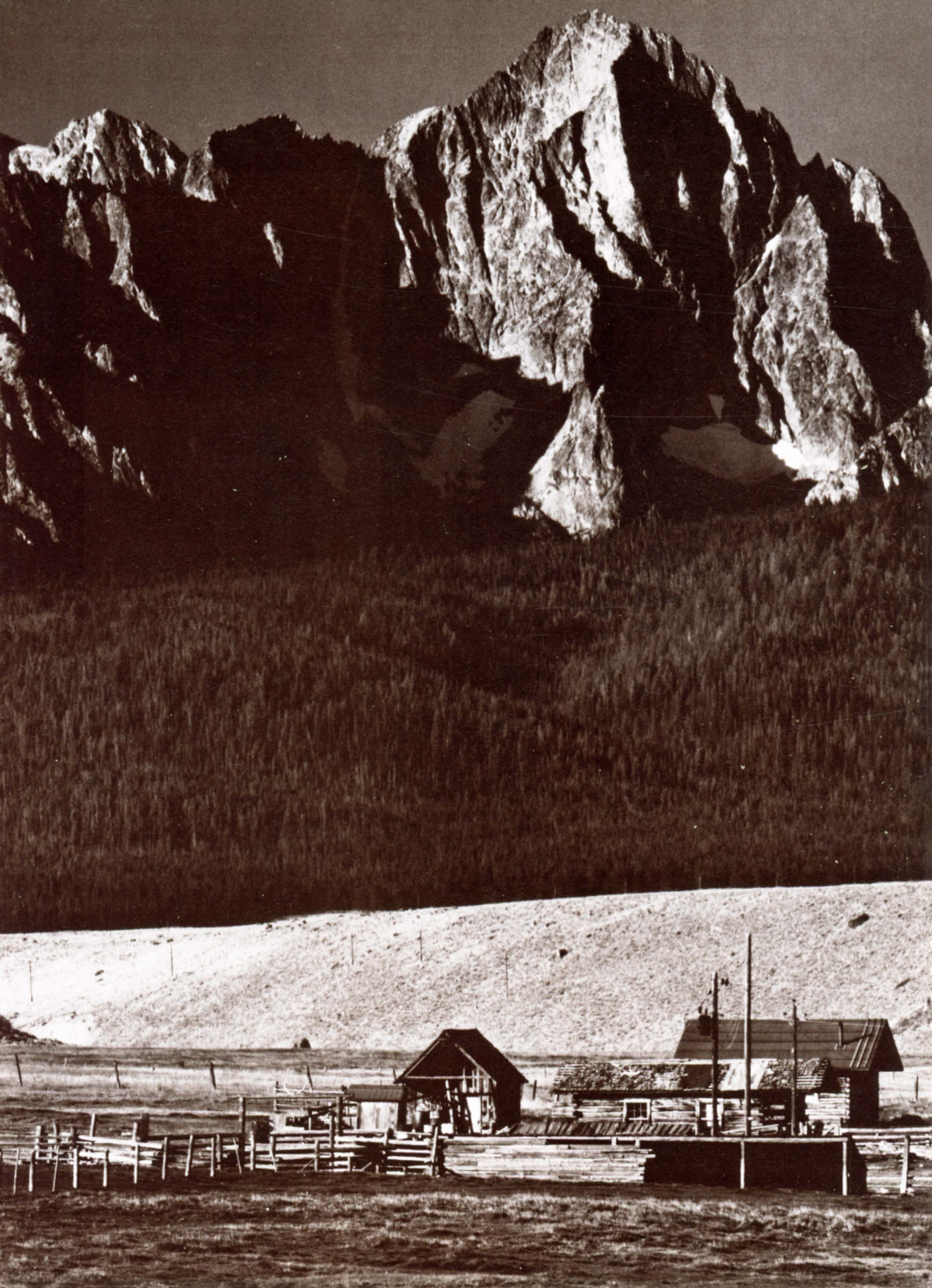
THE AMERICAN WEST

COVER: Timber Jack Joe from Dubois is one of a group of westerners who preserve the heritage of the mountain man annually at the Pinedale Rendezvous in Wyoming. For two articles on the mountain man, his world, and his image, see pages 28–45 of this issue.

