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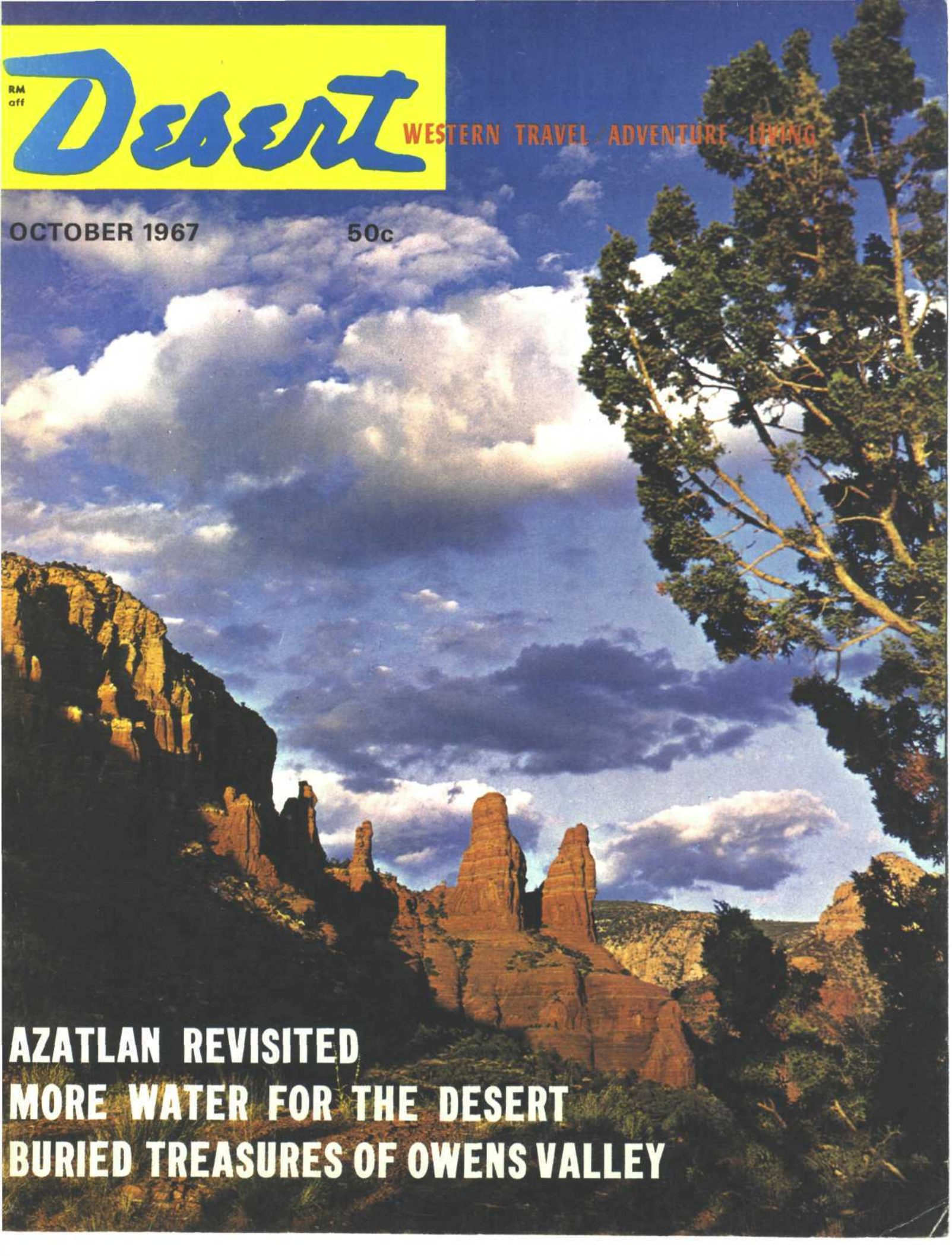

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Desert

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THE COVER

Arizona's Oak Creek Canyon, on U.S. Alternate 89 south of Flagstaff, is an artists and photographers paradise with the colors changing during the day and throughout the seasons. Don Valentine, Los Angeles, took the cover photograph near the picturesque community of Sedona.

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New Books for Desert Readers

Books reviewed may be ordered from the DESERT Magazine Book Order Department, Palm Desert, California 92260. Please include 25c for handling. California residents must add 5% sales tax. Enclose payment with order.

NUNO de GUZMAN and the Province of Panuco in New Spain
By Donald E. Chipman

Nuno de Guzman ranks second only to Cortes in importance in the conquest of New Spain. Here, for the first time in any language, appears a broad study of Guzman's part in the government of the tropical and agricultural regions of east central Mexico.

The native population at this time (1518-1533) consisted primarily of the Huastecs, a race whose language reflected a cultural affiliation at some early date with the Maya peoples of Yucatan and Central America. They had successfully resisted the Aztecs and at the time of Spanish contact enjoyed a fairly advanced civilization. In this book, for the first time, a study of the Huastecs is set forth in detail.

Although Guzman's reputation has suffered with historical evaluation, the author discovered from evidence revealed in Guzman's trial that in comparison with the governmental practices of his contemporaries, Guzman has been unfairly condemned. In addition to this, little-known and interesting material relative to the early occupation and exploration of central Mexico is described. Hard cover, 322 pages, $9.50.

MIRACLE HILL
By Emerson Blackhorse Mitchell and T. D. Allen

Any number of scholars and traders have written about the Navahos, but here, at last, a Navaho writes about himself. Written loosely, as the Navaho boy's teacher and guide, Mrs. Allen, described his style, this book is a "primitive" documenting the life of a Navaho Indian boy from the time he is born in a hogan until he comes of age and attempts to enter the white man's world. It is slow moving and details much insignificant conversation in order to expose the thought processes and interpretations the Navaho gives to the white man's vocabulary. For serious students of the Navaho today, the book will have value, but it is not especially entertaining for the casual reader. Hardcover, 230 pages, $5.95.

LATEST AZTEC DISCOVERIES
By Guy E. Powell

Scholars, archaeologists and treasure hunters have nourished theories about the mysterious Aztec homeland called Azatlan ever since the Spanish conquest of New Spain. Here is a new theory presented by a Texan which suggests it might have once existed in an ancient lake bed in east Texas. The author has turned up a lot of evidence to support his claim. He has found artifacts and petroglyphs and topographical patterns which seem to fit the Aztec legend that described their land of origin. Step by step he traces their migration, until he concludes with the discovery of a land map drawn on an ancient cave wall that virtually duplicates a post-conquest Aztec painting displayed in the American Museum of Natural History.

Whether or not you buy this writer's theory or lean toward one of the many which have been presented by other writers, the book will interest other amateur archaeologists. The author refers to "petroglyphs" as "pictographs" and blithely deciphers them, a liberty professionals do not assume, but no one can prove Azatlan is not in east Texas, so he is operating on fairly safe ground. Hard cover, 78 pages, many illustrations. $4.95.

THUNDER GODS GOLD
By Barry Storm

Under the title "Thunder God's Gold—The Mountains That Were God" Barry Storm has published a revised edition of his original book "Thunder Gods Gold which he wrote in 1945. Dealing with the Lost Dutchman and the Peralta Mines in the famed Arizona Superstition Mountains, the original book caused a great deal of controversy and no doubt the revised edition will also.

PICK FOR '67 FROM THE **BEST** IN FULL COLOR
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A Joyous Yule — Heap on more wood!.. we'll keep our Christmas merry, etc. — **Harvey**

From the Two of Us — to you and all you hold dear, a Joyous Yule and New Year — **FitzSimmons**

God's Candlesticks — May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace, etc. — **Lowdermilk**

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On The Roadrunner Route — Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for all the Year — **Tilton**

"And there were shepherds..." — May the Spirit of Christmas Abide With You all the Year — **Stahley**

Desert Glow — May the warmth ... of the Christmas Season be with you all the Year — **Penney**

A Home Tested Recipe, etc. — Christmas Joy... and Happiness the whole year through — **Nicles**

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Benediction over Evening Seas — May the Peace & Joy of Christmas be with you all Year — **Moreton**

Memories of a Frontier Christmas — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year — **Wilson**

Christmas Candles — May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you all the Year — **Lau**

A New Friend for Christmas — May the warmth ...of Christmas be with you all the Year — **Lee**

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Books

There have been dozens of books written about the Lost Dutchman and Peralta Mines, many of them by authors who have never been in the Superstition Mountains. Barry Storm has hiked through and camped in the rugged area which has claimed many lives. He has devoted many years to search and research and goes into great detail relative to maps, markers and other clues. However, like most dedicated lost fortune hunters, he has his definite opinions, albeit the Lost Dutchman is still lost.

In the revised edition he has used most of his old pictures, but has added two new maps and admits he was mistaken on some of his original conclusions. Unfortunately he has wasted some pages on his emotional diatribe against a motion picture company which years ago made a picture based on his book. DESERT Magazine takes no stand on stormy Barry Storm, or his book, but would be remiss if we did not review the latest on the Lost Dutchman. Paperback, 85 pages, $3.00.

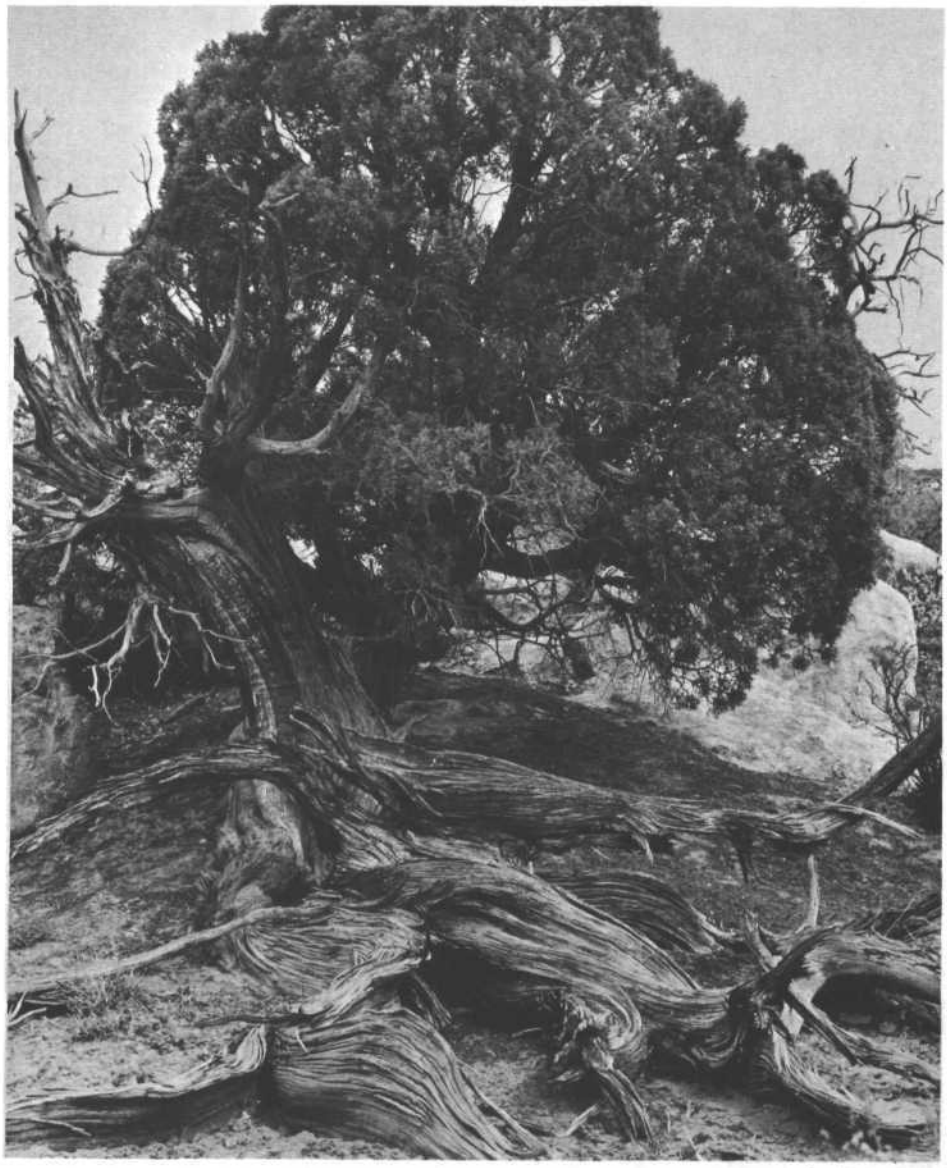
PIRATES ON THE WEST COAST OF NEW SPAIN

By Peter Gerhard

Little has been written of the piracy, buccaneering and privateering on Mexico's west coast, but between 1575 and 1742 it was big business. From the Pacific shores of Panama north to the Californias, pirates such as Drake, Cavendish, Hawkins, Dampier and scores of others focused upon the China-Acapulco trade routes of the Pacific and often successfully acquired loot at the expense of Spain.

In detailing landing sites, towns, fortifications and harbor facilities from Panama to Baja California, the author has included material from the *Archiva General de Indias* in Seville and other sources which has never before been published. Armchair treasure seekers can have a lot of fun with this book, as can collectors of the early history of New Spain.

This is not a new book. It was released in 1960, but this reviewer recently came upon it and considers it worthy of mention for history buffs who may have missed it earlier. Hardcover, 274 pages, $8.50.



The Western Juniper

by Vern Crawford

ALTHOUGH IT ranges from central Washington to southern California, the Western Juniper *(Juniperus occidentalis)*, also called Sierra Juniper, spreads its most extensive forests in a region located roughly between the cities of Bend and Burns in east central Oregon.

From the Cascade foothills, where also grow Ponderosa and Lodgepole Pines, the Sierra Juniper spreads eastward onto the dry, lava-sealed plateau that stretches toward Idaho. This plateau is the result of two great outpourings of molten lava in past ages. The first, known world-wide as Columbia River Basalt, engulfed and buried much of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho during the Miocene epoch, about 20 million years ago. The other, smaller, appeared within the last 10 million years. The result today is a rocky, sandy plateau broken here and there by rivers that still gnaw channels through mountains that once stood as islands in the flowing seas of lava. It is dry country with an elevation of 3500 feet. The shining Cascades deter moist winds that blow inland from the Pacific Ocean, creating to the eastward what weathermen call a "rain shadow." Five to twenty inches of rain a year is normal in the land of junipers.

On the side of one of these islands that held its head above the ancient floods of molten lava lies a nearly flat area several miles across and covered with

junipers. This is a juniper forest. Unlike most forests, however, it is open and sparse due to the lack of rainfall. Stocky and bushy, the trees are not over 30 feet high and usually only 15 to 20 feet high. Between the trees grow sagebrush, rabbitbrush, bitterbrush, bunchgrass and, in season, wildflowers. Beneath the trees is exposed the bare sand and rock, littered by a slowly building mat of plant debris.

There is no other tree species here—except at much higher elevations—for no other tree can survive the extremes in weather. Many of these old, weatherworn trees are nearly dead, their limbs and trunks starkly white against their foliage. Olive-green needles of adult trees are sticky with resin, and the living portions of the trunks are clothed with shaggy gray-brown bark which in many of the older trees is twisted like a barber pole. Unlike the olive-green adults, young trees are of an unusual blue-green color and instead of stubby, round needles, theirs are short and prickly.

The blue juniper berry.

The berries are the cones of junipers. Resembling a pea, they are light-blue in color, a result of a thin blue film or "bloom" that is powdered over the dark skin of the berry. Birds and mammals eat the berries because the skin is sweet; Indians used them for the same reason.

Two other parts of the tree are often mistaken for cones. One is a scaly, green, urn-shaped structure about three-quarters of an inch long which hides a surprise in its core: a small white worm! This is an insect gall. It grew around an egg which a female insect deposited on the foliage. When the worm inside matures, it will fly away as an adult and lay eggs of its own, which cause new galls on other junipers.

The other structures mistaken for cones are small brown organs about one-eighth of an inch long which are scattered over the foliage. Sometimes they are so thick the tree appears brown instead of green. These are male pollen producers. Usually they form only on male trees, but some trees have both male pollen producers and female berries. Tiny sacs inside these organs become packed with golden-yellow pollen powder. When ripe, the pollen is released to the air with such suddeness that the trees appear to explode in a cloud of gold dust. Each pollen grain is carried away by the wind, perhaps to alight on an undeveloped berry which it will fertilize. Thus begins a new generation of junipers.

Mule deer and pronghorn antelope frequent the junipers, as well as coyotes, bobcats, and porcupine. Badgers, gophers, mice, and chipmunks also make this land their home. In the sky are bald and golden eagles, vultures and ravens. Magpies here are even more noisy than jays, and flocks of chattering bushtits create their own little din. Other song birds in the juniper forests are Townsend's Solitaire, flickers, robins, bluebirds, wrens, and even an occasional warbler. Underfoot are swifts and horned toads (two kinds of lizards), scorpions, large black beetles and, near water, rattlesnakes.

Many a huge burned-out stump was set afire long ago by lightning, but they are hard to kill. Junipers grow so slowly that many more growth rings are concealed within their trunks than within the trunks of other trees, such as fir and oak. Along its dead limbs often grows a chartreuse tinted lichen which the Indians once used as a source of dye. After a rain these branches are especially beautiful and are popular for table and floral displays.

Unusually resistant to decay, juniper wood is in demand for fence posts. Rarely is it cut into lumber, however, for it is too twisted and full of knots. For firewood its flames are hot and its smoke is fragrant. Fortunately, there is enough dead wood around Oregon's juniper forests to make this one of the most attractive places to camp in the west. □

Desert area near Reno is site of early toll bridge.

A Look at Nevada's Toll Roads

by Doris Cerveri

BEFORE THE great mass of humanity started across the plains to California's gold fields, animal trails or Indian paths usually established cross-country routes. Crude maps of the 1860s and '70s were not too reliable. Often a route changed a dozen times in as many years.

