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FANTASIES OF GOLD by E. B. Sayles. During his search for archeological finds for more than 30 years, the author was exposed to the rumors and legends of lost gold and treasures. After his retirement as curator of the Arizona State Museum, he classified and delved into these still unsolved mysteries. An interesting and informative book on lost bonanzas and legends, many of which have never been published. Hardcover, well illustrated, 135 pages, \$6.50.

LOST MINES OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST by John D. Mitchell. The first of Mitchell's lost mine books is now available after having been out of print for years. Reproduced from the original copy and containing 54 articles based on accounts from people Mitchell interviewed. He spent his entire adult life investigating reports and legends of lost mines and treasures of the Southwest. Hardcover, illustrated, 175 pages, \$7.50.

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MOCKEL'S DESERT FLOWER BOOK by Henry and Beverly Mockel. The well-known painter of desert wildflowers has combined his four-color sketches and black and white photographs to describe in detail so the layman can easily identify wildflowers, both large and small. Microscopic detail makes this an outstanding book for identification. Special compressed fiber cover which will not stain. 54 full-color illustrations with 72 life-size drawings and 39 photographs, 316 pages, \$5.95.

LOST DESERT BONANZAS by Eugene Conrotto. Brief resumes of lost mine articles printed in back issues of DESERT Magazine, by a former editor. Hardcover, 278 pages, \$7.00.

SOUTHWESTERN INDIAN ARTS & CRAFTS by Tom Bahti. Beautifully illustrated with 4-color photographs, this book describes the arts and crafts of the Indians of the Southwest and offers suggestions on what to buy and how to judge authentic jewelry, rugs, baskets and pottery. Large format, heavy paperback, 32 pages, \$1.00.



WILY WOMEN OF THE WEST

By GRACE ERNESTINE RAY

Whereas their male counterparts were usually all bad, the wily women of the West had both their good and bad sides—some slim and others hefty. They are not mentioned by today's advocates of women's liberation, but they were the forerunners of the movement. Included in the cast of characters in this well-written book are Belle Starr, Cattle Kate, Sadie Orchard, Gertrudis Barcelo, Lola Montez and the "Unsinkable Molly Brown." The author brings the gals alive. After reading the vignettes, you'll wonder if Germane Greer really has anything new to say. Hardcover, illustrated with historic photos, 157 pages.

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HOW TO COLLECT ANTIQUE BOTTLES by John C. Tibbitts. A fascinating insight of early America as seen through the eyes of the medicine companies and their advertising almanacs. Excellent book for avid bottle collectors and those just starting. Also includes chapters on collecting, locations and care of bottles. Heavy, slick paperback, well illustrated, 118 pages, \$4.00.

LOST MINES & BURIED TREASURES ALONG THE OLD FRONTIER by John D. Mitchell. The second of Mitchell's books on lost mines which was out-of-print for many years is available again. Many of these appeared in DESERT Magazine years ago and these issues are no longer available. New readers will want to read these. Contains the original map first published with the book and one pinpointing the areas of lost mines. Mitchell's personal research and investigation has gone into the book. Hardcover, 240 pages, \$7.50.

100 DESERT WILDFLOWERS by Natf Dodge. Each flower is illustrated with a 4-color photograph and described in detail, where found, blooming period, etc. Habitats from sea level to 4,000 feet. Slick paperback, 64 pages, \$2.00.

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GOLDEN MIRAGES by Philip A. Bailey. Out-of-print for more than 20 years, this was a collector's item. A valuable book for lost mines and buried treasure buffs, it is beautifully written and gives first-hand interviews with old-timers long since passed away. Excellent for research and fascinating for arm-chair readers. Hardcover, illustrated, 353 pages, \$9.95.

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DESERT OVERVIEW MAPS by Wes Chambers. Using topographic maps as basic underlays, Wes has compiled two excellent detailed maps for back country explorers of the Mojave and Colorado Deserts. Maps show highways, gravel roads, jeep trails plus historic routes and sites, old wells, which are not on modern-day maps, plus ghost towns, Indian sites, etc. Mojave Desert Overview covers from U.S. 395 at Little Lake to Boulder City, Nevada, to Parker Dam to Victorville. Colorado Desert Overview covers from the Mexican border to Joshua Tree National Monument to Banning to the Arizona side of the Colorado. \$3.00 each. Be certain to state which map (or both) when ordering.

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THE COVER:

The beauty—and the loneliness—of the desert is graphically presented in this photo by David Muench of the sand dunes near Shoshone in California's Mojave Desert. David's latest pictorial works, *Timberline Ancients*, is reviewed on page 5 of this issue.

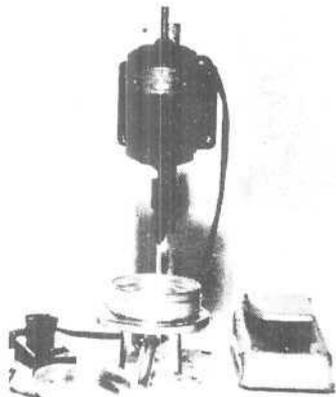
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LOTTIE M. SHIPLEY



A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

HE IS INSCRUTABLE, does not belong to a political party, minds his own business, does not create discord, moves with slow deliberation, is loved by both young and old and thus is not involved in the generation gap, has ancestors dating back 200 million years and even has a Latin name—*Gopherus agassizi*.

With these qualifications, what politically-minded legislator would vote against naming the Desert Tortoise as California's official reptile? And that is just what they did last month—so now *Gopherus* can proudly take his place alongside the Grizzly Bear—California's official animal.

Although he has survived for 200 million years, the Desert Tortoise is an endangered species and it is unlawful to take one from his habitat. Unless you owned a tortoise before March 1, 1972, possession of one is prohibited.

So when you see our new California State Reptile in the desert, pet him, and then leave him alone.

Speaking of California's official family—and we don't mean the Republicans or Democrats, since *Desert* is non-partisan—do you know that California is the 31st state to be admitted to the Union?

Also that the California Poppy is the official flower, the bird is the Valley Quail, the tree is the Redwood, the motto is "Eureka! I Have Found It," and the official song is "I Love You." And that California has more dogs and cats—an estimated 50,000,000—than any other state in the Union.

So who says California is going to the dogs? We are now going to *Gopherus agassizi*.

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by Jack Pepper

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TIMBERLINE ANCIENTS

Photos by

David Muench

Text by

Darwin Lambert



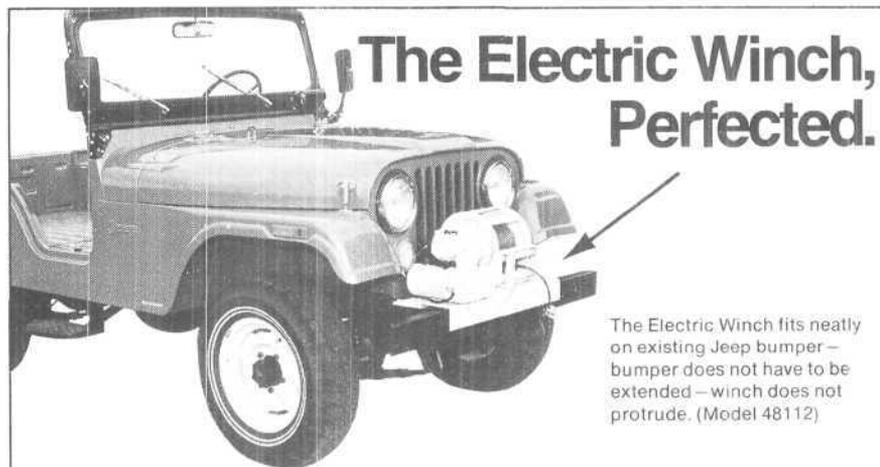
*Whisper, wind—whine through the
branches of pine:
The singing of angels, the music divine ...
A tree growing here is for Moses,
so ancient and strong on the peak ...
The life of another encloses
the eras of Roman and Greek.
A neighboring tree for the prophet Isaiah
still weathers the wind and the ice
of the height.
Another one lives from the time of
the Maya
whose day long ago was forgotten
in night.*

The above is an excerpt from a poem by Darwin Lambert who wrote the beautiful and moving text of *Timberline Ancients*, a pictorial presentation of bristlecone pines, the earth's oldest living trees. "Methuselah" in California's White Mountains, is the oldest living tree—4,600 years. The "youngsters" average from 2,000 to 3,000 years.

Lambert's poetry and prose is matched by the unsurpassed artistry of David Muench, whose color photographs of the ancient trees powerfully convey the multi-faceted essence of life in its more persistent form. Muench's color appears monthly in national publications and on many covers of *DESERT Magazine*.

With two previous pictorial presentations—*California* and *Arizona*—the present volume, in this reviewer's opinion, definitely establishes Muench as the most

October 1972



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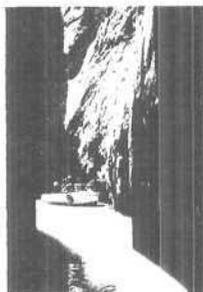
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BOOK REVIEWS, continued

outstanding Western color photographer.

This reviewer also knew Darwin Lambert when the latter was editing a newspaper in Nevada during the 1950s. At that time Darwin was waging a one-man crusade to protect the bristlecones in Nevada's Great Basin area.

Timberline Ancients is the culmination of a writer and photographer who, for many years, have braved the elements and hiked up 12,000-foot and more mountain peaks in winter and summer to graphically present the beauty and majesty of the oldest living things on earth. Their travels—and trials and tribulations—took them to the mountains of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Colorado. Their feelings—and the tenor of the book—is summed up in the following passage:

"The bristlecone tree is a dwarf, an ogre, a misshapen giant, an abstract sculpture, an old man . . . It is ugly, bizarre, absurd, or it is startlingly beautiful, generating larger and larger the charges of esthetic current as acquaintance develops . . . It is as if you are meeting a personage, perhaps a figure from mythology, half this, half that, like the Grecian Pan or his nymph-friend Pitys who, old tradition says, was transformed by the Earth-Mother into a pine . . . It is still a tree, anchored to the ground, but you have difficulty thinking of it as merely a tree."

Another artist who contributed beauty to the book is Bonnie Muench, David's wife, who designed the presentation. *Timberline Ancients* is 11x14 format, hardcover, heavy slick paper, 128 four-color photographs—plus Muench's information of film, exposure, etc., used. This is a pictorial presentation you will be proud to have in your library, or give as a gift. \$19.00 until January 1, 1973, then \$22.00.

BICYCLE TRAILS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



By David Kirk and
Robert H. Miller

"Would you like to go for a ride?"

That question once meant getting into the family car and going for a Sunday outing. Today, it usually means either taking the family bicycles and riding around the neighborhood, or packing them into the trunk of a car or strapping them on the front of a camper and heading for rural or back-country areas.

Bicycling has become the nation's number one participatory sport and more and more families are finding "togetherness" in this outdoor recreation.

It certainly has its advantages. You don't have to "fill her up" with gasoline, there are no obnoxious fumes, no engine troubles, no noise or dust, and, in going slowly, you enjoy the scenery, stop where and when you want—and keep in good physical condition.

The authors, both veteran bicycle explorers, have compiled a guide which contains 69 trails, including sidetrips, ranging from three and a half miles to more than 50 miles. Most are 10 to 20 miles, and are circular and range from flat to hilly terrain. There are tours for beginners, intermediates and skilled bicyclists.

Each trail has a detailed map, points of interest, facilities, traffic levels and mileage, plus other information to keep you from "spinning your wheels."

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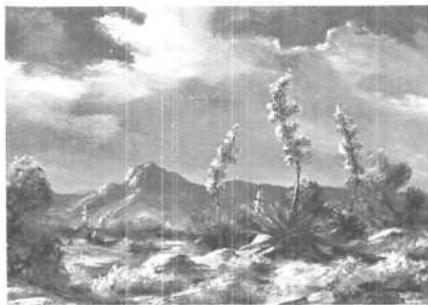
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FAST CAMEL CRUISE

PUTTING NEW emphasis on its role as "watchdog" of the desert, the Bureau of Land Management is policing the back country with the complete support of its most ardent adventurers—the organized four-wheel-drive clubs.

by
Rita
Lewis

Photos by the author

A typical example was the recent 18th Annual Sareea Al Jamel Fast Camel cruise sponsored by the four-wheel-drive club of Indio, California and staged near Twentynine Palms. Before the Indio club's run was scheduled, members took Mario Lopez, B.L.M. field representative, over the proposed course.

He approved the run and later was a



The Indio annual safari is always a family affair. Nylia McMillan (above) prepares breakfast in her unusual covered-wagon-type trailer. All types of four-wheel-drive vehicles (left) line up waiting for the start of the one-day trek through the back country. Even the youngsters participate (right) by filling up the tires after the two-day event.

guest during the weekend safari which had more than 400 vehicles participating in the various events. The Sareea Al Jamel is a member of the California Association of 4WD Clubs, Inc., which works closely with the B.L.M. and the U.S. Forest Service in policing the public lands of California.

Lopez approved the run after he was taken on the conducted tour over the route, through sandy washes, ridgebacks and rocky canyons which confined the drivers to natural courses, plus hill climbs that offered experienced off-roaders new challenges and skills but, at the same time, preserved the desert's landscape.

It was a weekend of fun for families from throughout California. There were more than 400 vehicles with 1,500 men, women and children (no dog count available) who feasted on barbecue around the community campfire, renewed old friendships, listened to music and finally returned to their homes.

