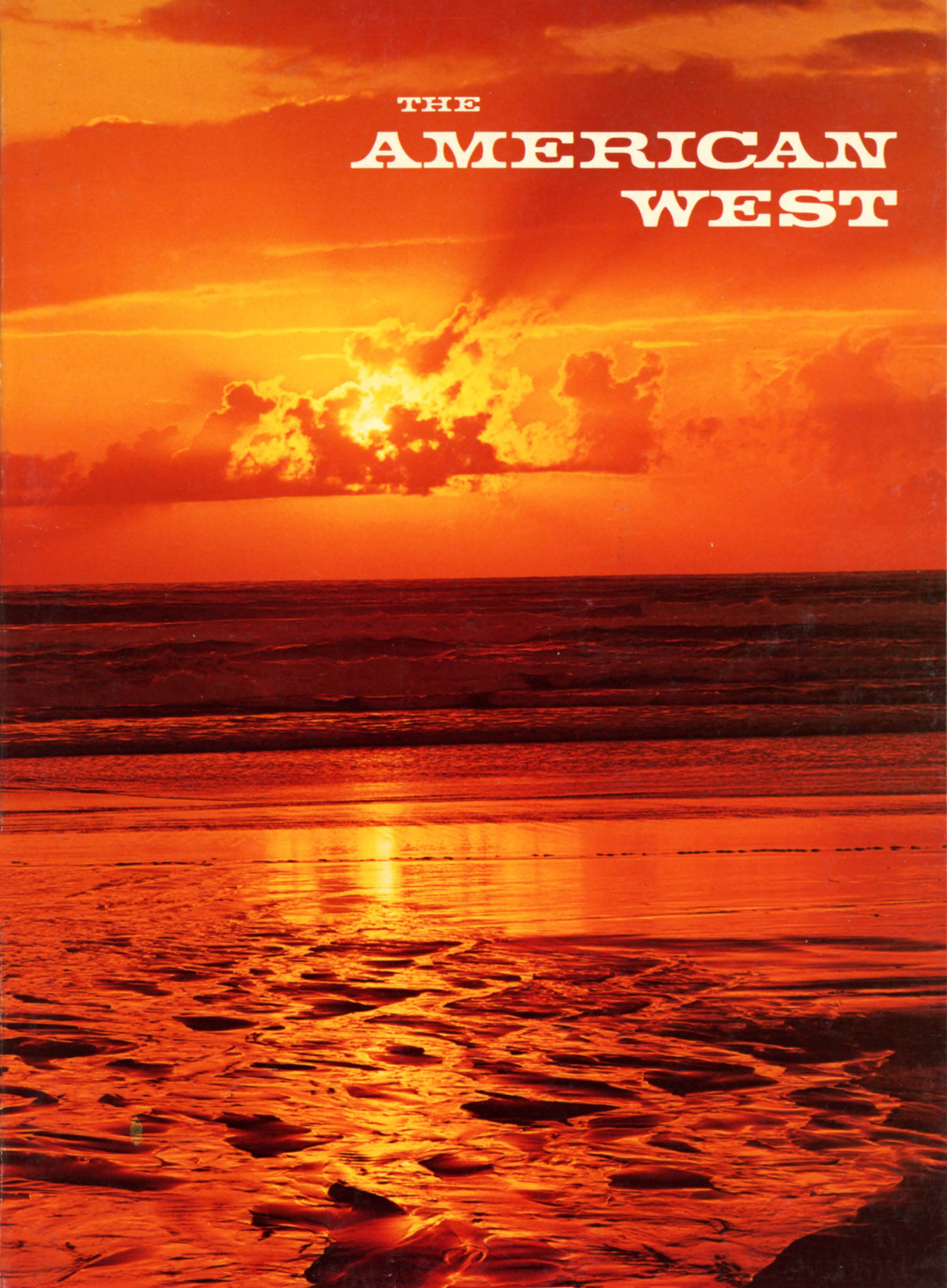
THE
AMERICAN
WEST

COVER: A sinking sun transforms sand into molten gold at Manzanita Beach, Oregon.

*(Photograph by Bob Clemenz)*

THE

# AMERICAN WEST

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*Icy headwaters of Washington's Wenatchee River tumble down a mountain valley toward the Columbia and, eventually, the sea.*

ED COOPER

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

*Richard Burton, in one of the disguises he affected while visiting holy cities of the East.*

# Richard Burton Visits the City of the Saints

*by Laura Foster Wilson*

AMONG THE ADVENTURERS of the Victorian era, one of the most romantic and controversial was Sir Richard Burton (1821–90). English explorer, ethnologist, linguist, translator, and author of more than fifty books, Burton was at home in some of the most exotic corners of the world. Strange cultures, trackless jungles, and forbidden cities drew him like magnets. He penetrated the holy city of Mecca disguised as a Moslem; in a similar disguise, he became the first European to enter the mysterious African city of Harrar; he went through tropical Africa looking for the source of the Nile; and he went, strangely enough, to Salt Lake City—a place that was, to his Victorian contemporaries, almost equally foreign and bizarre.

Everywhere he went, Burton made notes on the things that interested him—botany, geology, languages, religions, and especially the customs of the people. Their sexual customs fascinated him particularly. He observed harems in Egypt, wrote down his observations on polyandry and homosexuality in India, and was later to translate the *Arabian Nights,* complete and unexpurgated. Thus it seems likely that the Mormons' well-known practice of polygamy influenced Burton's choice of destination for his American adventure. Certainly his years of experience in the East shaped his attitude toward what he saw in Salt Lake City.

Though other luminaries visited Salt Lake City before and after Burton (among those who left written accounts were Horace Greeley and Mark Twain), none wrote a book like his *City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California,* published in London in 1861. His study of the Saints was the most complete and knowledgeable one written up to that time, and it remained so for many decades thereafter.

Burton made his trip to the United States in 1860. He had spent the three preceding years, between 1856 and 1859, searching for the true source of the Nile. It had been an arduous expedition, not only because of its physical dangers and discomforts, but also because of continual friction between the explorer and his chief assistant, Jonathan Speke. At the conclusion of the expedition Speke had rushed home to London ahead of Burton, announced the discovery of Lake Tanganyika, and claimed all the glory for himself.

Bitter and ill, Burton decided to take a vacation. He left England in April aboard the S.S. *Canada,* hoping to restore his health and his pride and, in the process, probe the secrets of another holy city. After tarrying for three months in eastern Canada and on the U.S. East Coast, he set out overland by Concord coach from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Salt Lake, making detailed notes of everything he saw and heard along the way (see box on page 6). He arrived in the City of the Saints in late August.

SALT LAKE CITY was then the capital of a large empire, Utah Territory, which extended from the Rockies to the Sierra Nevada and from Oregon Territory to the Colorado River. The Mormons, who had been ravaged in Illinois by Gentile persecutors only twenty years before, had fled the Midwest and settled in the desert basin adjoining the Great Salt Lake. By dint of extreme hard work and cooperation, they had overcome the hardships of their desolate

*For the English explorer and authority on Eastern religions and social customs, Salt Lake City with its Mormon population was, literally, another Mecca*

UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

***Brigham Young, prophet and leader in a holy city of the West.***

chosen land and had built an agricultural community supported by innovative methods of irrigation.

The key to their survival, Burton found, was water, "without which, as the 'distillation from above' will not suffice, Deseret would still be a desert." Describing the Mormons' irrigation network in *City of the Saints,* Burton stated admiringly, "the system works like clockwork."

Survive the Mormons did, and they flourished in great numbers under the leadership of Brigham Young, who had succeeded Joseph Smith when the latter was murdered in an Illinois jail in 1844. Young, of whom Burton "had nothing to say except in his favor," had led a band of distraught Mormons to a land, "fresh as it were from the hands of God." As the first governor of Utah Territory, he had in an incredibly short time molded what Burton described as "a despotism thriving at the centre of a democracy."

With his seventeen wives and forty-seven children, Young set an example of polygamy that aroused the indignation of the Gentile citizenry of the U.S. and kept Utah out of the Union until 1890. In that year, polygamy was renounced by Mormon church elders, though in places its practice continued—some say, to this day.

When Burton visited Salt Lake City, the community was on the brink of war with the federal government. There had been outbreaks of violence; the Mountain Meadows Massacre, in which Mormons were suspected of having killed a party of Gentiles traveling overland, had occurred three years before. President James Buchanan had appointed a Gentile governor, Alfred Cumming, and sent six hundred dragoons to keep the peace. (The troops stationed outside the city were as much of a curiosity to an old military man like Burton—he had served as a British army officer in India for seven years—as were the Mormons.)

The presence of the army troops made relations somewhat tense between Mormons and Gentiles at this time, and understandably the Mormons were wary of outsiders. Yet Richard Burton's reputation apparently preceded him, for he wrote, "the kindness and hospitality which I found . . . at every place in New Zion . . . were 'ungrateful to omit' and 'tedious to repeat.' "

Governor Cumming, ordered by the President not to interfere with polygamy, ruled with "scrupulous and conscientious impartiality." But, Burton observed, "his resolution to treat the Saints like Gentiles and citizens, not as Digger-Indians or felons, has won him scant favor from either party. The anti-Mormons use very hard language and declare him to be a Mormon in Christian disguise. The Mormons, though more moderate, can never, by their very organisation, rest contented without the combination of the temporal with the spiritual power."

So the Mormons continued to revere Brigham Young as their leader. He was still, after all, president of the Mormon Church. Burton was eager to meet this "Lion of the Lord" as the eyes of the world were turned upon him. A meeting was arranged through Governor Cumming, and Burton met Young in a one-hour interview in Young's office on August 31, 1860.

Carefully sidestepping controversy, the two men talked about safe subjects: why Burton had come to Utah, stock, agriculture, the Indian wars, and Burton's African expedi-

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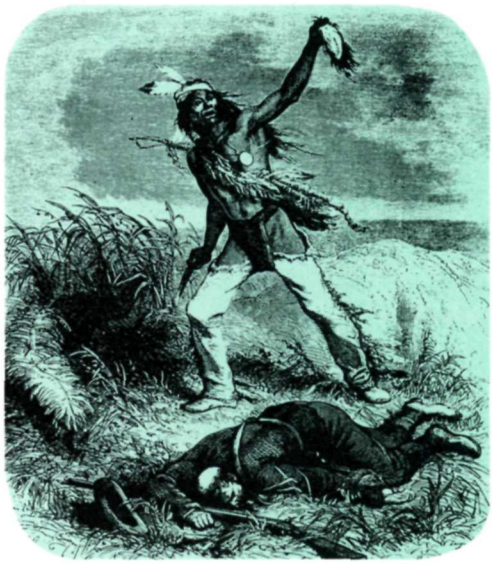

## Richard Burton Studies the Art of Scalping

*Few observers of man and his world approached their calling with a keener scientific eye or greater passion for accumulating mounds of information on everything in sight than Richard Burton. Everywhere he went, including his travels across the American West, Burton transcribed copious notes on a gamut of topics—often, it seems, with a special preoccupation for subjects either so morbid or daring as to shock his Victorian peers. Two brief examples of Burton's talents for observation and description (and sardonic humor), as recorded in* City of the Saints, *follow below and opposite:*

SCALP-TAKING is a solemn rite. In the good old times braves scrupulously awaited the wounded man's death before they "raised his hair"; in the laxity of modern days, however, this humane custom is too often disregarded. Properly speaking the trophy should be taken after a fair fight with a hostile warrior; this also is now neglected. When the Indian sees his enemy fall he draws his scalp-knife . . . and twisting the scalp-lock, which is left long for that purpose, and boastfully braided or decorated with some gaudy ribbon or with the war-eagle's plume, round his left hand, makes with the right two semicircular incisions, with and against the sun, about the part to be removed. The skin is next loosened with the knife-point, if there be time to spare and if there be much scalp to be taken. The operator then sits on the ground, places his feet against the subject's shoulders by way of leverage, and holding the scalp lock with both hands he applies a strain which soon brings off the spoils with a sound which, I am told, is not unlike "flop." Without the long lock it would be difficult to remove the scalp; prudent white travelers, therefore, are careful before setting out through an Indian country to "shingle off" their hair as closely as possible; the Indian moreover hardly cares for a half-fledged scalp. . . .

tions. They were mutually pleased by the interview and Burton and Young arranged to tour the Mormon capital together at a later date.

Burton's impressions are recorded in his book: ". . . the Prophet is no common man and . . . he has none of the weakness and vanity which characterize the common uncommon man." Young's manner was at once affable and impressive, simple and courteous, Burton wrote. Later, he noted, "There is a total absence of pretension in [Young's] manner, and he has been so long used to power that he cares nothing for its display. The arts by which he rules the heterogeneous mass of conflicting elements are indomitable will, profound secrecy, and uncommon astuteness."

Burton reported that Young was not a religious fanatic, and wrote approvingly that he "never once entered upon the subject of religion." As though to test Young's ability to resist proselytizing, Burton (an agnostic) at one point asked if he could be admitted to the Mormon fold. Young, who no doubt had heard of Burton's adventures in Mecca and the East, replied with a twinkle in his eye, "I think you've done that sort of thing before, Captain."

Likewise, the pair skirted the subject of polygamy. Burton wrote, "I was unwilling to add to the number of those who had annoyed the Prophet by domestic allusions, and therefore have no direct knowledge of the extent to which he carries polygamy." But an anecdote recorded by Burton's biographer Thomas Wright reveals some conversation between Young and his visitor alluding to polygamy during their tour of the Mormon settlement:

Brigham Young is said to have pointed out his family's gabled Lion House, the home of many of his wives, to which Burton replied facetiously that he had come all the way to Salt Lake City a bachelor, only to find that all the women had been taken. Waving his right hand toward the lake, he said mournfully, "Water, water, everywhere"—and then his left toward the city—"and not a drop to drink." Brigham Young laughed heartily, according to Wright.

Another Burton biographer, niece Georgiana Stisted, wrote that on another occasion, while Burton was standing with Young on the verandah of Young's block, Burton's eye "fell upon a new erection which could be compared externally to nothing but an Englishman's hunting stables, and he asked what it was. 'A private school for my children,' the Prophet replied. It was large enough to accommodate a huge village," Stisted wrote.

Burton continued to learn about Brigham Young indirectly, in conversations with various hosts and in discussions at the dining hall where he lunched daily. He learned that Young was "a temperate and sober man. His life is ascetic: his favorite food is baked potatoes with a little buttermilk, and his drink water. He disapproves, as do all strict Mormons, of spirituous liquors, and he never touches anything stronger than a glass of thin lager-bier; moreover, he abstains from tobacco."

DILIGENT AS HE WAS in observing and recording Mormon ways and beliefs, Burton also engaged in some diversions. He went bathing in the Great Salt Lake (see box at right), nipped whiskey with companions, and listened to tales of Mormon parties and balls. He did not attend any, as "the gay season had not arrived," but he heard enough to convince him of the Mormons' sociability. "Dancing seems to be considered an edifying exercise," he noted. The finest party of the season had lasted thirteen hours, he reported, and "it shows a solid power of enduring enjoyments!"

Burton described the rectangular layout of the city, and the shops, private dwellings, and beautiful gardens. He was disappointed by the Temple Block: "a great hole in the ground." (The Mormons spent forty years building their temple, and it was not completed until 1892.) He noted the adobe Tabernacle and the Endowment House, "the place of great medicine, carefully concealed from Gentile eyes and ears." He reported the rumor that human sacrifices were said to be performed within, but disclaimed it: "such orgies . . . could not coexist with the respectability which is the law of the land."

Of Mormon justice, Burton recorded an incident in which two men guilty of forgery and horse-stealing were gunned down in the street. "Gentiles hinted that life had been taken by 'counsel,' that is to say, by the secret orders of Mr. Brigham Young," Burton wrote. "Even had such been the case . . . such a process would not have been very repugnant to that wild huntress, the Themis of the Rocky Mountains . . . this wild, unflinching, and unerring justice, secret and sudden, is the rod of iron which protects the good." (Themis was the wife of Zeus in Greek mythology, a context in which justice was mostly arbitrary.)

A party of Mormon emigrants arrived in the city during Burton's visit. He was among the greeters and circulated with his Mormon host among the "brothers" and "sisters." The Saints "carefully suppress the Mr. and Madam of the eastern states," he wrote; . . . "the fraternal address gives a patriarchal and somewhat oriental flavour to Mormon converse." Arrangements were quickly made to house and employ the emigrants. Burton, having read accounts of "girl-hunting elders," "grey-headed gallants," and "ogling apostles" was somewhat "surprised to see that everything was conducted with the greatest decorum."

During his stay, Burton made the acquaintance of a Scottish convert, Elder T. B. H. Stenhouse, and his wife. "The conversation turned—somehow in Great Salt Lake City it generally does—upon polygamy, or rather, plurality, which is here the polite word . . . for the first time I heard that phase of the family tie sensibly, nay learnedly, advocated on religious grounds by fair lips." Burton does not record the conversation, but he does set forth his understanding of the justifications of polygamy.

Most fundamental was the religious justification. Burton noted that the doctrine was founded on the Mormons' literal

## Burton Takes a Dip in the Great Salt Lake

GOVERNOR CUMMING had asked me to accompany Madame and himself to the shores of the Lake, with an ulterior view to bathing and picnicking. . . . The approach [to the bathing beach] is first over the fine soft sand, like that of the sea shore, but shell-less, soppy where it receives the spring-water, and almost a quicksand near the lake. The foot crunches through caked and crusty salt flakes, here white, there dark green, there dun-coloured like bois de vache. . . . A dreadful shock then awaits the olfactory nerves. The black mud of peculiar drift . . . proves to be an Aceldama of insects: banks a full foot high composed of the larvae, exuviae, and mortal coils of myriads of worms, mosquitoes, gnats, and gallinippers, cast up by the waves, and lining the little bay as they ferment and fester in the burning sun, or pickle and preserve in the thick brine. Escaping from this mass of fetor, I reached the further end of the promontory where the Black Rock stood decorously between the bathing-place and the picnic ground, and in a pleasant frame of curiosity, descended into the new Dead Sea.

I had heard strange accounts of its buoyancy. It was said to support a bather as if he were sitting in an arm-chair, and to float him like an unfresh egg. My experience differs in this point from that of others. There was no difficulty in swimming nor indeed in sinking. After sundry immersions of the head, in order to feel if it really stang and removed the skin, like a mustard plaster —as described—emboldened by the detection of so much hyperbole, I proceeded to duck under with open eyes, and smarted "for my pains." The sensation did not come on suddenly; at first there was a sneaking twinge, then a bold succession of twinges, and lastly a steady honest burning like what follows a pinch of snuff in the eyes. There was no fresh water at hand, so scrambling upon the rock I sat there for half an hour, presenting to Nature the ludicrous spectacle of a man weeping flowing tears.

UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

***The Saints had arrived at Salt Lake in 1847, just thirteen years before Burton's visit. By dint of great exertion, discipline, and an effective system of irrigation canals, they transformed the desert into a verdant oasis. This view shows Salt Lake City as it appeared in 1853.***

interpretation of Scripture, in which divine blessings are promised to the progeny of Abraham "numerous as the stars above or the sands below." The theory that "the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man" is by the Mormons interpreted into an absolute command that both sexes should marry, he wrote. " 'A virgin's end is annihilation' . . . . The Mormons . . . see in the New Testament no order against plurality, and in the Old dispensation they find the practice sanctioned in a family (Abraham's), ever the friends of God, and out of which the Redeemer sprang."

The religious justification also incorporated the centuries-old Mosaic code forbidding adultery. The Mormons, like the Hebrews of old, held the "children of shame" in extreme dishonor, Burton wrote. Mormons quoted the command of God that an adulterer "shall not enter into the Church of the Lord til the tenth generation." They wished to expel all impurity from the Camp of Zion and adopted every method of preventing the tremendous evil of violating God's temple in their bodies, Burton explained. This attitude was expressed in the heavy penalties Mormons set for adultery: three to twenty years in prison, with fines of up to $1,000.

Lest anyone doubt the Puritanical thrust of the Mormons' approach to polygamy, Burton was careful to note that ". . . rules and regulations . . . disprove the popular statement that such marriages are made to gratify licentiousness. All sensuality in the married state is strictly forbidden beyond the requisite for ensuring progeny." Later, he observed, "in point of mere morality the Mormon community is perhaps purer than any other of equal numbers."

Burton cited arguments justifying polygamy on physiological grounds. The woman, he argued, is constituted by nature different from the male, for the purpose of motherhood. She needs relief at regular periods, in order that her system be kept pure and healthy; so she practices strict continence during the gestation and nursing of children. "The same custom is practiced . . . by some of the noblest tribes of savages; the splendid physical development of the Kaffir race in South Africa is attributed by some authors to a rule of continence like that of the Mormons, and to a lactation prolonged for two years," Burton wrote. Therefore, he pointed out, in the Mormon view polygamy for males is a "positive necessity."

Polygamy was also justified on social grounds, Burton noted, because it increased the population rapidly in a land that needed many hands for work. Furthermore, it was justified because it decreased the number of surplus women—about two thousand, according to the 1856 Mormon census. Burton observed that without polygamy, "part of the social field would remain untilled."

Finally, polygamy was justified on economic grounds. Burton remarked that "servants are rare and costly; it is cheaper and more comfortable to marry them."

Recognizing a single shortcoming of polygamy, Burton wrote; "The choicest egotism of the heart called Love . . . subsides into a calm and unimpassioned domestic attachment . . . a ménage à trois . . . is fatal to the development of that tender tie which must be confined to two. In its stead there is household comfort, affection, circumspect friendship, and domestic discipline."

BURTON'S FAVORABLE TREATMENT of polygamy was such as might have caused Gentiles to question his objectivity. But their thinking was dictated by Christian European tradition. Burton, on the other hand, was familiar with customs and beliefs that made the Mormons' polygamy seem quite staid by comparison. Perhaps because of his experiences, Burton's moral judgments were not likely to be typically Victorian. In much of his writing, in fact, he railed against the Victorians' sexual hypocrisy. He attempted to bring to the West some of the wisdom of the East, where the art of love is glorified. In his later years he published several volumes of Oriental erotica, including his multi-volume edition of the *Arabian Nights,* and was working on a translation of *The Scented Garden* when he died at Trieste in 1890.