A tremendous change occurred, however, with the urgent demand for supplies and heavy machinery needed at new settlements. Later, when cumbersome prairie schooners and hundreds of travelers on horseback and afoot started the long trek over barren stretches of desert and across precipitous mountains, good roads connecting main routes of travel were no longer something to dream about. They became an absolute necessity.

In remote sections they often were constructed in novel ways. Black powder was used to make cuts through some rock sections, stone walls were constructed as guard rails and stones were used as bridge supports and as fill for large sections. Used extensively was hand drilling in rock cuts, with water poured into holes at night in order to freeze and break large sections loose. Most roads were constructed without the use of modern grading equipment. Remarkably effective for their time, these roads stood up under millions of tons of freight transported over them and some are still passable.

Bridges were constructed from local pinon and cedar trees and often masses of sagebrush, tree limbs and rocks filled up an otherwise impassable wet area. Usually ravines and washes were bypassed due to the tremendous labor of even a small fill. Sagebrush was used to bolster sandy roads, such as the toll road from Winnemucca to Paradise Valley, which ran for about 15 miles across shifting sands.

As time passed, enterprising individuals conceived the money-making scheme of developing a system of toll roads even before there was a legislature to legalize such action. Fierce competition ensued as toll gates were established wherever there was a chance to intercept pony express riders, passing teams, or emigrants on the move. Prices were not excessive. Revenue was based on the following fees:

One wagon and one span of horses, or one yoke of cattle, $2.00.

Each additional animal, 25c; empty team returning, half price.

Buggy and one horse, $1.50.

Man on horseback, 50c; each pack animal both ways, 25c.

Loose animals 12½c, often only 10c.

Soon legislation was passed to grant toll road franchises to responsible individuals who were required to keep their roads in good repair. Later further legislation enabled owners of roads already constructed or in the process of construction to collect tolls at such rates as established by commissioners of a county through which the road ran. According to Mark Twain, the legislature sat for 60 days and passed many franchises before they were able to carry on with the rest of the state's business. When they adjourned, it was estimated that every citizen owned about three franchises.

Above: Old Kingsbury Grade was the site of the first toll road from Carson Valley to Lake Tahoe. Right: Lake's Crossing, later named Reno, in June 1862. Photo shows the Lake house and toll bridge. Nevada Historical Society.

Occasionally there were shooting incidents or a display of fisticuffs when drivers of teams refused to pay toll. However, the law provided for such characters, those not willing to pay a fee were fined in court not less than $10, nor more than $100 plus court costs. Anyone destroying a bridge or gate over a toll road was fined not less than $25, nor more than $500 and costs. All fines were turned over to the company.

During this period Reno was an important station on the great overland route of travel. At a point where the Truckee River could be forded, a man named Fuller built a wooden bridge about 1860, secured his franchise and collected toll. This bridge served until 1862 when a flood destroyed it. In 1863, M. C. Lake built another bridge, calling his toll road "Lake's Crossing." Four years later, high waters again damaged the bridge and it had to be rebuilt. The place was then renamed "Reno" in honor of General Jesse Reno.

Jack Goodwin, an unreliable character living in the Truckee Meadows area, usually had no money to cross the Lake Bridge. Whenever he did have a few dollars, however, he concocted a scheme to avoid paying toll. A favorite trick was to run his horse full speed down past the County Court House and across the bridge. Once Dan Pine, the toll collector, rushed after him, shouting for him to halt. Jack supposedly yelled back, "Can't stop now. Can't you see my horse is running away?"

After the Central Pacific Railroad was completed to Reno, the bridge was declared free by the county commissioners, which no doubt took all the pleasure out of Goodwin's wild rides.

Another amusing incident occurred about 1857 when John F. Stone and Chas. Gates established a point on the Truckee River called Glendale. Heavy rope for ferrying across the bridge was ordered out of Sacramento. By the time it was freighted over the Sierras by mule team and delivered at Glendale, it cost a whopping $50. One day Stone attempted to cross the river with Gates plying the feed rope on the other end. Trouble started when the rope developed a kink. Stone yelled, "Cut the damn rope, pal." Withdrawing a small hatchet from his belt, Gates did just that. As soon as the cut was made, he realized he had cut his half interest on the rope. Business was pretty slow after that as the rope was difficult and expensive to replace.

One of the first important toll roads in Nevada was the Kingsbury passage over the mountains to Lake Tahoe. This steep, winding dirt route operated by D. D. Kingsbury and James M. McDonald commenced west of Carson City and extended to the eastern boundary of the California state line. Toll dodgers continued to use the Clear Creek Road to Lake Tahoe to avoid paying tolls. Several miles from this area was the famous Clear Creek Station, and to the west was Rufus Walton's toll road leading to Lake Bigler (Tahoe). Toll was collected here from weary emigrants and a wagon yard and blacksmith shop serviced the Pony Express, as well as rendering service to freight teams and stage coaches. The Overland Telegraph Line also passed this point.

The famous turnpike road over which freight was hauled during Virginia City's boom days was the one from Virginia City to Steamboat Valley. Seven men held a franchise for this route which they built two rods wide on each side. It was such an outstanding thoroughfare for its time that legislation was passed prohibiting freight teams and loose stock. The route was proclaimed a Pleasure Road and was for buggies or pleasure riding only. Roads to the north and west of historic Virginia City are extremely interesting to the week-end explorer today because they remain in practically the same condition as when they were abandoned following the construction of railroads.

Another heavily traveled road passed over the route from Carson City to Half Way House about six miles, skirting the foothills on the west of Old Empire City. In the same area, heavy teams carrying lumber, mining machinery, and other

supplies came into Virginia City daily. Despite a shortage of water, some of the dirt roads were sprinkled during the dry season to keep down the dust. The old stage road from Genoa (Mormon Station) to Carson City, also an emigrant road, was later taken over, improved, and made a toll road by the Gillette Stage Company.

The quaint little town of Carson City, named after famous guide Kit Carson, occupies an important niche in the state's history. It was at one time a division point on the Pony Express route, and also either a terminal or important division point for seven toll roads, five telegraph lines, and distributing point for cut lumber and timber from early saw mills. Located on the main route of the Overland Trail, it served, too, as the central supply line for various mining districts.

From early days, Dayton miners and prospectors toiled up the Gold Canyon toll road in their search for gold. Records of 1861 indicate that there was a toll station at Dayton and another at the divide to the south of Virginia City. Near Dayton, too, a toll road was established which extended all the way to Fort Churchill. Samuel S. Buckland, early day pioneer, constructed an important stage station and toll bridge on the Carson River contiguous to Fort Churchill. This toll bridge, the first one built over the river below Carson Valley, was in constant use until about 1865, when it was replaced by one owned by a toll company.

In emigrant days a toll bridge was built across a portion of the Carson Sink at Stillwater, a small community numbering 44 persons. Shortly afterward, an unchartered temperance organization appeared in town. Three different pledges were offered to erring souls; a tobacco abstinence, a whiskey abstinence, or a total abstinence pledge. Needless to say, nobody took a single pledge nor accepted the whole package. Stillwater today is still a small town where a few Indians live. It is also a favorite duck hunting spot.

Although little evidence of their existence can be uncovered now, all the toll roads crossing mountains and valleys and over Nevada's various rivers contributed to the development, romance, and historic development of the state. In their places are million-dollar highways with four or more lanes of travel, but if you pull off onto a side road in some of these locations and dig into nearby ravines, you can often recover an old bottle or relic dumped near the homesite of the taker of the toll. □

AZATLAN REVISITED

by Stanley Demes

THE STORY of the Aztecs is a piquant blend of fact and legend. Imagine Cortez's wonder when he rode through the great capital of the Aztec empire. Here were extensive arsenals, granaries, warehouses, an aviary for exotic birds. Blending into the blue horizon were gorgeous temples where captives were sacrificed, their bodies dressed as food, and devoured at religious festivals. There was even a public library.

But facts of beauty and luxurious power could not endure in the wake of Castilian conquerors. Allied with the Tlaxcalans, the men from Spain tore down the Aztec dreamland. They substituted a new religion, and despotic ruin.

The most interesting legend in the Aztec tradition is the story of their Aztlan homeland. A will-o'-the-wisp, the location of this legendary land has stirred men's minds since the end of the conquest. Many theories have been advanced as to the location of Aztlan. These theories have proven interesting for a time, but all in the end have lain fallow; there is simply no proof. Time has covered the wispy migration trail of the Aztecs as effectively as daylight sweeping away dreams.

I wish to present here a new migration theory over which I have long pondered. It is as tenable as any I have seen, perhaps more so.

Legend tells us that ancient Aztlan was a land of seven caves in the extreme north or northwest. In them lived seven ancient tribes of Nahuatl-speaking peoples, the Aztecs. Theirs was a bright land; a white land surrounded by mountains. In the center of this fabled land loomed Colhuacan, the sacred mountain. The *Boturini Codex* tells us of an island in a lake where extensive marshlands proved a happy homeland for cranes and other types of waterbirds. Occasionally the Aztecs would leave their island home and canoe to the mainland. There the *Altacachichimecas,* as these Aztecs were known by their contemporaries, would pay grudging tribute to the *Aztlanecas,* who owned their island and its environs. One day, some authorities say, the Aztecs decided to free themselves from their onerous vassalage. First, the Xochimelcas left their caves, followed soon after by the Chalcas. Then the Tecpanec and Colhua peoples crossed the lake. Some moons after followed the Tlalheuca and the Tlaxcalans. Finally, the Aztecs left their giant cave, their hearts tuned to an eventual rendezvous with a glorious destiny. Other authorities feel that the Aztec migration began as a result of earthquakes. These earthquakes supposedly loosened rocks of varying sizes upon the heads of the cave dwellers. A superstitious people, the Aztecs felt that nature was at war with them. So they fled the malign influence; however, their awe of earthquakes (rockslides) was to play an im-

Islands rise from the Great Salt Lake, possibly the site of ancient Azatlan of Aztec legend.

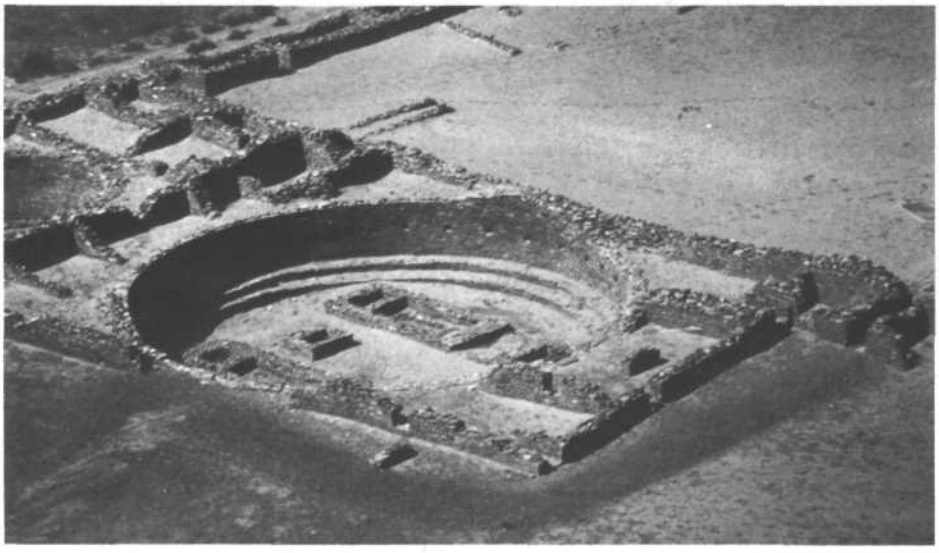
portant part in the development later of their unique calendar.

There is probably no one reason for the removal of the Aztecs from their beloved homeland. Their exodus stemmed from hatred of serfdom, rockslides, and their own restless spirits in which buds of violence and human sacrifice were beginning to nurture.

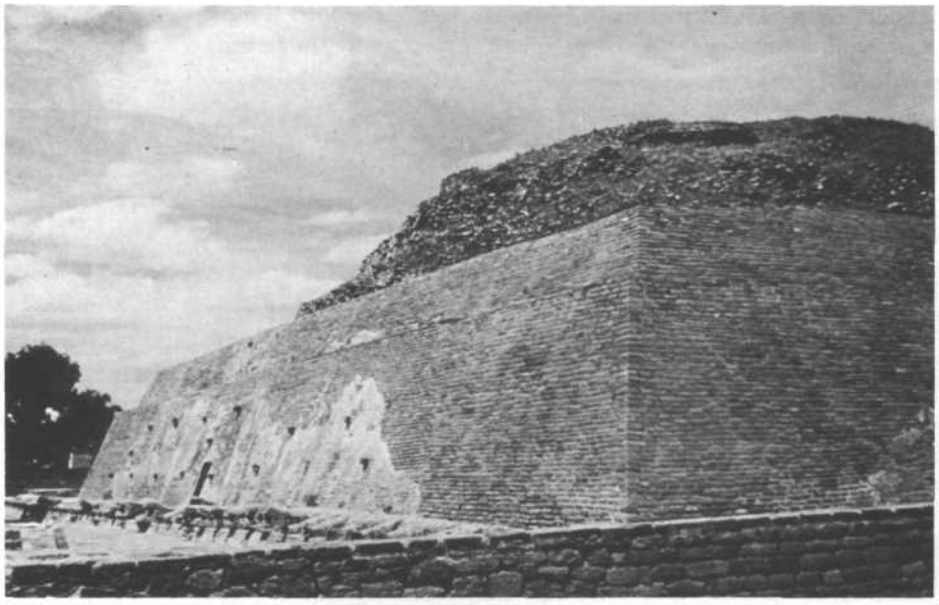
Many localities purport to be Aztlan, ancient homeland of the Aztecs. Ralph Caine presents a good case for the Superstition Mountain in Imperial County, California (DESERT, 1965). George Vaillant believes the Aztecs originated in the Mexican state of Michoacan. Edgar Lee Hewett suggests the "Seven Caves" region of Chihuahua as the likely locality. He is seconded by the eminent Spanish historian, Fray Sahugun. Bancroft and Prescott trumpet for Utah. New Mexico has its adherents. Acosta, the Spanish historian who came to Mexico in 1585, states that the Aztecs "came from far countries which lie to the north where they have discovered a kingdom called New Mexico." Few people espouse Arizono as Aztlan. The Aztecs do not have a Kachina legend. More importantly, the descendants of the ancient Arizonians still frequent the same locality today. In addition, the Zuni didn't learn the art of working silver until the 19th century. Since Aztec legends tell us that Quetzecoatl, their plumed serpent God, worked with silver, we probably can safely eliminate Arizona as the starting place of the Aztec migration. I say this with reluctance. Arizona has magnificent pueblos that makes eyes dance with delight.

Another problem: the pueblo builders of the Southwest were a peaceful tribe. Is it logical to assume that their descendants could assume the role of ferocious warriors dedicated to plunder and human sacrifice? I think the affirmative. Pueblo legends tell of grisly human sacrifice. While the historical record does not indicate such barbarious conduct, we must respect legend; it usually has a basis in fact. Further, Pueblo Indians migrating south of the Rio Grande could not remain peaceful and unwarlike. They had to meet the onslaught of the savage Chichamec cannibals who lived a primitive life in the barrancas of northern Mexico.

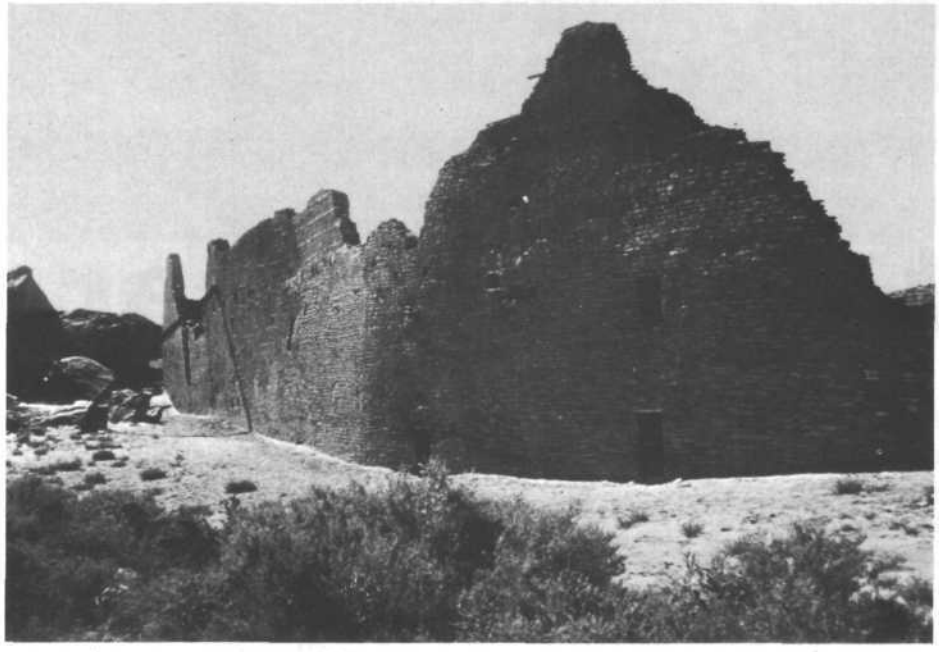
An old story believed by a few contemporary Spanish American historians states that the Aztecs were not always a savage and aggressive people. Their descent into barbarism took place because of the trickery of their high priests. The Aztecs on their migration had dammed a river and developed a flourishing agricultural community. In fact, so rich was their life,



Above: The great Kiva at Pueblo Bonito.



