally made her way to the authorities and was commended for her valor by then New Mexico Governor William C. McDonald.

Gwen Parks Gonyea, now sixty-five and living in Washington state, says her mother used to own a gold watch, a gift from McDonald, but that it had disappeared.

An archivist at the New Mexico Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe searched in vain for any official trace of a letter of commendation or resolution praising Mrs. Parks, and concluded that, "the alleged gift may have been a purely personal gesture from the governor. A search of Governor McDonald's correspondence, proclamations, and the executive record did not yield any evidence to indicate that it may have been an official act."

There is also a story that Mrs. Parks was honored by the telephone company by having her photograph printed on the front cover of a statewide issue. No documentation has been found to substantiate that claim, but the Mountain Bell Pioneer Museum in Albuquerque today proudly displays the old switchboard that Susan staffed during those terror-filled hours. A simple placard reads: "Old switchboard used at Columbus, N.M. 1910-1956. It was through this switchboard that the alarm was sounded in 1916 when Pancho Villa raided Columbus."

A tall, robust woman with a zest for

life, Susan was always able to hold her own. She was a crack shot with a rifle, and as a girl growing up in Montana, she had learned to box from her brothers. Self-educated and with little time for formal schooling, she also knew how to run a small-town frontier newspaper.

The Parks family left New Mexico in 1919. Upon Garnet's death at the height of the Depression, Susan took on a variety of tasks to support their seven children. During World War II she became one of the first women sheet metal workers in the Seattle shipyards.

Susan died last year at age eighty-five in a Puyallup, Washington nursing home. She had outlived two husbands — Parks and Del Kendrick — and left her own small mark on history.

THE DAVID MARSH STORY

Submitted by J.B. Moore

The following articles come from the newspaper files of the Cripple Creek Mining District, Colorado.

DAVID MARSH HOME BURNS TO GROUND

Cripple Creek, Jan. 2, 1901

David Marsh's house near the city dump was burned to the ground yesterday with its contents. The loss of $500, with no insurance. Marsh was in town when the fire occurred, and did not learn of the fire until almost home, when he was met on the road and apprised of the fact. Marsh is the colored man who has lived in this vicinity before there was a Cripple Creek.

"NIGGER MARSH" LIVES IN HOLE NEAR MOUNT PISGAH

Cripple Creek, Dec. 21, 1916

Out of the moutainside south of Mount Pisgah is the home of Cripple Creek's only cave man. His name is "Nigger Marsh," aged derelict and relic of the Civil War.

Nigger Marsh, as his name would suggest, is of African descent. His home in the mountains near this city resembles a lair more than it does the residence of a human being. One might imagine that in such a place a mountain lion or bobcat seeks refuge when pursued by a pack of hounds.

The entrance to the crudely grotesque domicile of Nigger Marsh is a hole in the rock just large enough for the ordinary man to slip through. To enter the place the easiest and most natural way, one should stretch out on the ground and slide down the incline feet foremost. Should Nigger Marsh ever have as his guest such a ponderous personage as William Howard Taft, he would have to do some blasting to make room for Mr. Taft to slip across the threshold.

Nigger Marsh's real name is not known. Perhaps he knows his original cognomen, but during the quarter of a century he has resided in the Cripple Creek District he has answered to the appellation of Nigger Marsh and he is satisfied with the name. His exact age is a matter of speculation. His age is somewhere between 75 and 100. His name and age are the least of his worries but he delights in entertaining his guest with stories of the Civil War and the South.

Near the close of the war that threatened to divide the Union, Nigger

Photos courtesy Bill Parks

Above: Susan and Garnet Parks on the land claim just outside of Columbus, New Mexico. Left: Susan, her daughter Gwen (the baby in the raid) and her son Garnet. This picture may have appeared on Bell Telephone directories after the Villa raid.

Marsh made his escape over the Mason and Dixon line and he never returned. He hid in the bottom of a freight wagon coming north and rode out of the slavery zone. He is still under the impression that the negroes are held as slaves in the southern states and says the south is the grandest place on earth but that he will never return.

The interior of the home of Nigger Marsh is finished in natural granite. The walls and roof of his quaint hovel are covered with a thick coat of black from smoke. He has a combination suite comprising parlor, dining room, kitchen and bedroom, all in a place not more than six by twelve feet. It is in this dingy place that he cooks his meals. What smoke he does not consume goes thru the dingy entrance to the place that serves as his front door.