But England was not ready for such enlightened views; most particularly, Burton's wife Isabel, a strong-minded Victorian, was not ready for them. After his death, she burned many of his letters, diaries, notes, and manuscripts as pornographic. Her deep devotion to Burton is unquestionable; it led her to "protect" her husband's reputation against the shame of posterity. Yet it seems a cruel irony that, out of love, she destroyed the very works that might best have assured Burton's immortality. Had his discoveries of the inner, sexual man been published, Burton might have displaced Freud on the stage of history.

*City of the Saints* was, when it first appeared, a victim of the same Victorian thinking. An 1861 London newspaper reviewer of the book declared, "Captain Burton is one of the best travellers we have. One would like him better if he had a little more faith and a little less credulity." Similarly, his niece Georgiana Stisted criticized the book in her 1896 biography. "It reads almost like a panegyric," she wrote. "It is generally agreed that he represented these strange people in too favorable a light."

By 1930, however, opinions warmed to the book. "Burton's work furnished the best non-Mormon treatise on the Mormon religion and philosophy, and the fairest if not the profoundest criticism of it . . . until now," wrote B. H. Roberts in his *History of the Mormons,* quoted in a Burton biography by Fairfax Downey, 1931. A 1941 biography by Jean Burton asserts that Burton "approached Salt Lake City in the same detached spirit of anthropological inquiry that characterized his studies of the obscurer African tribes."

Byron Farwell's 1963 biography called *City of the Saints* "accurate . . . comprehensive . . . sympathetic . . . one of the best unbiased accounts of the Mormon religion." Finally, Fawn Brodie's introduction to the 1963 re-publication of *City of the Saints* terms the book "a sagacious and thorough study," and characterizes Burton as "one of the least credulous observers of the Mormon scene."

An informal tally of Burton's comments on Mormonism, pro and con, reveals that generally speaking he was more pro than con. Many of his pro-Mormon comments were fashioned at the expense of his English countrymen and aimed to embarrass them. For example, writing of Salt Lake City emigrants, he remarks: "The contrast of physique between the new arrivals and the older colonists . . . was salient. Whilst the fresh importations were of that solid and sometimes clumsy form and dimensions that characterize the English at home—where 'beauty is seldom found in cottages or workshops, even when no real hardships are suffered'—the others had much of the delicacy of figure and complexion which distinguishes the American women of the U.S."

*City of the Saints* was, and is, a unique book. It was unique in 1861 because of its favorable, even sympathetic description of the Mormon people and institutions. Furthermore it was unique in its erudition and thoroughness: well over seven hundred pages of detailed description and exhaustive explanation, with references to Greek, Roman, and Oriental literature, the Judeo-Christian tradition, and scientific knowledge up to the nineteenth century. Burton's vast store of information and understanding allowed him to see the Mormon city as few other visitors of his time would have. In his own era, Burton was sometimes called a blackguard; today, reading *City of the Saints,* we can be grateful for his open and inquiring mind.

FOR FURTHER READING

Readers interested in learning more of Richard Burton's life and adventures have a choice of several biographies, including that written by his wife, Isabel Burton: *The Life of Captain Richard Burton* (1898; reprinted 1973, two vols.); Thomas Wright's *Life of Sir Richard Burton* (1906; reprinted 1968); Byron Farwell's *Burton: A Biography of Sir Richard Burton* (1963); and Fawn M. Brodie's *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Burton* (1967). Fawn M. Brodie has also edited and annotated a new edition of Burton's *The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California* (1861; reprinted 1963).

**Laura Foster Wilson** *is a free-lance writer currently residing in Lawrence, Kansas.*

# FROM MOSCOW TO A COW PASTURE IN AMERICA

## (in sixty-two hours and seventeen minutes!)

*by Martin Cole*


*A six-thousand-mile polar flight in July 1937 by three Soviet airmen ended on a dairy farm near San Jacinto, California.*

*Here, nine days after the aviators' arrival, technicians begin dismantling their Ant 25 monoplane.* LOUIS B. ZEIGLER

*World capitals now lie within easy reach of Soviet warplanes. Let this be kept in mind by foreign enemies threatening war.* PRAVDA

ONE NOW ALMOST FORGOTTEN CHAPTER from the pages of aviation (and western) history was written in July 1937 by three Russian fliers—who blazed a trail from Moscow over the North Pole to a cow pasture near the sleepy little town of San Jacinto, California. In direct airline miles the trio flew 6,262 miles in 62 hours and 17 minutes, establishing a new nonstop distance record.

The day following completion of the epic flight the official newspaper *Pravda* announced that "world capitals now lie within easy range of Soviet warplanes. . . . Despite such saber-rattling, the flight was accepted in the United States as one of goodwill, largely because of the modesty and friendliness of the three Russian crewmen. They were pilot Mikhail Gromov, age thirty-eight; copilot Andrei Yumashev, thirty-five; and navigator Sergei Danilin, also thirty-five.

Gromov later told the story of the record-breaking flight in a small book entitled *Across the North Pole to America.* (Only one copy is known to exist in the United States.) The pilot-author begins with the observation that "the idea of flying to America across the North Pole occurred to me long ago. . . . Until recently, it was believed—especially abroad—that flying in the Arctic was impossible. However, the development of polar aviation has shown that to Soviet planes and Soviet airmen the stern North is no insuperable barrier."

As plans developed, Gromov enlisted the help of Yumashev, a "splendid airman," and Danilin, "in my opinion the best navigator in the Soviet Union":

"We worked on the details of the North Pole flight for two years. This may seem a long time. But the result was that many problems which formerly seemed insoluble now became perfectly clear to us. We had a complete picture of the details of the proposed flight. This gave us great satisfaction. We proposed to use a plane which I had been testing for nearly two years, the Ant 25.

"It was a monoplane of the classical type with underslung wings, and at that time was undoubtedly the most suitable craft in the world for long-distance flying.

". . . Having increased the potential range of the plane by lightening its weight and increasing the supply of fuel, we turned our attentions to a large number of test flights to ascertain the expenditure of fuel and the ways of economizing it.

"The original range of the Ant 25 was 4,350 miles. But when a geared engine was installed, the range was increased to 6,200 miles. Experiments showed that the corrugated surface should be replaced by a smooth surface, and this increased the range by roughly another 1,250 miles. Finally, after covering the anterior edge of the wing with a polished surface, we were able to fly 7,700 miles without a stop. The installation of a metal propeller still further increased the range."

When pilot Gromov was convinced the Ant 25 was ready to pioneer a route over the North Pole to the United States, he, copilot Andrei Yumashev, and navigator Sergei Danilin were ushered by Defense Commissar Voroshilov and Premier Molotov into the Kremlin's inner sanctum to receive the blessings of Joseph Stalin.

On the eve of takeoff, Russian meteorologists told the crew to expect severe head winds and storms of cyclone velocity. The combination of storm warnings and thoughts of flying over a vast unknown so agitated Gromov's state of mind that he was unable to eat. Drinking only tea, he waited while six tons of gasoline were pumped into the wing tanks—enough, the crew believed, for 8,000 miles of flying.

The takeoff was made at dawn, Monday (Sunday in America), July 12. Despite a mile-long runway, the overloaded plane almost failed to become airborne. Finally lumbering

U.S. AIR FORCE

***Russian Consul Grigori Gokhman (left), congratulates fliers Mikhail Gromov, Andrei Yumashev, and Sergei Danilin.***

upward, the Ant 25 and its crew reached clouds at 1,000 feet. Continuing on instruments, they gradually gained altitude as gasoline burned and the load was lightened.

In the twenty-four hours it took to reach the North Pole, the fliers passed through two violent storms, and for the most part never saw land. The temperature outside the aircraft was —8° C. The fliers enjoyed a sense of accomplishment when they started on the "down" side after passing the pole. Through breaks in the clouds, they saw the polar cap, an endless, icy wilderness traversed with fissures. The scene was grand in scale but monotonous.

Eventually, after passing through another storm, they caught glimpses of the cliffs of Patrick Island on the cloud-scattered horizon. It was a satisfying relief; they were on course. When land appeared below them, the aviators mentally shook hands. They had reached North America! As the Ant 25 droned on over the northern wasteland, the character of the terrain gradually changed. Canadian tundra, dotted with thousands of lakes, stretched ahead from horizon to horizon. They saw rivers—perhaps some without names —and a scrub growth that finally merged into an endless forest. It was above this setting, 3,700 miles from Moscow, that the Russians made their last radio contact with their homeland. In the meantime, they had established radio contact with American operators in Anchorage, Seattle, and San Francisco. At noon they gave their position as 400 miles north of Vancouver.

Tuesday, the 13th, was a day of mounting interest on the U.S. West Coast. Where the Soviet airmen would land was a speculation kept alive by the newspapers and radio broadcasters. Some weeks previously, aviatrix Amelia Earhart had been lost while flying the Pacific, and her disappearance and the ensuing search made for daily headlines. Now these headlines were being replaced with stories of the approaching Russians. And, of course, since there had been no additional position reports, the big question was—where were the fliers?

The first definite knowledge that the Soviets were over the United States came at 10:25 Tuesday night, when a United Air Lines pilot spotted the big red monoplane near Roseburg, Oregon. At 11:15 the Soviets reported: "Estimated hour-and-a-half from Oakland." By now much of California from San Francisco to the Mexican border was blanketed in fog.

During the late evening hours, a crowd began assembling at the Oakland airport. With an 800-foot ceiling at Oakland and with fog extending farther southward, it seemed unlikely the fliers would attempt to continue beyond that point.

But as the aviators approached the Bay Area, the "gas indicator was very encouraging," so—unaware of the excitement their decision would create on the ground—they decided to fly on. They answered no radio calls, and as the hours lengthened into the foggy night, apprehension grew in California. Had the flyers crashed? The *Los Angeles Times* was put to bed with the awesome headline: POLE FLYERS MISSING; HUNT BEGINS.

The *Times* story told of Russian Consul Grigori Gokhman who, fearing his countrymen might be lost, had chartered a plane and was searching first in the vicinity of the Bay cities, then southward. Another chartered plane with newsmen and cameramen had taken off from Union Air Terminal in Burbank and was searching the Southland above the fog.

Newspaper deliveryman Walter Harvey of San Jacinto listened to the early morning newscasters on his car radio while he distributed the *Los Angeles Times*. He noted that the fog was clearing in the San Jacinto–Hemet Valley but, according to the radio news, not elsewhere. He speculated that the flyers might just find this hole in the clouds. And they did. At six o'clock the big red monoplane began circling the valley. Harvey accurately guessed that it would land at Earl Smith's 740-acre cow pasture. He quickly drove in that direction and arrived just as the Ant 25 touched down and began long grasshopper bounces across the rough terrain.

Some years later Walter Harvey recounted this moment of history:

"When the crew shucked their heavy flying suits and climbed down from the cramped cockpits, there was a touch of weariness in their eyes, yet they flashed expressions of relief and vast satisfaction. Andrei Yumashev came close

to me and, talking above the apparent loud ringing in his ears, uttered the first words. In a strange accent he said, 'March Field.' The tone suggested a confirmation. The gesture supported it, when he pointed in the direction of March Field Army Air Base some twenty miles away.

" 'March Field,' I nodded affirmatively, and then my attentions were directed to a map Mikhail Gromov was shoving in my hand. The commander's finger jabbed at the map, and I thought I understood. I quickly found San Jacinto and indicated the location with my finger. There was nodded agreement among the flyers and an exchange of Russian talk. And then someone, Sergei Danilin perhaps, was shoving a fountain pen in my hand.

" 'Sign name,' urged Yumashev.

"I put the map against the side of the plane and wrote, 'Walter Harvey.' I glanced at my watch. 6:30. The plane had been on American soil for five minutes. I wrote '6:25.'

"The Russians pressed their hands into mine, giving vigorous handshakes of friendship. By now the first blur of excitement had passed, and impressions began to stand out in sharp focus. The flyers were blue-eyed and blond-haired. They wore baggy pants belted without beltloops. Their shirts were white and they were without hats and coats. A three-day growth of beard did not hide all lines of tiredness, although over-tiredness was not greatly apparent.

"I circled the plane with the Russians in hasty inspection. There were exclamations when a gasoline leak was discovered in a wing tank. The flyers gestured and eyed the roughness of the cow pasture. It had been a bumpy landing. There followed an exchange of Russian comments, and I caught the strange pronunciation of 'March Field' several times.

"Andrei Yumashev turned to me. 'Notify March Field.' His manner implied a request, not a demand. I nodded agreement. It was a two-minute drive to San Jacinto, and there Mrs. Anna Kirkendall, a telephone operator, put through a call to March Field."

The account in Gromov's book differs somewhat.

"We selected the only large, although rather uneven field, in this semiwilderness, and 62 hours, 17 minutes after the takeoff in Moscow we made a successful landing some three miles from San Jacinto, California. . . . Our plane was severely shaken and jolted on landing because of the hard, rough ground, but neither it nor the equipment suffered the slightest damage.

"Danilin was the first to alight. There was not a soul to be seen, but a minute later we noticed an old and dilapidated automobile bounding over the hummocks toward us. A young man jumped out and addressed Danilin in English. We had provided for such an emergency in Moscow and had the following note written for us in English: 'We are Soviet airmen flying to America from Moscow over the North Pole. Please inform the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, the local authorities, and the nearest flying field that we have safely landed.'

"The young man leaped into his car and dashed to the telegraph office. A moment later, the field was invaded by people and automobiles."

During this and the days that followed, as thousands of curious visitors arrived from Los Angeles, San Diego, and as far away as San Francisco, Earl Smith had problems. Smith's fences were torn down, and cattle strayed. To recover losses he began charging an admission of twenty-five cents per car. A segment of the public, however, ignored the tollgate and climbed over the remaining fences.

Meanwhile, at the March Field Officers' Club the fliers had a bath, a ham-and-eggs breakfast, and three hours of sleep. Russian Consul Grigori Gokhman flew in to take charge. Then began a heroes' welcome that took the airmen to Los Angeles and San Francisco for receptions, and thence to Washington, D.C., where they were received by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Nine days after landing, the Ant 25 was dismantled by two Russian technicians, assisted by March Field soldiers. After being trucked to Wilmington, Delaware, it was shipped to Russia. What eventually became of the plane is not known.

Visit San Jacinto and Hemet today and you will find the valley populated with newcomers who are largely unaware of the excitement that took place there in 1937. No marker commemorates the event. And in what is left of Earl Smith's cow pasture, about the only reminders to be found of the Moscow-America flight are a few iron stakes from a barricade that once held back milling crowds.

**Martin Cole** *is a free-lance writer and retired historian-curator for the State of California. He lives in Whittier, California.*

***In 1937 the Ant 25 attracted thousands of visitors, but today its record-breaking flight is virtually unknown.***

RIVERSIDE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

# Pageant of the Seasons

## *The West is a land of diverse and contrasting climates —but timeless rhythms determine its patterns of life*

by Bette Roda Anderson

THE GREAT DIVERSITY of climate that characterizes the American West is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the ways the seasons are experienced in various regions. In the Southern California desert, summer seems eight months long, while in the high country of the Rockies it is the winter that seems to last three seasons. On the prairies and eastern Great Plains there are years when spring is almost nonexistent, while in coastal California, it often seems to begin shortly after Christmas and last through May. Inland, the differences in seasons are sharp and unmistakable; as one nears the Pacific, they become ever more subtle. Yet, every place does have its seasons. And in each place living things—through thousands upon thousands of revolutions of the earth—have come to understand their local cycle of seasons and year after year perform their ancient rituals of response.

As spring gathers in the earth, knowledge of the coming season reaches all living things. In the plant world, the humble skunk cabbage is first to send up shoots from its swampy dwelling place. Sheathed by a slender hood, and retaining heat released by the oxidation of carbohydrates, the skunk cabbage is able to melt frozen ground and push toward the surface with gentle strength.

Hibernating animals stir in their snug hideaways, and snow-melt torrents roar down the mountain streams. Migrating mule deer will soon begin their seasonal trek from the foothills to summer feeding stations on the mountains, with preying coyotes and mountain lions not far behind.

As life awakens in the North, migratory birds return instinctively to their breeding grounds. Song sparrows, grackles, redwings, and some robins often return to a still-snowy landscape; in fact, some especially hardy robins never leave the northland.

Spring is an assorted weather season. Killing frosts and bursts of sunshine intermix in the Rockies; until mid-June, snowfall is possible at high elevations on the Colorado Front Range, and even lowlands remain vulnerable to ice and windstorms. Remnants of a cold mound of high pressure air, though less intense and more ephemeral than in winter, still hover over the Canadian Arctic, while over the southwestern United States a cell of low pressure is building. Incursions of arctic air sporadically pour down the meridians, flowing close to the earth. British meteorologist Sir Napier Shaw once estimated that 3½ trillion tons of cold arctic air flows south each year in late winter and early spring; and with every new influx comes a change in the weather.

Hence, freak weather conditions and record storms are not uncommon in spring. The Easter blizzard of 1873, for example, swept a huge swath across Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota, blowing wet snow into drifts and killing many new settlers; in 1906 a rare east wind drove fire from the San Francisco earthquake dangerously across the city; one spring day in Los Angeles registered 100°, and another in Eagle West, New Mexico, a numbing –36°.

Although Robert Frost is closely associated with New England, his words about the vicissitudes of spring apply as well to the mountains and valleys of the West:

*You know how it is with an April day:*
*When the sun is out and the wind is still,*
*You're one month on in the middle of May.*
*But if you so much as dare to speak,*
*A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,*
*A wind comes off a frozen peak,*
*And you're two months back in the middle of March.*

Throughout much of the inland West, winter yields reluctantly to spring. At the time when crocuses are already peeking through last year's leaves on the eastern seaboard, it would take a keen observer to hear the trickle of melting snow only beginning in the Rockies or feel a slight softening of the bitter wind across the northern plains.

IN UNDERSTANDING SUMMER WEATHER, one word is all-important: *convection*—the vertical exchange, along with partial mixing, of large air masses. Ascending air currents can literally hold up a summer cumulus cloud until the main

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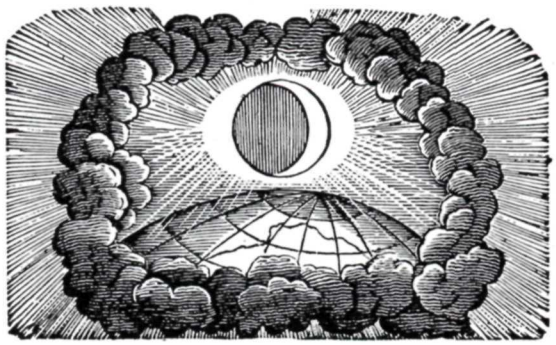
*This article is adapted from a chapter in* Weather in the West *by Bette Roda Anderson, to be released by the American West Publishing Company on April 30.*

ED HOLM

*"Four seasons fill the measure of the year"; man as well as nature must bow to the unyielding progression of the seasons.*



## Circle of the Seasons

WE OWE THE EXISTENCE of the seasons to the fact that the earth's axis of rotation deviates from its axis of revolution. Because the axis of rotation maintains a nearly constant orientation in space as the earth follows its orbit around the sun, the North Pole faces toward the sun during the spring and summer months in the Northern Hemisphere, and away from the sun during the fall and winter months. Consequently, during spring and summer the days are longer and the sun's rays strike the earth at a steeper angle, permitting more heat to reach the surface. In the Northern Hemisphere summer begins the instant the North Pole reaches its maximum angle of 23½° toward the sun (the summer solstice, about June 21), and winter begins when the pole tips to its maximum angle, also 23½°, away from the sun (the winter solstice, around December 21). Spring and fall begin when the pole tips neither toward nor away from the sun (the equinoxes, around March 21 and September 23, respectively). Each season in the Southern Hemisphere is out of phase with that in the Northern Hemisphere by six months: when it is summer north of the equator, it is winter to the south.

It seems a paradox that though a region receives essentially the same amount of sunlight during the spring and summer months, summer is the hotter of the two seasons. Similarly, winter is colder than fall. The explanation lies in the accumulation of solar heat by the land and the oceans, which, together with *insolation (in*coming *sol*ar radi*ation*), determines the temperature of the air. As insolation declines in the fall, the temperatures of land and water decrease, but because they have stored heat they nevertheless remain warmer than the insolation alone would dictate. Conversely, although the total sunshine increases steadily after the first day of winter, the land and water continue to grow colder as they lose excess heat. As summer approaches, land and water temperatures again lag, finally reaching their maximum sometime after the summer solstice. Several other variables influence this seasonal balance of heat and cold: for example, clouds and snow cover reflect heat the land would normally absorb; and land surfaces take in and lose heat energy more rapidly than the oceans.

supply of energy from the sun is cut off toward evening. "The full moon eats clouds" was an old French saying, and indeed, instead of falling to earth, cumulus cloud droplets can vanish (evaporate) into thin air at the end of the day—a phenomenon most usually noted with a bright, full moon.

The typical summer storm originates locally, convectionally produced by heating of moist, unstable masses of air. Rainfall comes in showers, often thunderstorms, but usually doesn't last all day. Because summer moisture in the West comes from either the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf of Alaska (which lies athwart the wind track of the prevailing westerlies even in summer), the likelihood of rain decreases with distance from these sources. Least accessible to either are Nevada and Southern California, regions of long summer drought. In California the "dry season"—that is, summer—lasts about half the year, browning the grasslands and encouraging punsters to call it the "Golden Bare" state.

With few exceptions, summer is the season of that king of convective storms, the thunderstorm. For the country as a whole, July is by far the most thundery month; in the most northerly tier of mid-continental states, two out of every three thunderstorms occur between June and September. The only region where thunderstorms occur at all in the western winter is along the West Coast, and then only infrequently.

Summer heat and humidity are called "corn weather" in Iowa. Bearing down on the flatlands of the Corn Belt around the beginning of July, high temperatures may be still in the upper 90s—with humidity the same—even in the small hours of the morning. Sleeping on such a night may be unthinkable. And growing so fast that one can hear it, the corn may be six inches taller overnight.

Heat makes the tomatoes grow in the Great Central Valley of California, too. Although nights are cool here, daytime temperatures of over 100° are common, baking all the rainless earth except for those fields and orchards hooked up to a life-line of irrigation ditches and canals.