(Photograph by David Muench from the American West book Rendezvous Country, *to be released this month.)*

THE

AMERICAN WEST



THE
AMERICAN WEST

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Peaks of the aptly-named Sawtooth Range loom above ranch cabins near Stanley, Idaho.

ED COOPER

Thomas Moran's "Acoma" captures the essence of a land the Spaniard occupied but never quite learned to master.

A Bicentennial Trilogy

A State of Less than Enchantment

By 1776 the Spanish province of New Mexico was tired — old without ever really having been young

by Larry L. Meyer

SPAIN KNEW NEW MEXICO a quarter-millennium before fraternal blood was spilled at Concord Bridge. Francisco Vasquez Coronado passed through in 1540 before there was a Saint Augustine in Florida, and in 1598 Juan de Oñate brought countrymen bent on staying in its valleys before there was a Jamestown in Virginia. Physically, New Mexico looked like a place for Spaniards—horse country with bare earth colors and a bowl of blue sky, not unlike Estremadura, the birthplace of so many of the first *conquistadores*. But by the middle of the eighteenth century, the Spanish salient that protruded upstream along the Rio Grande del Norte was tired, as creaky as a *carreta* wheel, old without ever really having been young. In truth, the quality of life on the river was never much from the first, and the quality of those living beside it had become progressively worse with the passing of years.

In the beginning, when the province was given its name grand with promise, it was thought that New Mexico would prosper from mining. But nature decreed otherwise. No gold or silver meant no influx of the industrious greedy, who, with all the woes they can bring, at least give life and vitality to a place. Manufacturing did not develop either, because there

was little to manufacture from, no one with skills to manufacture well, and too few with money to buy finished goods anyway. Rather, the mainstays of New Spain's far-northern colony became subsistence agriculture, the raising of cattle and sheep, and trade with the nomadic Indians. No wonder those in New Spain with talents chose to apply them elsewhere.

What collected in the eddy that was New Mexico was mostly human sediment. Caste-conscious Spaniards, who had names for every class, could not count among the permanent settlers many *peninsulares,* the elite born in Spain. There were not even many *Creoles,* full Spaniards in blood but, to their misfortune, born on the wrong side of the Atlantic. Instead, the bulk of the "Spanish" population was made up of *géntes de razón,* mixed bloods redeemed by some Iberian genetic inheritance and a patina of civilization, and *genízaros,* domesticated non-Pueblo Indians who often as not ended up serving in their masters' fields and ranchos without pay.

In 1754, Governor Pedro Fermín de Mendinueta described the inhabitants of New Mexico as "perverse, poor and lazy," and forty years later Governor Fernando de la Concha saw concealed behind their "simulated appearance of ignorance and rusticity . . . the most refined malice." On the other hand, the governor did not have much to say in praise of their corrupt officials, as countless court records show, nor for the outposts where life had dropped them and where they passed the time of day in idling, gambling, quarreling, cheating the Indians and one another.

Poverty was the central fact of life in New Mexico in 1776, as it always had been. The cultivation of corn and beans and squash depended upon natural rainfall, which the seasons sometimes brought and sometimes did not. Herds of livestock grazing over the open countryside were subject to unpredictable and indefensible Indian theft. No wonder that in the eighteenth century the Indians of the pueblos were excused from paying tribute to the Crown, required elsewhere throughout New Spain, and sales taxes, which ran as high as 14 percent in Mexico, were apparently dispensed with in the province for the very sound reason that nothing could be taken from nothing.

New Mexicans were constantly in debt to the far-sharper traders of Chihuahua, and when coin moved from south to north, it was in open subsidy paid to soldiers and priests and governors by the king. Antonio de Bonilla, adjutant-inspector of presidios, reported in 1776 that from the time of the conquest "the conservation of New Mexico has cost, and continues to cost, the king many hundreds of thousands of pesos. . . ." (The actual figure ran to about fifty thousand per year.) But Bonilla was one of those men who strain to see silver linings. "Although this province has not contributed so much as the rest of the Interior Provinces in fattening the royal treasury," he continued in gross understatement, "the glories of seeing reduced a part of the numerous heathen which live in these territories are worthy of attention." The Church might have wished that "part" was larger than it was.