The Cliff Dwellers of ancient times never chose a wilder spot for their homes than Nigger Marsh. The place is furnished with a crudely made bed consisting of a few old comforts and blankets, a limited supply of cooking utensils, two black cats and a guitar. At night Nigger Marsh entertains himself with his guitar and sings old plantation songs. There is no one near to hear him so he is host, guest and the whole show.

Nigger Marsh comes to town at least three times a year, Fourth of July, Christmas and election day. His "hole in the ground" home is about two miles from the city and he seldom comes in town except on the three days mentioned.

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INDIAN COMPANY AT FORT SIDNEY

IN 1891 a significant experiment was carried out by the Army — the creation of units totally comprised of Indian enlistments. These units were not Indian Scouts, as were organized before, but a part of the regular military establishment. General Orders No. 28, dated March 7, 1891, directed that each L Troop of eight cavalry regiments and I Company of 19 infantry regiments be filled by 55 Indian enlistments to be recruited in the various departments in which the regiments were stationed.

Company I of the 21st Infantry was organized as an Indian Company at Fort Randall, South Dakota, drawing manpower from the nearby Santee and Sioux reservations. In December, 1892, the company was transferred to Fort Sidney in western Nebraska. Here the Indians soldiers were housed in the former band barracks. Several married men were permitted to live with their families in tents to the east of the post. A school to teach the Indians to read and write was organized to assist in their transformation into soldiers. At the post, the Indian soldiers performed the regular garrison duties along with their white counterparts.

Early reports on the Indian experiment noted that encouraging progress was being made, but many Army officers were critical of the program, not believing that the Army should be used for social experiments. At this time, the Reverend George Beecher, an Episcopal clergyman, was assigned a large mission field in western Nebraska, and lived in vacant officers quarters at Fort Sidney. In defense of the Indian soldiers, he wrote the secretary of the Indian Rights Association in Philadelphia:

"I have known the Indians in Company I for one year. I became acquainted with them principally from holding services with them, but, also through frequent visits to their quarters with Mr. Seay (commanding officer of Company I). In all my dealings with these Indians, I have been a close observer and a careful student of the details in their new life as soldiers. I believe their present condition to be far better than any in which they have been placed before. They are all perfectly contented in their new life; and now the company reports for the past year show plainly that they are making remarkable progress.

"Their quarters are as neat and clean as any of the white men's; in person, each soldier is as tidy as can be. He takes pride in everything he does when the merits of the deed are based upon the principle of true qualities of a soldier. He is proud of his uniform, and is more than willing to give up his stiped blanket and bear the flag. It may be unnecessary for me to tell you any of these things, but I do not know that you have seen the Indian as a soldier. You know of what he is capable, and I have learned that he can become a good man, a good citizen, a good Christian, if the proper steps are taken to aid him to this plane of living.

"The army provides for him proper food and compels him to be regular in all his habits. A proper diet and certain regulations in regard to his personal cleanliness are two very important steps which the army affords for the civilization of the Indian. In this first step toward civilization he gains a certain amount of self-respect and a desire to be more like good white men. As a soldier he is obediant to the minutest detail.

"Intemperance is not more common among the Indians than among the whites. I am confident that if the companies now enlisted are given the same amount of drill and individual training as the white men there can be no question as to the result. The Indian wants to become civilized, and I feel that there is no better way to civilize the Indian than by making a soldier of him. If these men are turned back to roam about their reservation they will become discontented and there is no telling what may result from such a measure."

Although many, like Mr. Beecher, were supporters of the Indian soldiers, the project began to fail, and company after company of Indian soldiers were discharged. Company I of the 21st Infantry was transferred to Fort Omaha just before Fort Sidney was abandoned in June, 1894. By 1895, Troop L of the 7th Cavalry was the last Indian unit in the US Army until it was finally discharged in 1897. Although the Indian Company was short-lived, it demonstrated an attempt on the part of the Army to improve Indian-white relations in the post-Indian War period. — *Pre-*

pared by Tom Buecker, Curator of Neligh Mills, Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society.

SOLAR POWER NEBRASKA

SOLAR POWER was recieving formal attention in Nebraska as early as 1915, newspaper files in the Nebraska State Historical Society show. Lincoln was one of three sites in the country (along with Madison, Wisconsin, and Washington, DC) at which small government installations kept daily scientific records of the sun's intensity. The August 15, 1915 issue of the *Sunday State Journal* (Lincoln) described the purpose and nature of Lincoln's early research into solar power and even speculated on its future potential:

"The United States Weather Bureau decided a few years ago to get down to the real cause of the weather. The department already had plenty of instruments for measuring rainfall and the direction of the winds ... but that was not enough, for these instruments shed no light on the real cause of weather. Weather, the officials argued, was caused in the very first place by the sun. Without Old Sol, they declared, it would be impossible to have such things as rain or winds.