There are several field-tested methods for ascertaining the temperature of a summer day without benefit of a thermometer. They sound like folk wisdoms, but meteorologists say they work. One involves timing the speed of ants; another, pacing a worm; and a third—perhaps the simplest test—counting the number of chirps per minute of a particular katydid: subtract 40, divide by 4, and add 60!

MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT AUTUMN is the most beautiful time of the year. Nights are crisp and clear; days have a lingering warmth and can even be hot; inland lakes, though cooling, are still swimmable; and the air is soft and aromatic.

In the western states autumn blazes with the color of yellow — aspens and tamarack, and red vine maple and



***Three elements—sun, atmosphere, and earth—interacting in a yearly cycle determined by the 23½° angle between our planet's axes of rotation and revolution, produce the miracle of the seasons.***

RON CHURCH

BOB CLEMENZ

***Spring, a time of changeable weather conditions, is also the season of renewal and rebirth. Here wild flowers bloom atop a ridge in Washington's Olympic National Park.***

poison oak. The pigments bringing these tones have been part of the leaves since spring, but their color was overwhelmed by the leaf's green chlorophyl. With the diminishing of sunlight and food-making processes, the chlorophyll is lost, and the vibrant pigments glow triumphantly. During late autumn, California's Yosemite Valley glows with new color, from its tall meadow grasses to the Kellogg black oaks, the maples and dogwoods and poplars. In Utah the birch trees turn yellow; in the foothills of the Coast Range and the Sierra, clumps of red berries ripen on the toyon, and willows illumine every streambed.

The four major flyways for migratory birds—down the Atlantic Coast, the Pacific Coast, the Mississippi Valley, and southward from Montana and Wyoming—are busy with seasonal commuters on their way to winter quarters. At the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah, flocks gather before heading to their wintering grounds. Some proceed directly south, some turn west to the Pacific route or east to the Mississippi, and a few take the long way via the Atlantic Coast. Another large wildlife sanctuary outside Sacramento, California, provides a waystop on the Pacific flyway where millions of waterfowl gather. And on Monterey Bay, in October, wintering monarch butterflies cluster in the pines of their sanctuary at Pacific Grove.

Autumn's first warning of winter occurs with an incursion of cold polar air from the north. Along the Canadian border it may come by the end of September, and repeated onslaughts strike deeper into the country as the season progresses. But often, just when cold seems to have swept in and taken charge, Indian summer arrives. Strictly speaking, this name applies to a late fall stretch of warm, hazy, euphoria-producing days and cool nights that visits the central and eastern United States as the unpredictable gift of winds from the Gulf of Mexico. But it has grown to mean

JOSEF MUENCH

*Summer—in length of days a mirror-image of spring—is nevertheless a warmer time of year because of accumulated radiation from the sun. Here late-blooming plants brighten Arizona's Coconino Plateau.*

any unseasonably warm spell that comes along after fall has settled in. The term "Indian summer" is part of eighteenth-century America and was first used on the frontier of western Pennsylvania. Some say it came from the Indian strategy of attacking when settlers had relaxed their guard in the pleasant, mild weather; others say that the air was smoky from Indian fires, or that the good weather allowed the Indians to harvest their corn, squash, and pumpkins.

But by autumn's end, almost all the northern third of the United States has had snow, descending like a miniature ice age.

THOUGH WINTER does not begin or end on the same day for the myriad forms of life, there is a rule of thumb that when the mean daily temperature falls below about 43° F., plant processes in the mid-latitudes stand still. But nature has proven to be foresighted: in the autumn, trees grow the buds that hold the potential for new growth they will tap in the spring.

In the insect world, crickets, katydids, woolly bears, grasshoppers, and ladybugs crawl into hibernation. Bats hang in suspended animation in caves; frogs have burrowed into the mud of streams; the marmot is underground, and the muskrat has retreated into its den. On the coast, the grosbeak, finch, and junco appear, having abandoned chill nesting places in the high country. The chinook, or king, salmon has made its spawning run to the high waters of the Columbia River and died.

After the first official day of winter on December 21 or 22—the shortest day of the year—the weather grows more blustery. Throughout the months of January and February (and in the case of water surfaces, March), the earth continues to lose more heat than it claims. Snow-covered terrain

BOTH PAGES: BOB CLEMENZ

***The long shadows and short days of fall portend winter's approach, but return of "Indian summer" may provide a brief respite. Falling aspen leaves, above, coat a pond near Telluride, Colorado.***

reflects the incoming rays from the sun, rather than absorbing them as the ground does. Thus polar air spilling down from Canada takes on a biting cold in the new months of the year that was not there in December.

Cold waves, when the thermometer suddenly plummets, obey age-old rules of the atmosphere and sometimes can be easily forecast. The principal ingredient is a strong high pressure system located over the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, poised and ready at any moment to slip its chill across the border. The catalyst to action is a low pressure system located in the Great Lakes region, which draws the cold air southward in its wake. The greater the pressure difference between the low and the high, the more rapidly the cold advances.

In the northern border states—Minnesota, North Dakota, and Montana—cold waves are legend. Montana plains may be locked in the grip of a cold wave for as long as two weeks. In the Mississippi Valley the same cold wave may last only two days. In its southward venture, the life span of a cold wave is diminished, and there is a tendency for its replacement to be a warm spell of comparable intensity. The warm spells and cold spells are, in fact, characteristic of winter in the Middle West.

Sometimes the meaning of a season is best illustrated in its myths. Groundhog Day—February 2 in most states—celebrates one such myth. If the groundhog (woodchuck), emerging from his burrow that day, sees his shadow, he will return to the burrow, and winter will continue for another six weeks. But if the skies are cloudy and he sees no shadow, he will go about his business and spring will be early. In fact long-range predictions cannot be forecast by a single day's sunshine or cloudiness, and the groundhog's emergence is less a weather omen than a fascinating study of life renewed.

***With the advent of winter, the days again begin to grow longer, but the earth continues to lose heat faster than it absorbs it; nature slumbers, awaiting a new rebirth. Here snow-covered Half-Dome overlooks California's Yosemite Valley.***

During his winter hibernation the groundhog—or in the western United States, his cousin the marmot—takes a mere ten or twelve breaths an hour, and his body temperature drops to a cool 38° or 40°. Then on an early spring day he awakens. In a miracle of spring, within just a few hours, his temperature rises nearly 60 degrees, his respiration quickens to thirty or forty times a minute, and he emerges at the chimney of his hole to greet a world that is perhaps still alternately freezing and thawing, not quite ready for renaissance.

TO PARAPHRASE ECCLESIASTES, for every place there is a season, or rather a cycle of seasons. The rich variety that western America offers in other ways—landforms, plant and animal life, historical development, day-to-day weather—is true also of its seasons. The northern plains swing from arctic cold to Saharan heat in half a revolution of the earth, while a coastal city like Eureka, California, must look beyond its thermometers to know the season has changed at all. Montanans experience four very distinct seasons, while residents of the coast often think in terms of only two—rainy and dry. But seasons they are, all the same.

The seasons existed before life, roll on unaffected by it, and may continue to do so long after it disappears. Rather, life has had to adapt to the seasons, building their rhythms into its very structure. Even man, while he can sometimes modify the weather, cannot stop the relentless procession of the seasons.

**Bette Roda Anderson** *is a free-lance writer who resides in Woodside, California. She is coauthor of the American West books* The Magnificent Rockies *and* The Great Northwest *(both 1973).*

# Roaming the West with ALBERT BIERSTADT

*by Gordon Hendricks*

A BRIEF NOTE in the May 12, 1863, edition of the *New York Evening Post* announced, "Bierstadt, the artist, has departed on his journey to the 'far West.' He is accompanied by Fitz Hugh Ludlow, who, it is understood, will make copious notes of the tour, which, on his return, will be published in book form. Mr. William W. Hill, of Providence, and Horatio W. Durfee, of New Bedford, also accompany the artist. The party will go directly from here to San Francisco, stopping only for brief periods here and there, on their route, to make sketches and notes of the scenery and the people. While in the Yo Semite Valley they will be joined by two artist friends of Bierstadt—Messrs. Perry and Williams, of San Francisco—and after a sojourn in the valley of two or three weeks, the entire party will proceed to the later-named city. . . . They propose to be absent from six to eight months, so that it will probably be Christmas before they get back to New York."

"Bierstadt, the artist," was of course Albert Bierstadt, later celebrated as one of America's foremost painters of the western landscape. Born in Germany in 1830, Albert had emigrated to the United States while still a child, then returned to Europe to study painting from 1853 to 1857. By 1863 he was already developing the themes and style for which he was to become world-famous, having made a sketching tour of the Rockies in 1859 and later producing monumental canvasses of scenes he found there. Now, in company with friend Fitz Hugh Ludlow—six years his

*This article is adapted from material in* Albert Bierstadt: Painter of the American West *by Gordon Hendricks, published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc.,* © *1974 by Gordon Hendricks.*



**Sierra Nevada Morning,** ***painted in 1870, epitomizes the grandeur of Bierstadt's West.***

THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA

***Soon after beginning their 1863 western tour, Bierstadt and his companions had a memorable encounter with a huge buffalo they had shot;* Buffalo Chase *may stem from sketches he made of the dying bull.***

junior and an author and art critic for the *Post*—he was embarked on another memorable tour of the West that was destined to provide inspiration for years to come. Bierstadt, Ludlow, and their two companions had departed New York a month before the *Post* article appeared; by late May, having traveled by rail via Pittsburg, St. Louis, and St. Joseph, they arrived in Kansas, their jumping-off point for the frontier.

IN THE BUSTLING TOWN of Atchison, Kansas, where Albert Bierstadt's party stayed at the "very creditable" Massasoit House (and saw a lynching), they gathered supplies and otherwise prepared themselves for their arduous journey. They left Atchison on the Overland Trail some days before May 29, laden with necessaries and dressed to kill, according to Fitz Hugh Ludlow's account (*The Heart of the Continent,* published in New York in 1870):

> . . . our commissary stores in boxes under our feet, where they might be easy of access in any of those frequent cases of semi-starvation which occur at the stations between the Missouri and the Pacific. Our guns hung in their cases by the straps of the wagon-top; our blankets were folded under us to supplement the cushions. To guard against any emergency, we were dressed exactly as we should want to be, if need occurred to camp out all night. We wore broad slouch hats of the softest felt, which made capital night-caps for an out-door bed; blue flannel shirts with breast-pockets, the only garment, as far as material goes, which in all weathers or climates is equally serviceable, healthful, and comfortable; stout pantaloons of gray Cheviot, tucked into knee-boots; revolvers and cartouche-boxes on belts of broad leather around our waists; and light, loose linen sacks all over.

Across the Big Blue into Nebraska, they soon arrived at Comstock's Ranch on the Little Blue. At Comstock's, where they saw their first buffalo, they lingered awhile, riding into the field, with Ludlow observing and Bierstadt making

sketches. At this point in Ludlow's account he makes his first direct reference to Bierstadt: "After dinner the artist opened his color-box, and began making a study of the antelope head, which had been left entire for his purpose."

But the principal and most intimate account of the way the artist improved his time and his art is the passage of the dying buffalo:

Our artist, though a good shot, and capable of going to market for himself whenever there was any game, as well as most people, had seen enough buffalo-hunting on other expeditions to care little for it now, compared with the artistic opportunities which our battue afforded him for portraits of fine old bulls. He accordingly put his color-box, camp-stool, and sketching umbrella into the buggy, hitched a team of the wagon-horses to it, and, taking one of our own party with him, declared his intention of visiting the battlefield as "our special artist."

Soon he came upon a wounded buffalo:

[Munger] had ridden upon as big a bull as ever ran the Plains, stopped him with a series of shots from a Colt's army revolver, and was holding him at bay in a grassy basin, for our artist's especial behoof. He, on his part, did not need three words to show him his opportunity. He leapt from the buggy; out came the materials of success following him, and in a trifle over three minutes from his first halt, the big blue umbrella was pointed and pitched, and he sat under it on his camp-stool, with his color-box on his knees, his brush and palette in hand, and a clean board pinned in the cover of his color-box. Munger's old giant glowered and flashed fire from two great wells of angry brown and red, burning up like a pair of lighted naptha-springs, through a foot-deep environment of shaggy hair. The old fellow had been shot in half a dozen places. He was wounded in the haunch, through the lower ribs, through the lungs, and elsewhere. Still he stood his ground like a Spartacus. He was too much distressed to run with the herd; at every plunge he was easily headed off by a turn of Munger's bridle; he had trampled a circle of twenty feet diameter, in his sallies to get away, yet he would not lie down. From both his nostrils the blood was flowing, mixed with glare and foam. His breath was like a blacksmith's bellows. His great sides heaved laboriously, as if he were breathing with his whole body. I never could be enough of a hunter not to regard this as a distressing sight. . . . Munger, Thompson, and I rode slowly round the bull, attracting his attention by feigned assaults, that our artist might see him in action. As each of us came to a point where the artist saw him sideways, the rider advanced his horse, and menaced the bull with his weapon. The old giant lowered his head till his great beard swept the dust; out of his immense fell of hair his eyes glared fiercer and redder; he drew in his breath with a hollow roar and a painful hiss, and charged madly at the aggressor. A mere twist of the rein threw the splendidly trained horse out of harm's way, and the bull almost went headlong with his unspent impetus. For nearly fifteen minutes, this process was continued, while the artist's hand and eye followed each other at the double-quick over the board. The signs of exhaustion increased with every charge of the bull; the blood streamed faster from wounds and nostrils; yet he showed no signs of surrender, and an almost human devil of impotent revenge looked out of his fiery, unblinking eyeballs.

But our Parrhasius was merciful. As soon as he had transferred the splendid action of the buffalo to his study, he called on us to put an end to the distress, which, for aught else than art's sake, was terrible to see. All of us who had weapons drew up in line, while the artist attracted the bull's attention by a final feigned assault. We aimed right for the heart, and fired. A hat might have covered the chasm which poured blood from his side when our smoke blew away. All the balls had sped home; but the unconquerable would not fall with his side to the foe. He turned himself painfully around on his quivering legs; he stiffened his tail in one last fury; he shook his mighty head, and then, lowering it to the ground, concentrated all the life that lasted in him for a mad onset. He rushed forward at his persecutors with all the elan of his first charges; but strength failed him half way. Ten feet from where we stood, he tumbled to his knees, made heroic efforts to rise again, and came up on one leg; but the death-tremor possessed the other, and with a great panting groan, in which all of brute power and beauty went forth at once, he fell prone on the trampled turf, and a glaze hid the anger of his eyes. Even in death his eyes were wide open on the foe, as he lay grand, like Caesar before Pompey's statue, at the feet of his assassins.

This buffalo may well have found immortality in a painting in the Thomas Gilcrease Institute in Tulsa (opposite).

WHEN BIERSTADT and Ludlow left Comstock's at 11 P.M. on May 30, they traveled without their two friends, who were going to meet them in Denver. Traveling "at the average Overland stage rate of a little over one hundred miles in twenty-four hours," and catching their first glimpse of the mountains outside Fort Kearny, they passed a wagon train of Germans going to Oregon. This event has been immortalized in two nearly identical paintings by Bierstadt (one of which appears on page 26), and in the following words by Ludlow, who had quite an eye for the ladies:

About two o'clock, we passed a very picturesque party of Germans going to Oregon. They had a large herd of cattle and fifty wagons, mostly drawn by oxen, though some of the more prosperous "outfits" were attached to horses or mules. The people themselves represented the better class of Prussian or North German peasantry. A number of strapping teamsters, in gay costumes, appeared like Westphalians. Some of them wore canary shorts and blue pantaloons; with these were intermingled blouses of claret, rich warm brown, and the most vivid red. All the women and children had some positive color about them, if it only ammounted to a knot of ribbons, or the glimpse of a petticoat. I never saw so many bright and comely

*Near Fort Kearney, Bierstadt and his friend Ludlow were charmed by a colorful wagon train of German settlers.* **Emigrants Crossing the Plains,** *completed in 1867, was the result.*

faces in an emigrant train. One real little beauty, who showed the typical German blonde through all her tan, peered out of one great canvas wagon cover, like a baby under the bonnet of the Shaker giantess, and coqueted for a moment with us from a pair of wicked-innocent blue eyes, drawing back, when the driver stared at her, in nicely simulated confusion. . . . Every wagon was a gem of an interior such as no Fleming ever put on canvas, and every group a genre piece for Broughton. The whole picture of the train was such a delight in form, color, and spirit that I could have lingered near it all the way to Kearney.

THE PARTY followed the Platte nearly to Denver, which they apparently reached on June 4. While in Denver, and under the aegis of Evans, the territorial governor, they made side trips. One of these was to the Garden of the Gods, where their hosts were disappointed because Bierstadt was not inspired and did not paint a big picture of the local pride and joy. On another excursion Bierstadt was taken by a guide, William Newton Byers, to the country near Idaho Springs. Here he made studies for what later became *Storm in the Rocky Mountains.* An account of this excursion, written by Byers in 1890, gives interesting sidelights into the artist's working methods as well as his way with trout:

The locality of the present charming little city of Idaho Springs was visited in 1863 by Albert Bierstadt, the greatest of American landscape painters. . . . I was ahead to show the way, the pack animals followed, with Bierstadt behind to prod them up. There was no chance to talk, but plenty of time to think. I knew that at a certain point the trail emerged from the timber, [presenting] all the beauty, the grandeur, the sublimity, and whatever else there might be in sight at the time. . . . Bierstadt emerged leisurely. His enthusiasm was badly dampened, but the moment he caught the view fatigue and hunger

were forgotten. He said nothing, but his face was a picture of intense life and excitement. Taking in the view for a moment, he slid off his mule, glanced quickly to see where the jack was that carried his paint outfit, walked sideways to it and began fumbling at the lash-ropes, all the time keeping his eyes on the scene up the valley. I told him I would get out his things, and proceeded to do so. As he went to work he said, "I must get a study in colors; it will take me fifteen minutes!" He said nothing more. . . . Nothing was said by either of us. At length the sketch was finished to his satisfaction. The glorious scene was fading as he packed up his traps. He asked: "There, was I more than fifteen minutes?" I answered: "Yes, you were at work forty-five minutes by the watch!"

We resumed the march and soon reached the foot of the lake. Bierstadt wanted to cross over the valley and make a sketch from a certain point that he indicated, so I took charge of all the animals and passed up along the north side of the lake to its head and made camp. After getting things in shape I started fishing. I could see plenty of them, but failed to catch any except one small specimen. . . . I walked over to Bierstadt and told him that I had failed to catch any trout and we would have to eat sardines. As we walked across the meadow I showed him the trout in the outlet. He looked at them a little while and admired them of course. Then he said, "I'll see if I can catch some." I laughed at him, and here comes in the fish story at which the reader will laugh, but it is the truest fish story you ever heard or read:

Bierstadt took from his pocket a combination table fork and knife, made for camp use; he detached them, and, taking the fork (which was five or six inches long when opened) in his right hand, dropped down beside the stream on his knee and began fishing. He would put his hand in the water near a fish and move it along gently until he touched the fish, when with a sudden motion he would pin it to the bottom or bank with the fork. It was so easy and certain that after a few captures he put the fork in his pocket and caught them with his naked hand. Sometimes he would touch the fish with the ends of his fingers and rub it back and forth very gently for quite a little time before seizing it. The fish appeared to enjoy the sensation and would lean up against his fingers. I called it "tickling them out of the water." In this way he caught, in a few minutes, I think, eighteen. . . .

Mr. Bierstadt worked industriously during our stay, making many sketches in pencil and studies in oil—these latter in order to get the colors and shade. I caught easily all the fish we could eat, and there was no object in taking more. We climbed to the upper lake, and eventually to the crest of the rim of the upper basin and to Summit Lake, and beyond that to the summit of the highest snowy peak in the group, which Bierstadt named "Mount Rosa," after one of the loftiest summits of the Alps. The return journey to Idaho Springs and thence to Denver was uneventful. Mr. Bierstadt soon went home to New York, and in a little over two years had finished his great picture of "A Storm in the Rocky Mountains."

On June 23, artist and writer left Denver for Salt Lake City, where they arrived late in the evening of the twenty-eighth. They found the city getting ready for the Fourth of July, a celebration they hardly expected to encounter among Brigham Young's followers, who had seceded from the United States. They had breakfast with Young's son-in-law in their hotel and took a swim in Great Salt Lake, where they lay on their backs on, rather than in, the water. Mormon habits constantly shocked them. They met an old friend of Bierstadt's, Dr. Bernhisel, and Ludlow, at least, was moved nearly to violence:

No more overwhelming proof can be offered for Mormonism's degradation of the marriage tie and its extinction of man's chivalric feelings of respect and protection toward woman, than the fact that men of refined, gentlemanly, and scholarly antecedents like Dr. Bernhisel, for instance, can hear one of their own sex talk in public to their sisters, mothers, daughters, and wives, upon the most private subjects in the most blatant way, and not tear him to pieces where he stands.

THEY LEFT Salt Lake City and on the first day out entered "a terrible defile . . . great, black, barren rocks." There were ten rifles in the party, and they were glad to have them: in the middle of the canyon the overland station had been burned and six men murdered. They could still smell the roasting flesh of horses. The Goshoot Indians were responsible for this, Ludlow wrote. By the time they got to Washoe (i.e., Carson City) their "very marrows [had been] almost burned out by sleeplessness." But at "the brink of the glorious Lake Tahoe" their "feet pressed the borders of the Golden State," and they felt "translated into heaven." Continuously along the route Bierstadt had made studies. Upon these, and upon others made in later trips, he drew for the rest of his life.

The two arrived in San Francisco on July 17, where they put up at the Occidental Hotel. They had never seen anything like it "for elegance of appointments, attentiveness of servants or excellence of *cuisine*." Here they were joined for their trip to the Yosemite Valley by Virgil Williams, whom Bierstadt knew in Rome in 1856, and Enoch Wood Perry, with whom he had studied in Dusseldorf. Both of their new companions were well-known local artists. Williams was to paint an interesting account of this trip, showing Bierstadt himself. They also had with them a Dr. John Hewston, "a highly scientific metallurgist and physicist generally." By August 1, they were on their way, and the Stockton newspaper predicted that they would have "a jolly time of it."