They left the area as clean and pristine as when they arrived—ready for the next group of outdoor enthusiasts looking for fun and fresh air on public lands under the desert skies. □

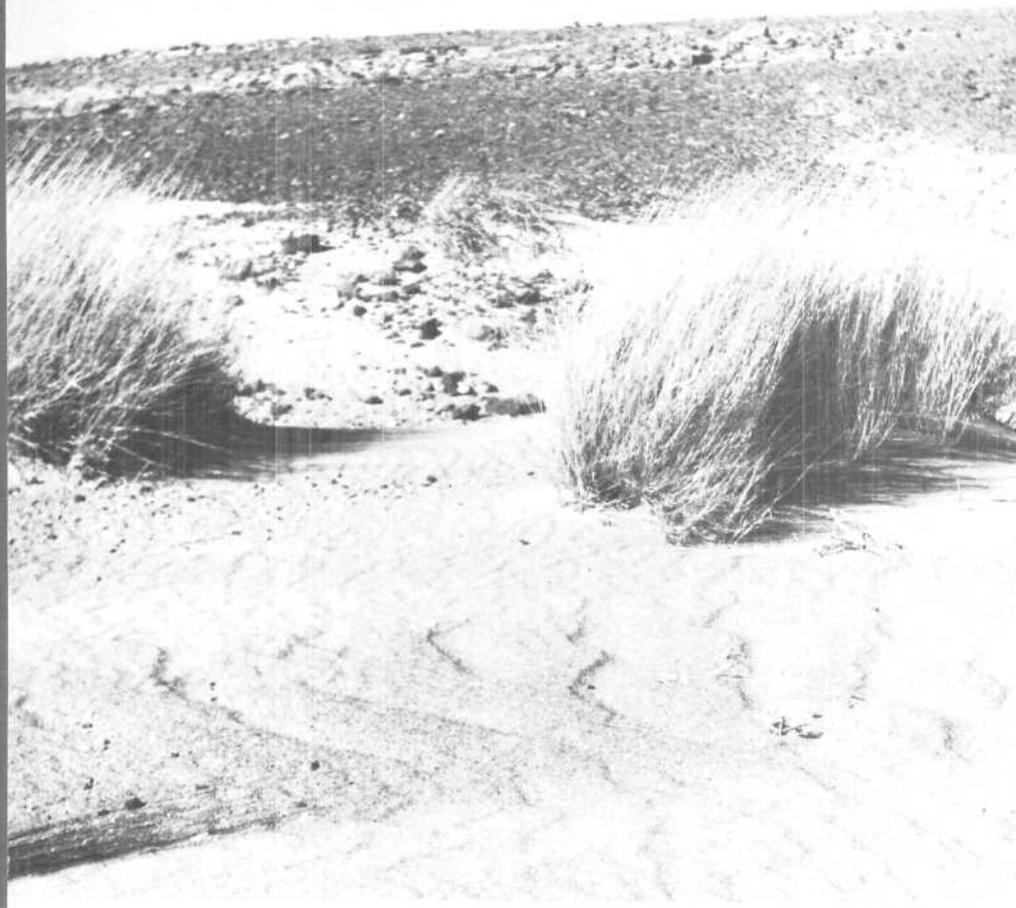


Proof that organized four-wheel-drive clubs police their camping areas is shown (right) in the two "before and after" photographs. The final cleanup vehicle checks the area where only a few hours before 1,500 persons with 400 vehicles had camped.



TONS

by Mary Frances Strong
Photography by Jerry Strong



Sand blown from Troy Dry Lake is deposited around the collecting area. The bajada (above, left) in background is covered with cutting material. Jerry Strong (left) examines colorful jaspagate. Specimens range from small tumbling pieces to large chunks for slabbing.

FOR TUMBLING!

“WHERE CAN I find some good gem material within a short distance of a highway?” is the question most often asked by new rock hobbyists. Fortunately, Southern California’s Mo-

jave Desert provides a number of easy-to-reach locations. For example, Desert Oasis in the southern tip of the Cady Mountains—36 miles east of Barstow, offers a good supply of colorful agate and jasper.

The Cady Mountains are well known for producing a variety of fine cutting material and their south-western extension is no exception. Though collecting has occurred here for over two decades, the supply is not noticeably diminishing. There are still “tons for tumbling.”

The name, Desert Oasis Gem Field, originated from the first route to the area which began alongside a gas station and cafe so-named. When Interstate 40 was completed, it cut off this access road. It is now necessary to travel east to the Hector Road offramp and backtrack. The new

route turns north under the freeway and follows a graded dirt road toward Hector Siding.

All is quiet at the Siding today, but a few years ago it was in harmony with the activity of several mines in the region. Forgotten stock piles of ore stand forlornly near the tracks and are slowly melting back into the earth. Small pea to walnut-sized balls of barite can be found around the ore piles. They make interesting T/N specimens.

Heading west, the graded road divides. It is best to use the left branch as there are stretches of sand along the route closer to the tracks. Two miles of travel lead to the railroad crossing. It has a steep pitch and is a bit rough, but no problems were encountered when taking a 22-foot trailer over it. However, watch carefully, as



The dun-colored hills at Desert Oasis (above) appear "frosted" with tons of agate and jasper. Ninety-nine percent of the dark rocks are cutting material. There is a good campsite (right) at Area B. Bright yellow jasper is found in slopes behind trailer.





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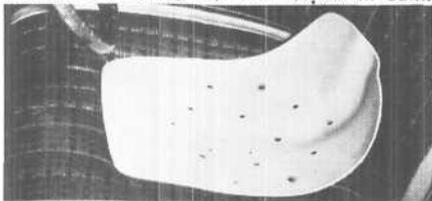
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signals are absent and trains regularly roar down the tracks.

After crossing, turn left, then in a short distance (unmeasurable) take the road branching right. See map. From this point, the route is dependent upon which area you elect to visit first and where you decide to camp. We have always parked our trailer at the vein material location but there is level ground near the old trailers west of Area A. Happily, both sites are far enough away from the railroad that sounds of passing trains are diminished.

The vein material requires digging but the reward will be nice specimens of red and brown moss agate.

The slopes immediately north of this location contain scattered specimens of bright-yellow jasper.

There is so much agate and jasper at Area A that, from a distance, the dune-colored hills appear chocolate-frosted. Nature has already preformed the jasp-agate so collecting is actually a matter of selection for size and pattern.

Tumbling is an easy method of testing the polishing quality, as well as producing free-form gems. Jerry and I always try to pick up a few handfuls of small specimens from each collecting area we visit. Upon returning home, they are high-graded. Materials of like hardness are combined and started in our small tumbler (2 1/2 pounds.) Within a few weeks we have

polished stones collected from the various locales of our trip.

Most hobbyists have their special method for producing a high polish on tumbled stones. Some of these methods are downright complicated. Ours is very simple and productive. The only requirement is that specimens to be tumbled must be of good to excellent quality.

I shall not attempt to reiterate here the basics of tumbling. However, for those of you who might be interested—here is our method:

Tumbler running 24 hours daily.

Barrel filled 3/4 full with specimens.

Water added to just cover specimens.

Amount of grit added in Steps 1-2-3 is heaping tablespoons.

Each grind runs 7 to 10 days.

Step #1

Rough Grind (80 grit).

Step #2

Intermediate Grind (220 grit).

Step #3

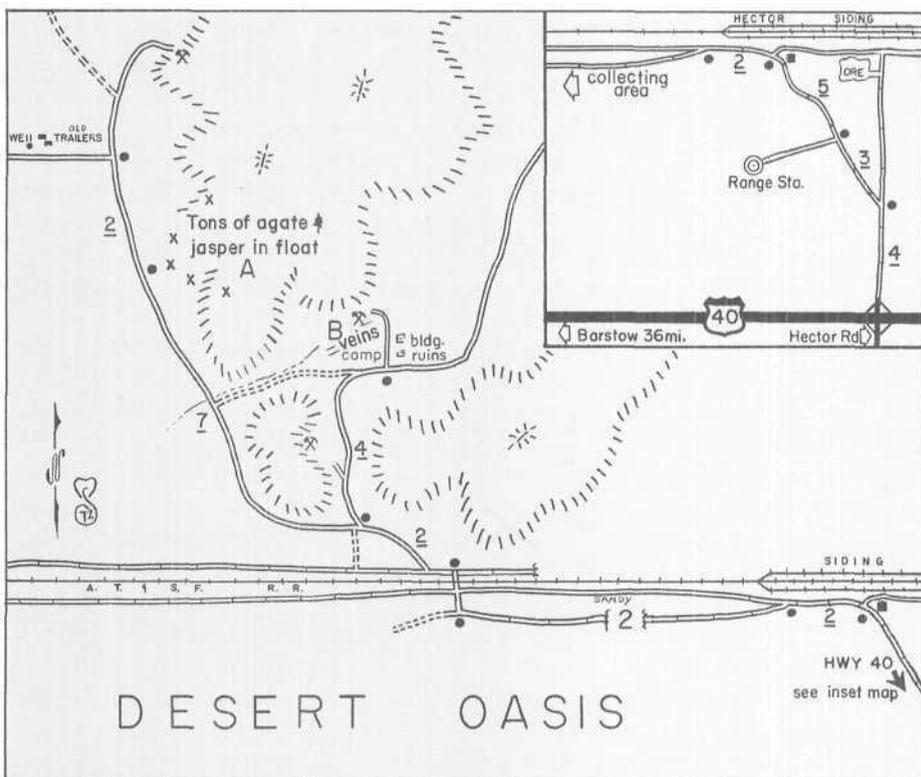
Fine Grind (400-600 grit).

Step #4

Polishing: (We use a separate barrel for polish). 6 level teaspoons of cerium oxide. 6 teaspoons of polishing pellets. A 1/2-inch cube of hand soap. Run 7 days.

Step #5

Final Cleaning: 4 tablespoons Tide (or other granulated detergent). Add water to within 1 inch of top of specimens. Run 3 hours.



Step #6

Rinse, dry—and enjoy!

There has been limited mining at Desert Oasis mainly for Hectorite—a high magnesia, low silica type of bentonite, used in oil-well drilling. The commercial-grade clay deposits consisted of lenses and pockets ranging in size from a few to several thousand tons. The ore was hauled to Hector Siding where it was air-dried to reduce the moisture content from 30 to 10%.

It was then loaded into railroad cars and shipped to a grinding plant in Los Angeles. The mines have long been idle and only ruins remain at the old camp of the Baroid Sales Division, National Lead Company.

Desert Oasis qualifies as a good location for a weekend trip to a secluded retreat. It also provides more than just rock collecting. Several jeep trails lead north through sandy canyons toward the main mass of the formidable Cady Mountains. Riding trail bikes over the jeep roads can be challenging and rewarding.

Because of the slightly higher elevations of the campsite there are broad panoramic views in three directions. To the west lie nearly a mile of sand dunes with numerous hillocks topped by giant mesquites. On the horizon beyond, the flat, shimmering expanse of Troy Dry Lake marches west to join the volcanic bulwark of the Newberry Mountains.

Looking south, the main artery of travel, Interstate 40, cuts a wide swath across the belly of the desert floor. In the distance, the Rodman Mountains jut sharply skyward to form a fortress-like barrier. The eastern view discloses the classic

shape of Pisgah Crater on the skyline. The many lava flows fanning out from the crater are readily discernable.

California's Great Mojave Desert is a land of extreme contrast and variation of topography. It is this diversification of land forms, climate and flora which lure the visitor to come and see for himself.

Once there, the capricious desert will lure you with her siren song. You will return again and again to drink at the fountains of peaceful quietness and primeval expanses. They are heady wine, indeed! □

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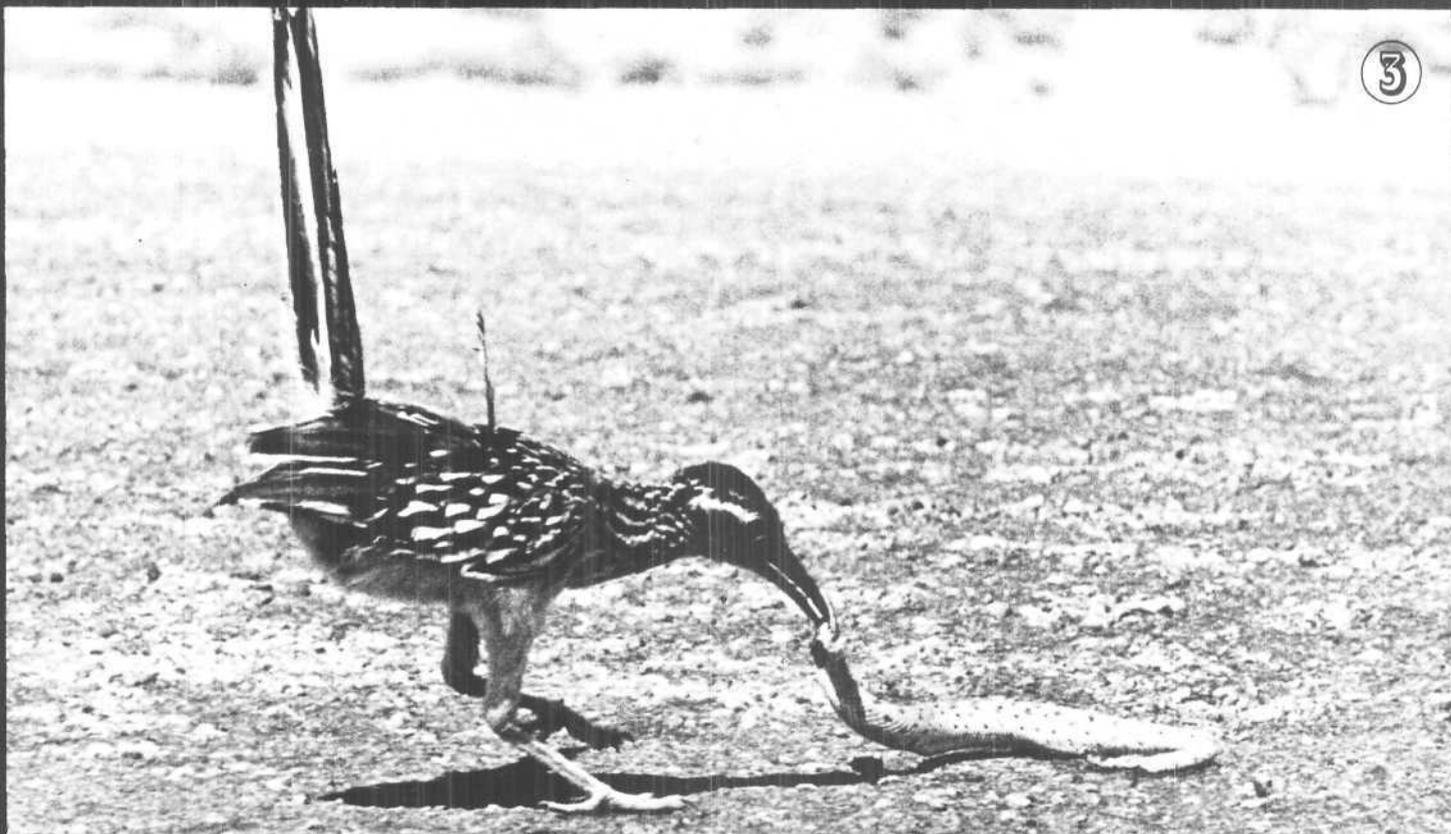
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ROADRUNNER VS. SIDEWINDER

by Dr. Hans Baerwald

Also called the "paisano" or chaparral cock, the roadrunner is known for his cockiness. Although insects are his main bill of fare, his favorite menu consists of rattlesnakes. And once he spots one, the poor rattler doesn't stand a chance. These photos depict how a roadrunner overcomes a sidewinder.

- 1** Mr. Roadrunner exhausts the sidewinder by circling the snake and keeping his prey in the sun. Rattlers cannot exist long under direct sunlight.
- 2** When the snake is too exhausted to strike the roadrunner moves in and with a swift jab grabs the rattler just behind the head. He then starts his adagio dance.
- 3** Never letting go of the snake, the roadrunner whips the sidewinder around and around until he is satisfied his prey is quite dead and harmless.
- 4** Dragging the snake into the shade, the roadrunner starts the slow process of devouring his meal, head first. If it is a large reptile, it may take three hours.



1



2



4



LOST SPANISH MINE ?