"Way up above the tree tops at the state farm, on the very top of the experiment station hall is a little glass bulb, set on a steel plate and connected by wires with the station located down below. Inside of this bulb are little squares, two black and two white, the black and white squares alternating ... This is the apparatus that takes care of the sun's rays as they fall down on the top of this building.

"When the current from these little plates is received by the instrument downstairs, the excess current from the white squares overflows so to speak — and moves the pen across the white paper recording the difference in electric impulses from the two squares and consequently the difference in heat. From this sheet of paper covered with zig-zag lines the operator can compute the day's work of the sun.

"On a hot day last July the instrument recorded heat energy of over one horsepower per square yard. Multiply this by 10,000 approximatley the number of square yards in a block, and you have something like 10,000 horsepower going to waste in every city block in Lincoln. Divide this up among some twenty property owners in the block and every housewife in the city would have enough power to do the washing, ironing, light the house and run the automobile. [There were some electric cars then.]

"Probably the biggest idea in connection with the new work is the thought that maybe, somehow or other, a practical use for the sun's heat may be found. Perhaps some day the people will be talking about conserving the sunbeams while some greedy corporation is turning them into electric power at the expense of the community. Who knows?" — **Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.**

HOMESTEADERS' BEEF

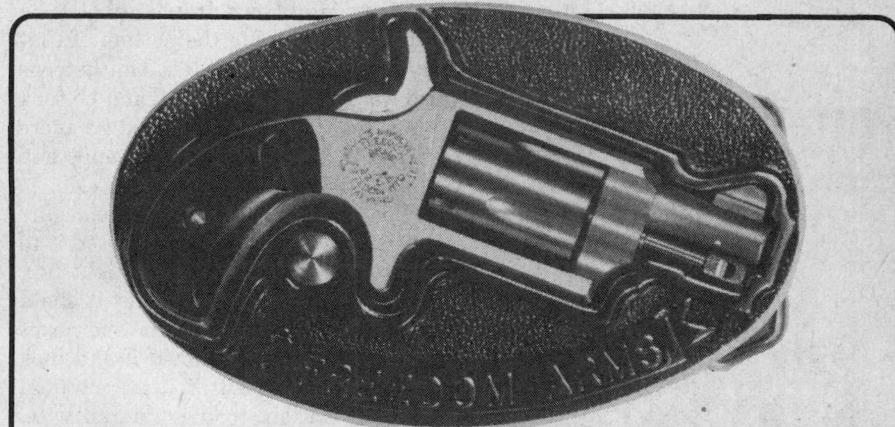
By Bill Cellers

MANY homesteaders found the going far from easy. Dry years arrived when about all they raised was a big dust. And since homesteaders had to eat, when they became too hungry their honesty could fly window. It was suspected that more than one butchered a beef with some rancher's brand on it to feed himself or his family.

In my part of the country, northeastern Wyoming, the tale of such a butchering was told to a few of us in a ranch bunkhouse by an old-time character, Hugh Lyle. He was part Indian and ran a few head of cattle and horses. To keep tabs on them he did considerable riding of the open range. I may as well admit what everyone in the country more than suspected old Lyle. He had no scruples against butchering some big rancher's beef for his own use, nor was he averse to rustling a few horses when he thought he could get away with it. Here's his tale.

"I WAS out a-riding crost the range one day in late November, when I happened to ride over top of a little ridge, and right down in the draw on the other side, 'bout sixty-seventy yards away, I spied a man and woman working over a beef they was a-butchering. And I knowed shore as God made little green apples it wasn't theirs but some big rancher's.

"If I'd of seen them first 'thout them a-seeing me I'd of ducked back out of sight and took a sawshay clear around 'em. But no such luck. They seen me 'bout the same time I seen them. I knowed if I'd turned and rode clear around 'em after they'd seen me they'd of up and pulled their freight outa there



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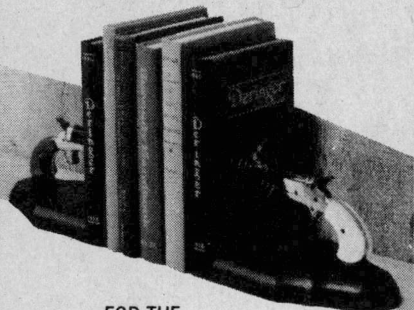

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the minute I was outa sight, and woulda left that beef carcass a-laying there in that draw for wolves and coyotes to feed on. An' I shore didn't want 'em to waste it thataway.