Before entering the valley they stopped at Mariposa, where they met Galen Clark, the Yosemite pioneer, whom Bierstadt painted at the base of one of the great trees. Clark gave them "the nicest poached eggs and rashers of bacon, home-made bread and wild-strawberry sweetmeats" in the state.

*The high point of Bierstadt's tour—and inspiration for a number of subsequent paintings—was a seven-week idyll in the Sierra; this detail from* **Camping in the Yosemite** *shows the visitors' campsite near Yosemite Falls and the Merced River.*

Nothing quite equaled for Ludlow his first sight of the Yosemite from Inspiration Point:

That name had appeared pedantic, but we found it only the spontaneous expression of our own feelings on the spot. We did not so much seem to be seeing from that crag of vision a new scene on the old familiar globe as a new heaven and a new earth into which the creative spirit had just been breathed. I hesitate now, as I did then, at the attempt to give my vision utterance. Never were words so beggared for an abridged translation of any Scripture of Nature.

Down in the valley, in a meadow on the Merced River, they pitched their camp, and named it Camp Rosalie, "after a dear absent friend of mine and Bierstadt's." (Ludlow's wife; later the couple was divorced, and in 1866 Rosalie married Albert Bierstadt.) During their stay in Yosemite, Ludlow wrote, "most" of them got up at dawn and took a bath in the ice-cold Merced. Then they breakfasted on flapjacks and coffee—and sometimes game:

Then the artists with their camp-stools and color-boxes, the sages with their goggles, nets, botany-boxes, and bug-holders, the gentlemen of elegant leisure with their naked eyes and a fish-rod or a gun, all rode away whither they listed, firing back Parthian shots of injunction about the dumpling in the grouse-fricassee.

Sitting in their divine workshop, by a little after sunrise our artists began labor in that only method which can ever make a true painter or a living landscape, color-studies on the spot; and though I am not here to speak of their results, I will assert that during their seven weeks' camp in the Valley they learned more and gained greater material for future triumphs than they had gotten in all their lives before at the feet of the greatest masters. . . . At evening, when the artists returned, half an hour was passed in a "private view" of their day's studies; then came another dinner, called a supper; then the tea-kettle was emptied into a pan, and brush-washing with talk and pipes led the rest of the genial way to bed-time.

DETAIL FROM THE ORIGINAL; THE TIMKEN ART GALLERY, PUTNAM FOUNDATION, SAN DIEGO

Soon the camp was moved five miles up the valley to the base of the Yosemite Falls, or "Cho-looke" as it was then called. Here Bierstadt made studies for one of his finest paintings of the valley, and one which is still with us (left). Near one camp on August 21, the artist wrote his name on Register Rock. His name, however, along with many others of interest, were all carefully sandblasted off near the turn of the century by a zealous U.S. Army officer who thought the place needed cleaning up.

AFTER LEAVING the valley and returning to San Francisco, Ludlow and Bierstadt stayed for "more than a fortnight," making various excursions in the Bay Area. But this "lotus-eating life soon palled." They "burned to see the giant Shasta, and grew thirsty for the eternal snows of the Cascade Peaks still farther north." Accordingly, they set out again "one glorious September day," the twenty-fourth, and boarded the boat for Sacramento. Up the river they went, beyond the capital city to Bluffs and the base of Shasta, where they had a delightful visit with a settler from Illinois named Sisson in his two-story ranch in Strawberry Valley. Here they passed "the pleasantest, as distinct from grandest" week of their California stay:

No family whom we encountered lived in such wholesome and homelike luxury as Sisson's. . . . Bless [Mrs. Sisson!] how she could broil things! No man who has not built up his system during a long expedition with brick after brick of pork fried hard in its own ooze . . . can imagine what a blissful bay in the ironbound coast of bad-living Sisson's seemed to us both in fruition and retrospection . . . the great stand-by of our table was venison, roast, broiled, made into pasties, treated with every variety of preparation save an oil-soak in the pagan frying-pan of the country. As for chickens and eggs, it "snewe in Sisson's house" of that sort of "mete and drinke." . . . Cream flowed in upon us like a river; potatoes were stewed in it; it was the base of chicken-sauce; the sirupy baked pears, whose secret Mrs. Sisson had inherited from some dim religious ancestor in the New England past, were drowned in it; and we took a glass of it with magical shiny rusk for nine-o'clock supper, just to oil our joints before we relaxed them in innocent repose. Our rooms were ample, our beds luxurious, our surroundings the grandest within Nature's bestowal.

Onward through Northern California to Oregon they plunged, then Ludlow got pneumonia, and Bierstadt, "the best friend I ever travelled with" nursed him with wet compresses. At the inn where they stayed, they paid sixty dollars for five days' board, as much as they had paid at the Occidental in San Francisco, and received the explanation that it was because the lady of the house had felt for Ludlow "like a mother." Ludlow observed that "maternal tenderness" in Oregon "was a highly estimated virtue." Twenty miles south of Salem they saw "one of the most magnificent views in all earthly scenery." Seven snow-clad peaks were before them in one vista: the Three Sisters, Mount Jefferson, Mount Hood, Mount Adams, and Mount Saint Helens. There was also a dim suggestion of an eighth "colossal mass which might have been Ranier." "No man of enthusiasm," Ludlow wrote, "will wonder that my friend and I clasped each other's hands before it, and thanked God we had lived to this day."

Down the Willamette River to Portland, they put up at the Dennison House, where they were as comfortable as they had been since they left Strawberry Valley. They went up the Willamette to the Columbia as guests of the owners of the steamship line and stayed overnight at Fort Vancouver, where they had a family dinner with General Benjamin Alvord, the commandant. The next morning at seven they boarded the *Wilson G. Hunt* for the trip up the Columbia to The Dalles "and went immediately to breakfast." They steamed up the Columbia, took the six-mile railroad portage at the Columbia Falls to The Dalles, where the accommodations of the Umatilla House waited them, and Ludlow indulged in flirtations of his own in the hotel parlor. The next morning Bierstadt made sketches of Mount Hood from a point of view several miles out of town. Ludlow thought the resulting studio painting better even than *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak,* whose glories they had seen off to Boston just before they left home.

That afternoon they visited a town called Celilo, and from there they went back down the Columbia to Portland to catch the San Francisco steamer, which was scheduled to arrive in Portland in a day or two. But their haste did them little good: when they got back to Portland they were confined in their hotel for a week by drenching rains. They were back in San Francisco by November 14, and spent a busy, happy fortnight there. They were seen off on the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's *Constitution* on November 23 by no less a personage than Thomas Starr King, California's great preacher. They arrived in Panama on December 5, crossed the Isthmus the same day, and were in New York on December 17, 1863.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Albert Bierstadt was born January 7, 1830, in Solingen, Germany; his family immigrated to Massachusetts two years later. Young Bierstadt received most of his art training in Europe during 1853–57. Two western trips, one to the Rockies in 1859 and the other described in this article, in 1863, did much to influence Bierstadt's work, and paintings based on what he saw in the wilderness sold for as much as $25,000. By the time he made a third extended trip through the West in 1871–73, he had become one of America's most acclaimed landscape artists. In later years public tastes changed, however, and his work was not so well received. Bierstadt died in New York on February 18, 1902. A mountain peak in the Rockies preserves his name.

**Gordon Hendricks** *has lectured widely and written numerous articles on American art and photography. He is author of* The Photographs of Thomas Eakins *(1972) and* Origins of the American Film *(1971).*

# The Costliest Sack of Flour Ever Sold

## by William Childress

HE WAS TALL AND SLIM with a curly mop of red hair and piercing blue eyes. Fresh-faced and still in his mid-twenties, he possessed a barbed tongue that was forever getting him into mischief of some sort. A lover of fun and adventure in equal doses, he was profane, sentimental, hot-tempered, and profoundly human. Now, on a hot autumn day filled with the bustle of new riches and newer bankruptcies, he strode across a dusty street in Virginia City, Nevada Territory, and entered a plank-fronted building labeled *The Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*. Behind a scarred walnut desk heaped with papers sat a dark-haired man of medium physique with a sharp gaze.

"You Mr. Goodman?" the visitor inquired.

"The same. You Sam?"

"The same."

"All right Sam. Here's your first assignment—get going."

And so Samuel Langhorne Clemens, the genius known in later years as Mark Twain, began his career as a western newspaperman. It was 1862, and the man who was destined to become America's most celebrated humorist was already embarked on some of the adventures that would fill his first really well-known book, *Roughing It* (1872).

Most of the yarns in *Roughing It* are fictionalized ideas based on a skeleton of actual events. But one episode is indisputably real, although the sardonic redhead stretched the truth now and then for the sake of a chuckle.

And the story of the costliest sack of flour ever sold could only have come from the fabulous Washoe country, where both heroes and scoundrels struggled to reap fortunes in gold and silver from mines like the Gould & Curry, the Comstock, and the fabled Yellow Jacket. Today, only the Yellow Jacket remains in Virginia City, and it is a tumbledown ruin.

But this very mine sparked the remarkable bidding, in May of 1864, on what was then called the Sanitary Sack of Flour, although it was dirty and most unsanitary by the time it got there.

Many years later as an old man, Mark Twain would recall that the tale of the flour sack sold for the Civil War Sanitary Commission was one of his favorite stories. He brought to it some of his best reportorial talents, and more than any other it showed the generosity, warmth, and downright foolishness so pervalent in the western boomtowns of the period.

"Money was wonderfully plenty," Twain wrote of Washoe country in *Roughing It*, his tongue firmly wedged in his cheek. "The trouble was, not how to get it—but how to spend it. . . ."

Happily, news came over the wire that Union sailors and soldiers were languishing in eastern hospitals for lack of proper care. Hurried meetings were held to seek a remedy. "Virginia City rose as one man!" Twain crowed. "The very Chinamen and Indians caught the excitement . . . men plowed their way through the throng and rained checks of gold coin into the cart. . . ."

But the fever soon faded for lack of proper bureaucratic process. Clearly a saner method of collecting for the Sanitary Commission (a Civil War version of the Red Cross) was needed. It fell to a former schoolmate of Twain's, one Reuel C. Gridley, to come up with a method whereby Nevada miners could unload all the gold they wanted.

Gridley—a resident of the mining camp of Austin, one hundred and fifty miles east of Virginia City—had stumbled over the idea of auctioning off a fifty-pound sack of self-rising flour. He already had the flour. It was his penalty, to be carried through town on his shoulder, for losing an election bet. Being sporting in nature, Gridley had ended his mile-and-a-quarter payoff march through Austin (accompanied by a brass band and cheering crowds) by impulsively clambering up on a buckboard and shouting, "What shall we do with the loser's prize?"

"Auction it!" roared the crowd. "Sell it to the highest bidder for the benefit of the Sanitary Fund!"

"I climbed up on the seat and assumed the role of auctioneer," Gridley later wrote. Thus began a chain of events that would immortalize his name throughout the territory.

The winning bid for the sack was two hundred and fifty dollars. But this was nothing compared to what would come. Catching the spirit of the event, the successful bidder gave Gridley his check and hollered, "Sell it again!" By sundown, the Sanitary Sack of Flour had been sold to, and returned by, three hundred people and over eight thousand dollars had been taken in. (These and other figures are quoted from *Roughing It*. Some sources give different estimates.)


MARK TWAIN HOME MUSEUM, HANNIBAL

***Re-creating the election bet payoff that made him famous, Reuel C. Gridley shoulders his fifty-pound sack of "Austin Sanitary Flour."***

The news quickly spread to Virginia City. "Send along your flour-sack!" they wired back. "We'll show you what money is!"

During the first afternoon of bidding at Virginia City, five thousand dollars was contributed, and eager citizens sent telegrams of challenge to the neighboring settlements of Gold Hill, Silver City, and Dayton—Nevada ghost towns now, or nearly so. "The communities were at fever heat and rife for the conflict," wrote Twain. "We descended into Gold Hill with drums beating and colors flying."

"The Yellow Jacket silver-mining company offers a thousand dollars, coin!" shouted the first bidder. A tempest of applause! This was more like it. Gold Hill and its neighbors soon outbid Virginia City, outraging that metropolis. The wagon and its costly sack were instantly fetched back. By the end of two-and-a-half hours of frantic bidding, the Sanitary Sack of Flour had garnered the incredible sum of forty thousand dollars!

Meanwhile, eastern papers had picked up the story, helping Gridley's ballyhoo decades before the advent of modern press-agentry.

"Gridley sold the sack in Carson City and several California towns," wrote Twain. "Then he took it east and sold it in one or two Atlantic cities . . . he finally carried it to St. Louis, where a monster Sanitary Fair was being held, and . . . had the flour baked into small cakes and retailed *them* at high prices."

It was finally estimated that a total of over *one hundred and fifty thousand dollars* had been paid for the fifty-pound sack of flour, greatly benefiting the Sanitary Fund. In those days, the sum was a very large fortune.

Gridley traveled fifteen thousand miles during three months and paid most of the expenses of the journeys out of his own pocket, a large outlay, and donated his time and energy. When he died, his friend Mark Twain wrote his eulogy: "Mr. Gridley was a soldier in the Mexican War and a pioneer Californian. He died at Stockton, California, in December, 1870, greatly regretted."

**William Childress** *is a writer and photographer who lives in Anderson, Missouri. His articles have appeared in nearly fifty national publications, and he is author of two prizewinning collections of poetry,* Lobo *and* Burning the Years.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

*Life in a nineteenth-century apiary: the beekeeper hives a new swarm.*

# Bringing Honey to the Land of Milk and—— *Beekeeping in the Oregon Territory*

*by Catherine Williams*

MANY EARLY EMIGRANTS to the Pacific Northwest were surprised and disappointed to find no honeybees, and it is understandable they would feel disillusioned. Back East their ears had rung with wondrous stories of green and lush landscapes blooming with a profusion of wild honeydew blossoms. The region would have seemed an ideal habitat for these useful insects.

Settlers could have been forewarned by reading Navy Lt. Neil M. Howison's 1847 report on Oregon. Sent out by the government to make "an examination of the coast, harbors, rivers, soil, productions, climate and population of the Territory," Howison arrived in July, 1846, aboard the schooner *Shark* and remained six months. He wrote, "A more lovely country nature has never provided. . . . the natural flora of this country is said, by those acquainted with the subject, to be very rich and extensive. Speaking of flowers reminds me that the honey-bee has not yet been naturalized —a desideratum which every one seems to notice with surprise where the sweet briar and honeysuckle, the clover and wild-grape blossom, 'waste their sweets upon the desert air.' "

The absence of honeybees had been noted by others before Howison. Overton Johnson and William Winter, in their journal *The Migration of 1843,* wrote that "after leaving the waters of the Kanzas [sic] we found no bees, and this, from

all we could learn, is the fartherest point west they have yet reached." Another 1843 emigrant, Thomas Turner Eyre, also made mention of the absence of honeybees. He became a farmer and later was instrumental in starting bee colonies in Oregon.

Going even farther back in time, explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark remarked in the journals of their 1804–06 expedition that the "bees left us at the Osage River."

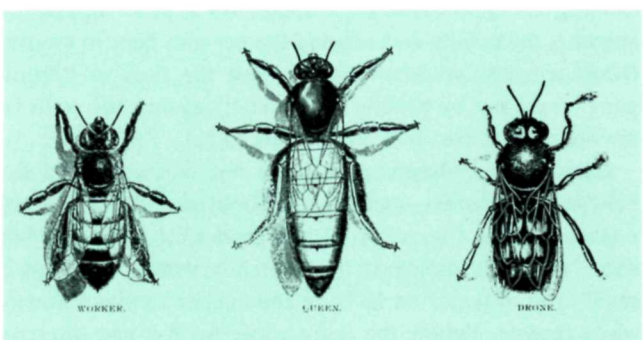
A NATIVE of Europe, Asia Minor, and Africa, the honeybee was brought to the New World by early colonists, possibly first by English settlers to Virginia in 1622. Escaping from their hives and becoming wild, swarms of honeybees gradually advanced westward ahead of the frontier. The Indians took note of this, calling the honeybees the "white man's flies." They dreaded the arrival of the insects in their vicinity for this meant that whites were not far behind and that the Indians would soon have to move on. Washington Irving makes mention of this in his *Tour of the Prairies*: "In proportion as the bee advances, the Indian and the buffalo retire."

Bee pioneer Edward Bevan wrote in 1843 that "a few years ago the hum of a bee had never been heard on the western side of the Alleghany mountains; but . . . a violent hurricane having carried several swarms over that lofty ridge, they found there a new unexhausted country, singularly favourable to their propagation, where they have multiplied, till the whole of those boundless forests and savannahs have been colonized by these indefatigable emigrants."

But in the 1840s and '50s the Far West still remained beyond the reach of this natural migration. Moreover, the high mountain ranges of the continental divide presented an almost insurmountable barrier.

Attempts were made to carry hives across the plains and mountains by covered wagon, however. Lieutenant Howison noted in his report that an emigrant of 1846 via the Applegate route had tried to bring along two hives of bees but had lost them when overtaken by winter before reaching the settlements. This was bad news for the settlers, who valued honey more than we realize today—but it must have been almost a calamity for the emigrant, who had been promised $500 for a hive delivered in good condition.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES




***Worker, queen, and drone bees—an 1890s engraving.***

CULVER PICTURES

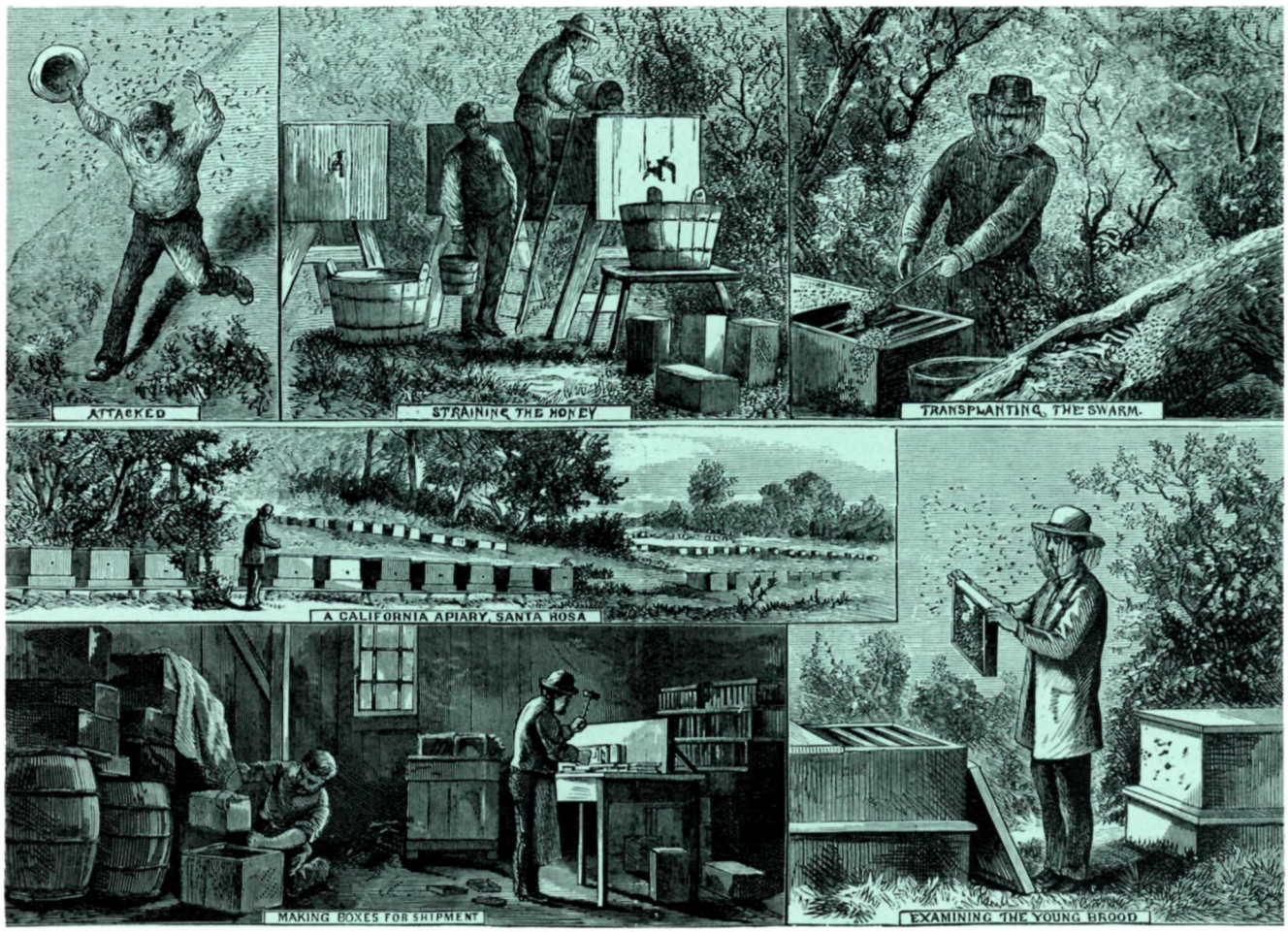
***A young beekeeper tends her "skeps," or straw beehives.***

Honey (or "hoonie" in the Middle Ages), besides making a pleasant sweetener, was thought to have great healing powers. Oregon settlers had certainly used it prior to arriving in the territory, relying on it for liniments, plasters, and many home remedies. A common cure for a sore throat consisted of honey and alum dissolved in sage tea. Colds were treated with a mixture of one-half pint of honey blended with lemon juice and a tablespoon of sweet oil. Beeswax was also used for various purposes, including candlemaking. A useful cold cream was concocted from beeswax, oil of almonds, spermacetti, and rosewater.

For some time it appeared that the residents of the Oregon Territory would have to live without honey as a native product. The general opinion seemed entrenched that honeybees could not survive the Northwest's famous rains. As Charles Stevens wrote to friends in the East in 1853: "There is one thing that I have always wanted to mention, but it has alwais [sic] slip my mind, and if you ever come to Oregon you must not make any calculations on keeping Bees, for they cannot be raised here, the winters are not cold enough to keep them in, they come out of the hive to fly about, and a little shower of rain will catch them and in that way the whole swarm will soon be distroyed."