IS THE "HOLE" IN THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS OF UTAH A LOST SPANISH MINE OR IS IT MERELY A NATURAL CAVITY? ONLY A MAJOR EFFORT BY VETERAN SPELUNKERS CAN SOLVE THE MYSTERY, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR WHO WAS UNABLE TO DETERMINE THE DEPTH OF THE PUZZLING SHAFT.

by George Thompson

A STORY ABOUT a lost Spanish mine in Utah which appeared in a Western magazine in 1970 brought letters to the editor from several interested readers. One who wrote was Lortin Mortenson, a California reader who was raised in Utah, and who remembered seeing an old Spanish mine there as a boy. I like to search for lost mines, and Spanish mines in particular, so it wasn't long until Mr. Mortenson and I were exchanging correspondence on the subject.

In his first letter, Mr. Mortenson described the location of the old mine as best he could, recalling events of more than 50 years ago when he was a young boy on his father's homestead in the mountains near Henefer in Utah's Sum-

mit County.

"Dad's homestead was on Taylor Creek, about a mile from where it emptied into East Canyon Creek. We lived in a one-room log cabin. It must have been in 1915 or 1916 when father and his younger brother, Martin, covered the old mine shaft. We traveled from dad's property to Clarence Spicer's homestead on Dixie Creek, and then up over Hogback Summit to where there was an abandoned two-story house. The mine was about a mile or a mile and a half from the old house, in a westerly direction."

I later learned from hard work and fruitless search that more than a half century had dimmed Mr. Mortenson's memory of directions, as well as of distances!

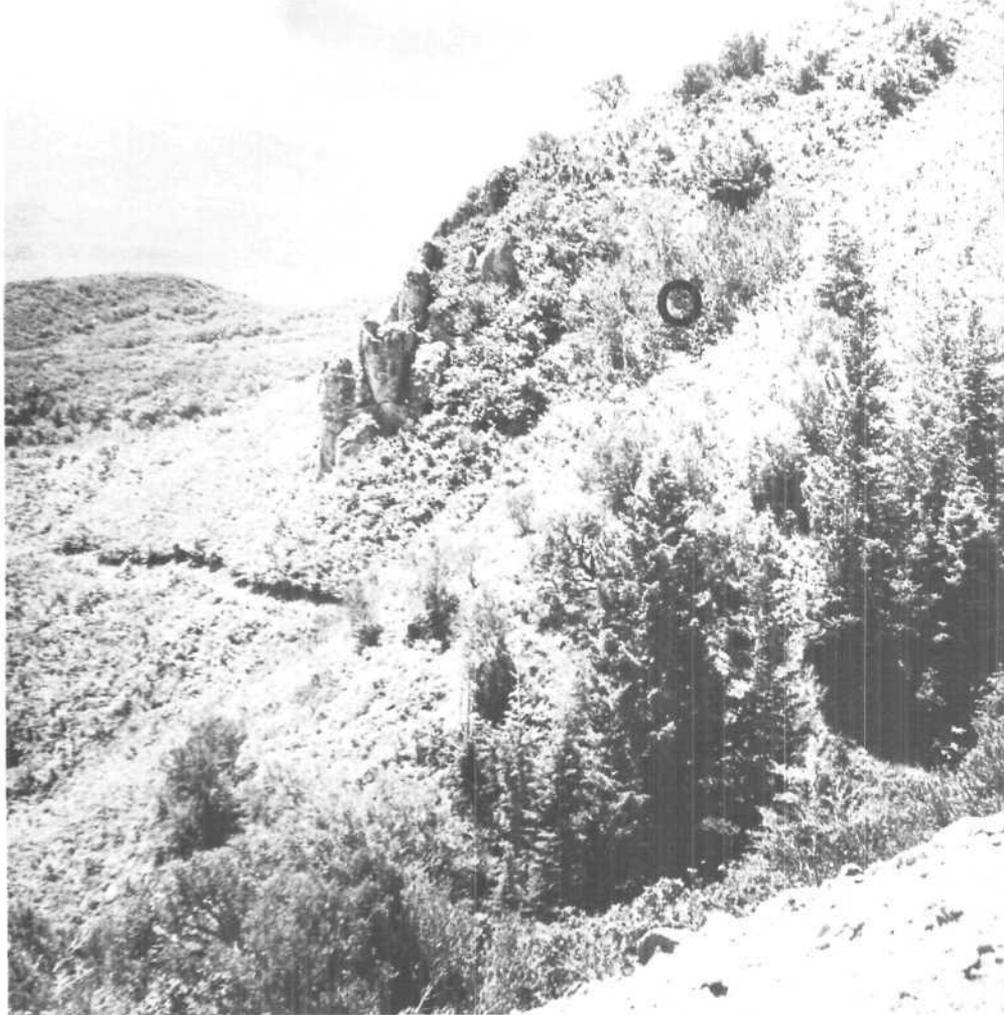
Site of the old shaft (above) as seen from the highway with the farm house in the foreground. The "hole" in winter (right) has a different appearance than in the summer as shown in photograph (above, right) where it is hidden by thick brush above deer trail. All photos by the author.



"There was a small canyon or draw running east and west, and the old mine was on its north slope," he continued. "Everything was brush-covered, but if memory serves me right, there was a dump or mound of waste rock by the mine. The mine opening was a vertical shaft, and apparently very deep, for I distinctly remember Uncle Martin dropping a crow bar into it. We could hear it ringing as it fell, bouncing from side to side of the shaft for what seemed like a long, long time.

"George Ritter, an old man who had livestock in the hills there, hired my folks to cover the shaft to keep his sheep and cattle from falling into it. He told them that it was an old Spanish mine, and that it is what it looked like it was. As I remember the mine, it must have been very old, for it seemed to be just part of the hills even then. We decked the shaft over the logs, and covered them with about a foot of dirt to keep them from moving."

The location described by Mortenson is only a few miles from the route of the old Mormon Trail, followed by the pioneers in 1847. Their wagon tracks can still be seen where oxen pulled the heavy



wagons over Hogback Summit. There is no record to show that band of pioneers saw the old Spanish mine shaft, but no doubt their stock herders quickly discovered it, for the first white settlers in the area knew of it.

No one knows how many head of livestock fell into its black depths before young Lorin Mortenson helped his father and uncle cover it over. Folks don't get out into the hills anymore like they used to, so the old shaft, heavily timbered and covered with dirt, probably would have been forgotten if Mr. Mortenson hadn't written his letter to the editor.

When spring came I began my search for the old mine site, but I soon discovered that Mr. Mortenson's memory of directions seemed to be in error, for I found no evidence of the shaft in the area he described, or anywhere within the distance from the old house that he remembered. Of course he was only five years old when the shaft was covered, and besides, it was possible that it was still covered with the logs his father and uncle had "decked" it over with more than 50 years before. I also learned that almost anything could be hidden in the thick jungle of oak brush which covered the mountain front!

I made three searches for the old mine that summer, but when snow came in the fall of 1971 it was still lost. I probably wouldn't have looked for it again if Mr. Mortenson hadn't checked with his aunt, a lady in her seventies who had been a 17-year-old girl when the shaft was covered. She not only remembered the Spanish mine just as he had described it, but also clearly recalled her Uncle Martin dropping the crow bar into it. She also remembered that Uncle Martin was lowered down into the shaft on three lariats tied together, a descent of about 120 feet, but he was still unable to reach its bottom with that much rope. She said the shaft was always known in those days as "The Old Spanish Mine."

In March, 1972, while snow still lay on the mountains three to four feet deep, I used a pair of snowshoes to hike into the area again, traveling with ease through the rough country that had been a jungle of thick oak brush during the summer. I knew that the shrinking snow drifts would outline whatever lay beneath them, and just as I expected, high on the mountain front, but much farther from the old farmhouse than Mr. Mortenson had remembered, in a steep rocky gulch where



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few hikers would venture, I found the long lost shaft!

A snow comb was rifted nearly over it, but its entrance was wide open, making a dangerous trap for whoever might venture out onto that solid looking snow cap. I took several photos of the deep pit and the area around it, which were later mailed to Mr. Mortenson. He quickly verified that they were photos of the shaft he helped cover over 57 years before.

I returned there in June, when brush, vines and wild flowers grew in a dense thicket around the shaft, nearly concealing it and making a dangerous trap for the unwary. A person could easily step into it before it was ever seen. I took some more photos and searched for tool marks or other signs to prove that the hole was man made, but the danger of its crumbling edges and the heavy growth of moss on its rocky sides made close examination impossible. A winch or other heavy equipment will be required to safely lower someone into its depths. After listening to dropped rocks echo from its seemingly

bottomless depths, I decided that someone would have to be someone else.

I did learn several other puzzling things about the mystery hole. An air flow rises from the shaft, indicating the possibility that there is another entrance to it somewhere lower on the mountain. Also, several old-timers at the nearby tiny town of Henefer recalled that many years ago students from one of Utah's colleges attempted to explore the mystery pit. One of them was lowered on a cable for more than 250 feet without reaching bottom! The students did learn, however, that the hole is not a single vertical shaft, but instead descends in offset levels, each of which is nearly vertical.

A few local people who have seen the shaft think that it might be a natural sink hole, but any text book on geology teaches that sink holes occur in limestone, while the mountain where the shaft is located is sandstone, a formation not usually associated with sink holes. In a recent letter Mr. Mortenson write, "I do not believe the shaft is caused by natural seepage or erosion, for I've never heard of a sink hole in sandstone. Also, air rising from the shaft appears to indicate another opening, or underground stream."

Is the mystery hole a lost Spanish mine, or only a sink hole? If you want to try to solve this puzzle, follow Utah State 65 west from Henefer for 5.7 miles to Hogback Summit. You'll see the weather-beaten ruins of the old two-story farm house mentioned by Mr. Mortenson on the right side of the road just a mile before the summit is reached. The high rocky ridge where the mine is located parallels the highway about two miles to the west.

You can spot the canyon where the shaft is located from the road, for the first canyon to the south of it is brightly colored with especially bright red sandstone, while the first canyon to the north is lined with dark green pines and is colored a dull gray. The shaft is about a half mile up the rocky face of the mountain front, just off a visible trail used by livestock, deer and elk.

The only way to learn for sure whether the mystery shaft is really a long forgotten Spanish mine or only a sink hole is to explore its bottom. If you do, let me know what you find. After looking into the black depths of the hole, I have decided that, as far as spelunker exploring is concerned, it's not for me! □

Daacet Manning



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VISITORS ENTERING the Mother Lode Country from its southern area on State 49 find themselves in the attractive community of Mariposa. As the county seat, Mariposa, for more than 100 years, has played a vital role in the history of central California.

Mariposa lies on what once was the famous Mariposa Grant owned by Colonel John Charles Fremont, noted explorer, soldier, and one of California's first two senators when it was admitted to the Union in 1850. As a presidential candidate in 1856, he was defeated by Buchanan.

The old Mexican grant had been conferred upon ex-Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado in 1844. It consisted of what was described as "ten square leagues" or about 44,000 acres of vague location and unsurveyed boundaries in a wild and remote area. Fremont purchased the entire tract from Alvarado in 1847 for \$3,000, thus becoming the owner of about 70 square miles of land.

The Mexican Government had issued these old land grants to its citizens from time to time, hoping to colonize and develop what was considered a vast wilderness of little value at that time. The grants were described as so many square leagues lying within a much larger area

FREMONT'S FALLEN FORTUNE

by A. H. Waterman

Photos by author



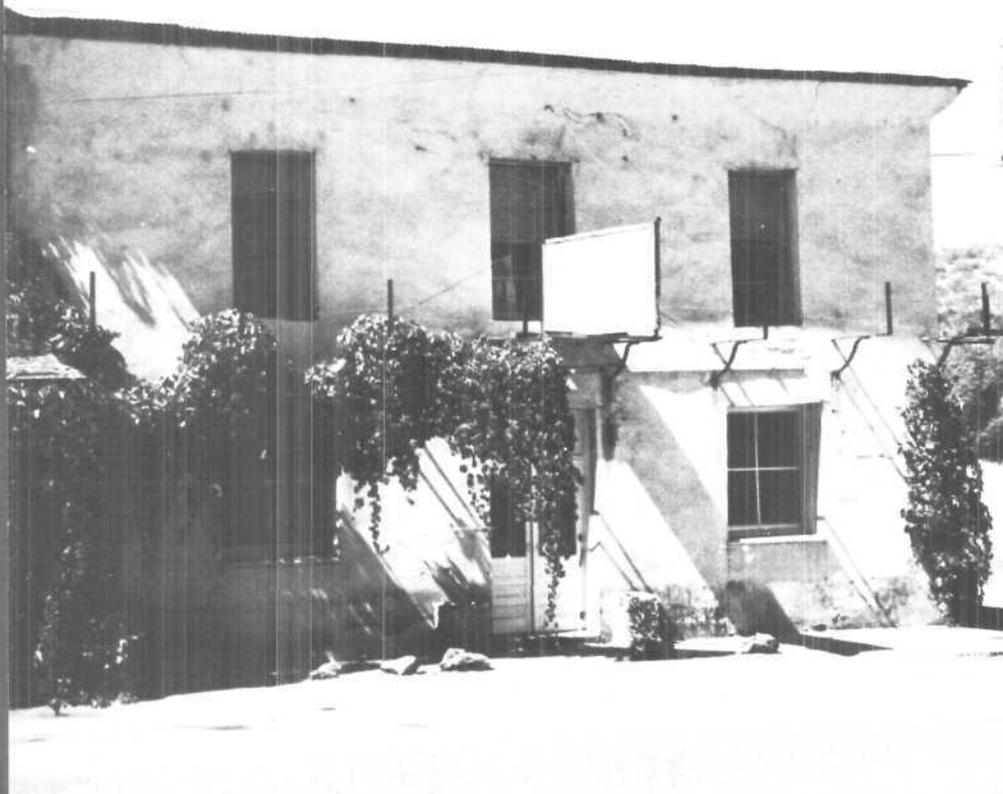
also of vague boundaries and location.

Many holders of grants in the interior country had never seen their property and dared not enter the area for fear of Indian tribes.

Ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, by which the United States acquired California, and the discovery of gold the same year, induced a heavy influx of settlers by land and water. Rapid development of the territory ensued. Under the terms of the Treaty the United States agreed to honor the land grants previously made by Mexico. Trouble soon developed.

Disputes arose between grantees, land speculators and squatters concerning exact locations and boundaries of grants. The vague descriptions given when the grants were conferred, tempted grantees to move or "float" their property to in-

The Mariposa County Court House has been in continuous use since 1854 and is still the county government headquarters.



Now called the OSO Hall, the old I.O.O.F. building still stands.