"When they first seen me, the man he jumped 'bout three feet off the ground and the woman, poor soul, she froze there with her face whiter'n the blaze in my ol' Nig's forehead. Even if I hadn't knowed no difference that woulda told me they was butchering a rustled beef.

"Caught thataway they wasn't nothing for me to do but ride down to 'em as unconcerned as I could, like I thought what they was a-doing was plumb honest and nothing wrong about it. When I got down to 'em I give 'em a big, friendly smile and tipped my hat to the woman and said to 'em, 'Howdy, folks. I see you're butchering one of your beefs for your winter's meat. Shore's a heap nice-looking piece of meat, all right.'

"By that time I'd stepped down off ol' Nig, and I pulled a bottle of whiskey outa my coat pocket I always carried with me in case of snake bites, and handing it to the man I said real friendly-like, 'Care to have a little drink?' He was able to squeak out a stammered yes, and he glommed onto that bottle like it was his long, lost friend. But his hands was a-shaking so bad I was afraid he'd drop that bottle on some of the rocks in the bottom of that dry draw and bust it all to smithereens and waste it. But he didn't, and he took a big, healthy snort of it. And he shore needed it to quiet his shaky hands and all-shot-to-hell nerves.

"Soon as he passed it back, managing a squeaky little, 'Thanks,' I passed it to the woman, not wanting to slight her, woman or not, and asked her it she'd like to have one on me too. She never even hesitated but grabbed it and took 'bout as big a snort of it as her man done. I took 'em to be man and wife. And I'll bet my bottom dollar that was the first drink of whiskey that poor woman ever took in her born days. Knowed it from the way the man looked at her kind of slaunchways outa the corner of his eyes from where he'd resumed trying to butcher out 'their' beef. He hadn't yet come outa his fright enough for him to git his hands steady so he could do the job.

"After the woman give me the bottle back and nodded me a thanks I shoved it back in my coat pocket then took out my pocket knife and opened it and begun helping 'em with their skinning and dressing out the beef they'd laid claim to. And all this time I'd had my tongue busy, but not overdoing it so it would sound like I was putting it on, to kind of put 'em at ease and give 'em to understand I was in sympathy with 'em and they didn't have nothing to worry 'bout me squealing on 'em none for butchering some big rancher's beef for their winter's meat. A big AU7 brand on the critter told me who the owner was. But he could well afford it; he run several thousand head on free grass.

"This couple, this man and woman, didn't open up and talk no more'n they thought they had to 'cept enough to be halfway friendly-like.

"Soon as we got the beef all gutted out and skinned to where I knowed I couldn't be of more help to 'em I put my pocket knife back in my pocket and took out my bottle of whiskey and give 'em both another drink which they wasn't slow in taking. And after I'd forked my bronc to pull my freight the last words I said to 'em was, 'Now, you folks be sure and take good care of that there beef of your'n. Soon as it's froze hard as a rock it'll keep outside all winter. But it's best to keep it in a shed or a building of some kind.'

"I didn't know either one of 'em from Adam's off-ox. But there was a homestead shack 'bout a mile and a half or two miles from there I took to be theirs. And I hope they took care of that beef and made good use of it. It was too good a piece of meat for wolves and coyotes to fight over. And I'm sure they did."

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Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 9)

known as Slim. He came from North Dakota to Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, Canada. In 1929 he moved to Prendergast, Saskatchewan where he met my grandmother, Elza Jane Nickerson, a widow from Nova Scotia. He married her in 1937 and they lived there on a homestead until he died in 1948 from cancer. She then moved to Nelson, British Columbia where she died in 1966.

Harvey Farrell was the only grandfather I ever knew and the information will go in a book being written about the early settlers of that district. — Mrs. L. Hobson, 1516 Smith Avenue, Coquitlam, B.C., Canada V3J 2Y3.

Watts

I would like information concerning my great-great-grandfather, William Douglas Watts, who was listed in the first U.S. census in Shelby County, Kentucky. He had several children, one of whom was Jacob. I would like to know where he came from and anything else that concerns him. All letters will be answered and postage refunded. — Gus Watts, E. 9907 Wellesley, Spokane, Washington 99206.