But the rampant growth of wild clover and wild peas continued to tease the settlers into dreams of honey. Finally, on August 1, 1854, the *Oregon Statesman* triumphantly announced a piece of good news:

BOTH PAGES: CULVER PICTURES




***By the 1880s apiculture had become a full-fledged industry, with an estimated three million hives in the United States. These contemporary views show typical episodes in the daily routine of a West Coast bee ranch.***

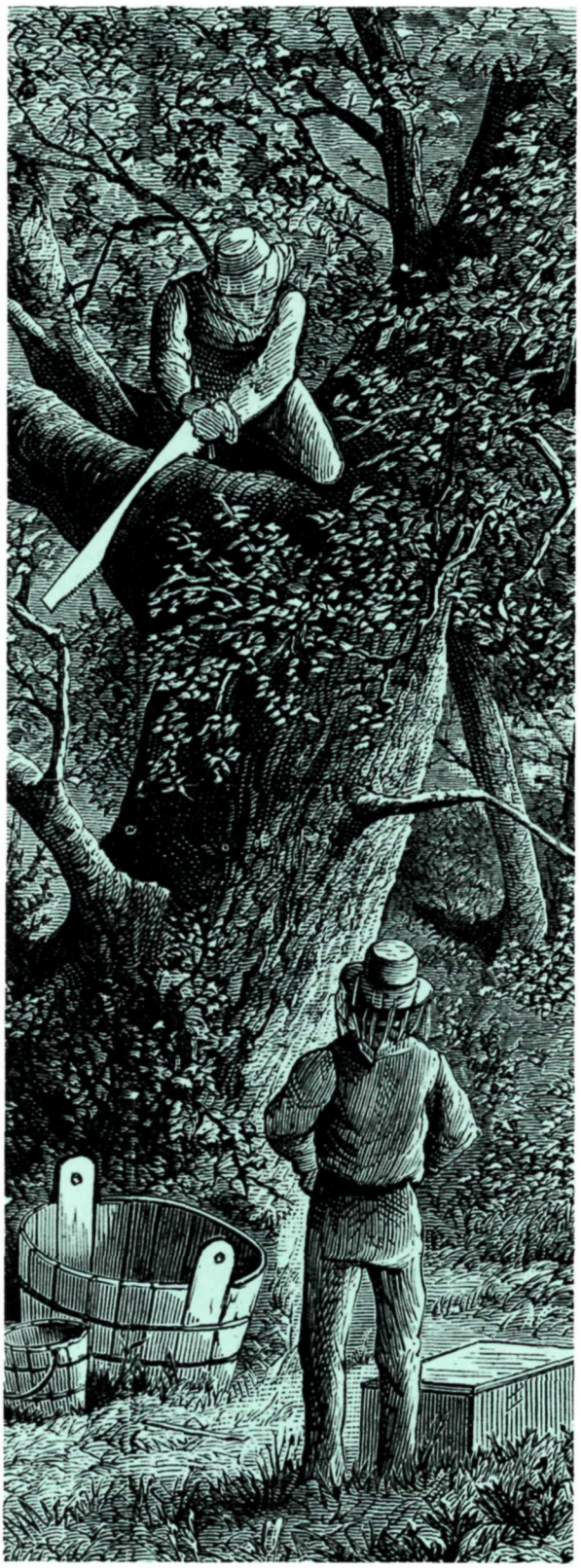
"SOMETHING NEW—John Davenport, Esq., of this county [Marion] has just returned from a visit to the States, and has brought with him a hive of honey bees, an enterprise hitherto supposed impractical. The bees are apparently in good health and not less in numbers than when hived for the journey. The hive in which they were confined is of the ordinary size, three sides being made of wire gauze, the fourth of boards."

This achievement, says Charles Henry Carey in his *History of Oregon*, "was hailed with great joy throughout the territory, since it meant a new and welcome addition to the diet of the pioneers." (It was later reported, though, that this first colony of bees had "not done well.")

Most historical accounts bear out the statement that there were no honeybees native to Oregon, and that no bees survived attempts to import them prior to 1854. There is, however, the story of Tabitha Brown's bee tree, which she was said to have found in 1849. Tiny "Grandma Brown" was an honored Oregon pioneer, founder of an orphanage and school in the Forest Grove area (this later became Pacific University). She told of serving her orphans and school children honey from a bee tree. In later years some of those who had lived with her verified this. There is no doubt, therefore, that Mrs. Brown did find a bee tree, and it can only be assumed that a mistake was made in recalling the actual date of the discovery.

Bee trees did become rather common in Oregon later as swarms escaped from their makeshift hives and "took to the woods." A common folk-formula for robbing such trees was to bang energetically with a spoon on a pan, supposedly angering the colony and causing the nervous bees to swarm. Other schemes involved smoking out the bees or "drumming" them out by beating rhythmically against the walls of the hollow tree (see box on opposite page).

Dean Collins, Oregon poet and a one-time editor for the *Portland Oregonian*—and a man who loved at times to spoof—passed along a secret of his old uncle's for locating a bee tree. "First," he directed, "you catch a worker bee, put a small drop of honey on its back and anchor to that a downy white feather. Follow the fluffy white feather and discover your bee tree!"



## HUNTING WILD BEES

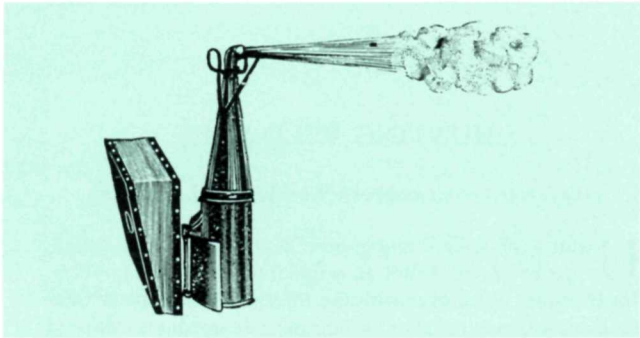
*(Excerpted from* Harper's Weekly, *April 23, 1881)*

UNLIKE the wild "bumble-bee," as it is commonly called, the honey-bee is not an original native of this country. Its ancestors came over with the Pilgrim Fathers from England or Holland, and year by year their descendants followed the course of civilization westward. Restless swarms escaping from the farmers' hives, and failing to respond to the seductive music of tongs and tin pans with which the frantic owners tried to recover them, the fugitives took to the woods, and formed independent colonies in the cavities of decaying trees. These colonies in turn sent out new swarms every year and peopled the forests with wild bees that gradually lost all recollection of the hives of civilization. . . . There were no wild honey-bees west of the Mississippi River previous to 1797, and they did not make their way to the Pacific coast until more than half a century later, when hives of bees were carried thither by settlers. Then, the old story was repeated. Fugitive swarms from the hives escaped into the forests, and wild bees soon became abundant, just as they had spread through the forests of longer settled portions of the country.

The method of hunting wild bees [on the Pacific coast] is the same as in our Western and Southern States. In India, Africa, and the Indian islands the bee-hunter has a serviceable friend and partner in the bird called "the honey guide," a member of the cuckoo family, by which he is unerringly guided to the tree where the wild bees build their nest. The American bee-hunter is compelled to resort to other methods. He carries with him into the woods a box containing a small portion of honey, and perhaps some mints or essences which are attractive to bees. He waits patiently until the bees collect about the box, and when they have gorged themselves with the seductive sweets, watches them keenly as they rise circling in the air. As soon as a bee sees some familiar landmark, it makes a straight line through the air for home, and the line of flight is carefully noted by the hunter. When several bees have flown away in the same direction, the hunter removes his box to another spot, and the same operation is repeated; and the intersection of the lines of flight gives him very nearly the position of the tree in which the wild bees have built their nest.

The hunter now proceeds to find the spot. His hopes may be doomed to disappointment, for the tree may hold a new swarm, and the store of honey may very small. But if the tree should chance to be the abode of an old colony, his venture may be rewarded by a booty of many hundred pounds of wax and honey. After the tree has been cut down, or the limb containing the nest has been sawn off, the bees are driven out by burning straw or grass, and the rich spoil is then removed. If the hunter wishes to remove the whole bee colony to his farm or ranch, he will carefully close the openings through which the bees pass in and out, and transfer them to his apiary, where the bees may be drummed into hives containing honey and brood comb. . . .

BOTH PAGES: STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



*For calming angry bees: the Bingham smoker, c. 1880.*

BEE CULTURE in Oregon developed slowly but surely, as keepers followed the lead of eastern apiarists. For many years after the introduction of the insects to America, beekeeping practices throughout the land were conducted in a haphazard manner. Most early hives were simple backyard affairs, often rolled-up pieces of bark with a solid wood plug at one end and a perforated one at the other, sections of hollow logs ("bee gums"), or containers fashioned from mud or clay. Others, following the traditional European style and called "skeps," resembled inverted baskets and were woven from reeds or straw. Beekeepers removed honey from hives indiscriminately, often killing the colonies in the process or leaving the bees insufficient reserves to survive the winter.

Several developments during the mid–1800s, however, led to improved beekeeping practices. Around 1840 Moses Quimby of New York invented the multi-level wooden box hive which enabled storage space to expand as colonies accumulated honey. A decade later the Rev. L. L. Langstroth refined this system with the introduction of the multiple-frame hive, which facilitated the easy inspection of colonies and provided ideal spacing between honeycombs. Both experts also wrote books on beekeeping that did much to encourage a more scientific approach to the field. In succeeding years the introduction of the bee smoker for controlling bees; the beeswax foundation for building uniform honeycombs; and the centrifugal extractor for efficient harvesting of honey, brought the state of beekeeping up to essentially that practiced today.

It took time for such advances to reach the territory, however, and for many years little was known about the control of diseases. Hives that came to Oregon during the early years were often diseased from foul brood, which caused developing larva to dry and decay, and the colony to die off. There were other diseases which were not understood.

Oregon beekeeper Thomas Eyre, owner of forty-three hives, summarized the progress of Oregon beekeepers in the August 1, 1858 edition of the *Oregon Farmer*. There were now in the Territory, Eyre estimated, a total of 338 hives. (Eyre also reported that to the south, one William Buck of San Jose, California, had been importing bees to that state for several years, having brought in a total of 125 swarms and saving about half. Hives were selling there for $100 each. The first honeybees in California had arrived in March of 1853 from Aspinwall, Panama, having been shipped by sea to San Francisco.)

Farmers in Oregon soon learned such tricks as covering their hives with carpet or matting to protect them from the wind, and tipping the hives forward for drainage during Northwest rains. A notable development they welcomed was the introduction of the Italian strain of honeybees to the United States by the Department of Agriculture in 1860. More resistant to disease than the common black German bees previously cultivated, they were also much more tractable. The trials of handling German bees were graphically described in 1877 by A. I. Root in *The ABC of Bee Culture:*

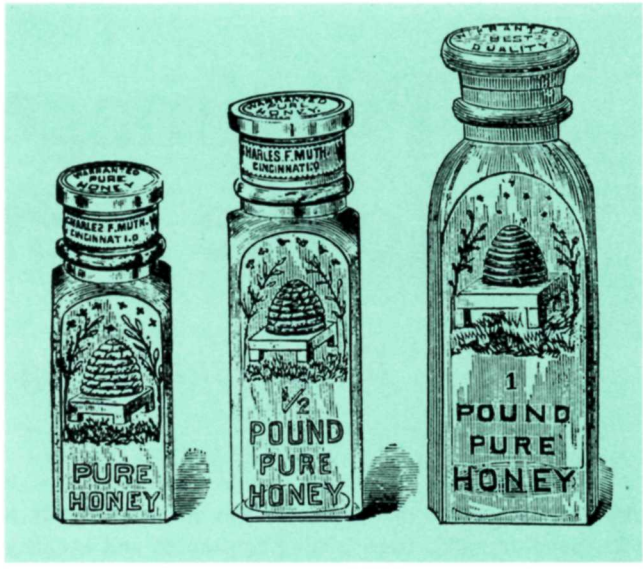
"They [the Germans] are much more nervous [than the Italians]; and when a hive of them is opened they will run like a flock of sheep from one corner of the hive to another, boiling over in confusion, hanging in clusters from one corner of the frame as it is held up, and finally falling off in bunches to the ground, where they continue in their wild scramble in every direction, probably crawling up one's trousers-leg, if the opportunity is afforded. . . . [They] are not as gentle, and worse than all, have a disagreeable fashion of following the apiarist about from hive to hive in a most tantalizing way. This habit of poising on the wing in a threatening manner before one's eyes is extremely annoying, as they will keep it up for a day at a time unless killed. . . ."

By the 1880s much more knowledge was available. *West Shore* came out with a detailed article on beekeeping in Oregon: ". . . we will state as a fact that the honeybee thrives as well and winters very much better than in any other northern state east of the Rocky Mts. Our bees do not freeze to death, and unless allowed to starve will generally come through all right wintered on their summer stands."

The writer considered the southern part of the state much the best for bees and ended with the following tale:

"The Honorable A. J. Dufur speaks of a honey belt east

*For calming anxious beekeepers: the Globe veil, c. 1900.*




***The sweet labor of a thousand bees: honey, c. 1890.***

of Oregon City where bees store honey in the open air on rails, not having room in their hives. He attributed the source of this honey to a honey dew said to fall copiously in that section. I am inclined to the opinion that the greater portion is gathered from the fireweed which is found in that locale and which is known to yield honey in great abundance. Branches from the trees and bushes have been known to be coated with a sweet substance resembling honey, the source of which is unknown unless it be a veritable honey dew falling like manna from the heavens. With advantages like these there would seem to be enough inducement to tempt the practical beekeeper to Oregon and with his advent and a fair trial, the production of honey may yet become one of the important industries of Oregon."

Bees bestowed on a small logging community one of the most unique names in Oregon history. Apiary was so named for a thriving bee ranch in the area, owned by David Dorsey, the first postmaster. Beautiful pink fireweed grew abundantly in the burned-off acres of this logging community. Dorsey's bees feasted on it and produced a choice honey that was considered a great delicacy in the marketplace. The settlement existed from 1889 until 1924; today a few houses and a schoolhouse remain.

THE INDUSTRY grew as predicted. By 1921 sixty carloads of honey were being produced annually on Oregon farms. By 1972 there were 64,000 colonies in the state with an annual yield of 2,560,000 pounds of honey.

But this was a decline from previous years. A problem had appeared which has plagued apiarists around the country, and which still remains unsolved. Chemical sprays are the devils in the bee patch. According to LaVerne Boylan, president of the Oregon Beekeepers' Association, one apiarist lost 1,100 colonies to poison in 1972; many others reported heavy losses. Irving Mann, State Director of Agriculture, said: "It is no secret that fully a quarter of Oregon's registered hives [in 1972] were rendered inoperable because of spray poison used in fields to control other insects and weeds."

After DDT was finally banned because of its ecological hazards, scientists discovered that the substitutes Sevin, Parathion, and Guthion were even more deadly to bees. Other effective, nontoxic controls are still being sought.

Yet another danger—an exotic enemy from below the southern horizon—threatens Oregon and other American honeybees. Vicious Brazilian bees are swarming northward by the millions at a rate of up to two hundred miles per year, destroying domesticated colonies in their path.

Developed accidentally during the late 1950s and early 1960s when Brazilian apiarists imported bees from Africa, the Brazilian honeybees are a cross between domesticated strains and an aggressive African breed. They are fierce, exceptionally nervous, sting at the least provocation, and are devoted to wandering en mass. Their only virtue is that they are big producers of honey, working long and hard, even in light rains or after dark.

In a report released jointly by the National Research Council and the National Academy of Sciences in 1972, it was estimated that these bees had already taken over an area ranging from Argentina's temperate pampas to the Amazon's tropical forests. Their preferred flight is always northward. In a few more years, unless a defense is worked out, they will reach the United States.

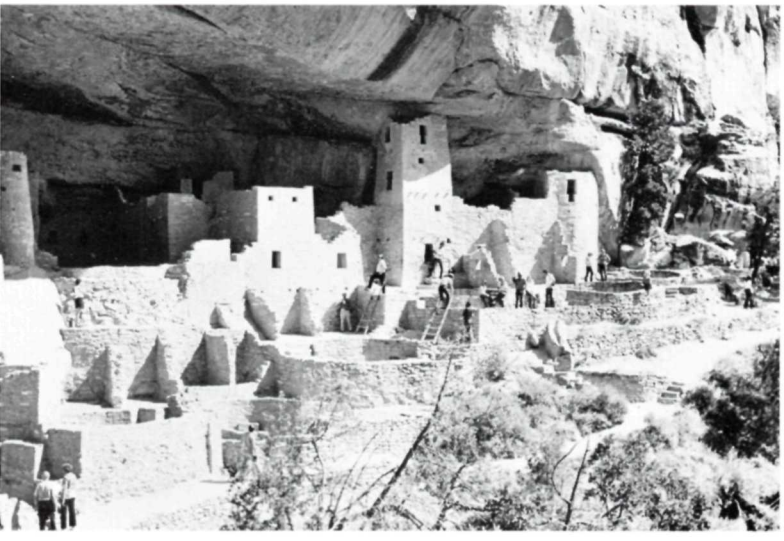
In a *New Yorker* interview, Dr. Jerome Rozen, Jr., deputy research director at the Museum of Natural History, tells of testing Brazilian bees for frequency of stings. Field team members dangled a one-inch-square of soft leather before a hive. In just five seconds the leather picked up ninety-two stings. Fifty are sufficient to kill a man. When a member of Dr. Rozen's committee became alarmed and walked away, the bees followed him for three-quarters of a mile.

Dr. Rozen's proposal for blocking the advance of the Brazilian bees is to create a natural bottleneck in Central America by developing a new strain equal to the Brazilians but with their bad traits bred out.

It has been 120 years since John Davenport succeeded in bringing the first beehive to the Oregon Territory, causing jubilation among the settlers. Recently Oregon's Governor Tom McCall, bemoaning the state's rapid growth rate (twice that of California) said, "Oregon, the Queen Bee that she is, is not ready for the swarm." It is true that Oregon is not ready for more humans. But she loves her "hoonie" and welcomes the bee swarms so hard to come by in pioneer days.

**Catherine Williams** *is a retired librarian and a free-lance writer specializing in Oregon history.*

*Tour leader anthropologist Michael Sullivan, Hans Sumpf, and Dr. Ken Stratton board our bus.*



*Under the watchful eye of a Mesa Verde park ranger, we explored the majestic ruins of Cliff Palace.*

*Dr. Joe Brazie and Carla Bard climb the last ladders on the trail up from Cliff Palace.*

BOTH PAGES: PATRICIA KOLLINGS

# Pilgrimage to the Past

## *by Patricia Kollings*

IT IS NOT OFTEN that an editor has the opportunity to spend an entire week getting acquainted and exchanging ideas with a group of his or her readers. It must be much rarer still that these readers turn out to be every bit as congenial, intelligent, well-informed, and enthusiastic as our most extravagant editorial fantasies have pictured them. Place this encounter against the scenic Colorado Plateau, amid the mystery of prehistoric ruins and the fascination of present-day Indian cultures that still maintain their own elusive aura, and you have some idea of my experience on the first American West Anasazi Tour.

The eight-day tour (last September 8 through 15) had its beginnings in the growing interest among our staff as we worked with David Muench's glorious photographs for *ANASAZI: Ancient People of the Rock,* published by American West last May. Don Pike's informative text only whetted our appetites for more knowledge. If we felt so impelled to return to the ruins, would our readers perhaps want to go too?

It soon became clear that they did—*you* did. A short description of the tour on a back page of THE AMERICAN WEST and a simple quick flyer enclosed with mail-ordered copies of ANASAZI quickly brought far more reservation requests than we could accommodate. On the premise that our readers would find much in common and enjoy a chance to get acquainted personally, the group was kept small—thirty-five participants.

As the tour members drifted in one, two, maybe four at a time, to rendezvous at the Airport Marina Hotel in Albuquerque, that premise seemed increasingly right. Oh, there was plenty of diversity. Participants came from all over the country—New York to California, Minnesota to Texas, with a generous sampling of points between. Ages ranged from thirty to seventy-eight. By occupation, men and women in the group included five physicians, two psychologists, two librarians, a mushroom farmer, a dentist, an adobe brick manufacturer, an attorney, and one young man who (too modestly, I suspect) listed himself as "laborer."

# The editor who helped create *Anasazi: Ancient People of the Rock* shares her experiences on our first American West Tour

*As we sat in the ancient kiva of Casa Rinconada, guide Elizabeth Miner talked of Chaco's mysteries.*

By the time Sunday lunch was over, the group had already closed ranks to give tour leader Michael Sullivan some good-natured ribbing. That camaraderie was sustained throughout the trip.

And so the week began. Before it was over, we would have visited parts of three states and most of the important archaeological sites in the Four Corners region of the Southwest—Bandelier, Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, Aztec, Canyon de Chelly, and Wupatki. We would see pit houses, peer into cave dwellings, wander in awe through the vast "apartments" of Casa Bonita, pick our way over paths strewn with ancient pottery shards, sit quietly in a sacred kiva conjuring ghosts of the medicine men and masked dancers who once moved in its smoky twilight. We would visit a number of museums, too, and view some of the finest artifacts of these cultures that have been unearthed. And we would be fortunate to find a welcome waiting at two historic Indian pueblos—the old Hopi village of Walpi on First Mesa and the "Sky City" of Acoma, which may be the oldest continuously occupied community in the United States (Old Oraibi on Third Mesa also vies for that honor).

*Author Frank Waters, shown here with co-leader Natalie Pattison, was our guest in Santa Fe.*

As we settled into the seats of our chartered, air-conditioned bus, the driver picked up the microphone and announced, "Hello, folks. Welcome aboard. Now for my first joke—my name is Claude Hopper." It was! And from that moment Claude was one of the group.

The microphone proved to be a handy tool throughout the tour. From time to time Mick Sullivan, a professor of anthropology when he isn't leading tours, would lecture on the culture of a site we were about to visit. So did co-leader Natalie Pattison, also an anthropologist but currently involved with the archaeological work being coordinated by the Chaco Center in Albuquerque.