Above: Tenayuca Pyramid (Aztec) near Mexico City. Below: Four-story "apartment" dwelling in Chaco Canyon.



the rank and file Aztec was not going to migrate any further. However, the priests of their War God, *Huitzelopochlli,* tore out in secret the hearts of the most troublesome rebels. Afterwards, they told the people that their War God was displeased with their complacent life. So, the dam they built was broken, and the waters swept their former course. The corn died, the rushes died, and the herons and other waterbirds flew away. The Aztec commenced their migration once more towards their destiny in the valley of the eagle and the serpent. Henceforth, many hearts would be torn out to feed and propitiate an angry God.

Nor does the absence of the pyramid in the architectural repertoire of the Pueblo makers of the Southwest rule out the possibility that descendants of ancient pueblo tribes became the historically famous Aztecs. Historians of every age attribute a great deal of intelligence to the Aztec peoples. In the latter stage of their great migration they would have seen the enormous pyramids and richly embellished temples of the Toltecs. And, like the Hyksos, the shepherd kings who conquered Egypt, the Aztecs could acquire advanced technology by learning from the nations they had subjugated.

Let us consider for a moment the region about Superstition Mountain in California's Imperial County. Could this be the location of Aztlan? Ralph Caine (DESERT, Dec. 1965) argues eloquently for the affirmative. He points out that in the northeast side of the Superstition Mountain there is a tremendous cave. Although the entrance to the cave has been buried under the wind-shifted sands of the Colorado desert, Caine believes that long ago the ancient Aztecs lived there. To prove his point, he asserts that there is a limitless quantity of shells to be found in the area which suggests an Indian establishment of considerable importance. The geologist further argues that ancient Yuma legends tell of a caravan of warriors bearing Montezuma's treasure advancing in the direction of the great cave in the Superstition Mountain. Unfortunately, other localities have "treasure" legends of equal relevance.

Up until 1840, it is claimed, Indians living in the mountains near Pecos, New Mexico, kept a perpetual fire burning in a cave hallowed by Montezuma's dazzling treasure. The historian, Dobie, writes concerning two additional Aztec treasure horde locations; one, a cave in Sonora where Apaches ubiquitously stand guard, and the other near Del Rio where Montezuma's wealth is held to be buried some-

Continued on page 29

More Water for the Desert

BY ROBERT HYATT

THE United States has joined with Mexico in a dramatic plan to create a nuclear miracle that will change desert wastelands into areas of plenty. They are going to deluge the hot sands of northern Sonora and southern Arizona with fresh water from the sea.

Their blueprint calls for a massive desalting complex on the barren shores of the Gulf of California that will produce a billion gallons of fresh water daily—water purer than rain.

This plant, which will probably be the first of several nuclear-powered desalting installations along the Gulf, in Los Angeles, San Diego and elsewhere, will cost about $160 million. Both countries will share the cost as well as the water and power produced. The potential water output will be more than the entire state of Arizona uses daily, while the 1.5 million kilowatts of electricity generated daily will exceed the output of Hoover Dam.

Dr. Jack Hunter, head of the Office of Saline Water, U.S. Department of the Interior, told newsmen recently that this source of pure water and abundant electric power could transform the desert seacoasts of the world. He added that the cost of producing fresh water by nuclear power may soon be competitive with domestic irrigation projects. "What we're aiming for," he said, "is irrigation water at about 10c per 1000 gallons." Conventional desalting costs more than one dollar a thousand gallons, much too high.

Several sites for the plant are being considered in the Gulf area of Baja California, but it is believed that the world's largest desalting plant will be built near Santa Clara, about 75 miles south of Yuma. This is a good location since it is near Arizona's vast agricultural center, and California's Imperial Valley, also a whopping crop producer. From this location water could be piped at low cost to Mexicali, Yuma, and Southern California because the land is relatively flat.

For many months the University of Arizona has been making a study, under government auspices, involving the design and construction of the plant, farming and industrial changes resulting from the introduction of cheap water and electric power, tourism, fishing, and the possible changes to the ecology of the Gulf area when the discarded brine is returned after fresh water extraction.

Dr. Norman Hilberry, University of Arizona nuclear engineering professor and former director of the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago, said, "This is the biggest thing that has ever been dreamed of before. The electricity available will have as great an impact on industry as will the water."

Dr. Roy Post, nuclear scientist at the Arizona university, looks on the desalting project as a bonanza for the poor and desolate of the enormous area involved. "Wherever you have cheap water and power," he said, "you're going to see industry blossom." He cited as examples Grand Coulee Dam's effect on the economy of the Pacific Northwest and the growth of the Tennessee Valley under TVA.

According to engineers, the danger factor of a nuclear desalting plant is practically nil since the atomic portion of the complex is nothing more dangerous than a furnace. They claim there is positively no way for an explosion to occur.

Here are some interesting statistics about this proposed distillation plant. If it were strung out in a straight line it would cover an area the size of 33 football fields. However, for economy and ease of maintenance, the 1.5 million-square-foot complex will be built in the shape of a square or circle.

For every gallon of fresh water obtained, six gallons of sea water will have to be processed. That means that if one billion gallons of fresh water are produced each day, six billion gallons of ocean water will have to be pumped through the system.

To handle this huge volume of water, more than 200,000 miles of corrosion-resistant tubing, probably titanium, will be necessary to carry water and heat under pressure.

There will be several reactors to enable operators to shut one down for repairs or refueling without halting fresh water production. The reactors convert water into steam that turns back-pressure turbines and generators to produce electricity.

From the back-pressure turbines the steam, pressurized to 30 pounds per square inch at a temperature of 250 degrees, is run through a heat exchanger.

Pressurized sea water then is heated to just below the boiling point. In the first of a series of depressurization chambers, the steam pressure is dropped slightly, causing a portion of the sea water to flash into vapor.

The vapor rises until it meets pipes carrying cold sea water. Condensation takes place and the fresh water falls into pans, ready for storing and pumping wherever needed.

The hot sea water that has not evaporated at the initial stage is moved into another chamber where the pressure is dropped slightly again, causing another chain of evaporization and condensation.

The sea water, its temperature a little lower after each cycle of flash evaporization, undergoes 20 pressure drops in as many depressurization chambers before it is discarded.

The extraction of fresh water raises the salt content 1% above the normal 3.5% of ocean water. As yet, no one knows what dumping this extra-salty brine will do to the organisms of the Gulf—plants and animals that range from microscopic plankton to the largest whales. It is certain that the marine ecology in the immediate vicinity of the plant will undergo changes, maybe imperil the fishing industry. Many fish cannot survive a sudden temperature change of more than 11 to 14 degrees, although some species can tolerate a gradual change of up to 54 degrees. Scientists aren't disturbed; they believe they have solutions for any problems that may develop. If the ejected hot brine turns out to be injurious to sea life, it will be pumped into holding ponds until it cools to normal sea temperature, then returned to its original element. Still another proposal is to mix fresh water with the brine to cool it and dilute its salinity to normal.

Few drawbacks are anticipated, but if any are encountered, the spinoffs from the desalting plant will more than compensate. Dr. Donald H. White, head of the department of chemical engineering at the University of Arizona, pointed out a few.

Waste brine could be treated chemically and electrically to extract any number of the 74 elements contained in the oceans, which cover 70.8 per cent of the earth's surface. For example, the magnesium chloride found in the sea could be electrolytically reduced to magnesium, used today in many industries.

Sodium from the sea would come from sodium chloride treated with electricity. Sodium is the cheapest metal except for steel, zinc and lead.

Electricity and sea water could combine to make chlorine, a raw material much in demand as a basic heavy chemical.

An ammonia plant, using electricity and natural gas, could pull nitrogen out of the atmosphere to make nitrogen fertilizer. A large-scale plant can produce such fertilizer for one cent a pound.

A by-product of the nitrogen process would be carbon dioxide, needed in dry ice manufacture and the carbonation of soft drinks. A dry ice plant would make it feasible for the Gulf fishing industry to freeze its freshly caught fish instead of canning the catch.

Other potential industries might include a refining plant for crude oil. From petroleum would come gasoline, natural gas, propane and butane. These, in turn, could be used to make asphalt for road surfacing, liquified petroleum gas (LPG) to make synthetic rubber, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene and polystyrene plastics,

With the cheap electric power available, aluminum could be made with bauxite, brought in by ore ships. Electricity might also play a part in the large-scale production of cement, necessary in nearly every industry.

Through chemical processes, still other industries would probably spring up, such as plants for the manufacture of pulp and paper, fibers and textiles, non-ferrous metals, ceramics and glass, paints and even pharmaceuticals.

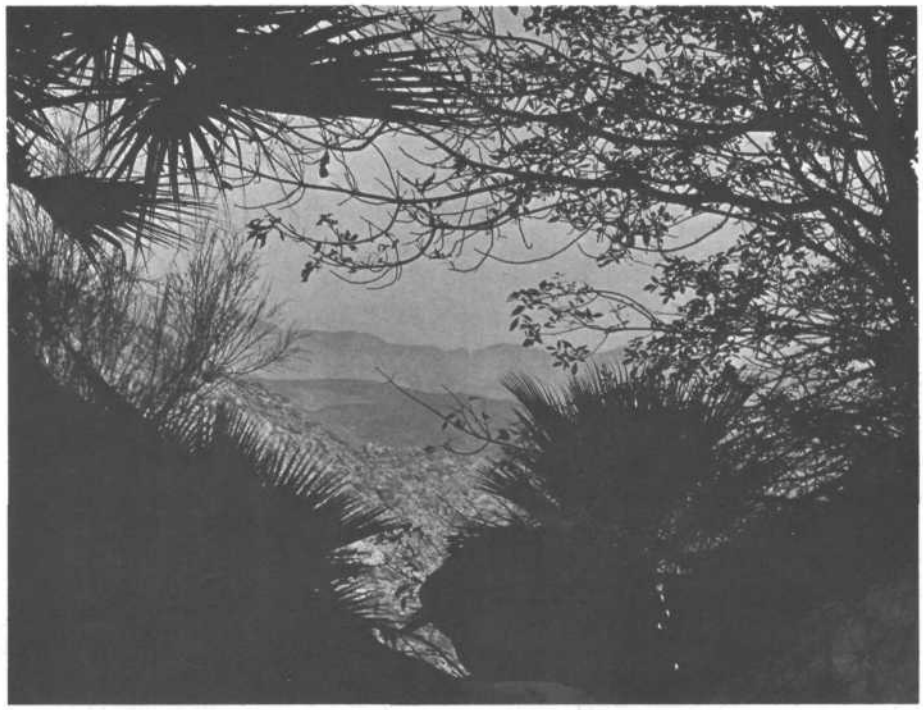
One could go on and on. The point is that nuclear science and technology are on the threshhold of a major advance in obtaining fresh water from the oceans, making possible the development of deserts, increased food production, new jobs, and industrial products.

The Atomic Age, cursed and blessed, provides the answer to the most serious problem facing the world: the growing scarcity of water. The oceans contain an inexhaustible basic supply. All they need to give up their precious burden is nuclear magic. □

There is a touch of

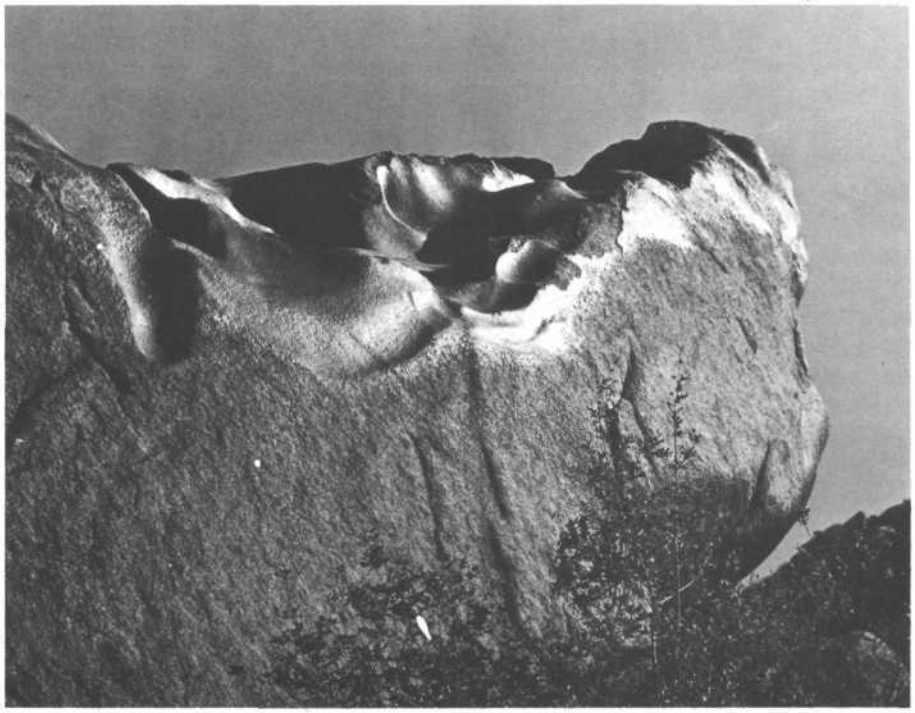
Autumn on the Desert

for those who know where to look



by W. L. Jones

Above: Evening view of Collins Valley from south fork of Sheep Canyon. Below: Stream polished granite in late afternoon sun.



IN other parts of the world Fall comes abruptly with chill winds and frosty nights, with sudden snow flurries and falling leaves. Deciduous trees, about to go dormant, cease production and leaves begin a colorful transformation as their green chlorophyll masks break down and reveal the brilliant hues of Fall.

On the desert there is no Fall. There are, however, if you know where to look, a few places at the very edge of the desert where Autumn has crept down from another life zone to intermingle with desert flora. Such a place is the south fork of Sheep Canyon which extends westward from Collins Valley some 17 jeep miles north of Borrego Springs in southern California's Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. You may drive to the mouth of Sheep Canyon and from there hike the mile or so to the first wild palm grove

Fall comes in spots even to the desert.

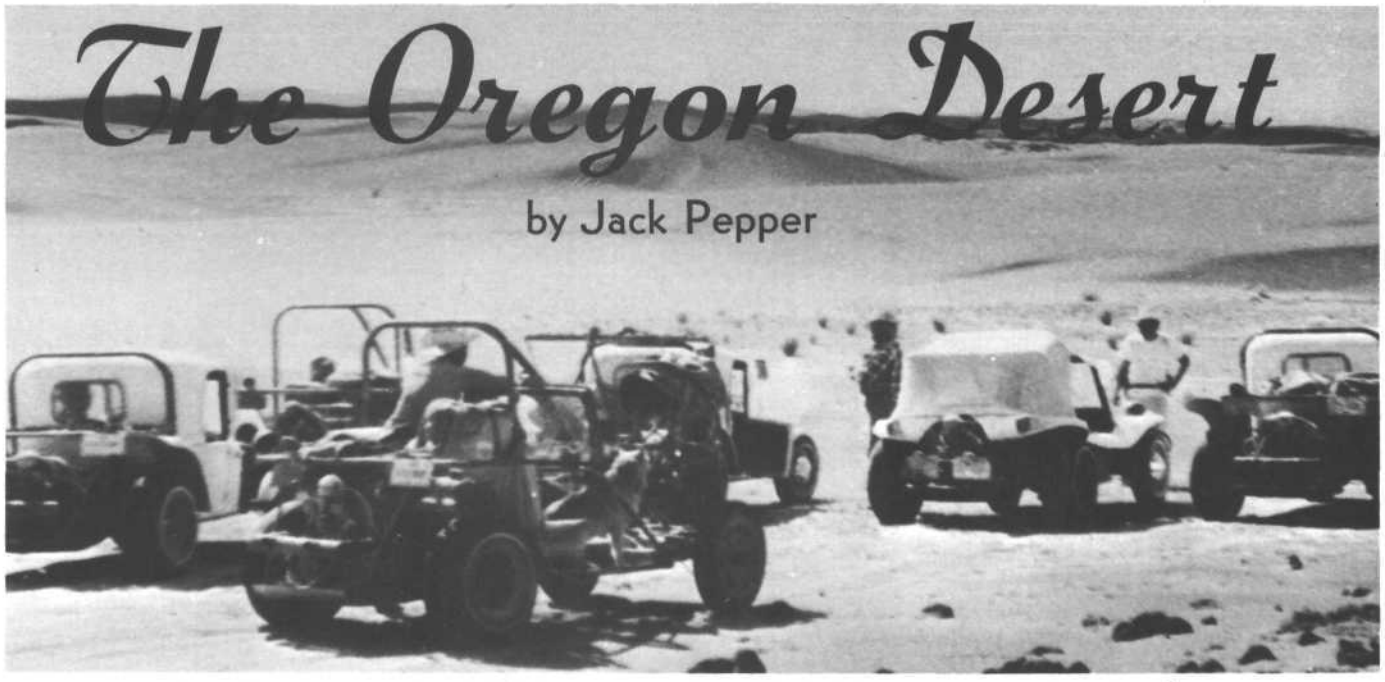
visible part way up the canyon. It is an arduous hike, but the beauty found there is worth the effort.

In late summer you will find green sycamore trees and pools of evil-looking water surrounded by dozens of bighorn sheep tracks. In late Fall, it is different. Then deep red, tubular blossoms of Chuparosa and California Fuschia dot the lower part of the canyon, visited by scores of hummingbirds that flit from bush to bush. The mouth of the canyon is dry, but soon a small, swiftly running stream appears, sinking quickly into the ground a few yards downstream. Most of the water comes from the north fork of Sheep Canyon where sycamore and juniper provide a vivid contrast in green and gold.

After you reach the first running water, bear left and pick your way around the huge granite boulders that choke the lower reaches of the south fork. As the canyon steepens, sycamore in Fall regalia, stunted palms and occasional juniper cast shadows into a deep part of the canyon rarely penetrated by the sun. Here it is cool and damp. Water slides silently from rock to rock, then tumbles noisily down a tortuous path of highly polished granite. Cold, clear pools filled with tadpoles extend upward, stepwise toward a waterfall. Here you may rest before you climb back to the sunlight above the waterfall where you can rest again in the grove of palms that looked so deceptively near from the road below. □

The Oregon Desert

by Jack Pepper



THE reason I have been able to produce some fast horses is that, where I graze them, they have to feed at thirty miles an hour to get enough to eat."