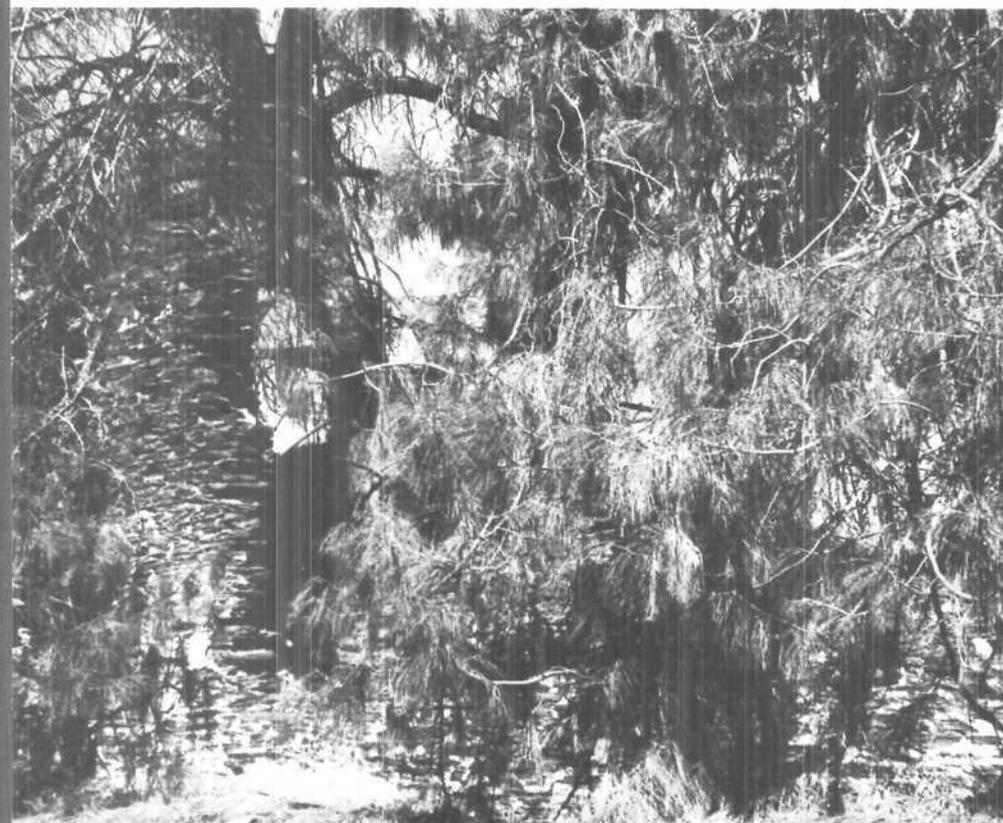
clude a more desirable piece of land and eliminate a portion thought to be of little value. Confusion caused by these "floating" grants took years of litigation to settle before title could be confirmed.

It was charged by many that, after the discovery of gold in the Mariposa area, Fremont had "floated" his grant to en-

compass that valuable mining region and claim it as part of his huge estate. Mexican miners, grubstaked by Fremont, had uncovered valuable gold placer deposits near Mariposa and so had others.

Rival mining interests refused to relinquish their claims and at once took legal action against Fremont and his Mari-

All that remains of the once busy and prosperous Fremont mine office.



posa Grant, which continued until title was confirmed to him in 1856. The second floor courtroom of the old Mariposa County Court House, built in 1854 and still in use, provided the stage for the long and costly series of legal contests involving the estate.

The early mining settlement of Agua Fria, about five miles west of Mariposa, was the first seat of the county, but was replaced by Mariposa when gold placer deposits tailed off at the old camp. County business had been conducted in a log cabin at Agua Fria and also at Mariposa, at a rental fee, until the erection of the present court house.

Each town lacked a jail and prisoners were kept at Agua Fria on the sheriff's premises, which doubled as a calaboose. Haulage to Mariposa and return, for court appearances, cost the county \$4 each way, payable to the sheriff. Old records show a charge of \$2.50 a day for board, and no records exist of any complaints as to the quality of jail oatmeal.

Bills presented to the county by the sheriff for one miscreant, found guilty of murder, show charges of \$17.50 for seven shirts, \$10 for two pair of pants and \$4 for shoes. It must be assumed the felon was properly attired for his execution.

He was duly dispatched by means of a rope and noose at a fee of \$50, plus \$5 additional for a shroud and \$2 for the rope, payable to the sheriff. For more economical operation, a jail was built at Mariposa in 1852. It still stands on a hill above the main street.

When placer mining began to diminish, some of the first gold quartz outcroppings in California were discovered in the surrounding hills, but most miners at that time lacked the know-how to separate gold from the quartz. Colonel Fremont then appeared at Mariposa, in 1849, with experienced Mexican miners and an arrangement with a San Francisco firm to supply the equipment necessary for ore reduction.

A stamp mill was set up to crush the ore for gold recovery, and Mariposa became one of the very earliest, if not the first, of the hard rock mining camps on the Mother Lode.

The Mariposa Grant, as finally established by the court after lengthy legal turmoil, was an "L-shape" area of land ex-

Continued on Page 36

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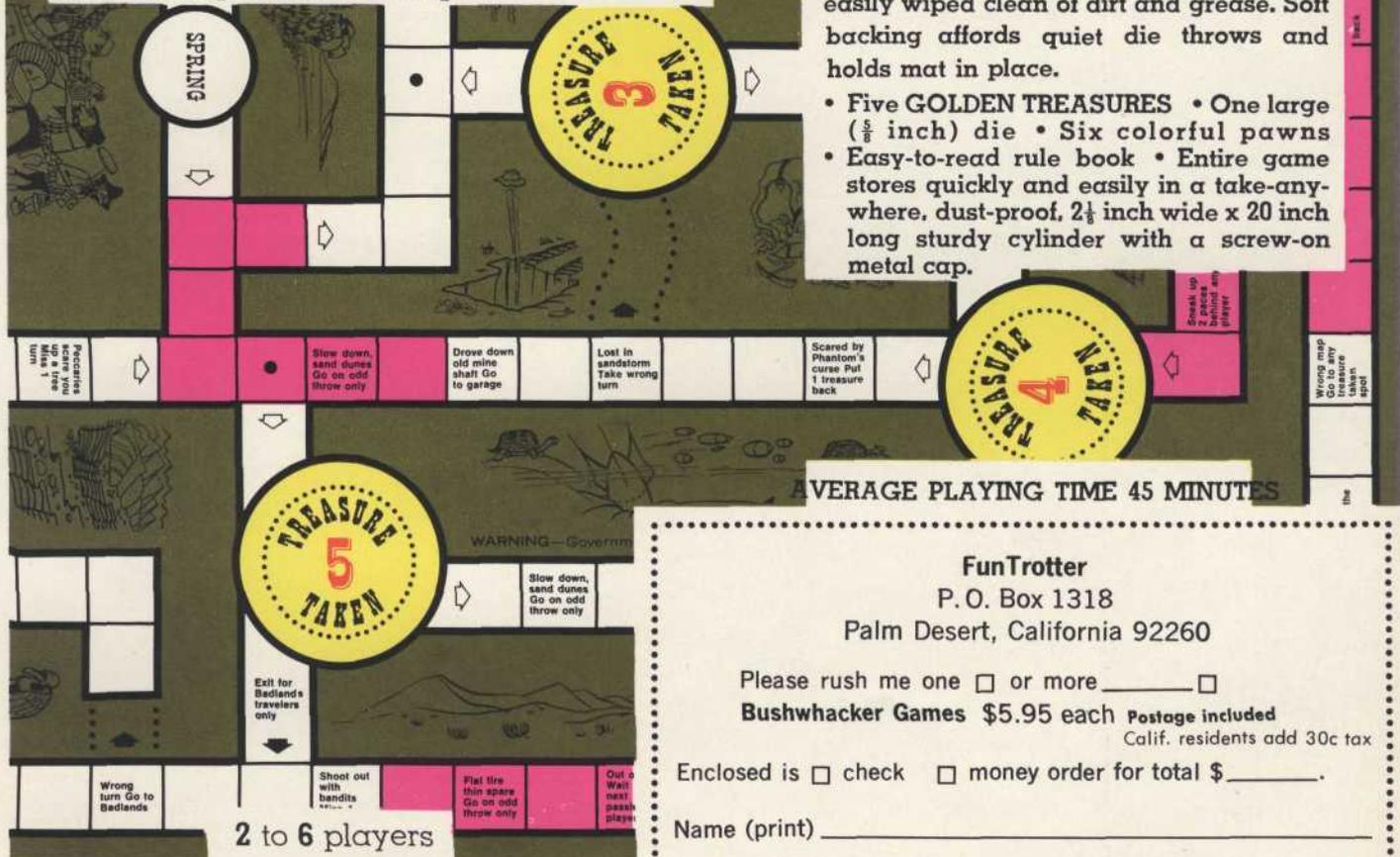
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Flaming Gorge

by Jack Pepper

Photos by author

THE BLUE and serpentine waters of the historic Green River wind through the rolling hills and plains of Wyoming and then intrude into the colorful canyon country and coniferous green forests of northern Utah and the southern section of the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

The "youngest" of the three vast national recreation areas formed by major dams along the Green and Colorado rivers, Flaming Gorge is within the Ashley National Forest, one of the few scenic and yet uncrowded wilderness areas still remaining in the West.

Backed up by Flaming Gorge Dam, just below the Wyoming and Utah border, the waters of the once turbulent Green River now form a sprawling recreational lake 91 miles long with clear, cool streams cascading into the lake where you find isolated public camping sites and where you can literally fish from the back of your camper or outside the flap of your tent.

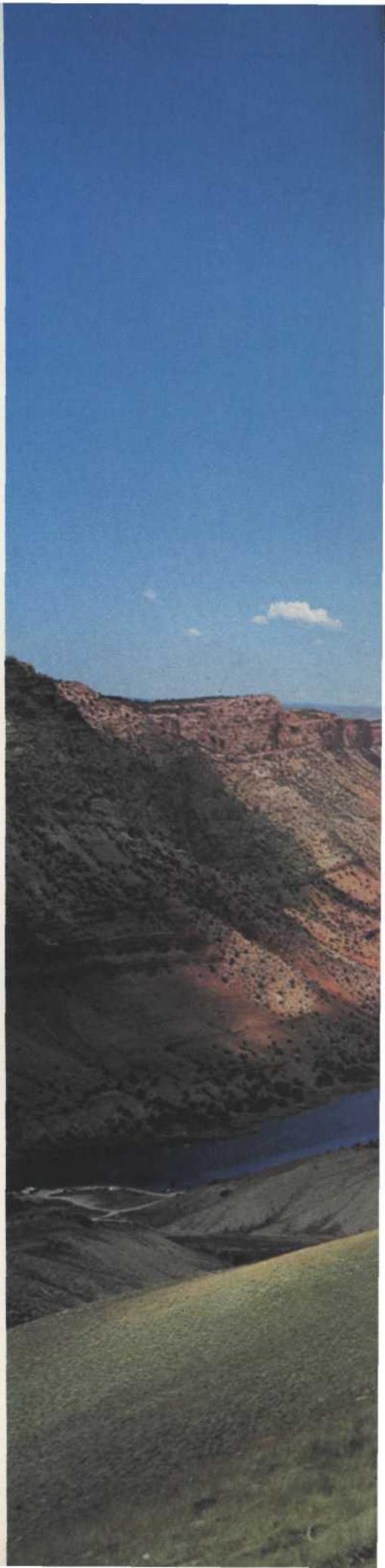
One fisherman told me he hooked a trout and, in the process of pulling it out of the stream, the fish got loose in mid-air, and landed in the frying pan outside his camper!

And, since this is "water country" which gives abundance to wildlife, it is common to see mule deer, antelope, elk and many varieties of small animals and wild birds—plus waterfowl such as coot, great blue and black-crowned night herons, American bittern, geese, redhead and ruddy duck.

Golden and bald eagles make the area their home and, in the back country, are found bear, mountain lion, coyote and bobcats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wyoming and Utah state departments constantly stock the lake and streams with bass and trout. Fishing is open the year-round—during the summer in open water and during the winter by cutting through the ice!

Major tributary to the Colorado, the Green River originates near Green River, Wyoming where Major John Wesley Powell began his historic expedition in 1868. Encountering his first rapids on the then untamed river near what he described as a "brilliant red gorge", he named the area Flaming Gorge.

From Flaming Gorge, Major Powell and his nine-man crew explored the Green to its confluence with the Colorado







that when construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam began in 1957 only primitive roads lay across the Uinta Mountains and not one road was even close to the dam site.

But it was even more primitive in 1776 when two Spanish priests, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante, the first white men to set foot in the area, crossed the Green Riv-

River in what is today Canyonlands National Park. Below the confluence of the two rivers he encountered the most dangerous rapids of his entire trip. (See *Desert*, Sept. '72.)

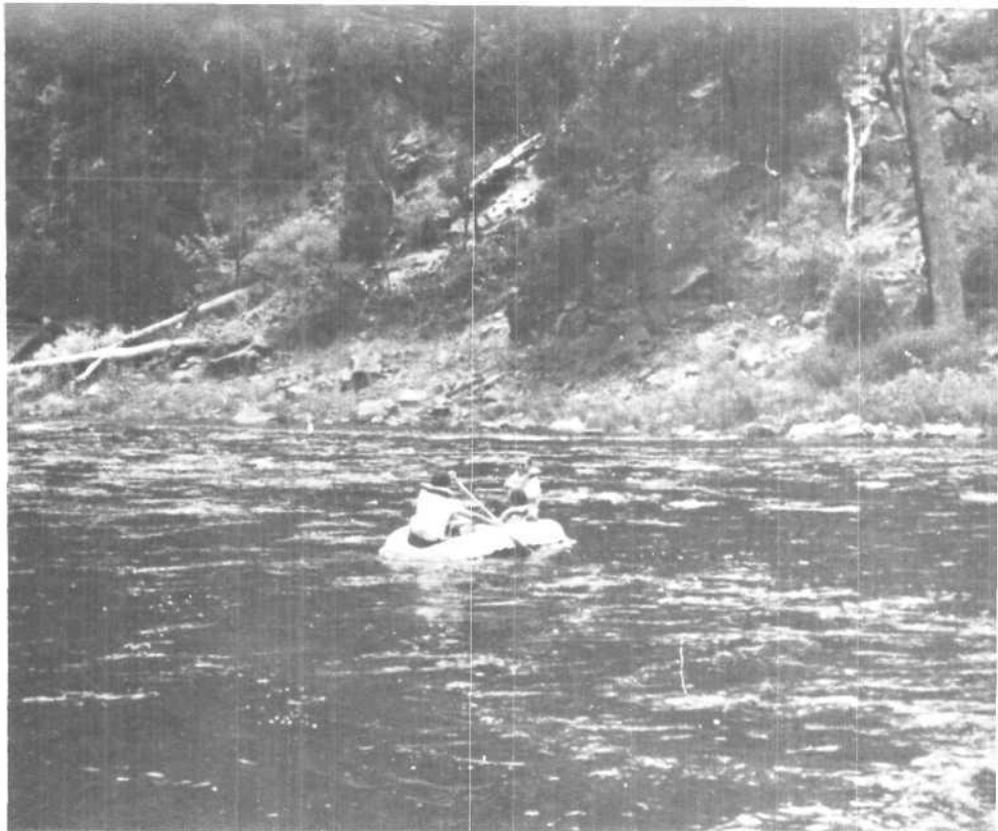
Today the Green and Colorado Rivers have been tamed by concrete, flood-control dams which have created three vast recreational areas. Hoover Dam backs up the Colorado near Las Vegas, Nevada and forms Lake Mead; Glen Canyon Dam backs up the same river waters at Page, Arizona, forming Lake Powell, and the Flaming Gorge Dam — dedicated only eight years ago—has created the newest of the aquatic recreational areas.