We at American West already knew that the trip would be in good hands with two such knowledgeable and personable leaders. What we didn't know was the rich sources of related expertise we would find among the group's participants. Leon

*Continued on page 59*

***Our pilgrimage ended among the Anasazis' cultural heirs in the picturesque "Sky City" of Acoma.***

# In Search of the Simple Life

## *A young western family says good-bye to high-pressure, consumption-oriented living and seeks a new life-style in harmony with nature and self*

by David Cavagnaro

*In the spring of 1971 David and Maggie Cavagnaro moved into a century-old farmhouse on the coast north of San Francisco and began new roles as resident biologists and teachers at the Audubon Canyon Ranch. For the Cavagnaros this move symbolized more than a simple change of residence: it was the first deliberate step toward a whole new way of living. On this and the following pages, David shares some of the experiences and insights that he, Maggie, and their little son Pippin have found in a quest for the best from two worlds—a life close to the land and nature without sacrificing the scientific, educational, and artistic work they love.*

OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS of hiking, exploring, and sharing as a family our feelings and the joys of discovery at Audubon Canyon Ranch, we have begun to know this small piece of coastal California. We have become acquainted with events of the seasons, familiar with many plants and animals that live near us, and aware, above all, of the peace and spiritual fulfillment we have gained from our natural surroundings.

Thus we have spent our free moments, but the search for a means of living that does not violate the principles, the beauty, and the spirit of this world has occupied most of our time. For a number of years a deepening concern had been welling up within us over the materialistic, highly consumptive, often environmentally destructive way of life that has gradually gained dominance in every industrial country of the world. Somewhere in the course of our dissatisfaction arose a memory of something my father had once said many years before. He had expressed the belief that a person makes his greatest contribution to the world through the way in which he leads his life. Gradually our environmental concerns began no longer to appear as someone else's responsibility alone. We, too, were part of the unbalanced flock, plundering the planet in the very innocence of living itself.

A single powerful desire took form within us: to do in actuality what for most Americans had become only a nostalgic memory—to restore a sense of joy, meaning, spiritual satisfaction, and ecological balance to the act of daily living.

The concern behind our frustration and desire for change was intellectual. But the conscious side of man floats like a thin film over a vast, dark inner flow, seldom explored and little understood. It is the realm of the unconscious that gives foundation to our feelings and life to our spirits. It is the unconscious that emerges from the far, dim past of our species and speaks to us of our heritage. It was primarily this mysterious force within us that drove us back toward the simple life.

Long before we were consciously aware of it, our unconscious had been shaping our responses. This was the source of our uneasiness over a hectic way of life. This was the source of the satisfaction and joy we felt when we cooked a good meal or put in a hard day working the soil in our little garden and tending the plants for our table.

It was not until we moved to the Ranch, however, and began the task of sustaining ourselves primarily through our own direct efforts that this ancient calling surfaced. Only when the job became a daily affair did the unconscious begin to reveal its true hold upon us, for such is the power of our age-old link with the land.

WE HAD CHOSEN our garden plot at the Ranch carefully so that it would receive maximum sunlight, be reasonably close to the house, yet not encroach upon significant wild places that we knew would prove valuable as teaching areas. We had also planned the garden so that it would be adjacent to a rocky slope where goats could be housed with-

*This article is adapted from material in* Almost Home *by Maggie and David Cavagnaro, to be released by the American West Publishing Company on March 31.*

***After much searching, we moved to Audubon Canyon Ranch, a wildlife sanctuary near the Pacific. From the century-old farmhouse we can hear the distant sounds of seagulls and surf.***



DAVID CAVAGNARO

*Establishing a garden where none had been before was at first like stark pioneering, but after much hard though satisfying labor the rich earth began to yield fresh produce.*

out becoming winter-mired in mud. Through this proximity garden discards could be efficiently fed to the animals and manure piled to compost close to the plots that would later receive it.

This plan left only the most important matter of soil to consider. The floor of the entire valley had been built from coarse alluvium washed out of the canyon. The soil everywhere was therefore laced with gravel, but in the proposed area it was also deep and rich from years of use as a livestock holding area when the canyon last functioned as a subsistence farm. We concluded that we must take the blessing of good soil along with the curse of rocks.

Building a shed and pen for the goats were the first jobs on the agenda. A friend came to help, and we set to work, first on a double shed and then on the pen itself, separated down the middle by a fence, one side for Snowballs and the other for Sunflower. Neither of us had constructed anything much beyond shelving before. No corners met quite on the perpendicular, and none of the fence posts remained fully vertical as we stretched the fence wire, but no words could describe our feeling of accomplishment.

More friends and members of the family came another day to help with the deer fence around the garden. Once the selected area was enclosed, I started in on the soil. The first turning was made with a heavy-duty tiller, for the bunch grasses were tough and the river rocks more numerous than we had anticipated.

The tilling completed, I began to work the soil by hand, prying stone after stone from the tangled grass roots. I was alone now in the canyon. The wind moaned through the fence wire. Its mournful sound stirred visions of the lonely prairie in my imagination. Nature had firmly reclaimed this

BOTH PAGES: DAVID CAVAGNARO

place where once a farm had been, and the tasks before us seemed like stark pioneering. From this rocky soil we would take our sustenance.

The first few plots were planted immediately after we moved to the Ranch so that we would have a steady supply of homegrown food while Maggie nursed our son Pippin during his first year of life. Maggie joined me in the garden, and plot by plot, the soil was carefully prepared. To save hauling, the tons upon tons of rock we removed from the soil were placed as pavement upon the paths, and thus the curse became, with immense effort, another blessing.

IT TOOK US TWO YEARS to complete the garden and a third to extend it. Sustenance did begin to flow from the rocky soil in plenty. This sustenance, however, was made possible by one single basic ingredient: consistent, hard, often back-breaking work. I remembered a number of community gardens we had watched spring up near our former place of residence. Groups of young people had banded together in some vacant lot or spare field with the intention of growing wholesome, clean, sweet country food. They scratched some seeds into the ground, dashed a bit of water on them now and then, and sat back waiting, talking philosophy on the fence rails. They got a few stunted radishes and the inevitable zucchini, but usually by the second season the fields lay fallow, save some very healthy weeds. No, it takes a great deal more than philosophy to start a garden.

During the first spring and summer we spent long days together among the plots, shucking rocks from the soil, weeding, watering, and nurturing the crops we had planted. From his very first days, Pippin joined us, cuddled peacefully among the squash vines while the sun shone down upon him and the leaves rustled in the coastal breeze.

Laced with organic matter and lots of manure, the newly worked soil responded in kind to our labors. Out of one tiny patch in which Maggie had planted potatoes, she dug 160 pounds of tubers. The largest single head of broccoli weighed five pounds. We had tomatoes weighing a pound and a quarter, ten-pound cabbages and cauliflowers, seven-pound rutabagas, and sweet Italian red onions that *averaged* a pound apiece! One small paper bag of Jerusalem artichoke tubers multiplied to fill a heavy-duty garden wheelbarrow twice. We did not go hungry, nor did our friends and neighbors.

By midsummer plots vacated by early crops were filled with plantings for the winter. As the days grew shorter and rains and frosts returned, we feasted upon a continuous supply of root crops, greens, and other morsels from the garden, blending them with winter squash, potatoes, onions, and other items we had placed in storage.

Gaining confidence and experience, we soon fell into a pattern of seasonal crop rotation that involved forty basic kinds of vegetables and no less than one hundred twenty different varieties.

***To know the source of one's sustenance and to share in the labor of its production are components of our age-old link with the soil. This, we decided, must be part of the heritage we provided for our son.***

CONCERNING PESTS, our experience gave us far more cause for concern. During the first summer we had very few insect problems. We attributed this fact to the garden's wilderness setting. Surrounded by a reasonably balanced natural ecosystem, we reasoned, the garden would be kept fairly free of pest species by a diversity of parasites and predators. On the other hand, we anticipated more problems with the larger wildlife than we had experienced in former gardens we had tended in town.

We did have the deer fence, which proved essential, but we had little defense against a flock of thirty-two quail, numerous other birds that came to eat the seedlings and berries, and raccoons and foxes that made nocturnal raids once in a while in search of tasty morsels. After all, we were living in a wildlife sanctuary, and in any case, we were not inclined toward the killing of wildlife. Instead, we learned the seasonal habits of these animals, timed our plantings as best we could to avoid the most damage, and otherwise either protected the crops from them or planted enough to share.

Gophers, moles, deer mice, and meadow mice, however, did so much damage in the garden that we were obliged to control them or give up on many crops entirely. In a sense this policy was only an attempt to maintain the natural balance in an otherwise artificial setting. Protected from usually shy predators by their proximity to human activity and surrounded by an abundance of food not found in the surrounding wilderness, the rodents rapidly increased in numbers beyond the normal density. We ourselves, therefore, had to substitute for the predators that were largely kept back from the valley by our very presence.

These problems we expected, but the difficulties we were to have with insects took us by surprise after our successes the first year. By the time the second spring and summer rolled around, a host of rather disagreeable companions began to appear in the garden. Leaves were chewed by caterpillars, cucumber beetles, earwigs, snails, and slugs. A new crop of baby slugs in the spring wiped out our entire stand of Chinese cabbage, and every radish, carrot, and cauliflower succumbed as the roots were consumed by fly larvae and millipedes. Soil flatworms and sow bugs took most of the strawberries as they ripened, and cucumber beetle larvae ate the roots of many squash seedlings.

The initial plowing of the garden had destroyed many of the potentially harmful soil creatures, and the insects had not yet discovered the rich bounty, so our first-year crops had been pest-free. It took a full season for their numbers to increase from the population a wild area could support to one that could only be sustained by the exotic domesticates of man.

Our original thesis still held some validity, however. A host of parasites and predators did invade the garden and began their work among the munching, sucking, burrowing

***A basket filled with mushrooms picked from beneath the ancient oaks speaks to us of the native Americans who once camped beneath these trees and reminds us of the foraging heritage which is common to all mankind.***

*Unique in man is the ability to see plants not simply as food but also as aggregations of form, color, and texture which evoke in the spirit a sense of beauty. The thrill of the harvest comes from more than our basic need to eat.*

hordes. We had birds, lacewings, ladybird beetles, spiders, caterpillar parasites, syrphid fly larvae, soldier beetles, and aphid wasps in abundance by the second year. Native plant-eaters were held in check by these indigenous parasites and predators. Only the introduced pests that had remained in the canyon since the early farming days presented a major threat to our own sustenance.

Because of their dangerous effects upon human health and wildlife, we refused to use any chemical means of pest control. Instead, we gradually developed a variety of new cultivation techniques and physical means of control, which began to show promising results. The most important changes, however, took place in our own attitude. We found that we no longer worried about a certain percentage of loss in the garden, because, even with the loss of a crop or two, there was always more than enough to share. We had learned enough from the natural world to realize that the simple laws of population control could work for us in the garden if only we were patient enough to allow them expression in their own time. Holes in leaves or roots, or aphids in the broccoli indicated to us only that natural laws were being observed rather than violated.

AT ANY RATE, these periodic surprises at meal-time could not possibly detract from the pleasure of cooking and eating the garden-fresh produce we had tenderly nurtured from seed to harvest. Maggie had learned certain basics about cooking as a child, and since both my father and mother are talented and creative in the kitchen, I was attracted to the art of cooking long before I left home. By the time we moved to the Ranch, Maggie and I had established a satisfactory rhythm of creative cooking, based in part on the things we grew in our small gardens.

But now we had a much larger area under cultivation. With a vast, year-round assortment of fruits and vegetables,

*Maggie has learned to spin wool and shares the meaning and joy of this skill with students and friends who visit us in the canyon.*

milk from the goats, and our own supply of meat on the way, our immediately available resources had considerably increased. Cooking and gardening continued to be enterprises shared between us, but since I had assumed more of the responsibility for growing the food, Maggie took on a larger share of cooking it.

Above all that we have learned so far in our experience of living close to the land, the transformation of a handful of seeds into delicious meals, simply and quickly prepared, has emerged as the greatest miracle and most joyful enterprise. The distance in quality between store-bought produce and vegetables picked fresh from the garden only moments before cooking is too vast for words to describe. The satisfaction of eating seasonally brought an even more remarkable change in our attitude toward food. Fresh corn and tomatoes in winter or celeriac in the summer were now not out of the question. Frozen or processed foods no longer found their way to our table, and we no longer relied upon the extravagance of off-season crops from Florida or the Coachella Valley. Since we had not found time to build a fox- and raccoon-proof chicken house, we still purchased eggs, and once in a while during the wintertime we brought a crate of oranges from town. Excepting these items and staples such as honey, salt, flour, dried beans, and grain, we relied upon what we had.

This reliance on the products of our own labor in our own climate had a profound effect upon our cooking. By choice we denied ourselves the luxury of unseasonal fruits

and vegetables beyond our own larder. It therefore became nearly impossible to use most cookbooks literally. We could not work backward from recipes to an all-season supermarket produce counter but had to work forward from the garden and pantry themselves. Neither of us had ever relied much on recipes, but now we found that our cooking was becoming even more spontaneous. A few minutes before dinner, we simply went out to the garden, picked what struck our immediate taste or what most needed harvesting, and combined these ingredients with whatever eggs, meat, cheese, staples, or leftovers happened to be on hand. The event of synthesis was always an inspiration and an adventure; dinner usually took only a few minutes to prepare, and the results were seldom anything but superb.

This tradition we adopted and this we continue, not as a chore but as a joyous part of our daily life. We crave the thrill of harvest, the sweet aromas of preparing the food, and the satisfaction of making do with what we have. We have found also that, by eating seasonally, our appreciation of foods has increased. By the time fresh corn is ripe on the stalks or the first vine-ripe tomatoes are ready to pick, months of anticipation renders them even more delicious than they would otherwise be. When apple season, pear season, or persimmon season finally arrives, these fruits seem like the most delectable productions the world has ever known. Maggie commented one day that, at age thirty, she could remember only about twenty-five times in her whole life when she had tasted the first peach of the season or the first apricot. These are rare and precious moments, and they have been all but obliterated by modern marketing techniques.

SO PRECIOUS had been our space and our time the first season that we had not planted flowers. A portion of the garden remained as yet unworked, and both Maggie and I had been eyeing it for future use. We both agreed that we must have some flowers and that we also must have some berry vines. It was only again a matter of relative space. A compromise was reached, and some of both were planted.

Maggie's flowers were indeed a feast for the eye (Pippin's first word for them was "wowers"), but since I was more concerned about a feast for the stomach, I occasionally grumbled about the space they were removing from gastronomic productivity. Then one day Maggie devised so clever a scheme for justifying their presence in the garden that I had to relent. She simply ordered two hive boxes and the honeybees to fill them.

First the hives arrived at the post office, and Maggie assembled and located them. They were soon followed by the bees themselves, three pounds (or 10,000 bees) and a queen for each hive, and once again the postmaster cheerfully

*Continued on page 60*

***With colors brewed from plants gathered from hills and garden, Maggie dyes the yarn she has spun and has thus come another step closer to a basic way of life.***

**A Matter of Opinion**

# Arise, Ye Custer Fans!

DETAIL FROM "CUSTER'S LAST FIGHT" BY ELK EBER; CUSTER BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT

IN AN ARTICLE published in a national magazine a few years ago when white pro-Indian sentiment was reaching its height, illustrious author and historian Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., called for the destruction of the "false idols" of the American West, starting with the most "outstanding" of all, George Armstrong Custer. While the emotionalism typical of the era in which the Josephy article appeared has since died down, we are still reaping the residue.

One such casualty appears to be the removal of Custer's name from the area of his most well-known exploit, the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The National Park Service—ever conscious of social and political trends—has, in the name of objectivity, determined in its future planning to change the name of the Custer Battlefield National Monument to Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

While I agree that the argument of objectivity has merit, it pales beside the stamp the Custer personality placed on the battle.

First, no other person from the early American West, white or red, commands the attention that George Custer has received. Right or wrong, he was the personification of the Indian fighter. Even the fame of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse comes primarily from the fact that they led the opposition. Whether you like the man or not (and I happen to be one who does) is immaterial. Both supporters and detractors of Custer can present strong arguments to support their viewpoints (and these usually say more about the individual making the judgment than any revelation concerning Custer himself). But however we perceive Custer, his character and personality demand our attention: contemporaries could not remain indifferent to him and neither has history.

Secondly, and most relevant here, the Battle of the Little Bighorn was Custer's battle from start to finish—the direct following of the Indian trail despite General Terry's "druthers" to the contrary, the forced march the night before the battle in his anxiety to locate and close with the enemy, and the rushed slinging attack with a divided command in the face of known strength for fear the opposition would escape. While I agree with Robert Utley in his book, *Frontier Regulars,* that it was primarily the skill and aggressiveness of the Sioux and Cheyenne warriors that won the battle rather than any failure by the army officers, still it was Custer who initiated the attack in the manner in which it was executed. The Indians merely responded to it as it came. Even given the known situation at the time of the battle and despite the fact that cavalry leaders were reared to aggressiveness, it is my opinion that no other army officer would have initiated the battle as Custer did. Custer was faced with a situation which by character and personality he could not escape. To him attack and victory were synonymous. He would have attacked the Indian village had it contained fifty Indians or fifty thousand. Not only was Custer responsible for the manner in which the battle was executed, but the manner of his death was the perfect expression of his life. Death at the Little Bighorn assured for Custer even after death the limelight he had sought while living.

So before the National Park Service makes any name changes it had better take a long hard look at the Battle of the Little Bighorn to determine just who that battle belongs to. I believe if the Park Service is honest it will find that the battle belongs to George Custer in name as well as fact.

Randall T. Kane
*Ames, Iowa*

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A MATTER OF OPINION *is provided as an open forum. Contributions from our readers are invited, but should be limited to 750 words and must be signed.*

# George Armstrong Custer: Five New Books

REVIEWED BY JAY MONAGHAN

**The Two Battles of the Little Big Horn** edited by John M. Carroll *(Liveright, New York, 1974; 214 pp., intro., appen., index, $35.00, slip-cased).*

**The Benteen–Goldin Letters on Custer and His Last Battle** edited by John M. Carroll *(Liveright, New York, 1974; 312 pp., intro., index, $35.00, slip-cased).*

**Curse Not His Curls** by Robert J. Ege with an introduction by Lawrence A. Frost and illustrations by Lorence Bjorklund *(Old Army, Fort Collins, Colo., 1974; 152 pp., map, muster roll, $8.50).*

**Peter Thompson's Narrative of the Little Bighorn Campaign 1876** edited by Daniel O. Magnussen *(Arthur H. Clark, Glendale, Calif., 1974; 339 pp., illus., maps, biblio., appens., notes, index, $22.50).*

**Custer's Prelude to Glory: A Newspaper Accounting of Custer's 1874 Expedition to the Black Hills** edited by Herbert Krause and Gary D. Olson with photographs by W. H. Illingworth *(Brevet, Sioux Falls, S.D., 1974; 279 pp., illus., maps, appen., notes, index, epilogue, $14.95 cloth; $7.95 paper).*

WHY DOES GEORGE CUSTER continue to fascinate so many writers? His famous Last Stand on the Little Bighorn was not the worst defeat in Indian-fighting history. Less than half his men were killed, yet Francis Dade in the Seminole War, J. L. Grattan in 1854, and W. J. Fetterman in 1866 lost their entire commands. While Republican President Ulysses Grant blamed the disaster on Democrat Custer's rashness, Democratic politicians blamed Grant's corrupt Indian administration. The partisan press and a popular book by Frederick Whittaker charged that Custer's squadron commanders, Maj. Marcus Reno and Capt. Frederick Benteen, had disobeyed his orders and abandoned him because they knew he was out of favor with Grant. This resulted in a military investigation that continued long after the 1876 election. Two critical points were—and still are—at issue: (1) Did Custer, for personal glory, disobey an order and attack a superior force of Indians instead of waiting to cooperate with other regiments? (2) Did Custer lose the battle because Reno and Benteen disobeyed his orders?

GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER, C. 1865

These questions caused many soldiers and ex-soldiers to "sound off." Custer had numerous enemies. He became a brigadier general during the Civil War at the age of twenty-three. This elevated him above dozens of older officers who later were eager to disparage him as an unworthy commander. Most Custer complaints cite his disobedience of the order in question. This order has been preserved, and a casual reader would say that Custer did not disobey it. The wording may be construed two ways, however. One of Custer's military critics printed a revised version to make it conform to his interpretation. Others maintain that the original order was amended verbally after Custer received it.

Custer's orders to Reno and Benteen have not been questioned, but were they militarily possible to obey? Heated allegations on the above-mentioned points continued throughout the 1880s. Those who supported Custer were helped in 1885, when his widow wrote *Boots and Saddles: Or Life in Dakota with General Custer.* This book was an immediate success, selling 22,000 copies. She followed it in 1889 with *Tenting on the Plains: Or General Custer in Kansas and Texas* and in 1890 with *Following the Guidon.* In spite of the adverse allegations against Custer, these books gave him enduring fame, and Anheuser-Busch began to immortalize him graphically in saloons by presenting to customers 150,000 pictures of Custer's Last Stand. This rising tide of interest in Custer culminated in 1892 with an article by Gen. Edward S. Godfrey in *Century Magazine* that discredited Reno's part in the battle and remains today as a basic element in all studies of the Little Bighorn.

*The Two Battles of the Little Big Horn,* edited by John M. Carroll, contains a revised reprint of the *Century* article. In addition, Carroll accuses Reno of proposing, on the first night of the battle, an escape in the dark, leaving the wounded behind. The editor gives other documentation of this incident and explains why Godfrey—a lieutenant in Benteen's squadron—probably omitted it in his account. The second battle described in this book is Gen. Charles F. Roe's account of the same fight. He accuses Custer of disobeying the famous order and not waiting to join his column for the engagement. This contradicts others who say there was no such plan. General Roe digresses constantly to describe acts of Custer, Reno, and Benteen which he could have known only by hearsay. He did ride over the battlefield where Custer had been killed, and he says that he

found the general and nine others lying behind horses they had killed for breastworks.

The volume entitled *Benteen–Goldin Letters on Custer in His Last Battle,* also edited by Carroll, contains extensive correspondence antagonistic to Custer. These letters must be analyzed thoughtfully for an understanding of the bitterness that has perpetuated Custer literature. Theodore Goldin participated in the battle, was discharged without honor for falsifying his age, and in 1904 became chairman of the Republican Central Committee in Wisconsin. For five years he exchanged intimate letters with Benteen, letters that will charm any reader interested in their characters.

Serious students of the Little Bighorn will find all the important details in this and Carroll's previously mentioned volume. It seems safe to say these two books include the most extensive collection of source material on Custer that can ever be published.