Rancher Reub Long was talking in his low but penetrating voice as we traveled along the alkali-dust road through the Oregon desert. We weren't on horses, but in back country vehicles and instead of chasing wild mustangs we were exploring the sparsely settled deserts of Southern Oregon.

Oregon's image is one of water falls, trout-filled mountain streams, scenic lakes jammed with hungry bass, lush ocean and verdant farms and cattle ranches.

This is true of 75 percent of the Beaver State, but the other 25 percent in south central and eastern Oregon is a land of deserts and volcanic mountains which have claimed the lives and fortunes of many men. This section of Oregon is not well publicized in the Chamber of Commerce brochures.

Reub Long doesn't like this. "In Oregon a quarter of the state is desert, and we'd better be getting proud of it. If we don't the dudes will take us just like we took the Indians."

Reub hasn't been in Oregon as long as the Indians or the prehistoric people who date back more than 10,000 years, but he has lived on the Oregon desert for all of his 76 years and knows all of the inhabitants, including most of the jack rabbits and coyotes.

Along with the late E. R. Jackman, Reub is co-author of a book "The Oregon Desert" which is a potpourri of fact and fiction with impressions of their home country as the authors saw it during the past half century. After reading the book, Erle Stanley Gardner, mystery writer and desert explorer, asked Reub to be our guide as we searched for the lost Blue Bucket Gold, described in last month's DESERT Magazine.

During the four-day search I saw only a small portion of this little known land, but I found the Oregon desert is different from other deserts of the West. The four day trek only whetted my appetite for further exploration of this last frontier.

Where else will you find a 9000 acre forest completely surrounded by sand dunes with towering ponderosa pines growing where it just isn't ecologically possible for them to grow? And in the middle of these Sahara-like sand dunes lies a clear lake where wild geese share the oasis with magpies, hawks and the horned owls who spend their days in deep

Oregon's Lost Forest of Ponderosa pines is completely surrounded by desert. Grasshoppers, (top photo) cut-down Volkswagens which weigh less than 1000 pounds, were used to explore the sand dunes.

caves where prehistoric man once lived.

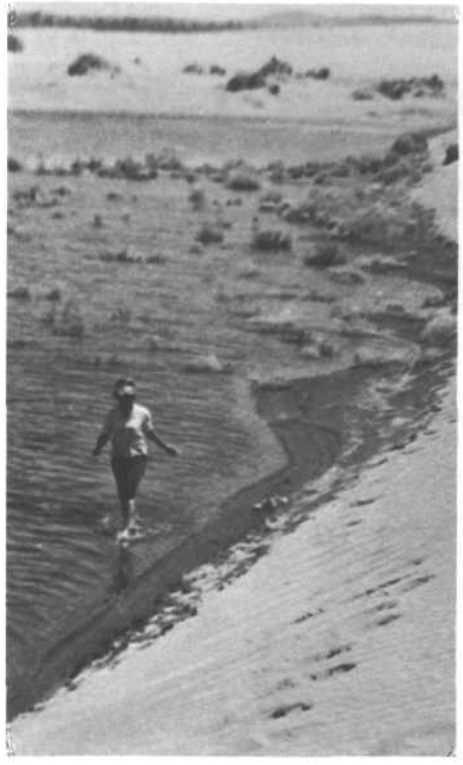
One of Reub's many yarns involves a man describing how he was chased by a lion in the Sahara desert, and as he could feel the lion's hot breath on his neck, he saved his life by climbing a tree. A listener objected, "There aren't any trees in the Sahara desert." The story teller said with dignity and finality, "By God! There *had* to be a tree!"

This is the feeling you get when you travel through this strange land. You know what you see shouldn't be there, but there it is. If you don't believe that 6-point buck running right towards you as you drive along the road isn't real then take a second look because this is what happened to us. When he suddenly realized we were intruders, the buck stopped, snorted and with great dignity slowly walked away.

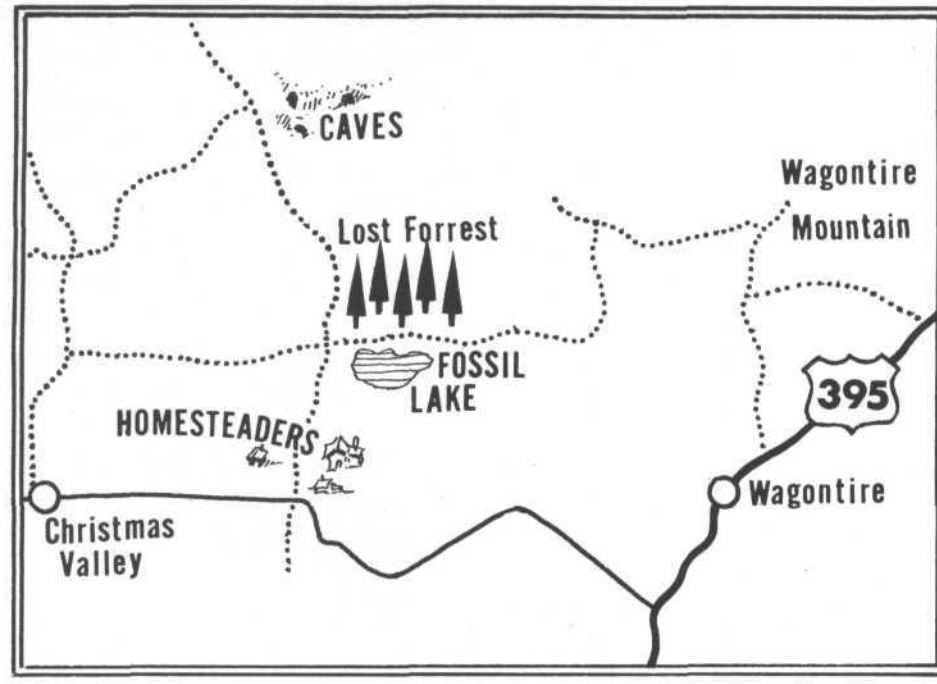
This happened while we were driving from the Lost Forest to Christmas Valley, the only community in this section of the Oregon desert. A successful real estate development, Christmas Valley has its own lake, lodge, motel, landing field and even a golf course where the jack rabbits are big enough to act as caddys!

It is located about 20 miles from the Lost Forest where we camped. Here again is an Oregon desert paradox. The 9000-acre full-fledged ponderosa pine forest is growing where the annual rainfall is

Prehistoric man once lived in the many huge volcanic caves in the Oregon desert area. It is believed many caves containing artifacts are still undiscovered. Below, Reub Long, right, shows Erle Stanley Gardner and Moyne DeShazer fossil bones of prehistoric horse which roamed the area before the Ice Age.



Choral Pepper wades in a lake in the middle of sand dunes, one of the many paradoxes of the Oregon desert area.



too low to support such a growth. The mystery of the Lost Forest was solved in 1962 by Dick Wallace Berry, an ecology student, who determined that the drifting sands spread over a layer of compacted volcanic dust impervious to water. The sand acts as a mulch, allowing the scanty rain easy entrance, but holding it on top of the hard layer below, thus giving the trees enough moisture to grow. Nature has also helped since through survival the seedlings germinate faster than other ponderosa and seek refuge from winds and animals in the rabbit brush.

Although the tree rings indicate that the weather has been the same for the past 600 years, more than a million years ago and possibly to as late as 10,000 years ago, the area was a land which would have been described in prehistoric Chamber of Commerce brochures as "rich and verdant with beautiful lakes supporting all kinds of wild life and a hunting and fishing paradise."

Fossil Lake is mute testimony to this. Here we found the bones of camels and the prehistoric large horse which roamed over the continent a million years ago only to disappear with the Ice Age and not to reappear until the Spanish conquistadores landed in Mexico. Mingled with the bones of these prehistoric animals and birds are Indian arrowheads and artifacts. And there wasn't one modern beer can to be seen!

The area around Fossil Lake and its adjoining sand dunes abound in petroglyphs and since there has been little detailed exploration of the area, many Indian artifacts are yet to be found. Enroute from Fossil Lake to a giant cave we found a metate and mano which is now on display in our Desert Magazine museum.

It was in a similar cave to the one Reub showed us where several years ago he found 70 sandals which Carbon-14 tests proved are more than 10,000 years old. Reub feels that further excavations and research will provide archeologists with proof of man's existence in the area even as far back as 50,000 years. The caves are not easy to locate since they are volcanic caverns covered by sage brush with small openings. There are undoubtedly many of these undiscovered caves containing prehistoric artifacts which would contribute greatly toward the knowledge of early man.

Prehistoric man is not the only homo sapien who made his mark and then disappeared from the Oregon desert. There were the homesteaders, a valiant but deluded group of Easterners who, for a period of 10 years, invaded the desert with a "dreamy, mystical approach, hopelessly impractical" as Reub states in his book.

Using the various homestead acts as bait, phoney promotors, railroad ticket sellers and "land locaters" enticed blase Easterners to the Oregon desert with promises of "a good life on your own land with plenty of water." The "good life" was doomed from the start as the ill-fed, ill-advised and ill-housed immigrants lost the battle to survive. Today the empty shells of their fragile frame homes are gradually being covered by the shifting Oregon sand. Reub feels they may have lost a temporary battle to survive, but they would always remember Oregon and their experiences enriched their lives.

And that's the way I felt after my short stay on the Oregon desert. Only I felt frustrated because I hadn't seen towns called Blitzen, Wagontire, Plush, Fort Rock, Brothers, Riley and Denio, all of which are part of the mysterious Oregon land of adventure—one of America's few last frontiers. □

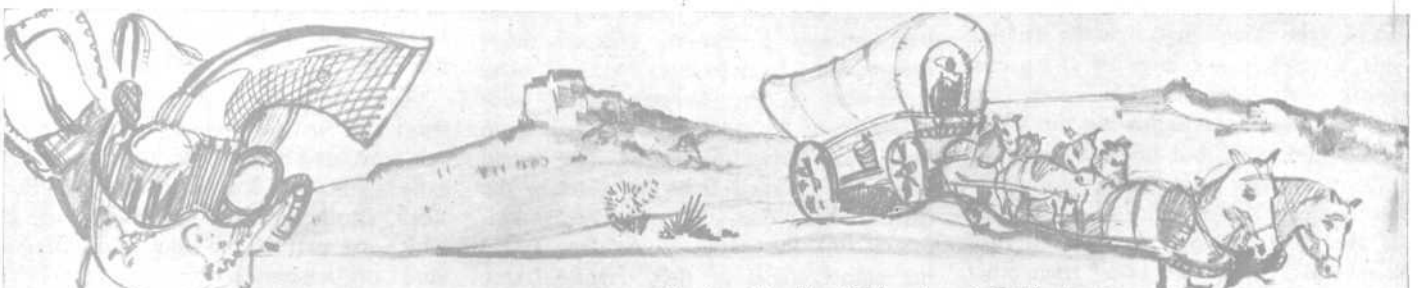


Photo opposite: Old mine at Bridgeport, California by Paul A. Podolski.

Treasures of Owens Valley

by John Wardle Dixon

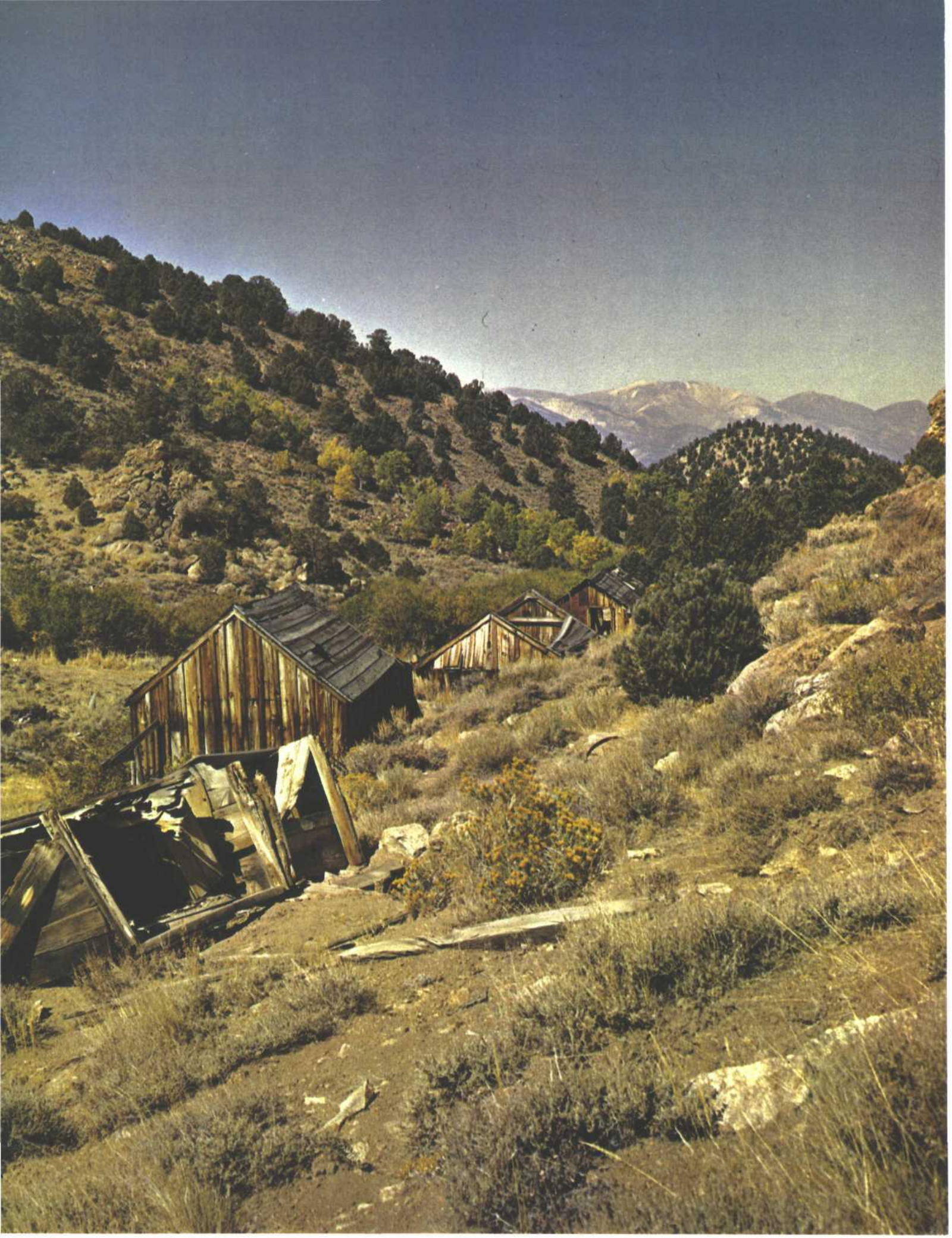
GOLD FROM different areas varies in characteristics caused by impurities in the gold and by the way the gold has been deposited. The old mint in San Francisco usually could tell the origin of the gold just by looking at it. An old prospector once told of taking some gold there to sell. When asked its origin, he said, "The Mother Lode."

"It did not come from the Mother Lode," he was challenged.

The prospector then admitted that the gold had come from Owens Valley. "That is better," said the foreman of the mint.

Thereby hangs the tale of a lost Owens Valley gold deposit, as told by Mr. John Gorman. There is gold around Lone Pine, California, that white man has never found, Gorman claims.

It was prior to the days when selling liquor to the Indians was prohibited and Lone Pine was celebrating. During the afternoon, a Piute brave became quite boisterous. When the saloon keeper decided not to serve him, the Indian responded by breaking up the furniture and glassware until he was seized, sobered up,



and made to understand he must pay for his damages.

The next morning the Piute departed, but on the following day he returned with a buckskin bag containing more than enough placer gold to pay for his damages. When the men in the saloon asked where he got his gold the Indian wouldn't tell, so they told him the gold was not enough. Then they tried to follow him when he went for more. The Indian slipped by their vigil, however. When he reappeared with more gold they tried to send him for more again, but he refused. In later years he admitted that he hadn't gone far, but he would never divulge his source.

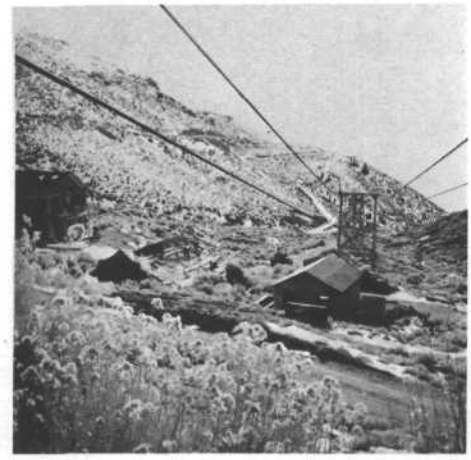
The only placer gold known to exist in this area is in Mazuka Canyon, but it would have been impossible for the Indian to have traveled that distance overnight, in addition to crossing the Owens River which he would have had to accomplish. Then too, the gold from Mazuka Canyon shows more stream wear than the gold the Indian brought. Gold such as he possessed has not been found around Lone Pine since the 1870s, when this occurred.

A number of well-authenticated nuggets have been picked up in Owens Valley. S. G. Gregg found one in Little Pine Creek which he sold to the government for $160. Two nuggets were found northeast of Bishop in a spring east of Chalfant's Valley. The writer has seen these. They were well-rounded nuggets with stream abrasions. None of the surrounding rock for miles on either side showed gold like this. During the 1930s, a John Amic brought in a nugget from the Mazuka Canyon. It was about the shape of the first three fingers on a man's hand and was worth about $300 in gold. The peculiar thing is that it came from the top of the hill. Other gold was found in Mazuka Canyon, but it was in small grains and found on the other side of the ravine. No other large nuggets are reported from that area. This writer saw Amic's nugget, too. It was abrasion-polished and a beautiful specimen.