Lake Mead is surrounded by the desert lands of Nevada. Lake Powell is encompassed by the sheer and brilliantly colored sandstone formations of Utah and Arizona. Flaming Gorge is nestled in the plains and green forests of Wyoming and Utah.

The area was once so isolated, however,



Sheep Creek Bay (opposite page) is one of the hundreds of excellent camping and fishing areas where deer and antelope (left) are common sights. The landing at Buckboard Crossing (below) is one of several modern marinas around the lake. A favorite sport is riding rubber rafts down the Green River below the dam. Cold water makes excellent trout fishing.



er near the present site of Jensen, Utah, seeking a shorter route to California.

In 1824, William Ashley—after whom the 201,000-acre area of scenic land was named—and his fur traders invaded the territory and left with \$75,000 worth of fur pelts. It is believed that his was the first fur-trapping Indian rendezvous to take place in the West.

Fur trapping continued until the beavers became scarce and civilization moved in. With "civilization" came the outlaws and Browns Park for many years was a hideout for the gangs. The territory belonged to Mexico until 1848, when it was ceded to the United States.

Flaming Gorge National Recreational Area is not only the "youngest" of the three major Department of the Interior aquatic developments along the Colorado River complex, but it is also the most isolated and the farthest from major metropolitan areas—and thus the least crowded.

From the north, the area is reached by taking the paved state highway from Green River, Wyoming south to Manila. From here the highway goes through scenic Sheep Creek Canyon, around the southern periphery of the Ashley National Forest to Flaming Gorge Dam. Sheep Creek Canyon has been designated as a "Geological Area" by the Forest Service. It is one of the few places in the world where tourists can view from their cars geology representing millions of years in only 15 minutes driving time.

From the south, Flaming Gorge Dam and the main body of the lake and the lower Green River are reached by taking U.S. 40 from Vernal, Utah. The 30-mile drive from Vernal winds through another geological time-strata. Approaching the dam there are many isolated public campgrounds which are just off the highway and accessible by passenger car.

Driving through this section of the area during the late afternoon I spotted several antelope and mule deer. Even when I stopped my car to take photographs, they merely looked at me and then continued to forage on the grassy slopes.

Greendale Junction is the confluence of the north and south highways and from here it is a short drive to the dam and a panoramic view of the lake. There is a Visitor's Center at the dam and a self-guided tour through the power plant.

Also at the dam there is a public boat-launching ramp (one of 36 within the Recreation Area), camping facilities, a general store and motel with limited accommodations.

There is also a store where you can rent small rubber rafts (or bring your own) and float down the Green River from a launching area below the dam. This is a favorite pastime for families who glide down the river for seven miles to a public camping area where they go ashore and fry the trout they have caught during their "float trip."

Whether it is a "float trip" down the Green River, camping under the pine trees of the Ashley National Forest, boating, fishing or water skiing on the lake waters, or just driving through the historic and colorful geological formations around this wilderness area, you will find the Flaming Gorge Recreation Area is a land of living color—and a land to which you will want to return. □



CANYON OF

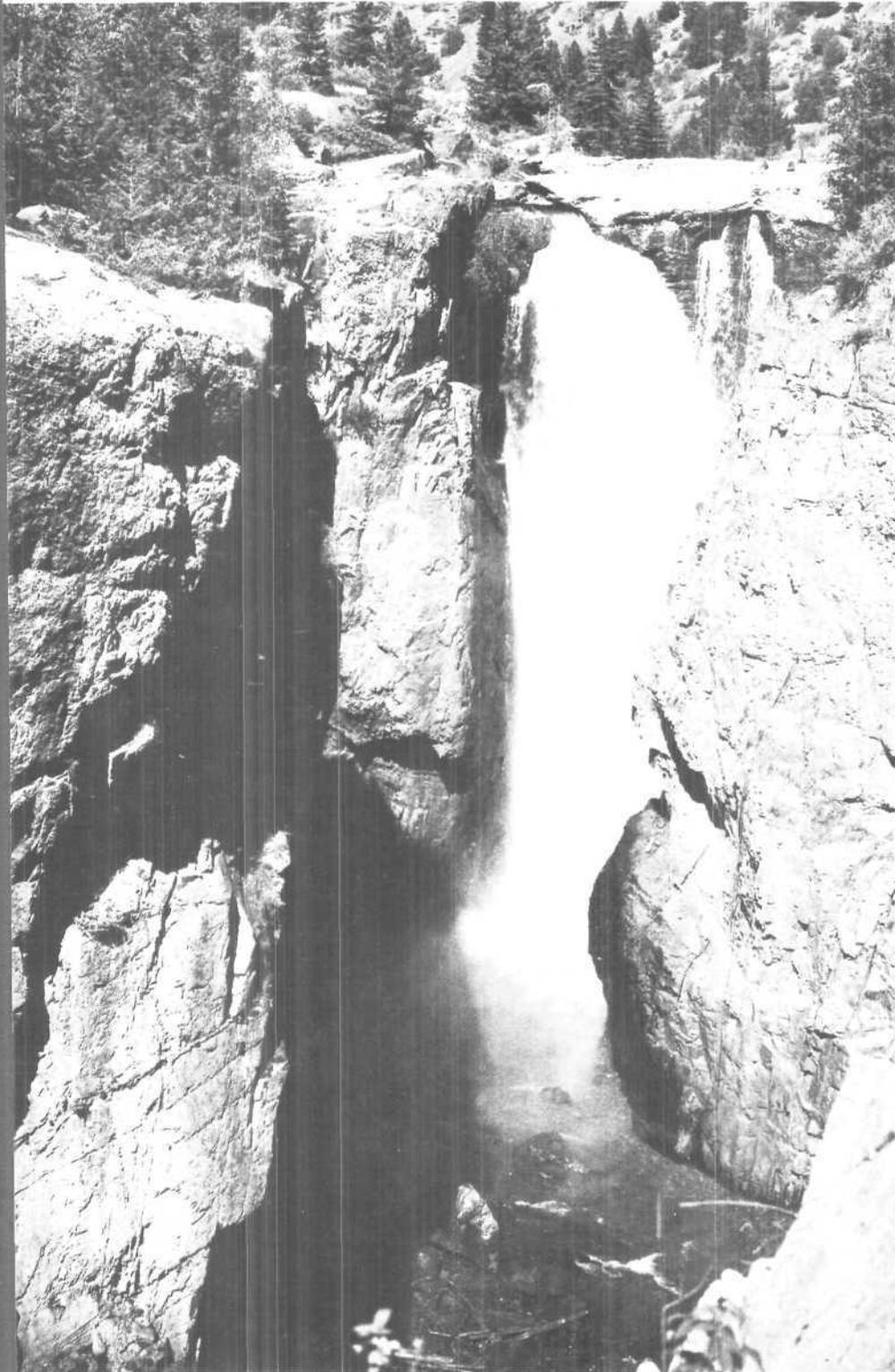
by

Enid C.

Howard

BR

Photos by author



Remains of a concrete dam (above) across Hensen Creek where early-day miners barnessed the water to run their machinery. Time and the elements are wearing away the concrete. Brick charcoal kilns (opposite page) which were part of George Lee's operation at Capitol City, are slowly decaying.

TWO MAGIC words, gold and silver, have influenced and changed not only men's lives but the very face of the earth. Nowhere is this more pronounced than in the state of Colorado.

If you were to draw a circle around the cities of Ouray, Telluride, Silverton and Lake City, called the "Silverton Quadrangle," it would encompass some of the wildest and roughest terrain in the state. Yet the 1870s to the early 1900s saw the narrow canyons and steep sides of the 14,000-foot mountains swarming with prospectors and miners.

Ouray, Telluride, Silverton and Lake City have survived the ups and downs of the mining industry, but it is the small camps that fanned out into the adjacent canyons that are today's ghost towns.

Lake City is situated on the "other side" (eastern) of the Continental Divide, isolated by lofty and forbidding mountains from the other three quadrangle cities. It was settled in 1874 after the United States signed the Burnot Treaty with the Ute Indians who roamed the valleys and high country of southwestern Colorado. Miners poured into the new location, and one, Enos Hotchkiss, located his Golden Fleece mine which proved to be a big strike. Soon, Lake City had all the usual confusion of boom towns of those times; saloons, gambling tables, high food prices, housing problems, along with extremely severe winters at the 8,684-foot elevation.

Somehow, order came out of chaos and by 1877 the little camp in the mountains functioned fairly well because of the back-breaking labor of its citizens and the Grace of God. The population had increased to 2,000, and 500 new buildings had been erected.

Lake City had its share of rough characters too. In 1882 a couple of would-be

Desert Magazine

OKEN DREAMS

bad men attempting to rob a house were caught in the act and "strung up" by the irate townspeople. Those being days of blood and guts, all the children were taken to view the unlucky criminals in a "let it be a lesson to you" gesture by well-meaning parents.

Then, too, Lake City has the doubtful honor of being the place where the trial of Alfred Packer was held. He was accused of the murder of his five prospecting partners, but escaped custody. Found and brought to trial nine years later he could not explain the massacre of his companions. The mutilated bodies had been found in the mountains above Lake City, and the townspeople found an appropriate name for the spot by calling it Cannibal Plateau.

The prospering little mining town was considered to be one of the most isolated of the western mining camps until 1889 when the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad reached the site with its narrow-gauge tracks. By then mining operations had extended into Hensen Creek where silver was discovered. Lake City, located at the confluence of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and Hensen Creek, became the jumping-off point for the high-country miners who had settled other camps along Hensen Creek; Hensen, Galena City, Rose's Cabin.

The stage coach line from Lake City to Silverton followed the Old Post Road #15 up the narrow, winding, rocky road along Hensen Creek where they stopped to change horses at Rose's Cabin. Rose was not a lady as one might suppose, but the last name of the enterprising gentleman who provided rough but welcome hotel accommodations, a bar and gambling for the passengers who cared to indulge.

From Rose's Cabin, the traveler, brave
October 1972



enough to ride the swaying coach to ever-increasing heights, crossed the Continental Divide and Engineer Pass at 13,175 feet, where a spectacular panorama of massive cloud-topped peaks of the San Juan and Uncompaghre Mountains dwarfed every other formation around them.

Of the settlements along Hensen Creek,

Galena City was probably the most affluent and unusual in that it soon became the domain of one George S. Lee. He arrived there soon after the discovery of silver and established a sawmill and smelting works which prospered.

As Galena City grew in wealth, so did Lee's delusions of his worth. When he



Concrete foundations (left) are all that remain of the Lee Mansion. One of the many mine shafts (right) which dot the hillsides of the "Silverton Quadrangle."

was ready to build a permanent residence, he sent to Pueblo, Colorado for bricks—thousands of bricks, to be delivered by rail to Lake City and freighted to Galena.

A veritable mansion arose overlooking the broad alpine meadow at Galena City. This elegant establishment boasted barns and outbuildings of brick also, with corals and pastures to complete the picture of the handsomest residence in southern Colorado. Hospitality was practiced with a lavishness that did credit to the beautifully unique setting of the Lee Mansion.

Lee named his fancy town house, "The Governor's Mansion," and arbitrarily changed the name of the town to Capitol City. It was evident his ambitions lay far beyond the boundaries of the tiny mining camp nestled beneath the majestic peaks surrounding the town.

The repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act and the financial panic of 1893 knocked the props from under Capitol

City and George Lee's hopes for an empire. Most of the residents drifted away from the small village, but Lee and his wife grew older among the ruins of their broken dreams. Finally, they too, left and never returned. Their handsome mansion fell apart, aided by the help-yourself attitude of passersby.

All that remains of the once-elegant establishment are the concrete foundations and a few scattered bricks from the main house. Rotting sawdust and slabs of bark mark the site of the sawmill, while across the creek two brick charcoal kilns slowly disintegrate among the stately evergreen trees; an empire slowly crumbling.

To visit Lake City, Hensen Creek and its ghost towns, drive south to Lake City over Colorado State 149 which intersects U.S. 50, nine miles west of Gunnison, Colorado. Lake City is still very much alive, and retains much of its early 1900 charm. Many of the old houses have been

restored and create a delightful scene. To reach Hensen Creek turn west at the Standard station, drive two blocks, then left and follow along the creek nine miles to what is left of Capitol City. The road along the creek is rough, with a constant increase in elevation, but passenger cars pulling *small trailers* can make it with careful driving.

A bonus side trip in the area is a drive to the top of Slumgullion Pass, so named because the early-day miners there had the reputation of "throwing everything they could find in the cooking pot, in order to keep body and soul together."

Lake San Cristobal, a few miles south of Lake City, is one of the largest and most beautiful lakes in Colorado, and has a selection of accommodations to satisfy the most selective traveler. There are motels, guest ranches, boat rentals, pack trips, jeep rentals or guided tours and fishing in the lake and the streams around the area. Camping is at designated areas.