Robert Ege, in *Curse Not His Curls,* summarizes the Indian situation prior to Custer's Last Stand. Lawless goldseekers, he notes, were bound to ignore treaties and trespass on the Indians' land, while young red men were equally bound to seek white scalps. In the military campaign to police them, Reno had hoped to lead the Seventh Cavalry, and Ege suggests that he and Benteen, both elder than Custer, may have resented being outranked. Ege quotes contemporary detractions made by Reno's subordinates and says that the witnesses in the Court of Inquiry on Reno's acts in battle may have hesitated to testify against a superior officer. He also asserts that the civilian packers' derogatory statements were not heeded.

Ege has drawn maps and taken photographs of the battlefield to illustrate his book. Excellent sketches by Lorence Bjorklund are also included. In addition, the author prints a troop-by-troop muster of Custer's regiment on the day of the Last Stand, and he gives information not available elsewhere concerning some of the seventy-odd individuals who claimed to be the only survivors of the battle. Most were impostors but Ege believes that one of them was genuine. Yet every alleged

CUSTER IN 1868

survivor's periodic appearance made a newspaper headline that helped to sustain interest in Custer.

The three books considered above are what might be called "pro-Custer." The next two are definitely "anti-Custer." A difference of opinion is said to be responsible for perpetuating horse races; this seems also to be true for Custer books. *Peter Thompson's Narrative of the Little Bighorn Campaign: 1876* edited by Daniel O. Magnussen is, as the title page tells us, "a critical analysis of an eyewitness account of the Custer debacle." Thompson was a private in a troop wiped out during the Last Stand. Fortunately for him, his horse became lame and dropped from the column before the fight. His narrative was first published serially in a North Dakota newspaper during 1913–14. Although an eyewitness, he added many incidents he must have heard or read about but could not have seen. His memory, after thirty-seven years, also played the usual tricks of faulty observation, and Magnussen devotes the entire volume to commenting on and exposing Thompson's errors. These notes are much longer than Thompson's entire narrative. Indeed, Thompson serves as a whipping boy for a carefully documented history of the battle by Magnussen. Well researched and thoughtfully written, this book should be read by everyone interested in that engagement. The editor knows the battlefield intimately, having served for two summers as seasonal ranger at Custer National Monument. He illustrates the book with his own photographs and with a splendidly informative map.

Magnussen's positions in the two cardinal arguments that persist in all Custer books are especially interesting. He tells us that Custer for selfish reasons "did, in fact, wilfully disobey the orders of his direct superior" by attacking the Indians when his written order specified only that "the Department Commander places too much confidence in your zeal, energy, and ability to wish to impose upon you precise orders that might hamper your action when nearly in contact with the enemy." For most nonmilitary readers, Custer's discovery of a fresh Indian trail would put him "nearly in contact with the enemy," but the editor tells us that these orders are "couched in the peculiar vernacular" understood by military personnel. Therefore Custer—a military man—disobeyed what he knew this order told him to do.

The second cardinal point in these arguments concerns Reno's failure to obey Custer's order at the opening of the battle, and Magnussen believes that Custer erred in this case also. He sent the order to Reno verbally, telling him to attack and "he would be supported by the whole outfit." Then, instead of following him, Custer circled away to strike the enemy on the flank, a maneuver that Reno must have known Custer used continually during the Civil War. However, the editor maintains that "support" should come from the rear. Here again is a possible difference in word meaning.

Magnussen repeatedly reminds us of Reno's concern for his wounded. This reviewer hoped but failed to find a refutation of the statement in Carroll's book concerning Reno's plan to abandon the wounded and escape in the dark. An account of that alleged plan has been in print since 1926, but Magnussen may have missed it. He does not specifically dispute Ege's statement that military men hesitated to testify against a superior in the Court of Inquiry. Instead, he says that "there would not have been any reason for officers to have withheld criticism. . . . That was their 'golden opportunity.' " The court, he maintains, did not ignore the civilian packers' testimony but felt it was contradicted by

the officers' more laudatory statements. Throughout the book Magnussen defends Reno at the expense of Custer and deplores efforts of other writers to "crucify" him—a punishment that has immortalized the more prominent of the two individuals.

The second of the anti-Custer books under review is entitled *Custer's Prelude to Glory*. Edited by Herbert Krause and Gary Olson, this handsome work contains splendid reproductions of the Illingworth wet-plate photographs of Custer's Black Hills expedition. The accompanying captions reveal valuable research. The Black Hills were recognized by treaty as exclusive Indian territory, but lawless gold-seekers were organizing to invade them irregardless, and Gen. Philip Sheridan ordered Custer to explore the area in 1874.

Krause and Olson's book is a reprint of six conflicting reports from eastern and western newspapers. Such objective coverage is certainly commendable, but the editors' introduction contains personal opinions not supported by the journals quoted. They assume that Custer's reports of the beauties of the Black Hills were designed to encourage white men to take them from the Indians, perhaps as an "entering wedge of a larger ambition" of his own. They ignore Custer's statement that his army is under orders to prevent such trespass until Congress rules differently. Krause and Olson also interpret Custer's report of "lignite of good quality" as a hint of the presence of other metals, including gold. Under a picture of Custer, they call attention to the "cocksureness" in his eyes. This reviewer learned during his army service that charges may be preferred against a man for what he says or does, never for the expression on his face, the tone of his voice, or what someone believes he thinks.

CUSTER IN 1876

Emotional opinions, however, have from the beginning incited emotional responses that have kept Custer in contemporary literature. Certainly these five books provide all the ammunition necessary for a continuance of this interesting confrontation.

**Jay Monaghan** *is consultant for the Wyles Collection of Western Americana in the library of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Editor of* The Book of the American West, *he has written a biography of Custer and seven other volumes concerning the West.*

**Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence** by Vine Deloria, Jr. *(Delta, New York, 1974; 263 pp., $2.95 paper; Delacorte cloth edition, $8.95).*

REVIEWED BY CLYDE D. DOLLAR

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR, the purpose of this book is "to present as fully as possible the background of ideas within which the declaration of independence of an Indian tribe would make sense." In the book's twelve chapters, however, the author and his associates conjure up a "background of ideas" in which very little makes sense, much less an Indian declaration of independence.

The book opens with the historical events that gave rise to this past decade's Indian militant activities. Following this is a chronicle of those events, beginning with the Northwest coastal "fish-in" confrontations through the Alcatraz invasion, the Trail of Broken Treaties takeover of the B.I.A. building in Washington, and up to the "Independent Oglala Sioux Nation" proclaimed from within the embattled village of Wounded Knee.

Deloria next turns to an examination of the historical background for the "doctrine of discovery" and applies its legal implications to the settlement of America. Then, after examining at length the mechanics of treaty-making and the "dependent domestic nation" versus "foreign nation" legal concepts of the nineteenth century, he concludes that modern Indian tribes are in fact sovereign. To prove his conclusion's practicality, Deloria compares the population, land areas, and economics of Indians with the world's other small nations. Conceding that the major flaw is the source of the new Indian nation's funds, he suggests that the federal government (which spent $582 million on Indians in 1973) should increase this to a sum that would "be a formally negotiated part of any sovereignty agreement." And finally, backtracking through the history of various Indian conferences, congresses, and commissions, he circuitously implies that these bodies actually were the forerunners of a new treaty-making relationship with the modern federal government, which once established, would ensure future Indian well-being.

The value of the book lies in its Indian militant thought as expressed by an articulate moderate member of that camp. Unfortunately, Deloria's position is undermined by his basic premise that all white men are responsible for all Indian problems. Further, chances of mature consideration being given his work are eroded by the self-serving and simplistic nature of his conclusions. And finally, his clipped prose, while readable, is unrelieved by wisdom-fostered humor, contrived in its arguments, and conveys little that is new in his search to find reasons for an Indian declaration of independence.

Of most concern to this reviewer is Deloria's shallow and not-overly-burdened-with-accuracy history of Indian-white relations. For all his Indianness—and all his degrees in theology and law—the author of *Broken Treaties* is about as accurate in his Indian history as a carpenter writing on brain surgery. Having lived with the persistent myth of the white man as devil in the American West, Deloria apparently now believes it. Accordingly, *Broken Treaties,* instead of containing new insights and fresh thoughts, only contributes to the already massive ego trip in racial self-pity in which most Indian authors and writers on Indians currently indulge.

**Clyde D. Dollar** *is a research historian specializing in the history of the American West who is working on an advanced degree at the University of Arkansas.*

**Colonel Greene and the Copper Skyrocket** by C. L. Sonnichsen *(University of Arizona, Tucson, 1974; 325 pp., illus., map, biblio., notes, index, postscript, $9.50 cloth, $4.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY DAVID J. WEBER

IN A GENEROUSLY ILLUSTRATED text based upon meticulous research, C. L. Sonnichsen relates the rapid rise and decline of the self-styled "Col." William C. Greene.

Reared in New York, Greene left home at seventeen to make his fortune. By 1877 he had reached Arizona, where he tried his hand at mining and prospecting before settling down to farm on the San Pedro near the Mexico border. In 1899, at forty-six, Greene's acquisition of copper mines across the border at Cananea, combined with an ability to charm eastern investors, brought him enormous wealth and power.

In an engaging and lucid style, Sonnichsen focuses on the years 1899 to 1907, when Greene rode the "copper skyrocket" and acquired vast grazing and timberlands. These years saw Greene shuttle between New York and Mexico, moving in high financial circles on Wall Street, and personally supervising his Sonora mines. By 1908, his health broken, Greene had lost control of his copper and timber operations; he devoted the last five years of life to his cattle empire.

Greene has won a place in the historiography of the Mexican Revolution because his Cananea mines were the scene of a bloody strike in 1906 that foretold troubles to come. Mexican historians have pictured Greene as an unscrupulous exploiter. Many American writers have seen him as an incompetent, violent, debauched con artist. Greene emerges as an honest, constructive promoter and developer in Sonnichsen's revisionist view—a convincing demonstration that much of what has been written about Greene is nonsense. Yet, since some questions remain only partially answered, Sonnichsen's book promises to provoke controversy.

**David J. Weber,** *who teaches southwestern history at San Diego State University, is author of* The Taos Trappers *and* Foreigners in Their Native Land: Historical Roots of the Mexican-Americans.

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**Planet Steward: Journal of a Wildlife Sanctuary** by Stephen Levine with drawings by Armando Busick *(Unity Press, Santa Cruz, Calif., 1974; 230 pp., maps, $9.95 cloth; $4.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY JANE E. HARTMAN

A PLANET STEWARD is a person "working in tune with nature," not to poison or to pollute, but to listen to the land and to care for all the life it holds. Stephen Levine had the opportunity to do this for a year at Canelo Hills Cienega, a preserve in southern Arizona owned by the Nature Conservancy.

Levine shares his experiences in this journal. His many warm descriptions of the area and its creatures—including Fyodor, a pack rat, and the "whimsical" roadrunner—are delightful.

The author points out that the land reflects the consciousness of the beings who live upon it. Whites, who usurped the area from the red men, showed no reverence for the land. This is still true and the land is dying. Mechanical Caterpillars are replacing the failing cattle industry and ensuring the continued deterioration of the once lush grasslands as they carve out "cattlelike housing developments."

The "trigger-finger mind," that has "a fear of the wild"—the mentality that "built" the West—is exemplified by the Santa Cruz County livestock inspector and the hordes of gunners who abound during Arizona's many hunting seasons. One is determined to exterminate "those damn critters [skunk, raccoon, fox, rat, etc.] who tried to eat him out of house and home," while the others present a constant threat to wildlife protection attempts.

Although, at times, the author's prose is heavily poetic and includes references to Eastern religious philosophy that may bog down the average reader, his book carries an important message, his desire that all humankind *must* achieve a harmonious relationship with Mother Earth.

**Jane E. Hartman** *is a writer, teacher, and student of ecology. She is author of* The Original Americans *and has contributed to* National Wildlife, Down East, *and* Defenders of Wildlife News.

**Conversations with Frederick Manfred** moderated by John R. Milton with a foreword by Wallace Stegner *(University of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1974; 170 pp., illus., $5.00).*

REVIEWED BY RICHARD W. ETULAIN

FREDERICK MANFRED'S artistic accomplishments and his nearly seven-foot height make him an imposing man. Manfred is a writer of extraordinary variety and energy (nearly twenty books). Best known for his novels *Lord Grizzly, Riders of Judgment,* and *Conquering Horse,* he is also an able spokesman for the dilemmas that confront serious western writers.

The present book is a series of thirteen videotaped conversations between Manfred and John R. Milton, a leading interpreter of the American literary West. Recorded in 1964, the talks center on Manfred's little-known Frisian backgrounds, his youth, and his career as a western writer. Manfred speaks at length about experiences that determined his career and about people and occurrences that have been incorporated in his books.

In a brief but penetrating introduction Wallace Stegner corrals and puts the right brands on Manfred. At times Manfred the man does seem larger than life, and his best works are epiclike "rumes" that deal with primitive life. Stegner also is correct in evaluating Manfred as a first-rate storyteller; it is the drive of his narratives (more than the depth or breadth of his characterizations) that give power and catharsis to his fiction.

Readers unacquainted with Manfred's writings will have difficulty following some of the comments. Perhaps there are also too many anti-eastern comments. But Stegner's brilliant introduction, Milton's probing questions, and Manfred's rambling, gusty, opinionated, and revealing answers add up to a significant aid in understanding the career of one of the West's important writers.

**Richard W. Etulain,** *a professor of history at Idaho State University, has authored over one hundred reviews and articles. He is preparing a book on Jack London and a guide to western American literature.*

**Sioux Trail** by John Upton Terrell *(McGraw-Hill, New York, 1974; 213 pp., biblio., index, $7.95).*

REVIEWED BY DEE F. GREEN

THE SIOUAN LINGUISTIC FAMILY in early historic times stretched in a great arc from lower central Canada through the upper and middle Great Plains, and then east to the Carolina coast. John Terrell set himself the most remarkable task of compressing the Indian history of this vast area into a mere 197 pages of text. The task is accomplished by quartering the area: (1) eastern, (2) southern, (3) midwestern prairies and Great Plains, and (4) northern woodlands and Great Plains.

Any summary of the vast knowledge available from archaeology, ethnology, and linguistics is bound to suffer from lack of detail and some bias in materials selected, yet the author has done a creditable job. A list of modern place names with Siouan origins is provided at the end of each chapter. A real weakness in the volume, given its geographical emphasis, is the lack of maps or other illustrations.

The lifeways of various Siouan groups also are discussed in word sketches that focus on a single topic, such as economics, religion, kinship, or warfare. It results in a bits-and-pieces approach but serves well the purpose of whetting the appetite for more information. A well-selected bibliography provides both primary and secondary resources for additional reading.

The author's attempts in the first chapter, and occasionally in others, to identify the Sioux with archaeological remains is interesting but becomes very speculative when he tries to push back to the Archaic and in one instance even to the Paleo-Indian period. The vagaries of Indian population movements, both in prehistoric and historic times, have created a situation fraught with complications for identifying modern tribal groups with their ancestors, except in the most recent and obvious prehistory.

Terrell is an accomplished writer, and the volume can be consumed quickly as his style is lucid and flowing. This reviewer found the author's use of two-to-five paragraph chapters dealing with the eastern Sioux both annoying and wasteful of space, however, and would have preferred the combining of groups into a single chapter as in Part Five. The text also has a pronounced anti-white bias that occasionally gets out of control, as with his diatribe against South Carolina in Part Two.

The book probably will not be of much interest to scholars and students. Few references (only authors) are given as authorities in the text, even when passages are quoted direct. The volume is designed for the general lay reader. It will give him a good summary of the Sioux but with an emphasis on geographical movement and custom, rather than as an explanation of their behavior and adaptation to various social and physical environments.

**Dee F. Green** *is regional archaeologist with the U.S. Forest Service, southwestern region. His anthropological research and writing cover the Midwest, Southwest, and Mexico.*

## *Forthcoming in* THE AMERICAN WEST

America had pioneered in the field of aviation; yet lack of funds caused it to rank only fourteenth in worldwide air power in 1916. In **Fluttering After Villa,** K. C. Tessendorf recalls the Mexican mishaps of the U.S. Army's air arm that led Congress to increase its appropriations. A campaign of a different sort saw success in 1912, when women received the right to vote in Oregon. The story of the woman whose decisive perception saw the need to separate the suffrage issue from that of prohibition is told by Elizabeth F. Chittenden in **Ballots or Booze: Abigail Scott Duniway.** Also: Phillip Drennon Thomas relates impressions of emigration by rail in 1879 in **Traveling West with Robert Louis Stevenson.**

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David Roderick, M.A., naturalist, educator, photographer, director of Nature Expeditions International. *(Spring)*

Michael Sullivan, Ph.D., professor of anthropology, DeAnza College, Cupertino, California. *(Fall)*

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Exploring the fantastic landscapes of the Utah/Arizona canyon country by bus, jeep, boat, raft, and helicopter, with an eye to understanding the natural history, ecology, and anthropology of the region: Bryce, Zion, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, Glen Canyon and Lake Powell, Grand Canyon.

*Optional:* Two-day mule trip to Phantom Ranch on the floor of Grand Canyon, September 6-7; return to Las Vegas September 8.

*Departure point:* Las Vegas.

*Leaders:* Reid Macdonald, Ph.D., paleontologist, geologist, naturalist.

Lauri Macdonald, M.A., paleontologist, naturalist.

*Eight days, seven nights—lodging;* meals, transportation during tour, and all special fees, including excursions on Lake Powell and the Colorado River.* $635
*Optional mule trip to Grand Canyon floor, two days, one night.* *add $195*

*Package price based on double accommodations; single, $8.00 per day extra.

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ANASAZI TOUR Spring: May 31-June 8, 1975 ☐
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I want to go! Enclosed is my deposit of $100 per person to guarantee my reservation—refundable (less $25 handling fee) until 60 days prior to departure. Send me all information. ☐

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# BOOKS IN BRIEF

By Ed Holm

**Panoramic Maps of Anglo-American Cities: A Checklist of Maps in the Collections of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division** compiled by John R. Hebert *(Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1974; 118 pp., illus., intro., notes, index, $2.20, paper).*

In the days before aerial photography, carefully drawn panoramic maps—also known as "bird's-eye views"—were the most popular means of portraying American cities and towns, finding use as real estate promotion items, as visible expressions of civic pride, and as wall hangings in Victorian homes. This catalog lists more than 1,100 such maps in the Library of Congress and includes a brief history of the unique and now virtually lost art form.

**The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado** by Robert Adams *(University of Colorado, Boulder, 1974; 237 pp., illus., map, biblio., $10.00).*

A tasteful photographic survey of Hispanic buildings and associated religious art on the late Colorado frontier.

**The Francis Drake Controversy: His California Anchorage, June 17–July 23, 1579** edited by Marilyn Ziebarth *(A special issue of the* California Historical Quarterly; *California Historical Society, San Francisco, Fall 1974 issue; 108 pp., illus., maps, appen., biblio., $3.50, paper).*

Midway in his monumental voyage around the world, English navigator Francis Drake on June 17, 1579, piloted his *Golden Hinde* into a "faire and good Baye" somewhere on the northern California coast. During a thirty-six-day stay there, Drake and his crew built a fort, repaired their ship, visited Indians and the surrounding countryside, and posted a brass plate claiming the lands of "New Albion" for their queen. Because Drake's charts and logs from this voyage have been lost to history, the exact spot of his anchorage remains in dispute. In recent years speculation as to this location has grown into the most heated historical controversy in the West, with partisans making claims for each of three possible landing sites, including one in north San Francisco Bay and others in Bolinas Bay and Drakes Bay to the west. Until some definitive new discovery is made it is unlikely the matter will be settled, but this fascinating special issue of the *California Historical Quarterly* does an admirable job of clarifying the issues by presenting, in the form of a debate, the major arguments for and against each of the three schools of thought.

**The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages, A.D. 1492–1616** by Samuel Eliot Morison *(Oxford University, New York, 1974; 758 pp., illus., maps, biblio., notes, index, $17.50).*

The culmination of a lifetime of study by the distinguished maritime historian, this thick volume presents what may be the definitive account of the voyages of Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand Magellan, and Francis Drake. Morison's exhaustive research included personally retracing many of the explorers' routes. Unafraid of stirring up controversy, he calls the famous "Drake Plate of Brass" (found near San Francisco Bay in 1936) a "college prankster's hoax."

**Robes of White Shell and Sunrise: Personal Decorative Arts of the Native American** by Richard Conn *(Denver Art Museum, Denver, 1974; 152 pp., illus., biblio., $8.00, paper).*

Catalog for the largest exhibition of its kind, currently showing at the Denver Art Museum, this volume provides an interesting, comprehensive survey of traditional American Indian body decoration and clothing arts. In addition to ten color plates and nearly one hundred black-and-white illustrations of representative items and styles, it contains informative shaded drawings showing the basic patterns employed by Indians in making fitted leather coats, parkas, shirts, and moccasins.

## PILGRIMAGE TO THE PAST

*(Continued from page 39)*

Birely, a petroleum geologist from Midland, Texas, often took the mike to explain the volcanic landscape of a caldera or the sedimentary deposits of an ancient sea as they passed by the windows of our bus. Allan Voigt, a physician and public health director from Sacramento, California, shared his extensive knowledge of plant life and a variety of other subjects. Joe Brazie, a pediatrician from Denver, taught us much about Navajo weaving, a subject he knows not only from books but from actually pursuing the art on an upright Navajo-style loom he built himself.

Joe, as wit laureate of the group, shared other information that was somewhat less reliable. Take, for example, his earnest explanation, as we passed the tollbooth at the entrance to Mesa Verde: "Some of you may be wondering why there is a tollbooth at Mesa Verde whereas there was none at Chaco Canyon. The explanation is simple: Chaco is an older culture, and they hadn't invented the tollbooth yet!"

One of the unquestioned highlights of the trip was our evening with the eminent Southwest writer Frank Waters in Santa Fe. In informal after-dinner conversation, he ranged over many facets of Southwest Indian life and contemporary Indian dilemmas. Few white men have the personal understanding of the subject that he has, and surely few have the personal warmth, simplicity, and charm that endeared him to all of us that evening.