The lost treasures of Owens Valley are not always found in mines, however. Ned B. Smith, who in the 1870s was the foreman on the Nancy Brady which plied between Swansea, Head of the Lake, Cottonwood and Cartago, tells this one.

"We had started in from Swansea on a windy afternoon, skirting along the north end of the lake to Head of the Lake, then turning south along the west side of Owens Lake when the boat bucked like a bronco as the wind hit it broadside. We thought the wagons and trailers on the boat were secure, but the pitching was so violent one of the trailers slid over the side, landing in the water with its tail end sticking in the mud and its tongue protuding above the water's surface. It was impossible to salvage the trailer wagon on that trip, even though it contained a load of bullion that had been sent from the Swansea smelter to be loaded on the wagons at Cartago.

"The next morning we came back from our run, taking provisions and freight that had come in on other wagons at Cartago. From there we went to Cottonwood Creek and to Head of the Lake. As



Cerro Gordo, famous old mine of Owen's Valley.

we passed, we could see where we thought we had lost our trailer wagon. It was not impossible to pull the trailer back onto the steam boat, but all of the bullion had slipped back into the lake and the water was about 12 feet deep. There was no way to retrieve the bullion from those saline waters. Ever since, people have hunted for this treasure. Tales are told of a shipwreck, but they are untrue."

Nothing was ever found until the early 1930s. Then a Piute squaw brought in one of the ingots of bullion that she had found down in the old lake bed, now dry. The ingot was displayed in the Dow Hotel in Lone Pine for several months.

Somewhere in the northeast corner of the old lake bed there is still treasure buried in what used to be the mud of the lake, for it has never been found.

There were other objects of great value lost in the deserts of Inyo County. In the early part of this century a prospector named Mark Kerr went looking for ore "float" in the canyons on the east side of Saline Valley. Mark had just arrived from San Francisco and among his belongings were eight rolls of 1909 S.V.D.B. pennies in their original mint wrappings. Someone had told him that the mintage would be small for that year and the coins might increase in value. Near the end of his prospecting trip, he remembered that the pennies had been in his pack when he packed his belongings on the burros at Dodds Spring in the southeast corner of Saline Valley, but when he checked his packs in the lower Warm Spring canyons, the pennies were not in the kyacks. Because he had unpacked two or three times between Dodds Spring and Warm Spring, he didn't consider it worth his time to go back and search for them.

Years later, however, people started collecting pennies and the price of the 1909 S.V.D.B. pennies soared to great values. Mark thought about looking for them, but the area was so vast he didn't attempt it.

Somewhere in the desert sand of east Saline Valley there is hidden quite a treasure.

The most sought after lost mine in this area is the old Cement Mine near Mammoth and Mono Lakes. Authenticated evidence suggests that a rich deposit did exist. The cement was said to be filled with gold, like raisins in a pudding, and one small sack of ore produced $25,000 in gold. In his book, *Gold, Guns, and Ghost Towns,* W. A. Chalfant related the authenticated facts and Mark Twain also mentioned it in *Roughing It.* Official records state that the gold was there. Thousands of people have looked for the gold-laden cement in vain. The old Mammoth, May Lundy and Bodie mines were discovered by prospectors searching for the lost cement mine, but these were all gold in quartz veins. The "Cement Mine" was gold contained in a red cement-like material.

A new slant was introduced by "Indian Ed" of Benton, California, as he was known to the white people. While reminiscing about the days before the white man came, he told of the Indian's fear of possessing gold. "Yes, it was a long time ago, " he recalled. "I was only a small boy, but I went with some adult warriors to see the white man digging. We stayed hidden, but we watched all of the time. Nobody knows where the place is now." Old Ed was silent for a minute or two. "Many have looked," he continued, "but they look too high up, way too high. The place is now buried in willow and birch."

Somewhere in the damp willow and birch area at the headwaters of the Owens River, there is some exceedingly rich "red cement," probably of volcanic tuff origin. □

Painting in the light

The same painting in darkness

Mystery in the Mission of St. Francis di Assisi

by Marion E. Jones

THERE'S A moment of truth in every life when some one thing stands out above any other; a moment of revelation when the depths of being knows a blinding light that floods the whole spirit. Such a happening was the origin of the famous "Shadow Of The Cross" picture which hangs today in the Mission of St. Francis di Assisi in Rancho de Taos, New Mexico, and attracts tourists from all over the world.

The artist, Henri Ault, painted the picture many years ago. It was a portrait of Christ standing barefooted on the shores of Galilee. When it was completed, the artist extinguished his light and prepared to leave, but some unexplainable impulse caused him to glance back. A revelation he would never forget startled him. The portrait had become self-illuminated. The life-size figure of Christ shown darkly against a background of flying, luminous clouds. A halo surrounded His head and the dark unmistakable shadow of a heavy cross appeared behind His left shoulder. This in itself was strange, as artists who had painted Christ with the cross always portrayed it over His right shoulder. This cross was but a shadowy form, as if showing something in the background that was yet to appear in the life of Christ.

The artist ran to call his family, his heart pounding with excitement. His wife and children rushed back to the room with him. Peering through the darkness, they shared the exquisite artistry which had startled him. But when he relighted his lamp, the mysterious additions to his painting disappeared and and only his original creation remained.

Intensely disappointed, he put out the light and turned to leave. But his wife cried out, "Henri, look, look, it's come again!" He turned and once more the whole family saw the strange metamorphism. Instinctively, they dropped to their knees and bowed their heads.

Henri Ault kept the portrait for a long time, allowing reverent people to witness the miraculous change that always came with the darkness. As he grew older, however, he felt his painting should be enshrined in a permanent place. He transferred ownership to a Mrs. Herbert Sydney Griffin who, in turn, presented it to the Mission of St. Francis di Assisi in New Mexico, where it now remains. Although it is now about three-quarters of a century old, it retains its miraculous transformation in darkness.

The artist was never able to explain the phenomenon. He had not painted the clouds, the halo, nor the cross. His Christ was a bright figure against a clear landscape; not dark with an illuminated background of flying clouds. It was created before the days of luminous paint, so it would have been impossible for him to achieve such an effect with means at his disposal. The painting has baffled

modern artists, chemists and physicists from nearly every part of the world. It has been tested for radio activity, luminous paint and all other known chemicals with negative results. It remains today, as always, in the company of so many mysteries surrounding the visions of Jesus, the Christ. There is one great difference, however. Many visions have been experienced by only one person in a moment of holy revelation. This painting is viewed nightly by a hushed and quiet congregation. Tourists are attracted from everywhere to the old Mission, not only for the mystery, but because of other objects of art gathered under its ancient roof. Among them are two rare statues of St. Francis di Assisi. One is believed to be over 300 years old because of artistic touches peculiar to the 18th century.

The church itself is made of adobe with walls 5½ feet thick, faithfully renewed each year with Ranchos mud. It takes several hundred parishioners nine days to do the work. Women do the plastering while men mix and carry the mud to them. They make a festival of the occasion, with feasting, singing and general rejoicing at the renewal of their beloved church. The Mission is an outstanding specimen of Spanish missionary architecture. It holds the distinction of being the oldest unrestored church in the Southwest. Services have been held in it continuously for parishioners in and around Rancho de Taos ever since its erection over 200 years ago.

The church is 108 feet long. Its actual construction, which took 45 years, was started about 1710. In the beginning there were no windows, except for a small opening high above the nave. Light came to the altar through the deerskin which was stretched over this opening. Early historians of the church recorded this beam of light pouring down at a certain height of the morning as one of the most inspiring sights they ever beheld. The deerskin has long since been replaced by glass, but light from the opening still brings the holy radiance to the altar and the mystery picture beside it.

"The Shadow of the Cross" painting is the one thing among all the church treasures which everyone comes to see. Having heard of the painting, I approached the Mission at dusk, thinking how Life itself depends upon mystery for its enhancement. Vision and wonder come from the things we do not understand. We need them to help us respect the unseen and inviolate mysteries. I waited breathless with expectation, as a young priest entered to address us. In a soft voice, he directed our attention to the painting beside the altar. Then he told the story. I watched as he talked, searching the painting for a clue.

Suddenly he extinguished the lights. The church fell into absolute darkness. My eyes, which had never left the painting, then witnessed the unbelievable change. The painting illuminated itself and the composition changed entirely. Then the light returned. All was as before. As I rose to leave, my heart beat a little faster. There are probably always certain factors in life which will remain unknown. It is fitting that this dedicated painting should have its home in the wonderful old mission of St. Francis di Assisi. □

St. Francis di Assisi Mission

DESERT PORTRAIT

by Jack Delaney

THE AVERAGE American adult is 49% male, 51% female, 10% left-handed, and 74% married. He has one-tenth of a cat, one-tenth of a dog, and three-quarters of a child who has one chance in nine of becoming delinquent! This composite, the brainstorm of a statistician, is supposed to present a reasonably accurate group picture of the men and women of America.

A portrait of the average dweller in our Western deserts could be developed by a smaller statistical method; but the result would only confuse those who are contemplating a visit, or a relocation, to this region of sunshine and sand. There would be no point in revealing that the average resident has one-tenth of a swimming pool, or one-fifth of a chuckwalla. A better procedure for achieving a meaningful picture of the type of people who inhabit our desert areas is available to anyone. It features a do-it-yourself approach—so simple that it could be classed as a game.

The key to this method is the use of the Classified Advertising pages of your favorite magazine as a barometer of the interests of people in the region to which the publication is dedicated. For an accurate picture of the deserts and great outdoor areas of our Western states, your best bet is DESERT Magazine. Select any issue (I have the September, 1967, issue in front of me) and start by read-

ing a few of the travel and adventure articles, in order to develop the proper mood. You'll learn much about desert people by reading these articles—also you'll start *thinking* desert.

Now turn to the section entitled, "Trading Post Classifieds." It is here that you will find the necessary material and clues for constructing a portrait of the typical deserteer. From the various classifications it should be obvious that outdoor activities, rock hounding, and adventure are a way of life here. Plush, shiny automobiles, with gold ash trays, may be used for driving to the plush shiny country clubs, with gold ash trays; but it's the Jeeps and other rugged 4-wheel-drive vehicles that give the natives their real thrills and the opportunity for back country exploration.

On our Western deserts many of the residents live in an air-conditioned, swimming pool, golf course environment. It is from a luxury base, with all modern conveniences, that they launch their frequent close-to-nature jaunts to the surrounding country. This image is reinforced in the *Books-Magazine* classificaton of DESERT Magazine. The book titles are a tip-off of the interests of the readers. You'll find reference to Western Americana, old ghost towns, old bottles, and Indian lore. Also books, are available on gems and minerals, and hidden treasure (very well hidden).

Under the category *For Women* is an intriguing advertisement. It announces a product which is claimed to be the "World's finest beautifier for women!" We learn from this ad that, on the desert, gals have the same interest in charming guys as do their sisters in any other locality. And the guys here have the same interest in observing displays of feminine charms as they have in any of the other attractions of the desert.

The classification *Indian Goods* is not intended to offer supplies to the various Indian tribes of the West—these redmen seek bargains in the same paleface discount houses that we patronize! It does provide an indication of interest, on the part of the people of this area, in the collection of authentic Indian artifacts as a hobby. A field trip can result in a lucky find, but the purchase of arrowheads, etc. through these ads is more convenient and permits the hobbyist to improve his collection while sitting on his patio.

An interesting aspect in our method of developing a well-rounded picture of the inhabitants of various desert regions from the flat pages of classified ads, is the tendency to compare prices of items and services that are not on a comparable basis. For instance, a *Real Estate* advertisement offers 400 million acres of government land, with some as low as $1 per acre! It is pointed out that details are available for $1. In otherwords, for the cost of an acre of land you can find out where the acre is located!

The classification *Gems* includes tempting items for rock hounds and pebble pups. Many goodies are offered for collectors of gems and minerals. One company is willing to send pocket gold to anyone for $2 per sample. Although the price is equivalent to the cost of two of the acres of government land listed above, it is still quite reasonable. The only explanation of this distorted relationship in price is that the land must be dirt cheap.

Returning to the classification *Indian Goods* we see an offer of Indian skulls for $25 each. It is likely that the original Indian would agree that his skull is properly classified as "Indian Goods!" He might even be happy with the value placed on his headbone—the equivalent of 25 acres of government land, or 12½ specimens of pocket gold, or a dozen books on Indian lore featuring episodes of history in which he was the hero! Frankly, I am concerned about the offer of Indian skulls with no limit on quantity. Does this mean that another Indian war is likely when the supply is exhausted?

Other fascinating items mentioned in the classified advertisements include 12-volt Bed Warmers, for campers who love to rough it in solid comfort; a limited number of add items from ghost towns, for folks who have always wanted an odd item; transistorized metal detectors with push-button tuning, for those who want to find treasure the easy way. (That rumbling we just heard was an old prospector turning over in his grave and muttering, "So *now* they invent it!".) Many more products are listed and, in each case, you'll find that they help to costruct our image of the average desert dweller.

Since this is a do-it-yourself system, why not try doing it yourself? It is possible to produce a composite picture of any area, provided an appropriate magazine is selected for study. We could even reach back to any point in history if a publication of that particular time and region were available. Imagine the wealth of information that could be uncovered had there been a magazine or two in the days of the Garden of Eden. Instead, all we have are the profound statements of statisticians who tell us that 50% of the population induced the other 50% to eat apples! □

Azatlan Revisited

Continued from page 14

where within Sugar Loaf Mountain. Another historian, Bancroft, cites a location near the city of Durango where great caves supposedly enclose Montezuma's golden treasure.

There are other reasons which students of Aztec folklore and myth should consider carefully before they locate Aztlan in Southern California. An early bulletin by the California Division of Mines (Vol. 40, No. 3, July 1944) states that "the 103 tribes who lived in the territory now within the boundaries of the state of California lived in a technological stone age." How could any such tribe sire a civilization that for grandeur and power equaled the Rome of the Caesars? We know, further, that California Indians paid scant attention to turquoise mining. San Bernardino's turquoise mines indeed were mined, but only by Pueblo tribes from New Mexico and Arizona. A turquoise deposit near Fish Creek in Imperial County, relatively close to the Superstition Mountains, shows evidence of being mined by early Indians, but on a very small scale. The obvious conclusion: Superstition Mountain Indians had little to do with mining turquoise, a gem which had been worked extensively by Aztec lapidarists since the very beginning of their civilization.

New Mexico has a number of localities that might once have harbored Aztlan. Mesa Verde has incomparable pueblo dwellings. The largest pueblo citadel, the cliff palace, is 4 stories high and possessed 200 living rooms. The Mesa Verde ruins were explored by a government party in 1874. The party was guided by a Ute legend, which spoke of a vast cave city somewhere in that particular section of the San Juan drainage area. Well might Mesa Verde claim Aztlan, except for one significant fact. Mesa Verde was still flourishing a hundred years after the ancient Aztecs had commenced their great migration.

In my opinion, Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, has a cogent claim on Aztlan. Today, of course, the Chaco Canyon area is a desert. It is 6000 feet in altitude. A few junipers are scattered over the mesas and hardy shrubs and shriveled grasses cling to the canyon floor. It is a land gutted by the lash of summer storms whose torrents annually careen down the canyon doing extensive damage to the antique pueblos. Jagged arroyos are scooped from the gnarled land by the tumultuous water. The larger ruins, 12 in all, grace with silent dignity a dry sandstone-cliffed canyon in northeastern New Mexico, 130 miles from Gallup, the nearest city. They represent the finest examples of Pre-Columbian architecture to be found north of the Valley of Mexico. The two ruins I found most striking were those at Pueblo Bonito and Chetro Ketl. Pueblo Bonito in its heyday possessed an estimated 650 rooms and housed 1000 individuals. It must have been the ultimate in "apartment house" living, until Hilton and other barons of collective living came upon the scene in modern times.

Chetro Ketl's architectural first is certainly the great bowl-like structure built, some people believe, in honor of the Sun God. Its average diameter is 62½ feet. Within its confines is a ceremonial altar and a number of interesting fire pits. Chaco Canyon vaguely echoes Aztlan: rocks tumbling down from the face of the cliffs might be interpreted as "earthquakes" by superstitious natives; the canyon peoples worked turquoise, and had an abundant supply of the gem available to them near Santa Fe, New Mexico; but most significantly, the Chaco peoples vanished from the Chaco area about the time the Aztec migration began. The latest tree ring date from a Chaco Canyon ruin is 1178, the purported date for the beginning of the Aztec migration is 1168, a very satisfactory correlation! Further, descendants of Chaco Canyon cannot be pinpointed as living in the general area. The Gallup Chamber of Commerce claims that Chaco peoples moved south to the Little Colorado and east to the Rio Grande. But this claim is not substantiated.

The region around the Great Salt Lake in Utah probably has the best claim to Aztlan, ancient homeland of the Aztecs. Gleaming salt flats quite conceivably make it the "white land" of the ancient codices. Many islands dot the Great Lake. Gunnison Island even sports a large population of herons. Aztlan was bounded by mountains. The Wasatch Mountains wall the lake on the east, the Promontory Mountains pierce the heart of the lake from the north, and the Stansbury, Terrace and Hogup mountains peer down on the lake from the west. Adding further confirmation to the Salt Lake region as Aztlan are the presence of many caves in the area. Some of these caves, particularly those around Promontory Point, were inhabited by early pueblo and basketmaker peoples whose carvings of human and animal figurines perhaps foreshadow those accomplished by their descendants in the Valley of Mexico. Again, atlatls found in these caves and other areas surrounding the Great Lake might be the harbingers of the atlatls used by the troops of Montezuma against the armored warriors of Cortez. It is possible. A seeming omission in the Great Salt Lake's imposing wealth of evidence asserting kinship to Aztlan is the absence of great rock slides which supposedly spawned the earthquake segment of the Aztlan legend. But even this difficulty is removed, if we consider that thundering hooves of buffalo often made the ground shake in the Salt Lake area. In fact, Antelope Island in the Great Salt Lake had buffalo on it as late as 1870 when Kit Carson hunted there.