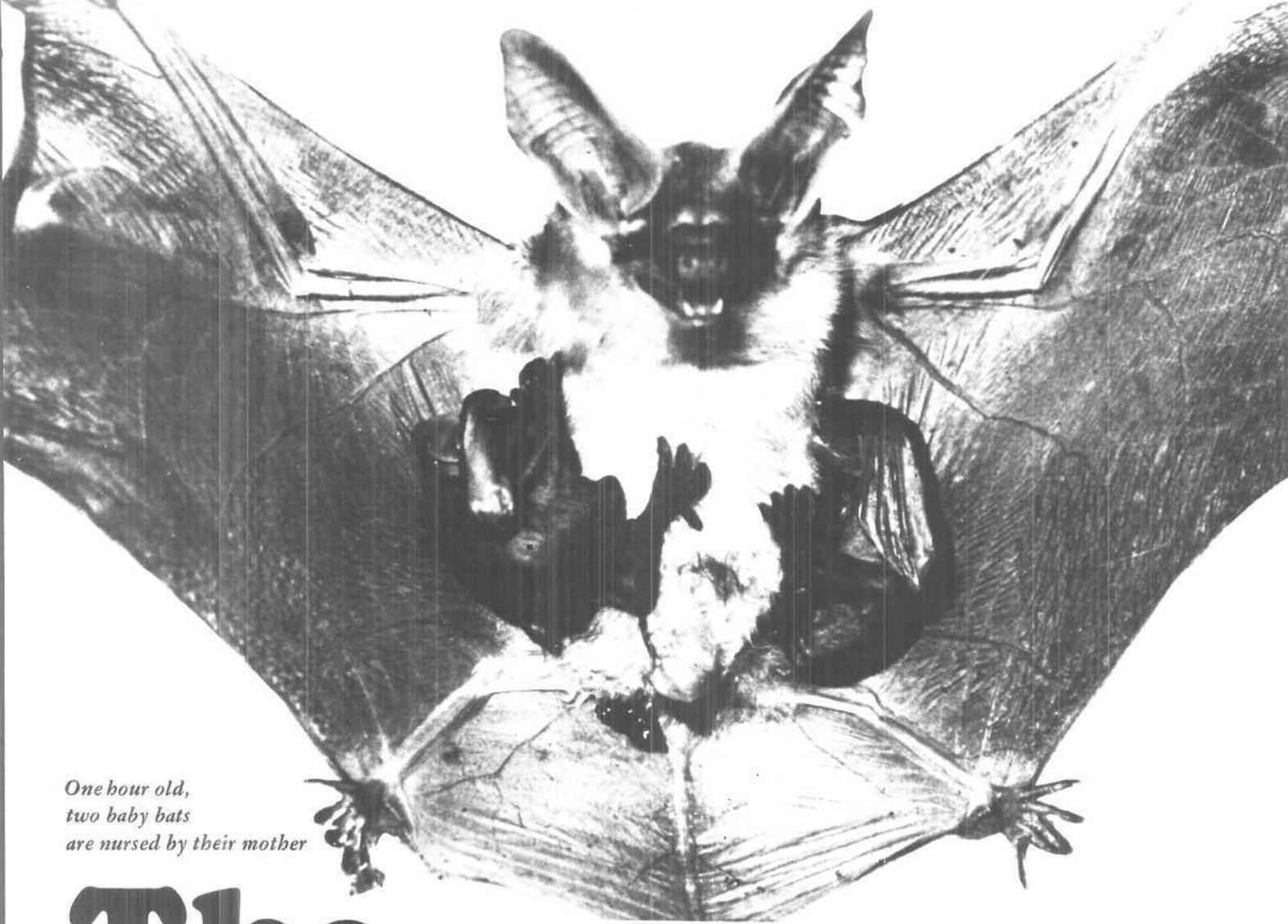
Write to Hinsdale County, Chamber of Commerce, Lake City, Colorado 81235, and ask for brochures and local maps of Lake City, Lake San Cristobal and Hinsdale County.

The narrow road beyond old Capitol City is not suitable for any vehicles but four-wheel-drive with short wheel base, as it climbs to Engineer Pass and the top of the world over narrow grades and short turns, with incredibly deep canyons on one side. It will lead you to Silverton if you stay with it.

Today, the lovely valley where Hensen Creek murmurs through quiet meadows, or sometimes roars through Narrows as it rushes from its high-mountain birth to Lake City, is a silent land. Nature has healed the wounds of mining operations with the passage of the years as trees and grasses return to cover the stark openings of abandoned shafts.

All that is left of the human struggle there are rotting cabins strangely askew, downed fences, bleak mine buildings, and perhaps the ghosts of all the broken dreams of the men who searched for gold and silver along Hensen Creek. □





*One hour old,
two baby bats
are nursed by their mother*

The Pallid Bat

by K. L. Boynton

© 1972

ULTRASONIC RADAR SYSTEM

Our monthly features on desert wildlife by K. L. Boynton usually are about species which you see during your travels. But who sees a bat, especially the elusive pallid bat which—although the largest desert variety—sleeps during the day? You seldom photograph a bat asleep during the day or flying at night. Fortunately, we were able to obtain these unusual photographs of **antrozous pallidus** from Patricia Brown, a graduate student at the University of California, who has delved into the mysteries of the pallid bat for four years. Her research into the echolocation pulses of this flying mammal—and its ultrasonic radar system—is comparable to the study of the sonar reflexes of the dolphin—both of which are of vital interest to the United States Navy. Mrs. Brown took these photographs in her laboratory at the University of California at Los Angeles.

IT IS in that magic moment when the sun has set and the sky is still aflame in the afterglow that the big pallid bat takes wing. Silhouetted against this gorgeous backdrop, she is a beautiful sight, fluttering, wheeling on her broad wings, her pale golden body highlighted in the fading afterglow. Then the twilight, coming swiftly, snuffs out the last daylight, and the golden bat becomes a ghostly creature that seems to drift like a pale wraith through the gathering gloom.

All about her small dark bats swoop and turn on fast wings, intent on their aerial hunting. Moving like a queen among them, the regal pallid bat is easily

distinguished by her much larger size and quite different flight pattern. She is a big bat, almost five inches long in body, with a wingspread of up to 15 inches. Her ears are large and handsome, rounded at the tips, pointing forward and extending well beyond the tip of her nose.

Picturesque, she is also rather pretty, for her eyes are large and alert and her face shaped more like a dog's, her nose being quite without the grotesque leaves and folds usually seen in bats. Her fur is soft and curly, and she keeps it scrupulously clean. She is also a lady with characteristics all her own, providing many a scientist with problems still not satisfactorily solved. Hence the current research into her affairs.

The general picture is that pallid bats are highly colonial, crowding together into daytime roosts in rocky crevices, hollow trees or the lofts of buildings. They emerge in the evening to feed, carrying their prey to favorite nighttime roosts under bridges, overhanging rocks, etc., places which are in the open and easily accessible to eat each course. Having finally dined, they return to the daytime roost, crowd into crannies to rest until night. While togetherness is the rule, royal tempers are short, and any jostling or shoving meets with immediate resistance. If vocal remonstrance in the form of a loud and annoyed buzzing isn't enough, Mrs. P. Bat promptly uses her teeth to get her message across.

These summer roosts are in reality maternity colonies and therefore made up of large numbers of females; all vocal, all short-tempered, and as to be expected under such circumstances, peace and quiet seldom reign. Yet Zoologist Russell Davis found that there is a strong group co-

herence among pallid bats, and particularly among the females. His banding tests showed that the same individuals returned to the same locality year after year and spent the summer together. If the bats left one summer roost and utilized an alternate, they did so in a group. So, too, was their shift from summer to winter roosts.

Blessed events occur among pallid bats in June, for the most part, Biologist Orr's study showed. The expectant mother hangs upright and forms a receiving basket by spreading the skin web that stretches between her legs. Jr. makes his debut feet first which turns out to be highly efficient, if backwards, for he promptly assists with his own birth.

Pushing against his mother's body he literally helps himself out, which is pretty good for a pink little thing whose eyes are sealed up tight, ears folded shut against his head, and without a hair anywhere to call his own. With a nuzzling assist from his mother, he climbs up to a nipple and attaches himself. There he stays safe and sound, folded within her wings.

Daytimes are spent thus when everybody is resting at the roost. Nighttimes, when Mrs. P. Bat goes foraging, she may carry Jr. along, but more probably leaves him with the offspring of others in the colony and goes off without him. Each returning mother sorts over the bunches of squalling infants clumped together and picks out her own. Each will nurse only her own, so the early establishment of mother-offspring is essential. It occurs probably at the moment of birth when the

female eats the placenta, tests showing that if she fails to do so, she will not accept the youngster, simply letting it fall.

Pallid bats take their time maturing. At least five to six days pass before their eyes are open and 10 to 12 days before much incoming fur is evident. And although they can fly pretty well by six weeks and are eating insects, the young bats continue to nurse still longer. By August they are nearly grown and, by now, old hands at catching their own food.

Unlike most bats who take small insects in high flight, pallid bats are interested only in the big ones, and surprisingly, as Zoologist Anthony Ross's careful field work showed, these are not only large flying insects (up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch body length and $6\frac{1}{2}$ inch wingspan) but also big flightless forms (up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long) actually taken off the ground.

This is a most unique feeding habit for a bat and it works something like this: Mrs. Pallid Bat, flying low in her characteristically slow flight, with echolocation pulses spots a large Jerusalem cricket or ground beetle for example, alights and captures it. She may devour it on the spot (one bat was so engrossed in eating a mole cricket he was easily caught by hand), but more likely will fly to the nighttime roost and dine there, eating only the succulent abdomen and dropping wings, legs and hard head parts.

Analysis of the discards under such a feeding roost therefore tells what was on the menu. The lengthy list Zoologist Ross compiled included various species of moths, beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, to

*With her forearm wings folded,
a pallid bat rests in
the laboratory. She is
approximately seven inches long
and, at 39 days, is mature.*





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mention only a few items. All in all Mrs. P. Bat accounts for many an insect's demise—to say nothing of a few small scorpions.

The team of biologists Licht and Leitner, interested in knowing how pallid bats get along in the high temperature of the desert, located a large colony of them in the loft of a big barn. To their great joy they saw that two other species (Mexican freetails and myotis) were also there in great numbers which made comparisons possible. What could be more ideal for their study? Plenty of bats (about 3000 in all) and plenty of heat. Indeed it turned out the temperature commonly hit 122 degrees in the roost during the day, which tended to make things especially interesting for bats and scientists alike. Intent on finding answers, the men stuck with the heat. The bats had their problems, too.

Pallid bats, it seems, do not hang freely when roosting, but like to have their undersides against a surface, and they want close protection from above. Cracks and joinings in the roof and rafters seem to fill the bill best. The other two kinds of bats preferred the same area for roosting, and so that was where everybody was. With the direct sun hammering down, the high loft section was bound to get the hottest.

Restlessness and squabbling and vocalization increased as the temperature rose and it became apparent that the bats were faced with a decision: stay in their preferred spots and stand the heat, or move down lower in the barn where it was cooler to be sure, but the roosting spots more exposed. The myotis bunch gave up earliest and moved down; but the freetails and the pallids consistently faced higher temperatures rather than give up their ceiling roosts. In fact, pallid bats voluntarily endured heat of 104 degrees, panting and salivating rather than move. But when the temperature continued to climb, they finally had to give up, too, moving down the barn sides and once relocated shoved each other to be spaced further apart.

Nobody needed to tell the biologists it was TOO HOT in the barn and that any mammal in his right mind should get out of it. Yet there were the bats voluntarily undergoing stress for hours in heat that was at least 50 degrees higher than burrowing desert animals were standing at the same time. And this is apt to be the case for some 46 days in a typical summer. Surely the fact that the bats were able

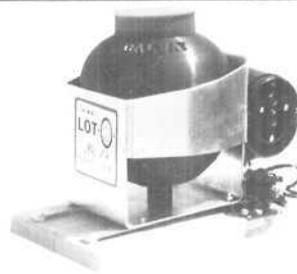
to exploit hot buildings for roosting must be associated with considerable heat resistance and the question at once arose: is this unique heat tolerance a survival characteristic developed in bats in general and raised to the nth degree in desert dwelling species such as the pallid bat? It would indeed seem to be the case, so more study is going on.

It is thought that the pallid bats hibernate in winter roosts fairly close to their summer grounds. They do seem to be familiar with considerable territory—a range of about 30 miles—and are pretty good homers. Zoologist Davis found the females did a better job of homing than the males in the early summer and that for some reason did best when released in a southeast-northeast direction from the maternity colony. Working with Lendell Cockrum in Cochise County, Arizona, Davis released a batch of bats. While some never got back at all, several individuals showed unusual consistency in return. One female was particularly good at homing, no matter what direction home was and clocked in in good time each trip from points 21 to 68 miles away. She traveled some 450 miles in all during the course of the study between May 28 and October 1. Much of the territory she had to cross was well outside her home range and therefore unfamiliar. So good was her score that chance alone could not be the reason for her success. How did she do it? Nobody knows.

Nobody knows either why the lady has glands on her nose that can release a scent definitely not Chanel #5. To the human nose it is uncomfortably reminiscent of skunk, and zoologists, biased from sad experience, cannot imagine how anything that smells like that could be used for anything but defense. However, tastes do differ, to be sure, so her perfume is just one more of her quirks that make the pallid bat still one of the desert's mysteries. □

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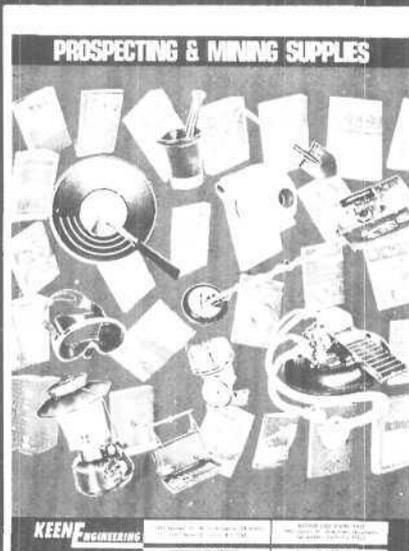
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L OUIS REMME, stockman, had just completed a profitable drive of cattle up the inland valley of California. He disposed of a few here, a score there, a dozen in another place until he had traded his steers and cows for yellow gold. The clinking gold, \$12,500.00 of it, was on deposit with Adams and Company in Sacramento. Now Remme was sitting down to a leisurely breakfast in Marius Bremond's restaurant.

Marius put a copy of the "Daily Union" in his hands. Newspapers in the 1850s did not shout all they knew from the front page. Before the stockman had read through many of the pages, he caught the news from the dining room's queerly excited chatter. Fragments were crashing about like crockery. "Page Bacon is cleaned out." "Adams, too. Looks bad." "They say Woods has skipped."

On February 17, 1855, the ship "Oregon" had arrived at San Francisco heavy with mail and passengers and fairly alight with news. The big news concerned the failure of Page, Bacon and Company of St. Louis. This was not only one of the largest banking concerns west of the Atlantic seaboard, but its main branch was the largest bank on the west coast.

Remme tore open his newspaper. The story had just come up the river from San Francisco by boat. Page Bacon's downfall had started a run on its branch. Other banks had been sucked in. All was seething, boiling panic. Remme came to his feet. The stockman was a small man, about five feet eight, weighing around 155 sinewy pounds and bearing the blood of French-Canadian voyageurs in his veins. All he could see was his gold on deposit in Adams' Sacramento branch. In a few strides he was shouldering through to the counter at 46 Second Street. Outside a roaring, milling crowd was gathered. He demanded his money.

"You'll have to see the receiver," the cashier told Remme. He intimated that the line was going to be long and the waiting considerable.

Remme thought rapidly. Should he dash for Marysville and try and cash the claim there? But the news just arrived from San Francisco must already be at Marysville. He could picture the scene accurately. The excited, jamming populace. The shouts for torch and rope. The closed doors, the smashed windows. The

REMMÉ'S FAMOUS RIDE

by Dr. Ira B. Judd

A TOUGH LITTLE FRENCH-CANADIAN RACED 600 MILES FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO PORTLAND, OREGON IN 143 HOURS AND SAVED HIS FORTUNE. HIS HISTORIC RIDE IS ONE OF THE FAMOUS FEATS OF THE OLD WEST.

Photo courtesy California State Library

locked or empty vault and the cries to high heaven of anguish, despair and indignation. His \$12,500 in gold. Grass Valley, then? Georgetown? Placerville? The news would be ahead of him everywhere. But the savings of his five year's labor! Then Remme stopped short! Why hadn't he thought of it before? Portland!