Another unforgettable hour was spent with Clarion Cochran of the National Park Service at Aztec. An interesting site under any circumstances, Aztec took on special meaning because of Clarion's own contagious enthusiasm for archaeology and his willingness to share his speculations (carefully labeled as such) about what life might have been like for the Anasazi, and what some of the puzzling finds might mean. Clarion had had occasion to think a lot about these questions in the past several months as he took part in a Park Service study of southwestern pictographs and petroglyphs.

Incidentally, these writings on the rock were a constant source of fascination to our "tourists." And they were to be found at most of the sites we visited. Among the most interesting were those at Canyon de Chelly, where both prehistoric Anasazi petroglyphs and colorful Navajo pictographs from Kit Carson's day could be photographed on a single slide.

Cameras were busy all week. The Southwest landscape itself offers marvelous color, landforms, and cloud formations. And the ruins let each of us feel for a little while that he was another David Muench. A little special planning made it possible for us to catch the early morning light on the red ruins of Wupatki and the last long rays of the sun illuminating Spider Rock at Canyon de Chelly.

The trip was so personally enjoyable for me that I've had some trouble appraising it objectively. But as this is being written, most of the participants have sent us their comments on the experience. They, too, seem to have had a wonderful time. Allan Voigt wrote:

"Almost a week has passed since completing the Anasazi tour—enough time to see things in perspective. My warmest thanks to all of you who participated in the planning and execution of this very successful venture.

"To many of us this was a pilgrimage of sorts—to see the roots of pre-Columbian civilization in the Southwest. Though we had seen many of the areas before, it was never in a coordinated fashion and never supported as an educational experience by so many scientific disciplines—professional and amateur alike! For others it was an introduction to a new world which will continue to gnaw at them and cause them to return and return again."

More than half of those who have written us have requested a second, "advanced" tour, several adding that they hoped it would be, among other good things, a reunion with the tour members whose company they had enjoyed so much. Leo Etzkorn of Sun City, Arizona, seemed to express the feelings of a number of the participants when he wrote: "In our estimation, it would be difficult to assemble a more congenial, more intelligent, more interested group, representing all parts of our vast land. We met as strangers, we departed as true friends. We would like to go anywhere, anytime with this same group of congenial friends. . . . Is it too sentimental for us to say that we are lonesome for all of you? If you planned another trip tomorrow, Helen and I would be the first to sign up!"

Reassured by that kind of warm response, American West is indeed planning more tours, both to Anasazi-land and to other places that we feel will be of particular interest to our readers. They are announced elsewhere in this issue.

**Patricia Kollings** *is editor of books for the American West Publishing Company.*

### A Note to Our Readers

This issue of THE AMERICAN WEST is 3/8 inch narrower than previous issues and begins a new size for the magazine. The paper shortage has necessitated some changes on the part of paper mills in order to eliminate waste—one result being the withdrawal from production of paper in the wider rolls previously used for our publication. The mailing envelope has also been redesigned to accommodate this new format. We will continue to provide you with the best magazine possible within the guidelines of ecological and economic feasibility.

## IN SEARCH OF THE SIMPLE LIFE

*(Continued from page 47)*

cooperated with our peculiar postal traffic. The bees immediately went to work building combs and gathering nectar and pollen among Maggie's flowers.

She studied their activities carefully, noting which varieties they preferred and identifying by color the pollen they were taking back to the hives. This information she added to our garden records so that the following year she would know which flowers to emphasize in her plots for the benefit of the bees. Once the colonies were established, we went together to inspect the hives. I operated the smoker while Maggie worked among the comb frames. We were amazed to discover beautiful patterns of color showing through the backs of the partially filled frames, colors representing the many different kinds of pollen that by chance were added first to the bottom of each cell.

The bees, and to a certain extent the goats, have taught us that trial and error alone is not always sufficient in learning a new skill, and it is certainly not necessarily the most efficient way to approach the task at hand. Beekeeping is a highly refined science, and goat-raising has a longer history than that of almost any other domesticated animal. We soon discovered the power of the printed word in conveying the collective wisdom of the past as it relates to these practical skills.

We began to assemble a library of useful books, and the reading we did concerning bees and goats was invaluable. But the books did not stop with these subjects. Maggie had for some time been interested in edible native plants, and she had already developed some excellent uses for those with which we were familiar. Still, the books she found were most helpful. She made cobblers, pies, and jam from wild blackberries, elderberries, and huckleberries; jelly from manzanita berries; tea from madrone bark, yerba buena, and the spring shoots of Douglas fir; bread from the rhizomes of cattails and cookies from their golden pollen; pickles from bull kelp; salads from watercress, wild mustard flowers, and miner's lettuce. She found a dozen ways to incorporate the vitamin-rich stinging nettle into our meals, and as she learned a few easily identified mushrooms, they too became a frequent ingredient in our food. (We had been careful to supplement our book-learning with the advice of old-timers, and their experience gave us confidence in distinguishing the edible varieties of mushrooms from their numerous, confusing poisonous cousins.)

We found a new level of satisfaction in the wild harvest, one that emerged from an even older stage of human evolution than agriculture. We felt an intensified kinship with the Miwok Indians, who must also have eaten these foods in this very canyon before they met their well-known fate at the hands of our own race. The gathering of acorns in the fall has become for us a minor pilgrimage, as it was for the Indians of California on a far larger and more important scale. It is when we gather mushrooms, however, that the bounty of the land seems to affect us most deeply. There is something in the rich, earthy smell of a basketful of chantrelles or oyster and honey mushrooms that awakens our ancient connections with the wilderness from whose embrace man wandered long ago upon the first planting of a seed.

Through her interest in Indian lore and edible plants, Maggie also became intrigued with the idea of spinning her own yarn and dyeing it with colors brewed from native plants, and once again more informative books were added to our library. It was not long before a spinning wheel occupied the middle of the living room, and in the evening Maggie spun by the hour as we talked, while Pippin stood close by in fascination. Many plants were brewed, and beautiful earth colors penetrated the wool yarn she had spun. Soon decorative weavings, useful caps, and a puffy handcrafted frog for Pippin had been completed during the spare moments of evening.

To the many colors of dyed sheep wool, she added the neatly spun underfur she had combed from the goats as well as the combings from the dogs of many friends. I have a warm feeling when I think of the many animals that have given their fur for the wool cap I wear, the care of their owners in combing and saving it for us, and the time Maggie spent spinning, dyeing, and knitting the final product. In what store-bought cap could one find that kind of legacy?

SUMMERS ON OUR SMALL FARM are busy times. Long evenings are spent in the garden watering, staking or trellising vines, mulching, weeding, and harvesting. It is mostly during the early hours of morning, however, when fog hangs low over the lagoon and the kitchen is cool, that we do our annual fruit canning.

Since the damp coastal climate precludes large-scale drying of fruit, our winter stores must be preserved in jars. Canning fruit is not a new enterprise with us. Maggie learned it from me, I learned from my mother, and she from her mother. As far back as memory takes me, I have known the sweet summer smell of fruit boiling on the stove and the loud popping of lids as the jars seal.

The only fruit trees that remain around the ranch house are five gnarled apple trees, a winter pear, which blooms like a thundercloud in the spring, and three English walnut trees. Each fall, unless the squirrels discover them first, we shake about eighty pounds of walnuts and dry them in the house by the stove. We make full use of the apples and pears, but some fifteen other trees we have added to the orchard are still too young to bear. All the rest of our fruit we scrounge from friends.

Canning season begins with the cherry plums. They are followed by other plum varieties, peaches, apricots, pears, and finally apples. We have always made canning a joint venture. If friends or relatives visit on canning days, they, too, are put to work with knife and pot. By sharing the work and using the time for visiting and exchanging ideas, canning becomes not a solitary chore but a pleasant pastime. We do a bit at a time, and our satisfaction grows as the bounteous harvest accumulates and the pantry shelves fill.

We began in a small way, doing a few jars here and a little there as time allowed. Piece by piece our facility grew, and as we settled into a routine of increased efficiency, we gained more time to devote to winter stores. Maggie collected pickle recipes, and with cucumbers, cauliflowers, onions, green tomatoes, dill, garlic, cabbage, and other items picked from the garden, we added many kinds of pickles to the pantry shelves. Variety and quantity have grown so that now we put up about twenty different kinds of preserves each year, totaling between 350 and 400 quarts. To this we add numerous kinds of jams and jellies and the indispensable Italian pesto, made with parsley, sweet basil, garlic, and cheese blended together in olive oil.

The most anticipated canning period comes with the fall apple harvest. We pick nearly a ton of apples from the old ranch yard trees early each October. Out comes the ancient cider press, and the sweet juices begin to flow. We hover around the spigot drinking glass after glass of the cold squeezings, and then we open the kitchen cannery in earnest. We put up applesauce and juice, setting some of the pressings aside for cider and wine. The house is draped with strings of apple rings so that we might also have a supply of dried apples on hand for winter munching. In the oven pies bubble and steam with autumn fragrance. These are happy times on the farm.

With the arrival of fall comes also the great squash harvest. Pippin and I look forward to this annual event anxiously as we explore among the vines during the summer months, inspecting the swelling, looming objects of green, yellow, orange, and pink. When the day finally comes, just before the first frost, the two of us start early in the morning with wagon and wheelbarrow. We make trip after trip to the house until the dining room is piled with over a thousand pounds and some three dozen varieties of gourds, pumpkins, and winter squash. Some are decorative, intended only for our autumn celebration of the pumpkin harvest. The rest remain on a long shelf in the dining room through the winter and are slowly transformed into soups, pumpkin bread, casseroles, and numerous baked dishes, serving in the meantime as a colorful feast for the eye and the soul.

AUTUMN FOR US is a mixed blessing, however, for it signals the time for slaughtering the goat kids.

The goat business began innocently enough. Before we moved to the Ranch, we saw Sunflower at the home of a friend and fell in love with her. She was just weaned, and we brought her home. She lived in the house with us, sleeping in the bathtub until I built a pen. In fact, Maggie slept in the bathroom with her the first couple of nights until she stopped crying for her former family.

When it came time to freshen her so that we would have milk, we found that bucks were scarce in the area. The first year went by, and she was not bred. Finally we obtained Snowballs; from that time on, the natural laws of procreation took their inevitable course.

Since the first offspring were both females, we were temporarily spared the full facts of goat-rearing. But by the time our second autumn rolled around at the Ranch, besides Amber we had Fig and Fog and Sienna's younger male kid. We knew that something would have to be done.

As the summer months waned, we judiciously avoided the subject. Apple harvest arrived and passed, with the squash harvest right on its heels. But gradually the unavoidable truth pressed itself upon us. We would either have to sell the little bucks to someone who would in turn kill them for the table, or we would have to slaughter them ourselves.

Both Maggie and I had eaten meat throughout our lives, but we had begun to question this part of our diet. As biologists we knew that pesticides and other poisons are concentrated along ascending levels of the food pyramid; we abandoned the consumption of the larger predatory ocean fish because of the questionable levels of mercury, DDT, and other chemicals they often contain. We were also concerned about the growing number of hormones and growth stimulants added to the feed of commercial beef and poultry, and the amounts of these meats that graced our table had become increasingly spare.

We were further disturbed by the impact of American meat consumption upon the agriculture of our nation and the diet of the world. Half the harvested agricultural land in the United States is planted to feed crops; 78 percent of our grain, not to mention soy beans and other high protein foods, is fed to animals. While beef provides protein of high quality, the production of that food is startlingly inefficient. A steer must consume twenty-one pounds of vegetable protein in order to yield one pound of meat protein for our use. Francis Moore Lappe, in *Diet for a Small Planet,* claims that the amount of protein fed to livestock and thus lost to human consumption is equivalent to 90 percent of the world's protein deficit.

These thoughts surfaced in conversation as autumn drew upon us. Another force also rose within us: since meat continued to be a part of our diet, we felt we should bear full responsibility for its consumption. Delegating the slaughter to someone else while we reaped the benefits began to appear as an evasion of knowing the full significance of eating meat.

We had performed the first half of animal husbandry. Through our auspices the does and the buck had come together in the production of these lives in order that Pippin might have milk. Maggie had learned to make yogurt, cus-

tards, and cheese from the extra, and our table had been rich with fine morsels. Mostly through our own efforts, the little goats had been fed, and we had learned from direct experience how much vegetable produce—how much land, sun, and water—a growing kid requires. These consequences we ourselves had perpetrated, save one still remaining, the taking of a life to sustain our own. This second and most difficult half of husbandry loomed before us like a dark cloud.

Maggie and I knew these goats. We had raised them up from the miraculous moment of birth. The thought of killing them was emotionally abhorrent to us, though intellectually it was not. Yet, since childhood we had eaten beef, lamb, pork, chicken, and turkey without a thought of remorse for them and their brothers who had met their end in the well-hidden death chambers of the assembly line. For years we paid taxes to the government so that our armies could bomb and devastate a tiny country in Southeast Asia; we made our protests, but we paid our taxes just the same. And yet it was over three little goats less than half a year old that we shed our tears, because of all those ended lives for which we shared responsibility, it was these creatures alone that we had to look squarely in the eye.

We have a Bulgarian friend from the old country for whom every aspect of goat-raising comes as second nature. He had herded, bred, milked, and butchered goats since his early youth. We decided to ask him to help us with Fig and Fog so that we might learn directly from someone who had the complete confidence of long practice.

Boyan and his family came one Saturday morning. We tied a pair of hay hooks to a selected apple limb and brought out a tub for the entrails and a large pot for the organ meat. I sharpened a butcher knife of good steel and a skinning knife, and Boyan set to work in the matter-of-fact way of one who had learned the simple lessons of survival in a country far less removed from the facts of life than ours.

SOON THE MEAT began to appear on our dinner table. There is hardly anything in this world more delicious than kid goat, and we had no compunction about eating it. But many weeks passed before I was able to face the fact that one little buck remained in the pen. Soon his meat would grow strong and tough; his time, too, had finally come. I took the knife one morning and left the house alone.

For three million years or more our ancestors and other hominids from which they evolved had been hunters. From the long silent dens of *Australopithicus* have emerged skull after skull of the animals upon which these ancient man-apes preyed, their cranial indentations and the bone weapons that fit them speaking of our heritage across the millennia. How thin is the veneer of civilization! How much thinner still are the plastic wrappers of roast and steak on the supermarket shelf, which in the last wink of time have sheltered almost an entire people from the realities of subsistence.

Our parents, and certainly their parents, had almost all known the facts of birth, death, and slaughter on the farm from firsthand experience. In one or two generations a break with the past had been created which now loomed before me like a dark and foreboding chasm. No amount of biological training concerning the natural laws of tooth and claw could fill this void. I had been told that life was sacred, even while the roast simmered in the oven. No one had taught me how to deal with the soft, frightened eyes that now looked up at me from beside the small pit I had dug in the ground.

I pulled the knife quickly through flesh and artery. The little goat flinched for an instant, then lay still. The centuries fled past before me. So this is our heritage, I thought. This is the same hand that paints a great canvas, builds a hydrogen bomb, and pens the famous words, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

I hung the little body from the tree and returned to the house. "He's ready," I said to Maggie. "The next lesson is yours to learn."

She dressed the goat kid well. Another skin was set to tan, more meat was added to the larder, and that night we feasted on the head and organs as others had done uncountable times both before and after the dawn of civilization.

We had not assumed in haste this task of killing, but rather had waited until the time was right, until we were at least partially able to understand the significance of our actions. There had been no feeling of conquest, no thrill of the hunt, no sense of *machismo,* that peculiar flexing of one's manhood which may have played an important role in tribal life but which, in the modern hunter with his accurate scope and high-powered rifle, seems crude and out of place. We viewed the taking of a life as the gift of life, just as others had for centuries before us.

Since our first experience, we have grown more accustomed to these raw facts of life on the farm. Still, a gradual change has occurred. We have used less and less meat in our cooking. Many days pass, during which beans, cheese, grain, and eggs constitute our only protein. Maggie has developed a host of delectable dishes based upon dry soy beans or fresh favas. When we do use meat at all, it is in the style of the Chinese—as a sparing, flavorful garnish. A roast will last us a week, and one whole goat kid, less than twelve pounds of meat, will feed us for a month.

This change has not been the result of economics; except for a little extra feed we must purchase, our meat comes free. It is the act of raising the goats from birth that has influenced our thinking. We have begun to appreciate deeply that life is precious and must not be taken lightly. We now know how difficult it is to kill.

WE ARE NOT ENTIRELY SELF-SUFFICIENT on our little farm at Audubon Canyon Ranch, nor can the local villages entirely meet our needs. Those purchases of goods and services that must be made in the larger towns are saved up until a full day's trip is justified, and every two or

three weeks we make the run. Once we had ceased the usual humdrum daily confrontation with the urban world, it was astonishing how quickly we lost our defenses against it. Now a day of noise, smog, traffic, and crowds completely exhausts and disorients us, and when we are obliged to make a rare sojourn into San Francisco itself, nearly a week is required for full recovery.

We have also made a concerted effort to reduce our use of electricity since moving to the country. Before Audubon Canyon Ranch procured this place, the old house had been remodeled inside and completely rewired. An all-electric kitchen and electric heaters were installed. It cost seventy dollars a month to heat the house to accepted American standards in the winter.

The average home in this country contains twenty-one electric appliances. We took stock of those the house contained and the few we had brought with us, and counted nineteen in all. The Franklin stove from our former cabin was promptly installed, and the use of nearly all heaters discontinued. Living-room and dining-room lights were replaced with kerosene lamps, which we use selectively and sparingly, and the hot-water heater we turned to low. One day the dishwasher went up in smoke, and it has been used ever since as a cool place to store cheese. When the blender stopped working, we replaced it with a hand-cranked gristmill, which does nearly everything the blender could do and much more. When the toaster burnt out, we used the top of the Franklin stove instead.

Still, we have not tried to be purists about the use of electricity. Our fluorescent desk lamps are efficient sources of light and will stay. We have kept the refrigerator until we build a proper cooler, and the freezer will remain in use until we learn another way to store meat. Maggie uses only cold water in the washer, and clothes are hung out on the line except during the worst weather.

Most of these changes could be made by anyone with little strain. Reducing our consumption of electricity has not made us any less comfortable, for we have simply adjusted accordingly. In fact, we can barely sleep in a thermostatically heated house now that we know the feeling of fresh air and cool nights. In one way, however, we are more fortunate than most. We live in a benign climate where winters are short, and the trees that fall each winter across roads or trails give us a steady supply of firewood. But to this must be added the fact that we have chosen to work for fuel; others have lived here before us who never used the wood even though it fell in abundance around them.

Cutting and splitting wood is one of the most satisfying of our numerous chores. Bit by bit during the summer months the job is done, and a little vigorous morning exercise puts me in order for the day. When the woodshed is full, we feel a sense of satisfaction that cannot compare with the monthly payment of fuel bills. And there is nothing in the world like stoking the stove on a cold morning or smelling the sweet aroma of burning wood while we sit by a crackling fire on a stormy winter evening. We have as a species enjoyed the warmth and glow of a fire too long to dismiss it lightly.

For years Maggie and I talked of having a wood-burning cookstove. We finally found one in a local antique shop for a fair price and brought it back to the Ranch. There is no describing the joy this one material possession has added to our lives. The first pot we placed on the hot metal danced as if it were a symbol of the excitement we felt over a wood-cooked meal. The oven bakes our bread and many of our dinners. Cast-iron pans or kettles simmer on the back of the stove while yogurt is being made in the warming oven, and all this from the same energy that heats the living quarters. In the morning Pippin helps me fill the firebox, and together we hover around the old black stove rubbing our hands until the metal heats up. Soon breakfast is cooking, tea water is boiling, and toast is browning, while Bo sleeps in the warmest corner and Maggie and I warm our feet on the oven door, reading the morning paper in the old family rockers. We never experienced a comparable family gathering around our electric range.

HEMINGWAY ONCE SAID, "I have always believed that the man who has begun to live more seriously within begins to live more simply without." This we are finding to be true, but we are also convinced that the percentage of chance for the reverse to occur is very high as well. Learning basic skills, doing things by one's own efforts, knowing the origins of the substances we use and their final destination—the very acts of simple living seem to cause one to live more seriously within. One would have to be blind in the broadest sense to eliminate extraneous appliances and not see that energy is being saved; one would have to be profoundly insensitive to grow a few vegetables and not sense his connection with the essential processes of the natural world.

Our gradual return to a more basic way of life has slowed us down. Though our days are full and busy, our long-range pace has slackened, and the urgency we once felt about daily affairs has subsided. We now tend to measure growth and achievement in terms of years rather than days. As a result, each moment has grown richer, and each experience, no matter how small, has become more fulfilling.

We have learned during this three-year beginning that the simple life, particularly now in this time and place, is elusive and fraught with as many pitfalls as satisfactions. We have learned that the search can only be measured in terms of a lifetime, for it has taken us this long just to unfurl the sails and set our course.

Most important, however, seeking the simple life has drawn us together as a family. This has been our greatest reward.

**David Cavagnaro** *is a biologist and writer-photographer who lives in Marin County, California. He is author of the American West books* Living Water *(1971) and* This Living Earth *(1972).*

EPILOGUE: The exuberant excesses of the Virginia City, Nevada, miners briefly alluded to in "The Costliest Sack of Flour Ever Sold" (pages 30-31), were a natural part of the city's heritage, if we are to believe the account of one J. Ross Browne, who visited the region when it was just coming into its heyday and then wrote a series of articles for *Harper's Monthly*. The wood engraving opposite, which appeared with Browne's "A Peep at Washoe" in the January 1861 issue of that publication, attempts to do justice to one of the scenes of confusion which burst upon the writer's vision when he first entered the famous mining camp:

"A fraction of the crowd, as we entered the precincts of the town, were engaged in a lawsuit relative to a question of title. The arguments used on both sides were empty whisky-bottles. . . . Several of the disputants had already been knocked down and convinced, and various others were freely shedding their blood in the cause of justice. Even the bull-terriers took an active part—or, at least, a very prominent part. The difficulty was about the ownership of a lot, which had been staked out by one party and "jumped" by another. Some two or three hundred disinterested observers stood by, enjoying the spectacle, several of them with their hands on their revolvers, to be ready in case of any serious issue, but these dangerous weapons are only used on great occasions—a refusal to drink, or some trick at monte."

Such was western life in a less restrained era.


*"A Question of Title": settling a claim dispute in the Nevada Territory, 1860.*

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