Let us assume then with Bancroft and Prescott that the Salt Lake region is Aztlan. Can we trace this migration to its end in Mexico City in the year 1325 A.D.? Admittedly, the way is fraught with difficulty, but fortunately for us there are chinks in Time's opaque curtain, chinks through which we may observe a portion of the truth. They started (we will assume) from caves in the Salt Lake area. From these caves the Aztecs trekked the San Juan river drainage area until they stopped at Chaco Canyon. Here they remained a great many years, but because of drought and constant pressure from the warlike Utes they moved to Casa Grande in Chihuahua, Mexico. Their stopover was perhaps for 20 years. At Casa Grande, they either constructed pueblos themselves or usurped those built by an earlier culture. After Casa Grande, our Aztec wanderers filtered through the hills and barrancas of northern Mexico to La Quemada near the modern town of Jemez in southern Zacatecas. Bancroft affirms that ancient legends indicate that La Quemada was a way station in the migration of the Aztecs. They may have passed through Mezquital, Durango, earlier if my interpretation of a passage from the Quetzecoatl legend is correct. From La Quemada we are on surer ground. It is fairly certain that the Aztecs stopped at a place called Patzcuaro in the Mexican state of Michoacan. A glyph has been interpreted as demonstrating that the Aztecs swung through Atzcapolzalco in the Distrito Federal. After a very short residence, they stopped at Chapultepec to regroup their scattered forces, then advanced southeast to Tizapan and Culhuacan. At the latter place their Gods gave the Aztecs the spirit for the final push. Several days later, on a date traditionally set at 1325, a tired band of triumphant warriors saw the symbol they were seeking—and eagle perched atop a prickly pear catus. At this location, the Aztecs built Tenochtillan which, like shadowy Aztlan, was centered in a lake. □

THE GOLDEN CACHE OF COYOTE HOLES

BY DOROTHY ROBERTSON

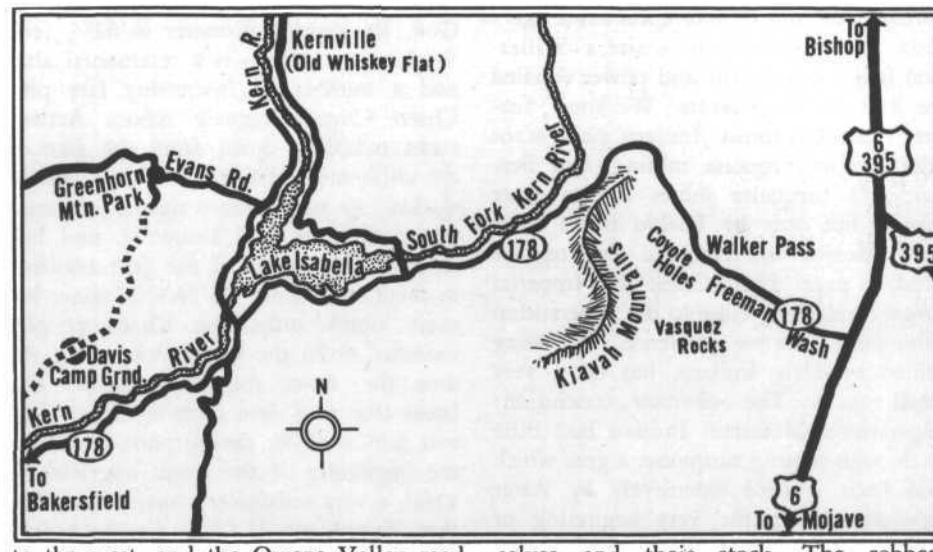
MANY a pioneer living in isolated country did not believe in keeping his hard-won cash in distant banks. He preferred to bury it somewhere on, in or around his own home, where he could keep his eye on it.

In Indian Wells Valley in the upper Mojave desert country, there are a number of long-buried, and now lost, caches. During the passage of time, their locations have been shifted in the telling so many times that it is hard to decide where to start searching. One cache, however, has remained constant as to location; this is the buried hoard of Freeman Raymond at Coyote Holes.

Coyote Holes itself is a large spring immediately south of California State 178 where the road winds eastward down from Walker Pass and the Kern River country to the west to arrive at its junction with State 14 and the main artery of U.S. 395. Coyote Holes is recognized today by the thick growth of yellow, coarse grass that possesses a peculiar white tinge derived from the strong alkali of the soil. There is a wire "fence" strung around the area for, in season, a cattle ranch from the Walker Pass area uses it for watering cattle.

Another sure marker of its location is the mile-distant rhyolite extrusion that stands out on the slopes to the south, well away from the mountain range, in the form of a twin butte. These buttes are in a direct line south of Coyote Holes.

The Coyote Holes lost gold cache, or caches, goes back to the early part of 1874 when Freeman Raymond, one of the original '49ers, decided to settle in this region. Freeman Raymond decided he would run a stage station that would provide him with a livelihood in his old age. He chose the strategic location of Coyote Holes, which lay at the junction of the two important roads: the Walker Pass road from the teeming Kern River mines



to the west, and the Owens Valley road that linked the rich Inyo mines and thriving cattle and fruit ranches of the north with the growing metropolis of Los Angeles. What better place for a way station?

Freeman Raymond, known as "Cap" and later as "Old" Raymond, personally knew many of the famous and some infamous, figures of his time, for they all stopped at Coyote Holes for rest and refreshments. Among them were the famous figure of Cerro Gordo's fabulous silver mines of the Inyo Mountains, Mortimer W. Belshaw, and the infamous highwayman, Tiburcio Vasquez, for whom the twin rhyolite buttes were named Vasquez' Rocks, or Robbers' Roost.

It was in February of 1874 that Vasquez and his henchmen fled south from the coastal scene of their depredations. Turning north then, toward the lucrative travel from the rich northern and eastern mines of the desert country, Vasquez arrived at the vicinity of Coyote Holes where he hid out in the nearby rocks. From this higher vantage point he was able to watch the comings and goings of laden freighters, stages and horse-and-foot travel. He noted that almost all stopped at Coyote Holes to refresh themselves and their stock. The robbers' mounts were put to graze in unseen areas behind the craggy mass while the bandits themselves camped in the caves where their campfires would not be seen from afar.

On February 25, Vasquez deemed the time for foray had arrived. From later eye-witness accounts, the Vasquez gang dropped down upon the unsuspecting way station when there were some five or six 16 to 20 mule teams lined up and the swampers and teamsters were busy eating and quenching their thirsts. The gang herded their victims together under gunpoint and systematically robbed them before tying them up out of sight behind the station.

As subsequent lone riders appeared, they too were invited to join the robbed and were left tied up with dire warnings of what would happen if they alarmed approaching victims. One man, somewhat the worse for liquid refreshment, became unruly and received a bullet in the thigh, after which he prudently did as he was told.

Mortimer W. Belshaw, the Cerro Gordo tycoon and a passenger on a stage from the south, was forced to give up his new boots and money. Then he, too, was sent

to join the colony behind the station.

When the bandits decided it was time to make their getaway, they stampeded the station horses, took six of the stage horses, and raced off. A remarkable sum of $15,000 was offered for Vasquez' head! Old Raymond later claimed he was robbed of some $1350.

Mrs. Raymond was luckier. When told to bring out all of her cash and valuables, she accidentally stumbled and fell flat on her face. While lying on the ground, pretending to be winded by the fall, she gouged her money and valuables into a shallow hole beneath her body, unseen by the excitable Mexicans. This cache she later recovered.

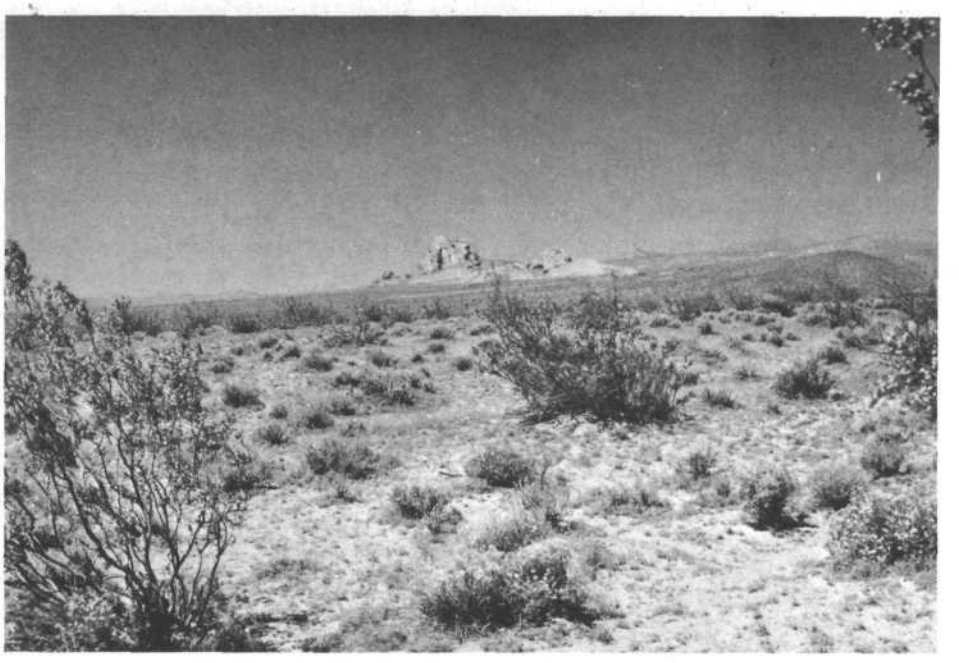
Vasquez was captured three months later, on May 14, 1874. Less than a year later he was executed.

Old Raymond, having been robbed, had learned his lesson. He kept five huge dogs about the premises, and still critical of distant banks, he secretly buried his surplus money in various hiding places around his 200-acre property. He is said to have continued this practice until his sudden death of an apoplectic stroke some 30 years later, in 1909.

Was his buried cash of much consequence? Nobody knows. But Old Raymond had the reputation of a "near" man. He also had several other lucrative ventures going: raising hogs and cattle, and a thriving liquor venture. It is safe to surmise that the liquor business paid handsomely, for the old-time pioneers, especially the prospectors and teamsters, were known for their prodigious thirst—and the desert is a mighty dry place!

It is easy to assume that those knowing of the buried caches at Coyote Holes have, over the past half-century, quietly searched for them. I have personally seen a number of individuals scouting an area from Vasquez' Rocks down to Coyote Holes with metal detectors. This approximately square-mile of territory might appear hopelessly large, yet there are many lost gold mine stories that cover far greater areas. And sooner or later someone stumbles on the treasure.

Old newspapers of this region tell of a tremendous cloudburst that sent a ruinous flood down Walker Pass back in 1901. It cut a deep swath through the Coyote Holes wash adjacent to the Pass road, shearing off a part of the station, demolishing the corrals and stables, and sanding up the springs. Could this floodtide have washed Old Raymond's hoard away? Nobody knows, for Old Raymond kept his own counsel, but it is safe to assume that his cache or caches remained safe, for the old man carried on as usual. Desert savvy as he was, I believe he would have hidden his gold in a place safe from robbery, flood or other threat.



View of Vasquez Rocks from Coyote Holes

Unfortunately for his family, Old Raymond died so suddenly he was unable to tell anyone where he had hidden his cache. Although in his 80s, he, like most desert folk, believed he would live forever. Soon after Old Raymond's death, his buildings were destroyed by fire. That was the end of the Coyotes Holes station.

A number of old-timers, some of whom had known Old Raymond, told me years ago that it was unlikely that the old man would have buried silver coins when gold coins were still in circulation. There is a 99% chance that the cache buried in his various hiding places is in gold coins; but where?

Very recently, Everett Beene, a Ridgecrest jeweler, told me of a fellow who brought to his shop some $10 and $20 gold pieces which he claimed to have found around Vasquez Rocks and Coyote Holes following a heavy rain storm.

Maybe this would be a lucrative way to pass the time on the next rainy day! □

Coyote Holes as seen from Highway 178

A monthly feature by the author of Ghost Town Album, Ghost Town Trails, Ghost Town Shadows, Ghost Town Treasures and Boot Hill

Jerome, Arizona

BY LAMBERT FLORIN

IN 1925 a large charge of dynamite was set off in the open Black Pit Mine at the edge of Jerome, Arizona. The blast joggled the town, built on a layer of loose gravel along the slope of a steep mountain, and the town hasn't stopped slipping since. Movement is most rapid when rain lubricates the rocky chute. Jerome's little jailhouse, which on the initial jolt moved only far enough to sober up a few inebriated inmates, now lies 300 feet below the street.

Copper and iron oxides in the area made the place popular with the Indians long before the arrival of white men. Around 935 A. D. Tuzigoots made regular pilgrimages to the slopes of Mingus Mountain to obtain brightly colored earth for warpaint. Much later Al Sieber, the famous scout, passed by. He observed the early diggings, but not a mining man himself, was unimpressed.

In January of 1876 a small party of Nevada prospectors led by Captain John Boyd and John Dougherty arrived in Prescott and listened to tales of immense copper wealth on the side of Mingus Mountain, but they neglected to visit the place and quickly labeled the rumors as "rubbish."

John Ruffner and August McKinnon were the first men to recognize a good thing when they saw it and subsequently staked out several claims. However, they didn't appreciate its true value, for they snapped up an offer from Territorial Governor Frederick E. Tritle for $2000 as soon as they learned how much money it would take to sink a shaft, refine the ore and develop a mine.

But, even after this transaction, little activity took place. The governor, too, found that hard rock mining was expensive and sat tight on the claim until an angel, in the form of New York lawyer Eugene Jerome, eventually appeared. Jerome had heard of the copper at Mingus Mountain and one day rode over the trail from Prescott to have a look. (In addition to being the founder of Jerome, he acquired historic importance as the grandfather of Sir Winston Churchill.)

Jerome was enchanted when he saw copper evident everywhere. He had money, he told Tritle, and was willing to sink it into the yawning blue cavern, but only on condition the town which would inevitably spring up be named for him. Tritle accepted the offer.

Without a smelter to refine it, there was no use to start digging copper, so Jerome used his powers to persuade the Santa Fe Railroad to extend its lines to Ashfork, 60 miles distant. While the railroad was building, Tritle used Jerome's money to clean away rocks for a wagon road from Ashfork to the mine. Both were completed about the same time and almost immediately a steady stream of wagons was hauling supplies and goods to the mine site. Soon parts for the smelter arrived along with mining equipment. In 1893 the United Verde Copper Co. was incorporated and the town of Jerome was in business. Already there were 400 people and six saloons. In 1900 those who felt a need for plain water contracted for a Mexican and his 20-mule team to haul water from springs on the mountain.

Coke for the smelter was imported from Wales, halfway around the world, until the coal mines and coke ovens in northern New Mexico were developed.

In 1885 United Verde put some of its ore on display at the New Orleans Exposition. There it came under the gleaming eye of William Andrews Clark who later would be U.S. Senator from Montana. Clark had a mining expert look at the Verde mines, then bought up stocks offered on the open market. Clark and his associates soon acquired 300,000 shares at a reputed cost of $60,000,000. The copper mine on Mingus Mountain had become one of the most valuable in the world.

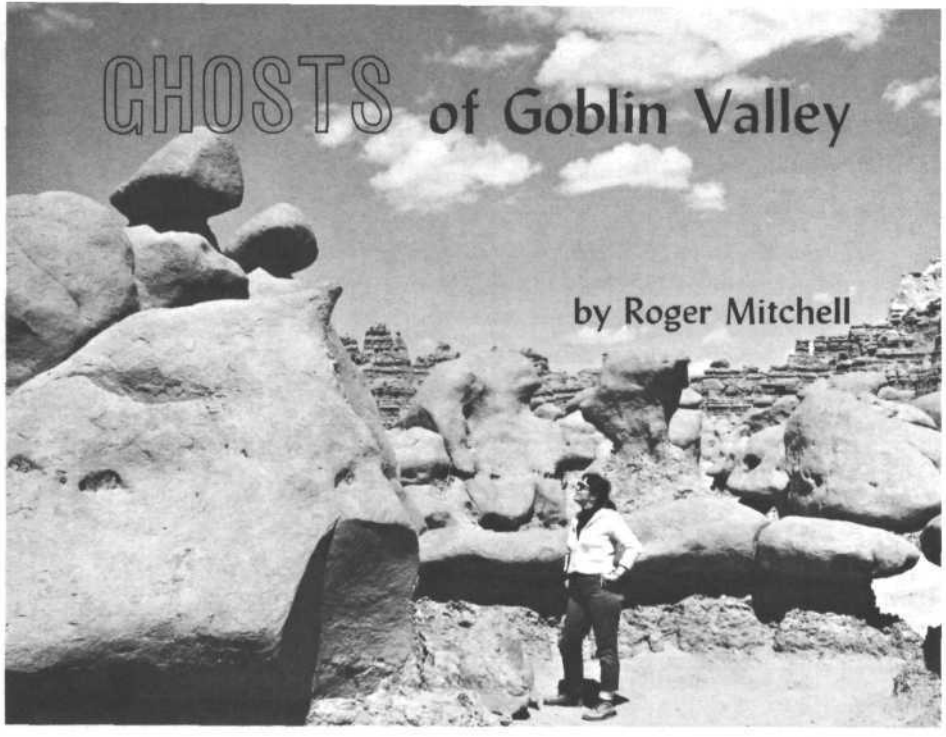
Mining crews came from every part of the world. Pay nights were wild beyond description. Most saloons and brothels were on the flat just below the town. Newly paid workers headed directly there to relieve huge thirsts and built-up libidos. Crazy Horse Nell, an opium addict, Gold Tooth Mae, Belgian Jenny and Dirty Gertie were among the most popular of the dance hall girls.