Adams had a branch there and it could not have heard the news. There was no railroad, no telegraph. Yet Portland was 700 miles away and the steamer from San Francisco would be sailing next morning. In deep thought Remme walked to the river levee. Should he go down to San Francisco and take the ship? If he did so, he'd arrive at Portland simultaneously with the bad news. Again there would be the milling crowd, locked doors, shattered windows and the sheriff's notice.

A stern-wheeled river paddler was just starting for Knight's Landing, 42 miles upstream. Remme made up his mind as

the gang plank was being drawn. He jumped for the boat. At Knight's Landing he got a horse, rode to the head of Grand Island, swapped for a fresh steed and bent grimly to the long trail north.

He had friends scattered on ranches and in towns here and there up the valley. The Maryville Buttes were bathed in the long shadows of sunset when he made his fourth change of mounts. Where necessary he paid a bonus with his blown horse and spurred on. Ten hours from Sacramento, he galloped into Red Bluffs. Five minutes later, sandwich in hand and a fresh mount under him, he was off again. Twenty miles farther a camp fire gleamed in the dark. "Who's there?"

"Remme, stockman. I'm after a thief and need a fresh horse."

The teamster helped him shift saddles. In darkness the rider swept through Shasta City and Whiskeytown. Dawn found him breakfasting at Tower House



had been forced to retrace. Five times his horse had played out. One hundred and ninety-five miles yet to go! The sky was cold and leaden. It changed to a darker hue as he reached the beautiful valley of the Yoncalla. Great raindrops were falling now. At the cabin of a hale, gaunt pioneer named Jesse Applegate, he again told his story. It was now a familiar one in ranch houses and camps for nearly five hundred miles. "Sure, help yourself to a fresh animal."

Breakfast at the lower end of French Prairie and a fresh animal. On to Oregon City by half past ten. Noon of the sixth day found him at Milwaukee where he crossed the swollen Willamette once more. By one o'clock he had reached Portland town and was putting away his horse at Stewart's stable.

"Is the steamer in from 'Frisco?"

"No, but she's fetching in here today."

"Where is Adams and Co.?" the traveler then asked in sweet relief.

Dr. Steinberger, the agent for the banking-express house was just taking down his shutters after returning from lunch. "Can you," a mud-spattered stranger asked, "cash a certificate of deposit for me on your San Francisco bank?"

"Regular charge is one-half of one percent for all sums over a thousand dollars. How much you got?"

"Twelve thousand, five hundred," replied Remme. "I'm a cattle buyer and need the money."

The certificate was in good order, and signed by W. B. Rochester, agent at Sacramento. Dr. Steinberger chuckled at the easy profit of \$62.50 acquired by the transaction. He set out ten stacks, twenty slugs to the stack. Forty pounds of gold. Remme took the gold to his hotel, saw it locked in the safe. Just then a cannon thumped out on the river. The "Columbia" was announcing her arrival.

There are few records of a ride to equal the feat accomplished by Remme. He covered 665 miles in 143 hours of total time, ten of which went for sleep. This was an average gait of five miles per hour through rains, storms and mud.

To show the irony of life, Remme met his death a few years later while trying to save some of his cattle which had become snowbound. He froze to death. An ill deserved end for such a resourceful chap. □

on Clear Creek. Here all semblance of a road ended, but the trail was familiar to the cattle driver. All day he rode, and as he mounted higher, springtime was left far behind. Snow swirled in the higher canyons and a wind howled on Trinity Mountain, setting the tall firs and tamaracks creaking. When he reached Trinity Creek, money could not buy a horse. But a good natured miner loaned him one and provided supper.

Remme reached Scott Valley in six hours, where he slept until noon. From here the going was a bit easier. Seventy hours out of Knight's Landing, he stumbled into the mining community of Yreka. After a big drink of brandy at the hotel, and with a fresh horse, he was headed for the Oregon Valley. Four hours later, ascending the long rise eleven miles north of Klamath, he came to the cairn on Hungry Creek marking the California state boundary. "Thank God for Ore-

gon," he sighed.

The Modoc Indians had staged an uprising in the territory between the Klamath and Rogue Rivers. Remme rode cautiously. At Jacksonville he had a cup of coffee and snatched two hours sleep. On a fresh mount he crossed the Rogue River on the pioneer ferry. At the bank of the Dardanelles he hired a strong horse from a stout Irishman named Kavanaugh.

Walking his horse under a bluff near Jump-Off Joe, he suddenly bent low and drove in his spurs. A musket ball whizzed by his ear. Five more Indian rifles spoke. He outran the Indians by the time Cow Creek was reached. He slowed the animal to a walk to avoid the quick sands. Through picturesque Round Prairie and onward to Winchester village he went. At Joe Knott's tavern he again snatched some needed rest.

Twice so far he had lost the trail and

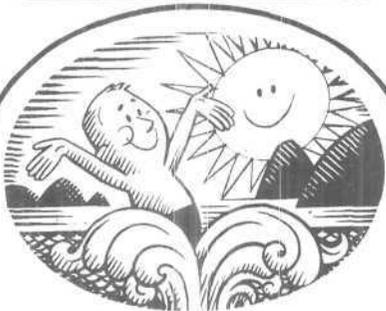
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FREMONT'S FALLEN FORTUNE

Continued from Page 20

tending from Bridgeport at the southern end, northward for about 17 miles to the Merced River. Peculiarly, about all of the important mines of the area lay within the boundaries of the grant, as it was finally laid out. State 49 runs through the entire length of the estate, passing several spots of historic interest.

Five miles north of Mariposa is the settlement of Mount Bullion, once named Princeton, near the site of the old Princeton mine, a rich producer of gold and a bitter legal antagonist of Fremont and his estate. Eventually, the Princeton interests were forced to relinquish the property when title was confirmed to Fremont.

About two miles farther north on State 49, on a road branching a little to the left, is the site of the old Mount Ophir private mint, authorized by the Federal Government to stamp out hexagonal fifty dollar gold slugs. Adjacent to the site are the stonewall ruins of pioneer merchant Louis Trabucco's trading post, built in the early 1850s.

Continuing northward for about three miles, the highway arrives at what is left of the old town of Bear Valley, famous as the headquarters of Fremont and his Mariposa estate. The town had been built almost entirely under his planning and direction, boasting a hotel, the Oso House, a large company store and his own residence. Inducements were offered to attract merchants to the town and a busy and thriving settlement resulted.

The Oso House and Fremont residence have disappeared along with many of the old stores and houses. Old streets have long since gone to grass and brush. The old I.O.O.F. building still stands on the main street, now named Oso Hall. Across the road from it is the decaying facade of an ancient adobe structure with massive iron doors, at one time a livery stable.

Opposite this ruin are the jagged schist stone side and rear walls of an old building within which grows a tree with a trunk measuring over 2 feet in diameter. On the slope to the east of the main street is the old schist stone jail with a heavy iron ringbolt deeply imbedded in the ground to which the prisoner's leg iron was attached. No record exists of any escape from this pokey. An old Bear Valley school stands nearby. A little to the rear

of this is located an old cemetery where rests pioneer merchant Louis Trabucco.

Two miles beyond Bear Valley, at the top of a steep-walled canyon, a dirt road branches sharply to the left, off 49, leading about a quarter mile to Fremont's old Pine Tree mine. It was reactivated by others later, but is dormant now. An old mine dump testifies as to the scope of operations. His Josephine mine is near this location.

Huge amounts of gold were taken by Fremont from his mines, his wealth at the height of his career being estimated at about \$10,000,000. Bear Valley was the bustling hub of his empire with a population numbering about 3,000.

Never known as an astute businessman, a lavish spender and too trusting of others, his estate gradually drifted into difficulties. Frequently absent from his business on extended trips to Washington and Europe, the management of his property was handled by others, some not chosen too wisely. Short military service in the early days of the Civil War added to his troubles.

Plagued by a continuing series of lawsuits against his property, exorbitant legal fees and a mounting debt against the estate, estimated at about \$2,000,000 in 1862, Fremont decided to sell out in 1863. Although receiving only a small portion of the true worth of his holdings, he still was a wealthy man.

An optimistic speculator, of a restless nature, he soon was involved in the purchase and promotion of a southern railroad. His entire fortune was invested in the project with disastrous results. Failure of the railroad to meet payments threw it into receivership and Fremont was ruined.

Friends interceded in his behalf, and in 1878 he was appointed Territorial Governor of Arizona at a small salary. Ill health finally forced his return to New York where he was placed on the Army retired list with the rank of major general in 1890.

He died the same year in a Manhattan boarding house in drastically reduced circumstances, a strange ending to the career of the noted trail blazer, soldier, politician and one-time owner of the famous and productive Mariposa Grant. □



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Rambling on Rocks

by

Glenn and

Martha Vargas

The Diamond Saw: Boon to the Gem Cutter

GEM CUTTERS have always been faced with the problem of dividing a large piece of gem material into more workable portions. Early gem cutters solved the problem by simply breaking the chunk by one method or another. Obviously, this was a very wasteful method, with control over the size and shape of the final piece being virtually non-existent.

Somewhere in the last century, a frustrated gem cutter developed a device known as a mud saw. This was made of a circular sheet of soft steel that turned much like the wood-cutting circular saw of the carpenter. The disc, or blade, was not notched, and had its lower portion

revolving in a bath of a mud-like mixture that contained abrasive grains.

The rock to be cut was placed in a clamp that held it against the turning blade. As the blade turned, it picked up some of the grains of abrasive and carried it past the rock, cutting it away. The abrasive also tended to wear away the blade, but as the metal was soft and malleable the grains would tend to embed in the metal. Thus they were held to a degree, and cut away the rock.

In our early experience as gem cutters, we had the "privilege" of using one of these machines. We found it to be slow, but it did cut rock. It had an annoying characteristic; the machine needed constant attention, to be sure that the abrasive did not settle, allowing only mud to be brought to the rock. The speed of the blade was necessarily slow, otherwise, the grit would be slung off long before it reached the rock.

The slow speed of the blade allowed it to wander (lack of centrifugal force) so that the final cut surface was not flat. Regardless of these features, this was a successful method of cutting almost any reasonable-sized piece of gem material into cubes, rectangles, slices, or whatever was needed to cut into a gem. The advantages far outweighed the disadvantages.

As part of the diamond cutting industry, a saw that could cut diamond was developed. The same saw used today is little different than the original. A tough bronze blade that turns at a very high rate of speed is covered with a mixture of diamond powder (bort) and oil. When the blade comes in contact with the diamond to be cut, the bort now embeds in the blade and cuts away the diamond. There is some loss of diamond powder, but as it has a great affinity for oil, most bort stays with the blade as long as the oil does.

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This method of cutting a diamond is very slow, but with the values at stake, time and the loss of some bort are not important.

Cutters of other gems looked at this saw, but found the cost and time loss were against them. Finally, a method of embedding the diamond bort in the rim of a blade was developed. Now the blade could be turned at any reasonable speed. The only loss of diamond was that of wear, and cutting was found to be rapid.

The first diamond blades were made by notching the edge of a soft steel disc and working the bort into these notches, then rolling the metal down and over to hold the grits. The first of these blades was offered to the amateur about 1935.

They were so advantageous over the mud saw, that most serious gem cutters took to them immediately in spite of the great difference in price. It was possible to cut a piece of gem material in a tiny fraction of the time necessary before, thus increasing the gem cutter's output many times. These early gem cutters could not have realized how very inefficient the first blades were in comparison to those offered today. Technology and methods of manufacture have improved enormously.

There is an interesting side issue of the diamond saw being used to make final preparations for cutting a gem. In the early days, after the larger pieces had been reduced to workable sizes, unwanted corners or other projections still needed to be removed. This was usually done with a special plier-like nippers that bit off the unwanted portion. Again, this was wasteful, and accidents were common.

After the introduction of the diamond blade, all that was necessary was to adapt it to a machine that would enable the operator to hold the piece needing to be trimmed, and let the saw do the job. This

type of saw is appropriately named a trim saw, and its value to the gem cutter nearly surpasses that of the saw designed to cut the larger chunks.

As an example, a slice of agate about one-fourth inch thick can be sawed, while hand-held against the blade (with complete safety), cutting about a linear inch in 15 seconds. This cut can be made in any direction, as long as it is a straight line, and portions removed with little or no possibility of breakage or other loss.

The present-day diamond saw is a precision instrument. Those designed to cut larger pieces are known as slab saws, with most of the pieces cut into slabs of varying thickness. The stone to be sliced is locked into a clamp, which is designed to travel toward and past the saw blade at a predetermined rate. As the blade turns, the stone is forced toward it, and a coolant (usually a light oil) is fed to the point of contact of blade and rock. If there was no coolant, the blade would be destroyed. Many of the machines on the market are designed so that these three operations are automatic after the initial set-up work is done. It is possible for an operator to tend a number of saws, turning from one to another as each operation comes to an end.

Today's gem cutter has other machinery available to him to assist him to cut excellent gems. Some of this machinery is very sophisticated and elaborate. We are certain however, that gem cutting would not be popular with the amateur, if the diamond blade did not exist. The saw is always the starting point, and most individuals would simply not bother to start with the old methods, regardless of how excellent the other machinery might be. □

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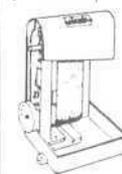
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PRIVATE PARTY must sell lot at Salton Sea. Illness. Best offer. Ella MacKenzie, 5118 deLongpre, Hollywood, Calif. 90027.

• TRAVEL

4WD "JEEP" Scenic Adventure Trips, Death Valley region, all desert areas, Paul H. Thompson Enterprises, Box 21, Darwin, Calif. 93522

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FOR NEW JOB openings in Los Angeles, California, write Mary's Work Shop. Send \$2.00 for information. Mary Green, 1259 N. El Molino, Pasadena, California 91104.

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Notes from the Field

CALIFORNIA

National Chloride Co.
Bristol Dry Lake

Mr. Melvin Stephens, president, informed DESERT that no collecting will be permitted at the company's mining operation south of Amboy. In the past, many groups and individuals have been granted permission at the office to collect the fluorescent salt specimens. Mr. Stephens states he does not want his workers distracted by people coming to the office. Stay away folks, it's off limits!

Lake County Diamonds

The Lake Berryses Estates have closed their area to the collecting of Lake County "diamonds." The locale is now under new ownership. "Doc" Burrows, California Federation of Mineral Societies trouble-shooter, is making every effort to have the site reopened.

Owlhead Crystals Closed

For nearly three decades, rock collectors have been trying their luck at the quartz crystal location in the Owlhead Mountains, Inyo County. The Owlheads form the southwestern border of Death Valley National Monument. Access to the crystal area (collection is done out-

side the monument boundary though crystals occur within it) has been via a dirt road leading west from the West-Side Road.

This road has been used regularly and it was not posted as late as November, 1971. However, a group of collectors were cited by park rangers for "unauthorized off-road travel and collecting within the Monument."