Tyford — Thyford — Thuyford

His daughter wishes to locate her real father, who she has never seen. He was first known to me in Kansas City, Missouri sixteen years ago. He went to Florida for some time, then came to San Bernardino, California where he worked as a body and fender repairer for Sievers & Ray Oldsmobile on North E. Street. He left and was seen in Kansas City shortly after. He was separated from his wife and had two little boys with him who would be in their teens now. I do not remember their names. I am his daughter's grandfather. George C. Benson, 9472 Verdugo Avenue, Hesperia, California 92345.

Dusenberry

I am seeking descendants of James Dusenberry and his wife Mary E. Dusenberry, whose last known residence was Grant County, Indiana in 1879. James Dusenberry was born in Bedford Township, Coshocton County, Ohio around 1835. He was a son of Henry and Rebecca Dusenberry. James served in the Civil War, was discharged in 1865, returned to Ohio and then went to Indiana. Please write if you have information. — John Dusenberry, 35831CR99, Warsaw, Ohio 43844.

Vineyard

About 1924 I stayed with a family near Stonewall, Oklahoma. Their name was Vineyard — Viola, Ida, Ruth, Mary, Arlie, Charlie, and Clarence. I would like to hear from a member of this family or anyone who knows their present address. — James E. London, 6400 Wurzbach Rd., Apt. 408, San Antonio, Texas 78240.

I would like to hear from some old friends. I met Bill (Doc) Myers in Texarkana in 1934 and we came to California together. He had a sister named Goldie and lived in Huntington Park,

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California.

I would also like to hear from Edward C. Anderson who was in the Pacific in 1944 during World War II. He was from Lynwood and Los Angeles, California. And I would like to hear from my cousins, Ed McCoy, Della Pence, and May Chronister who lived at Bunch, Oklahoma in 1932. — Lloyd S. McCoy, 7001 Perry Road, Bell Gardens, California 90201.

Treva Richardson

I am seeking information on my husband's sister, Treva Richardson and his mother, Jennie Richardson Sexton, who lived in Oronogo, Missouri. My husband's father was Clarence Richardson, a miner. Due to a broken home my husband lost track of them fifty-five years ago. Treva would be seventy-two years old now. We do not know her married name. The last contact we had with her was in Joplin, Missouri. — Mrs. Clyde Bryant Richardson, 1717 No. Harvand, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74115.

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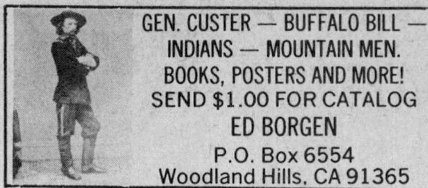

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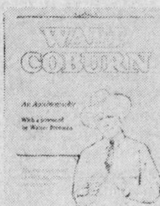

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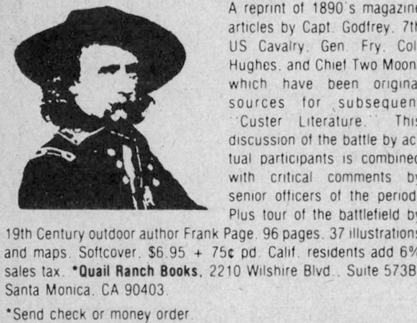

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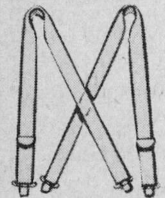

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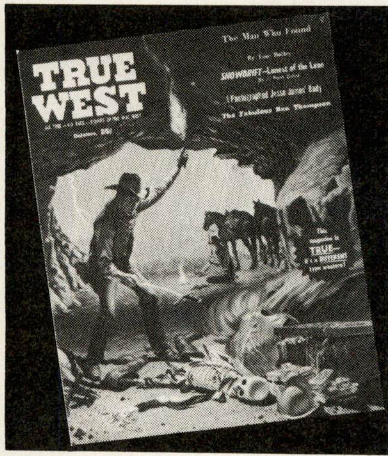

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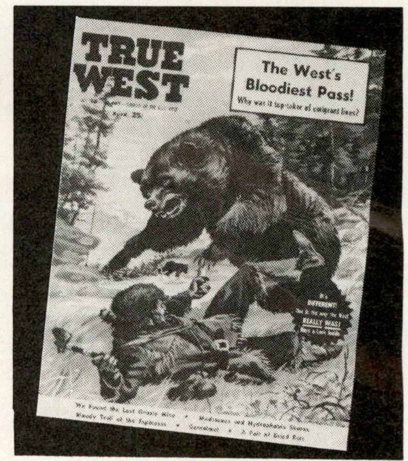

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