Jerome's production increased year by year. In 1929 the mines disgorged copper worth $29,000,000. However, October of that year saw the disastrous stock market crash which plummeted the price to a low of 5 cents per pound. United Verde soon closed down and the town shrunk from a population of 15,000 to a pitiful 100.

These persistent few eventually recognized that their city had become a ghost and decided to capitalize on this as an asset. Now the town is filled with visitors every year. Certainly there is much to see. There aren't many cities in the world with streets so steep that a man could strike a match on his neighbor's chimney! □

GHOSTS of Goblin Valley

by Roger Mitchell



IT IS A LONG stretch of road between Utah's Capitol Reef National Monument and the community of Green River. Along this 100-mile piece of State Route 24, there are few attractions to break the monotony of the open countryside. Almost unknown to the speeding motorist is an oddity of nature which lies just a few miles off the paved highway. Parts of a geologic formation known as the San Rafael Swell have been eroded into an enormous chamber of weirdies. Until funds are available to develop the area in a State Park, Goblin Valley will continue to be overlooked by the general public.

The turnoff to this strange gallery is 37 miles southwest of Green River on U.S. Highways 6 and 50, and 19 miles north of Hanksville on the Fremont River. At the turnoff, a paved road goes west across the open desert. At a point 5.2 miles west of Highway 34, turn left on the graded road. Three miles beyond you will pass Buckskin Spring on the left (boil water before using) and after traveling another three miles the graded road forks. The right fork circles the prominent Wild Horse Mesa and descends to the Muddy River. Here good, but undeveloped, campsites may be found under the spreading Fremont cottonwoods which line the river.

Follow the left fork to reach Goblin Valley. No clue is given to the scenic wonder which lies hidden in a secluded valley just two miles to the south. Where the road ends you can look down into the eroded maze, but to reach the heart of the grotto you must descend one of the several foot trails. No where else on earth can be found such a small area with such a concentrated variety of sculptured oddities. Spires, balanced rocks, and pedestals carved by wind, water, and frost achieve an infinite number of forms which change daily, as balanced rocks topple from their pedestals and new ones take shape.

These balanced rocks are cemented together with a material which makes them more resistant to erosion than the softer materials which surround them. Then, natural weathering agents dissolve or remove the softer rock, leaving an hourglass figure.

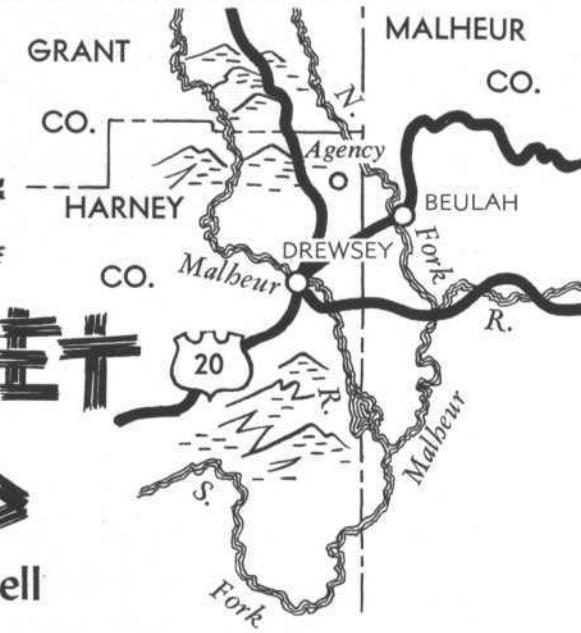
Geologists are not in agreement as to how these rocks, called concretions, are formed. Although the original composition of the concretion was the same as the surrounding rock, at some later date changes took place. Cementing agents such as silica, calcite, and iron oxide were introduced and built up concentric layers around a specific point. This precipitating nucleus may be an object like a shell, a bone, or a leaf, although in many instances nothing appears to trigger the phenomena.

Sediments now exposed in Goblin Valley were deposited in the Jurassic Period about 125 million years ago, just when the Age of Reptiles was reaching its peak. These sediments, called the Entrada Formation, have produced important quantities of vanadium in other parts of Utah.

Whether you visit Goblin Valley for a week or a day, it is safe to say you will always leave a portion unexplored. □

By reader request DESERT Magazine will reprint a series of articles written by the dean of lost mine yarns, John Mitchell, which appeared originally in 1940 and 1941.

LOST BLUE BUCKET GOLD



by John Mitchell

IN THE YEAR 1845, four years before the California gold rush, an emigrant train was on its way across the great plains. Oregon, not California, was its goal—land, not gold, its mission.

The pioneers worked their way across the country with the aid of a compass. They crossed desert, plain and mountains keeping on a fairly straight course. If a mountain range stood in their way, they crossed instead of detouring around it. Finally they reached Gravelly Ford Crossing on the Humboldt River, at the present site of Beowawe, Nevada. Here they split into two parties. One party continued along the Humboldt River, while the other group struck due north by way of the Black Rock Mountains. From the latter party a strange tale originated years later.

Leaving the Black Rock Mountains behind, the wagon train came to a high mountain range. The approaching slopes were gradual, and the party managed to reach the top with all the wagons. From this high point the wagon boss got a good view of the surrounding country and took bearings on the Twin Sister Peaks. The west side of the mountain was found to be very steep. In those days lock chains were used as brakes, but they would not serve here. Heavy timbers were cut and chained to the several wagons, and in this manner they made their way down.

While the wagons were being taken down the mountainside, camp was made at a spring in the canyon below. Some of the members of the party, gathering wood for the campfire, picked up pieces of metal that looked to them like brass. These people were farmers and knew very little about gold: They did not recognize the "pretty yellow rocks" as rich gold nuggets. The children picked up quite a few of the "pebbles" to play with. Several buckets were filled with them. The buckets, like the wagons, were painted blue.

While camped at the little spring, one of the women in the party became sick and died. They buried her near the spring, heaping up rocks on the grave, and left one of the little blue buckets hanging on a branch as a marker. After successfully crossing the mountain the little party continued on its way, unaware of the fortune swinging in the little blue buckets beneath the wagons. The emigrants had more grief while crossing the Deschutes River. The wagons capsized, the buckets were lost or their contents spilled into the water. Only a few of the little yellow pieces of metal—those the children were playing with or carried in their pockets—were saved.

The party reached northwestern Oregon, settled on homesteads and immediately undertook the task of making a living in the wild, untrammeled west. Several years later, a few of these settlers moved down to Sutter's Fort in California. Here they saw the nuggets recovered by Marshall in the mill race. The nuggets looked just like the little yellow rocks they had picked up in eastern Oregon. Eventually they obtained a few of the little stones

from friends who had remained in Oregon, and showed them to their newly made acquaintances in California. They were pronounced pure gold. So much excitement was created by the discovery that a party of 90 persons was immediately organized to return to southeastern Oregon and search for the rich ground that had now become known as the Blue Bucket Placer.

Hostile Indians soon put a damper on the party's intentions. The outfit was ambushed, and more than half of the gold seekers were killed. Only two men who knew, or thought they knew, the location of the golden canyon survived to get back to California. These two were members of the original emigrant party. They died shortly afterwards due to hardships suffered on the trip. However, before they died they met and told a Dr. Drane of Yreka, California, the story and gave him specific instructions how to find the canyon in which they had found the nuggets.

Dr. Drane was running a store and hotel and doing some placer mining in addition to his practice, and he was loath to leave his business to travel north. A trapper from the Hudson Bay country on his way to the California goldfields stopped at Yreka. The doctor showed him some of the gold nuggets that he daily washed out in his sluice boxes. "If that's gold," said the stranger, "I know where there's a pile of it. In a steep walled canyon northeast of here are lots of those yellow stones—some larger, some smaller. A man could load two horses with all they could carry in half a day. Why, you could just pick them up right out of the streambed."

The trapper, it seems, had wintered his horses in the canyon and had found the gold there the following spring when taking out the animals. While the trapper was describing the place, the doctor recalled the story of the two sick men. According to the description, the two places were identical. The interest of the doctor grew and grew. Eventually, with two trusted friends and the trapper, he set out to look for the canyon. The trapper backtracked by the dead embers of his campfires. Not until they reached the head of Goose Lake Valley did the doctor know where he was going. From the top of Warner Hill he could see the surrounding country and get his bearings.

The trapper pointed out the two peaks to the northeast about 120 miles away. "There," he said, "That mountain off to the right is the one. The canyon lies on this side and to the north of it. That is where I put my horses out to graze. The creek runs full in the spring and is low in the fall. The canyon is level at the lower end. There is a trail into it and plenty of grass. The upper end is steep. The walls are so close together that it is about all a man can do to get a horse through."

The three men found the place just as described but were doomed to disappointment. A recent cloudburst had played havoc with the canyon. The streambed was piled high with brush, boulders, and sand. The three men looked long and hard, but not a trace of gold could they find. The doctor never doubted that they were in the right place, but then he might have been wrong. With their food supply almost gone, and being exhausted from their long search, the trio reluctantly gave up.

Some 20 or more years later, in 1879, a boy, G. S. Johnson, and a man, William Adams, were traveling across Oregon. From Malheur Lake they headed into and camped at the agency of the Malheur Indian reservation. Adams, an old California miner, liked the looks of the rocks and formations of the country in and around the old agency buildings.

The Malheur reservation at that time was located where Harney, Grant, and Malheur Counties join. The agency was located on the southwestern slopes of the Burn River Mountains, west of Buelah and north of Drewsey. At that time white men were not allowed to stay very long on the reservation, or to prospect for minerals.

Johnson remembered a conversation with the agent while camped there. The agent had found piles of old rotten timbers, a grave by a spring and a wide deep track down the mountain about three miles from the agency. The timbers had been used behind wagons for brakes and had cut a large swath or road down the mountainside. Over 50 years later he heard the tale of the Blue Bucket Placer and recalled the tale told by the agent.

The story of Johnson should give new hope to the seekers of the Lost Blue Bucket Placer. The price is well worth a thorough search of the locality described by the Malheur agent. □

Desert COOKERY

Food Editor

Lucille Ivedale Carlson

CHIPPED BEEF CASSEROLE

1 4-oz package chipped beef
2 cups dry macaroni
2 cans cream of mushroom soup
½ lb. sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
½ small onion, grated
2 cups milk
Greased 2 qt. casserole

Parboil beef, bringing to a boil and then draining. It should be torn into small bits before parboiling. Combine drained beef with macaroni, and mushroom soup, mixing well. When smooth, add the grated cheese, onion and milk. Mix well. Bake in 350 degree oven for about 45 minutes, or until macaroni is tender.

JELLIED HORSERADISH

1 cup prepared horseradish
½ cup vinegar
3¼ cups sugar
½ cup liquid pectin
Green vegetable coloring enough to tint

Combine the horseradish, vinegar and green coloring, add sugar and bring to boil. At once add the pectin, stirring constantly, and bring again to full rolling boil. Boil exactly ½ minute. Remove from fire and let stand 1 minute. Skim and pour into jelly glasses. Cover with hot paraffin when the jelly is cold. This is very good with roast beef or ham.

SNAPPY STEW

1 lb. ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
2 tablespoons cooking oil
1 cup pre-cooked rice
1 cup boiling water
1 one-lb. can tomatoes
1 one pound can kidney beans
1¼ teaspoon salt
Pepper to taste
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon chili powder

Brown meat and onion in oil. Add rice and cook until golden. Stir in remaining ingredients and simmer for 15 minutes. Serves 6.

SCOTS BEAN MINCE

1 onion, chopped fine
1 pound ground beef
2 cups bouillon or water
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
Dash of monosodium glutamate
1 can (1 lb.) baked beans in tomato sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Saute onion in fat or bacon drippings till golden brown. Add beef and cook quickly, stirring, till lightly browned. Add all remaining ingredients and simmer gently, stirring occasionally till all is slightly thickened. Serves 4 to 6.

A farm friend in Minnesota suggests adding a tablespoon of white vinegar or lemon juice to a bean dish or bean soup for a subtle flavor lift and greater digestability.

FRUITED PORK CHOPS

6 pork chops
1 can condensed beef broth
8 pitted prunes
¼ teaspoon ginger
1 teaspoon celery seed
1 medium apple cut in six rings
2 tablespoons flour

Brown chops in skillet; pour off fat. Add broth, prunes, ginger and celery seed. Add apple rings and cook for about 10 minutes or until tender. Remove meat and fruit to serving platter. Gradually blend flour into a litle water, then slowly stir it into sauce. Stir and cook until thickened.

ORANGE BAKED CHICKEN

Chicken breasts, thighs or legs

Place each piece on heavy-duty foil large enough to cover and seal. Dot each piece with 1 tablespoon butter, salt and 1 tablespoon thawed, undiluted orange juice. If you like curry, sprinkle with a little curry powder, if not use some Lawry's Seasoning Salt or a few drops of soy sauce. Fold paper over securely and place in baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Remove from oven, remove pieces from foil and place in baking dish, pour juice over and place under broiler for a few minutes to brown, basting once or twice.

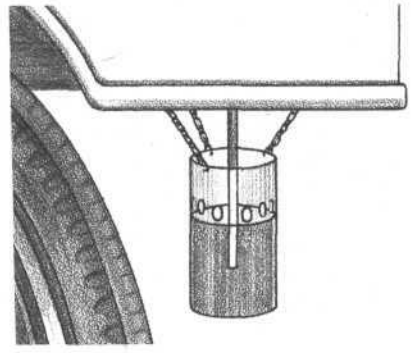
NEW IDEAS . . . By V. LEE OERTLE

This month we launch a page specifically aimed at telling readers what's new in the world of travel and recreation. New ideas about travel, motoring, desert camping and general desert living are welcome. So if you have a new and useful idea—something that hasn't been published before—please send it on to: Desert Product Report, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.

☆ ☆

A Pair of New Electric Winches for Off-Road Exploration. Belleview just announced their new and improved Model 6000 which fits all 2-wheel and 4-wheel drive vehicles. No special transmission or front power take-off is necessary. This unit operates strictly off your battery, 6-volt or 12-volt. While many persons think of a winch as "something to pull you out of sand", there are actually a score of handy jobs they'll handle. For example, moving fallen logs or rocks off a roadway. Or hauling fresh game up a steep hillside, or towing your buddy out of a ravine. The Improved Model 6000 provides 6000 pounds of single-line pull, even with a dead engine. Cab and winch side controls are easily operated even by women. Priced at $260, f.o.b. factory. Contact: Belleview Winch Division, Warn-Belleview, Inc., 5120 S. E. Milwaukie Ave., Portland, Oregon 97202.

The Titan Winch is also a 12-volt, battery powered unit. This new model features two-way free-spooling, safety brake, and controlled letoff. Controls are mounted inside the cab or car, with solenoid operation. Spool capacity is 280 feet of ¼-inch cable. On 12-volt power the lift is 2000 pounds, and straight-line pull about 3000 pounds. No-load drum speed is 60 rpm. Overall dimensions: 25-inches long, 9-inches high, 8-inches deep. At a weight of only 55 pounds, it's probably one of the lightest portable winches I've ever seen. (I said winch, not wench!) This price is $124.50 plus the cable. Available only through Airborne Sales, Dept. D, 8501 Stellar Drive, Culver City, Calif.



Here's How to Make Ice Last Longer In Your Coach Ice Box! This handy idea was sent in by Jack Derfus. It's well known that as cold air escapes down the drain tube it accelerates the melting of ice in the box. It's something like leaving the door open a little. But the drain is necessary to keep melted ice water from dribbling out of the box and down inside the paneling. Reader Derfus states that by attaching a can of water under the frame, you can insert the ice-box drain hose into it effectively blocking loss of cold air. Yet, it doesn't interfere with normal water drainage. Punch holes in the can as illustrated. Desert campers should find this idea worthwhile.

☆ ☆

Handy New Catalog Illustrates Special Desert Equipment. Dick Cepek has just announced his new Hi-Flotation Tire & Wheel Catalog. It consists of 44 pages of products and information that any desert traveler will find interesting. Even if you never plan to equip your car or pick-up with special tires, the catalog may entice you with other desert-oriented items. Special winches, unusual gauges, portable generators, fuel can holders, cable locks, wheel blocks—these and a hundred other product ideas are illustrated and priced in the catalog. It's free, from Dick Cepek, Dept. D, P.O. Box 181, South Gate, California 90280.

☆ ☆

Want a No-Slip Parking Brake? It's now available through Lever Lock, a positive acting hydraulic brake locker. By installing Lever Lock in the brake system of your car, pickup, or all-wheel-drive vehicle, you provide a direct method of solidly locking the brakes on any vehicle. Operation is simple: just step on the brakes (as usual), flip up the Lever Lock, and remove foot from the brakes. The car won't budge until you hit the brake pedal again! Nothing to slip, no extra parts to worry about, no adjustment problems. So long as the vehicle brakes are working, Lever Lock will provide a positive action parking brake. It's the same system used on United Parcel Service trucks and on other commercial carriers where quick stop-and-go driving is required. Lever-Lock should make an excellent addition to any camper's vehicle. Anyone who has been forced to change a tire or work on an engine while his vehicle was parked on a 45-degree angle will appreciate this device! It's not new — been around some 20 years, matter of fact. But it's just now becoming available for passenger cars and pickup trucks. Contact: Jim Odom, Almico, Inc., 2543 Seaman Ave., El Monte, Calif. 91734.