It is within the authority of the Monument administration to close the road and post it—which they have done at other locations. However, when use has been allowed over many, many years, it seems unfair to make scapegoats of persons unaware of any changes.

Collectors are advised not to use this route to reach the crystal area.

We welcome items of interest from our readers for this column. Please send to the address below.

I will be glad to answer any of your questions about field trips. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for my reply.

Mary Frances Strong

Field Trip Editor

Desert Magazine

VALYERMO, Calif. 93563

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Letters to the Editor



Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope.

"Sick and Tired" . . .

As a member of an avid four-wheeling family, I was completely infuriated after reading the letter and viewing the photo that was submitted by Orville Smith in the August, 1972 issue.

I'm quite sure that Mr. Smith must know what a 4WD vehicle or dune buggy looks like, yet he insinuates that a four-wheeler or dune buggy owner was responsible for the abandonment of a '55 or '56 Plymouth in the desert. This virtually valueless vehicle did not belong to a true off-road enthusiast.

It was left there by some irresponsible idiot who never should have taken it off a maintained road. Mr. Smith states that "Many vehicles are wrecked or fail in the desert and the owners walk away from them." The average four-wheeler has between \$4,000 to \$5,000 invested in his vehicle and you can be sure that its owner is not going to walk away from it if it is wrecked or fails.

Mr. Smith complains about the dust that "descends upon" his town when the "wind storms occur" and places the blame on an annual 4WD rally and two dune buggy races that are held in the area. I lived in the desert long before off-road vehicular travel became a sport and the blowing sand and dust was as much a problem then as it is now. The sand storm is a natural occurrence in the desert and is not caused by ORVs.

Mr. Smith blames the ORV for the disappearance of wildlife in the area. Maybe he'd better look in his own direction. Animals prefer to stay away from populated areas and the growth of Salton City certainly isn't on the decline.

He goes on to ridicule the carrying of firearms for personal protection as ridiculous. He states that if we are so afraid we should stay home. With the crime rate being what it is in our country, I do not feel that it is ridiculous nor am I going to stay home.

Our family carries a firearm for personal protection but we are not afraid, just smart! The persons that carry firearms for protection are not the ones that are shooting up the signs and wildlife. The individuals that handle firearms

irresponsibly are the ones that we must protect ourselves from.

So the citizens of Salton City have presented a petition against off-roaders to the County Board of Supervisors? I say, "Good for you, Mr. Smith!" But while you are attempting to prevent the use of ORVs near your town, please remember that the off-roaders are spending thousands of dollars in our your community every weekend.

Most of all, I resent Mr. Smith's last paragraph. The citizens of Salton City do not personally own that desert nor are they its only caretakers. It is public land and it belongs to me as well as it belongs to them. Our family and thousands of other off-road-vehicle families respect it, love it and help keep it clean. We are sick and tired of being blamed for the actions of a few irresponsible individuals.

PAT PARKINSON,
Fallbrook, California.

Rainbow Bridge . . .

As a reader of DESERT since Randall Henderson established the magazine many years ago, I have enjoyed every issue. The May, 1972 issue, however, was specially interesting to me, having visited the Rainbow Bridge twice; the first time with Zane Grey in 1923, and the following year as a side trip on the way down the Colorado by canoe from the mouth of the Fremont River to Lee's Ferry.

As you mention in your article, "On The Trail To Rainbow Bridge," John Wetherill and Dr. Cummings were the first known white men to see the arch and Roosevelt, with Wetherill as guide, and made the trip from Kayenta to the spot by pack train in 1913. As a correction, Zane Grey's first trip to the bridge was made shortly after his book, "The Rainbow Trail" was published in 1915. His description of the arch and much of the surrounding country in this book was furnished by Wetherill.

The original Rainbow Trail, blazed by Wetherill with the help of the Indians, began at Kayenta, following a course northward through the rugged country of Arizona and southern Utah with such landmarks as Monument Valley, Navajo Mountain and the Rainbow Bridge along the way.

Our party, which followed this route in 1923, was made up of 19 people including Grey, Wetherill, Jesse L. Lasky, my brother, Lasky's cameraman, eight packers and other guests of Grey. Our remudas included 53 pack animals and about 50 saddle horses.

An interesting incident occurred while we were at the bridge when Lasky decided to be the first to cross the bridge. This was accomplished by letting him down the steep end of the bridge on pack ropes tied together.

As a result of an established acquaintance with Zane Grey during this trip it was my privilege to be with him on other trips, although not as extensively as my brother who became perhaps one of the author's most intimate friends.

KENNETH WORTLEY,
Kernville, California.

Calendar of Western Events

OCTOBER 6-9, LONDON BRIDGE DAYS, celebrating the first anniversary of opening of rebuilt London Bridge, Lake Havasu City, Arizona. Dances, fireworks, contests, etc.

OCTOBER 6-8, SPOTLIGHT ON GEMS sponsored by the Las Vegas Gem Club, 3528 Maryland Parkway. Includes California Federation Field Trip Seminar, Indian artifacts and special table for the blind. Write Betty McCresless, 6261 Carey Ave., Las Vegas, Nevada 89110.

OCTOBER 7 & 8, ANNUAL HARVEST OF GEMS sponsored by the Centinela Valley Gem & Mineral Club, Hawthorne, Memorial Center, Prairie and El Segundo Blvds., Hawthorne, Calif. Admission and parking free. Write Charles Bawolski, 407 East Hilldale St., Inglewood, Calif. 90302.

OCTOBER 7 & 8, GEMARRIFIC SHOW, 16th annual event sponsored by the South Gate Mineral and Lapidary Club, South Gate Park Auditorium, 4900 Southern Ave., South Gate, Calif. Admission and parking free. Write Amber Hull, 9838 Elizabeth St., South Gate, Calif. 90280.

OCTOBER 8, ROCK SWAP & FUN DAY, Farmer's Free Market, 30th & S Streets, Sacramento, Calif. Free booths for swappers, tailgaters welcome. Write Sacramento Diggers Mineral Society, 5250 38th Ave., Sacramento, Calif. 95824.

OCTOBER 7 & 8, WONDERFUL WORLD OF GEMS sponsored by the East Bay Mineral Society, Inc., Scottish Rite Temple, 1547 Lakeside Dr., Oakland, Calif. Write P.O. Box 1196, Oakland, Calif. 94604

OCTOBER 20-22, ANNUAL TECOPA-SHOSHONE ARMAGOSA ROCKHOUND DAYS, Tecopa, Calif. Parade, street dancing, miner's drilling contest, etc. Write Lloyd Miller, Box 24 Tecopa, Calif. 92389.

OCTOBER 21 & 22, 23RD ANNUAL GEM SHOW sponsored by the Whittier Gem & Mineral Society, Palm Park Youth Center, 5703 S. Palm Ave., Whittier, Calif. Admission and parking free.

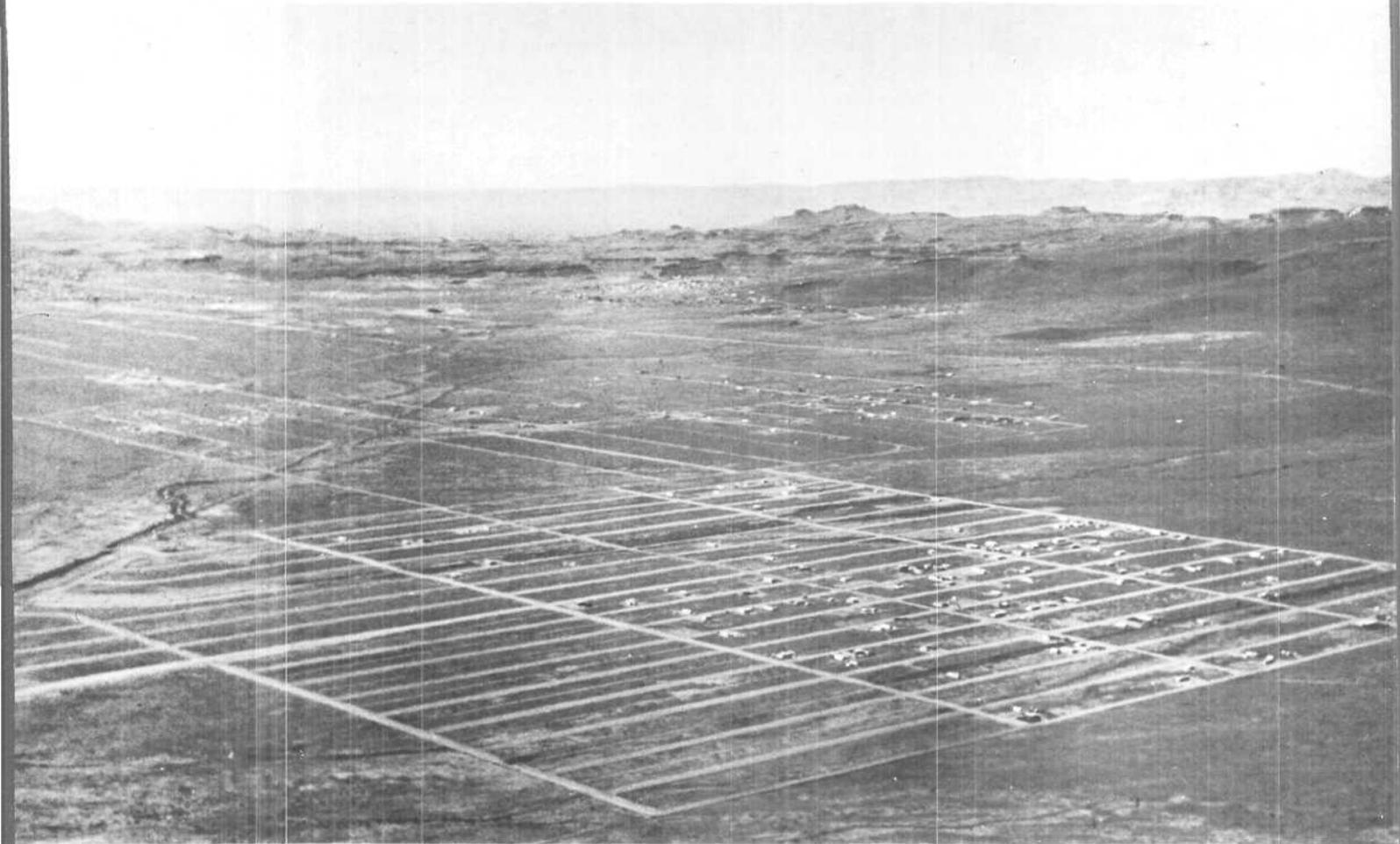
OCTOBER 21-23, THIRTEENTH ANNUAL SPACE FAIR, Point Mugu, Calif. Major exhibits of all facets of aerospace programs. Midway, airshows, rocket and missile firings. Admission free.

OCTOBER 28, BARBED WIRE SHOW, Mariposa, Calif. Sponsored by the California Barbed Wire Collectors Association, Box 239, Mariposa, Calif. 95338. Exhibits of antique barbed wire, fencing tools and related material.

Desert Magazine

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TREASURE FOUND

Dear Bill,

Recently I decided that I wanted to become a treasure hunter.

Several of my friends were having pretty good luck at coin shooting so I decided that was the way to start. Most of them (the lucky ones) were using D-TEX detectors. On May 5th, I got the D-TEX "Winner" and was soon launched on my new career.

Hunting mostly around parks and school grounds, I had accumulated the vast amount of 264 coins and felt that was pretty good for a beginner in only 8 or 9 weeks. On July 13 (my lucky number) I got up at 5:00 A.M. and headed for a neighborhood park to try to make it an even 300. I found one penny by the swimming pool. Next the monkey bars and found nothing. Then near the swings I got a loud signal. It was so loud I thought it was foil and started on. Then changed my mind and decided to dig, thinking no coin ever sounded that loud even on the surface. I had dug down about 6 inches with my knife and thought I must of had a false reading.

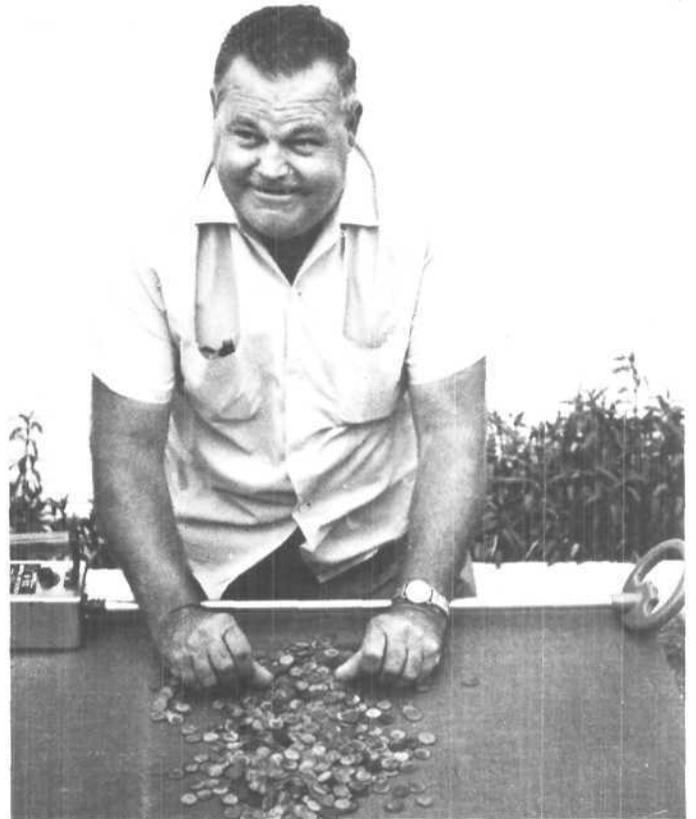
No detector would detect a penny or even a silver dollar that deep. I stuck the loop over the hole again and the sound was so loud it almost scared me, so back to digging. The first thing was an old rotted pair of men's suede leather gloves, then I started getting coins. First 4 or 5, then a hand full.

By now the old blood pressure was getting up. I realized I was going to need better digging equipment, so looking furtively all around I quickly covered the hole. Then taking my "Winner" I nonchalantly sauntered back to the car. Looking all around and casually whistling and trying not to hurry. At last back to the car and away I went to get a shovel.

Hurrying back, I again strolled slowly back to my location, this time with a small shovel and again looking all around and being as casual as possible. I wasted no time digging it all out and into a sack. Quickly covered the hole, back to the car and away I go.

At home and still nervous as a cat, I washed and counted the grand total of 652 coins and with dates from 1911 to 1952. Makes you wonder, was it a stolen collection that the thief was afraid to spend and then later forgot where he had put them.

Anyway, it was my lucky day. I am now shooting for a total of 1,000 and don't have far to go. My total for the 8 to 9 weeks is now 916, so now I want your new Delux. If the "Winner" could find this, I should surely strike it rich with the "Delux". I also want to say "Thanks" for building such fine detectors.



Bob Martin
2443 S. Beckley
Dallas, Texas

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