☆ ☆

Car Theft Is a Major Problem. Here's a new item designed to block thievery. It's the Steering Wheel and Gearshift Lock. Install the specially designed lock (which resembles a sort of double-ended bicycle lock) over the steering wheel and shift lever. Lock it, and there is no way the car or truck can be driven. Neither wheel nor lever can then be operated. A portable lock, it can be moved from car to car. With a set of two keys, the Steering Wheel Lock costs $5.75 from J. C. Whitney & Co., 1917 Archer Ave., Dept. 273, Chicago, Ill. 60616.

☆ ☆

Portable Refrigerator Operates Off Car Battery! No ice is required. This new box is of thermoelectric design—which means that it produces a cold interior directly from electrical energy. No coils, no compressors, no gasses that must be recharged. The conventional vapor cycle is eliminated. The only moving part is the small fan which removes heat. Just plug it into your car, boat, camper or wherever you have a 12-volt power source. Draws less than 40 watts, according to the maker. Called Mister Chill, the box is made by Nealco, Inc., Spartanburg, South Carolina.

BACK COUNTRY

COMPILED BY JACK PEPPER

FOUR WHEEL CHATTER . . .

by Bill Bryan

We had the opportunity to have a meeting with Doctor Horace Parker of the California Beaches and Parks Commission. We exchanged views, feelings, and ideas on what we think could be done to promote a clear understanding of feelings between the many outdoor organizations. Dr. Parker is the first person ever appointed to the Beaches and Parks Commission who to our knowledge is a true desert enthusiast. Dr. Parker has written many articles about the desert and published the most complete handbook on the Borrego desert area. You would be surprised at the amount of enthusiasm there is for our suggestion of a riding, hiking and camping trail from the Mexican border to the Oregon border.

Use extreme caution when traveling the Joshua Tree National Park area. The people who run that place don't mince any words when it comes to running their small domain, we are told. It seems that they had a balloon race from the top of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and one of the balloons ran off course and cracked up in this monument. According to the newspapers the people who run the monument really went out of their way to be nasty to these unfortunate people with the balloon. I personally know their attitude as we had occasion to talk to them one time when we were running a four-wheel-drive cavalcade on the very edges of the monument. They said if we so much as made a wheel track in their monument they would have us arrested. Of course, you can't blame them a great deal of the time after seeing the way many of the litterbugs and thieves act, but you could see room for accidents or the unexpected.

We attended a meeting of the judges and officials of the National Four Wheel Drive Grand Prix to discuss classes and rules for the next national event. The Grand Prix was planned for this October, but the city of Riverside, California, apparently cannot stand to see all that grass where the spectators stood last year and want it and the grass campground area paved. Can you feature that? It also seems that there was one sour grape last year who felt he should have won all the prizes, even though he didn't finish far enough up the ladder. Of course you always find one bad sport in every event where prizes are involved. Other than these two items it looks like bigger and more successfull four-wheel-drive Grand Prixs in the future.

Erle Stanley Gardner has done it again, searching out the facts on some more lost mines. This time in the state of Oregon. See last month's and this issue of DESERT. Also in Oregon at the same time, where they ran into Gardner's party, were a bunch from the Chuckawalla Jeep Club from Los Angeles. In the group were the A. V. Neelys, Merrit Ladberrys, Don Elmores, Frank Robinsons, Basil Smiths (Smittybilt Products-El Monte, Calif.). From Christmas Valley they went to Idaho and Colorado making some trips around the Denver area with the Bill McCauly family.

Bob Feuerhelm of Milne Bros. Jeep, 1951 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, tells us his group will be sponsoring a four wheel drive racing event in the Lake Elsinore area during November. Incidentally, Milne Bros. carry a complete stock of roll bars for four wheel drives, and header kits for the Jeep V-6. If you need any of these items, keep Bob in mind . . . a good guy to do business with.

We extend a hearty get well soon to Roy Tanaka, a most active member of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs and Director of the National Four Wheel Drive Association. Speaking of the National Four Wheel Drive Association, Jack Cook of the NFWDA Director for Arizona tells us the 1967 convention was very successful. The 1967-68 directors are: Arizona, Jack Cook, Harold Hawthorne; California, Roy Tanaka, Garland P. Peed, Jr.; Colorado, Dick Gibson, Jim Heffner; New Mexico, Lonnie Beyer; Oregon, Bob Baker; Utah, Al Kohler, Barney Nelson: Directors at Large, Norris Nelson, Russ Smith, Ken Smith.

Sound Off!

Owners of Open Road Campers wanting complimentary copies of our new newspaper "Along The Open Road" and/or wanting to join a local club of Open Road campers please write Sid Shleffar, Open Road National Club Director, P.O. Box 1312 Redondo Beach, Calif. 90278.

SID SHLEFFAR

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I am writing you concerning my desire to purchase a mineral light. I thought you might be able to tell me the address of a company that handles them. Thank you very much.

JACK F. BARNETT,
Boulder City, Nevada.

Write to Compton Rock Shop, 1405 South Long Beach Blvd., Compton, Calif.; Philtron Electronics, 10056 Cunningham Ave., Westminster, Calif.; Jacobsen Suppliers, 9322 California Ave., South Gate, Calif.

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The Lenin State Library of the USSR should like to establish an exchange of publications with you. We are interested in receiving your Desert Magazine. For our part we can send you one of the following journals published in Russian: Bulletin of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Series Geography; Bulletin of the USSR Geographic Society.

We ask you kindly to let us know whether you agree to establish such an exchange and what our journal you would like to receive in exchange for yours. Correspondence and publications should be sent to the following address: Department of International Book Exchange of the Lenin State Library of the USSR. USSR. Moscow. Centre.

Looking forward to your reply,

I. P. KONDAKOV.

We'll send 50 copies a month if it will help our two world powers understand that within the world powers there are just plain people.

TRAVEL

Vandals struck the new $35,000 Tonto National Forest Vista Point on State Route 87 from Phoenix to Payson recently and broke and removed the expensive glass covering of the illustrated information case, stealing the very costly panoramic photographs depicting the desert area and mountains viewed from the Vista Point. Damage has also been created to locks of the restrooms, obscene text printed on restroom walls at this and many of the other scenic points of Arizona, according to Ralph A. Fisher, Sr., Payson, Arizona.

Rancher Bruce Barron, of Manton, Calif., mounted a saddle on the front of his Grasshopper, a cut-down Volkswagen which weights only 800 pounds. While exploring the Oregon desert (see article page 19 of this issue) Jack Pepper rides saddle while Sam Hicks "rides shotgun" in the back.

Calendar of Western Events

Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to scheduled date.

CABRILLO FESTIVAL, Sept. 21-28, San Diego, Calif. Celebrating the 425th anniversary of the discovery of California at San Diego. Colorful pageant, festival and Spanish dances.

UNLIMITED HYDROPLANE RACES, Sept. 24, Mission Bay, San Diego, Calif. World's fastest boats compete. Climax of Aqua Week.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY ROCKHOUND GEMBOREE, Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Scottish Rite Masonic Memorial Center, Mission Valley, San Diego, Calif.

PAJARO VALLEY ROCKHOUNDS Annual Gem and Mineral Show, Sept. 30-Oct 1, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, Watsonville, Calif.

JULIAN APPLE DAYS, Oct. 7 & 8, Julian, Calif., 17th annual celebration with dancing, melodramas, western parade, barbecues, etc.

AVION TRAVELCADE CLUB'S CALIFORNIA UNIT FALL RALLY, Oct. 12-15, Holiday Hot Springs Resort, Reno, Nevada. Restricted to Avion trailer and camper owners. For information write Gene E. Young, P. O. Box 744, Vista, Calif. 92083.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY Gem and Mineral Show, Oct. 14-15, Masonic Temple, 50 West Duarte Rd., Arcadia. Admission and parking free.

CARMEL VALLEY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY'S Jubilee of Jewels, Oct. 14-15, Monterey (Calif.) County Fairgrounds. Hourly door prizes, working demonstrations, exhibits. Adults 50 cents, children free.

SOUTH BAY LAPIDARY AND MINERAL SOCIETY'S 16th annual show, Oct. 14-15, 3341 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, Calif. Everyone welcome, no charge.

BORREGO SPRINGS DESERT FESTIVAL, Oct. 19-22, celebrating the opening of the desert season in this Southern California Anza-Borrego State Park area. Events include jeep tours, nature walks, guided excursions, rockhound show, barbecues, campfire sessions, art displays, etc. For information write to Borrego Springs (Calif.) Chamber of Commerce.

GEM RUSH OF '67, Oct. 28 & 29, L.E.R.C. Rockcrafters Club 12th annual show, 2814 Empire Ave., Burbank, Calif. Exhibits and demonstrations. Free admission and parking.

DALY CITY ROCKHOUNDS Golden Gate Gem and Mineral Show, Oct 21-22, War Memorial Bldg., 6655 Mission St., Daly City, Calif.

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LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

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Spanish Helmet! . . .

To the Editor: Mr. Horton's interesting article about Havasupai in the July-August issue reminded me of an incident which may be related to the "grave with the man in armour" that he referred to. If this is investigated further, I would like to know if the man had a hat!

In the mid-80s my parents located a cattle ranch southwest of Prescott and I gew up knowing many of the pioneers. A neighbor, James O'Neal, had been a packer for General Cook and subsequent to his army service had located and operated the OX outfit on Date Creek. He once accompanied a detachment of soldiers in pursuit of some renegade Apaches up towards the Grand Canyon. When in the neighborhood of Peach Springs one of his party found a "big rusty iron hat." They looked it over, threw it aside and hurried on. Very probably now on some-drenched mesa, beside some long-abandoned trail, lies the rusting headgear of a Spanish Conquistador.

"Speak! Speak! Thou fearful guest!
Who with thy hollow breast,
Still in rude armour dressed,
Comes to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched as if asking alms,
Why doest thou haunt me?"

FRANK M. CANNON, M.D.,
Montara, California.

Plank Road . . .

To the Editor: Your comment in the Letters Department in the April issue about preserving a section of the historic Yuma plank road was a good one. We have a section of it on display at the San Bernardino County Museum. Do you know that another plank road once existed between Rice and Blythe that historian L. Burr Belden says antedates the Yuma one?

ARDA HAENSZEL,
San Bernardino, California.

I Flipped . . .

To the Editor: The cover photo of Bodie, California, on your September issue is reversed, although it is one of the finest I have ever seen. If you turn it upside down and look at the reflection in the water the buildings are then as they should be. The brick lodging house is first on the left, then the Odd Fellows building, then the Miners Union Hall and last is Mr. Osmun's home, later used as a storage building. Across Green Street on the corner was the Boone General Merchandise Store, then the Johl home, which was moved across the street from its original location.

I was born in Bodie and our home is still there. My father, J. S. Cain and my mother, Lile Cain, owned and operated the only bank in Mono County all the years we were in Bodie.

STUART W. CAIN,
Bridgeport, California.

Editor's comment: The negative of the photo was flipped deliberately. Occasionally it is necesessary to take artistic license in order to get the DESERT Magazine logo onto the cover without it cutting through an important part of a picture. In such cases, subject matter, pictorial composition and photographic superiority take precedence over realism. C.P.

Ancient Guns . . .

To the Editor: The story Al Pearce wrote in your June issue about the lost Guns in Davies is a familiar one to me. My husband's father, who was the first white child born in Julian, was the man who found them in 1911. He didn't ever look for them again as the guns didn't mean much to him. Forty-three years later my husband and I became interested in them and he told us the story, but died before he could take us there. He was 80 years old. Since then we have spent time each winter looking for them. We can't tell you where they are, but we can sure tell you where they aren't! But maybe someday, who knows?

MRS. DICK McCAIN,
Boulevard, California.

Friends in England . . .

To the Editor: For many years we have enjoyed our gift of DESERT from friends in Phoenix, Arizona. It has made us determined to see for ourselves your wonderful land. It will be in 1968. We read in a book about a place in the desert called Hidden Valley. The entrance is through a hole almost on the ground and it is necessary to crawl through the opening to get into it. This information is all we have, but we particularly want to go there when we visit the United States. The above is all of the information the book gave, other than that it lies between Yuma and the southern California desert.

WINIFRED SPINKS,
London, England.

Editor's comment: It is in Joshua Tree National Monument. We will have an article on it in a forthcoming issue just for you! C.P.

Big Nugget! . . .

To the Editor: When I read in the July-August DESERT about the gold nugget weighing 28 pounds that was discovered in Australia and was supposed to be the largest in the world, I thought your readers would like to know about the famous "Dogtown Nugget" found in 1859 on the east side of Sawmill Peak above Whiskey Flats near Chico, California, that weighed in at 54 pounds and was later melted down in San Francisco into a gold bar valued at $10,690. The money was used to construct one of Chico's first hotels. It was the biggest single piece of gold ever to be found in North America and just about double the weight of the Australian nugget.

G. C. SMITH,
Paradise, California

In Error . . .

To the Editor: In my story in the July-August issue, "Desert Journey," there was a typographic error where a picture of the old San Antone station in Nye County, Nevada, is captioned "built in 1800." The San Antone station was built about 1865 by the Liberty Mining Company whose mines were nearby in the San Antone Range of Nye County. The ruins are about 14 miles northwest of Tonopah.

MYRTLE MYLES,
Reno, Nevada.

Mono Indians . . .

To the Editor: There is more to be added to the article on Mono Lake in your July-August issue. The Indians of Mono Lake were Northern Paiutes. They have been called Mono Indians as well as Monachi, but their own name for themselves was Kuzediska, which means fly-larvae-eaters.

The larvae, called *Kutsavi,* were gathered from the northern periphery of Mono Lake in mid-summer, then sun-dried, husked and stored in baskets. This product was an important staple, but the Indians there varied their diet in season with roots, berried fruit, grass seeds, pinenuts, sea gull eggs, water fowl, rodents, rabbits, pine tree caterpillars and occasionally deer and mountain sheep. The *Kutsavi* was sometimes carried across the Sierras as a trade item to the Miwok Indians of Yosemite.

R. SHEPARD,
Pasadena, California.

Off-beat Travel . . .

To the Editor: We have done some limited exploring in southern and western Nevada and this Fall we hope to take an extensive trip through northern and eastern Nevada. Enclosed is 50c with the great hope that you still have a copy of the September 1963 Special Travel Issue on Nevada. Neither my husband nor myself are of an age to go exploring far from main highways and maintained roads, but that doesn't keep us from having wonderful trips and, believe me, our new subscription and your Special offer for three years of back issues and the additional ten issues we ordered several weeks ago have opened up a new world for us.

I never expect to come close to a lost mine, but if I find one bottle I shall be a very happy woman.

DOROTHY GILL,
San Francisco, California.

Sleep in Havasupai . . .

To the Editor: We liked G. Michael Horton's article, *Land of the Havasupai,* in the July-August issue but were sorry he did not mention the comfortable and reasonable accommodations in Supai.

The New Tourist Lodge has four clean and comfortable rooms, each with private bath and plenty of hot water. Guests share a kitchen in the same building. It is completely equipped with dishes and cooking utensils. There is a new gas stove with oven, and a gas refrigerator. We received a prompt reply to our request for reservations from the Tourist Manager. Mail goes out twice a week. "Time may move slowly in Supai," but the Tourist Manager is on the ball.

KATHERINE P. BAKER,
San Diego, California.

Likes to Travel . . .

To the Editor: You really did it with the July August issue! It has everything to satisfy our hunger for unusual travel. We have been reading DESERT since 1952 and find it fascinating. Each editor seems to bring out something different, but interesting. More power to a real team!

MRS. ELMER WILSON,
Eureka, California.

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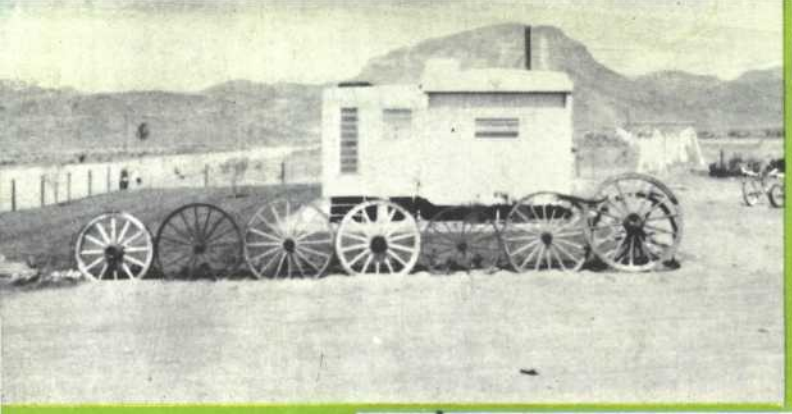

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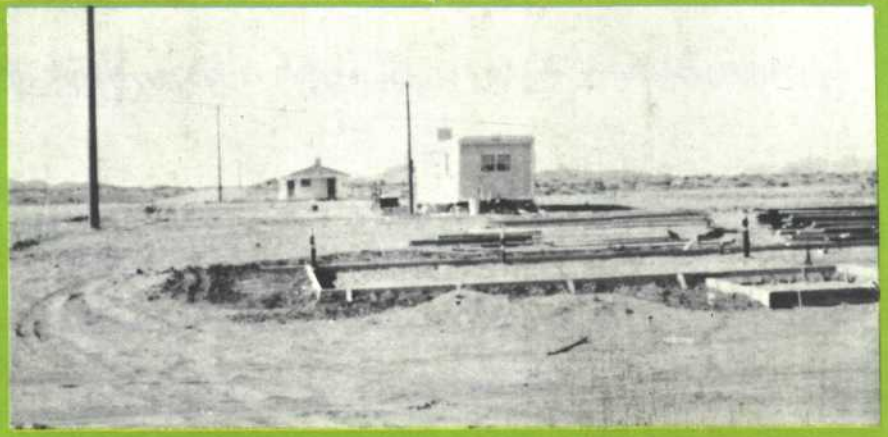

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