Spaniards on both sides of the Atlantic took their religion and its evangelical obligations deeply and personally. Whereas Frenchmen on the whole had a greater tolerance for the varieties of religious experience, and Englishmen could seldom accommodate red men in their Protestant denominations and sects, the Spanish church was in every way catholic, open to all. A baptized soul thereby saved from limbo and sent on to the company of God was something every good Spaniard could rejoice in. Missionaries were not sent out into heathendom purely as a cover for imperial gain. Indeed, when the whole New Mexico experience began to sour, when it became clear in the early seventeenth century that the distant province would never pay its way, the Spanish monarchy assumed it as a perpetual financial liability primarily to minister to those Indians who had already been converted, and to gather yet others into the fold.

It didn't turn out quite that way. The Faith in this instance did not go forward toward more and better, but the reverse, in the direction of disillusionment and less. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and the reconquest of New Mexico by Diego de Vargas in the 1690s, the authority of the priests was curbed, while that of civil officials was enhanced, until the Indians began going to the clergy with their complaints against venal authorities and settlers, though not for spiritual aid. The missionaries found themselves guardians of Indian rights and property, but not of their souls, which belonged to other gods, false gods. Despair and corruption appeared more and more among those anointed with the holy oil.

When Bishop Pedro Tamarón y Romeral made the long journey from Durango to New Mexico on an inspection tour in 1760, he was greatly saddened. Only a few of the twenty-eight resident Franciscan friars had learned the languages of the Indians they were ministering to, though some had been there for over twenty years, and the Spanish understood by the Indians was the wrong Spanish. "In trade and temporal business where profit is involved, the Indians and Spaniards understand each other completely," the Bishop wrote. "This does not extend to the spiritual realm with regard to which they display tepidity and indifference." Tamarón was reluctant to bestow the sacrament of confirmation on insincere Indians who confessed their sins only on their deathbeds and then through an interpreter—if one happened to be at hand. A gentle and politic man far advanced in years, Tamarón nevertheless left the priests firm orders to learn the local languages and so better perform the religious duties for which their king was paying them three hundred pesos a year.

Sixteen years later, in the spring of 1776, Father Francisco Atanasio Domínguez arrived in New Mexico as commissary-visitor with instructions to make his own exhaustive

This article is adapted from a chapter in Shadow of a Continent *by Larry L. Meyer, being released this month by the American West Publishing Company.*

evaluation of the spiritual and economic situation. A younger man than Tamarón (he was then in his mid-thirties), and accustomed to the civilized life and amenities of his native Mexico City, Domínguez was appalled by virtually everything he saw except the landscape. Of Santa Fe he said, "Its appearance, design, arrangement, and plan do not correspond to its status as a villa nor to the very beautiful plain on which it lies, for it is like a rough stone set in fine metal." To him the capital looked "mournful" because the houses were all made of earth and "not adorned by any artifice of brush or construction." In sum, he said, "it lacks everything." He found the Indians mostly destitute and pitiful (those in Galisteo had neither horse nor cow and were reduced to toasting old shoes for food), and nearly everywhere the natives showed a "repugnance and resistance to the most Christian acts," which they performed only "under compulsion." The state of religion was most distressing in the pueblos of Taos and Picuris, where the Indians were so "notably opposed to Christianity that they cannot even look at Christian things." The visitor unhappily concluded that the Indians were as much neophytes as they had been at the time of the conquest.

Domínguez' appraisal of the settlers was no higher. Some had sunk so low as to become hired servants for the Indians. He singled out Albuquerque for special censure, charging its citizens "to abandon the lethargy and laziness in which they have lived up to now, to the loss of many graces and indulgences." As for the twenty priests responsible for the more than eighteen thousand nominally Christian souls in the territory, he found some good and loving men laboring under almost impossible conditions. But he also found some bad apples, "insolent and haughty of spirit," who were more interested in advancing their temporal fortunes in illicit trade and consorting with "notorious women of evil." In the five missions of El Paso, particularly, he discovered a veritable orchard of drunkards living in sin and swindling the Indians.

DOMINGUEZ' DETAILED REPORT could not have surprised Spanish churchmen or civil authorities. The deteriorating situation in the north was already well known. As bad as things had been, they were made worse in the quarter-century after 1750 by an Indian problem unparalleled in two hundred years of Spanish experience. The Comanches had driven the Apaches off the southern plains, driven them south into the arid lands east and west of the Rio Grande, where the hunted became hunters, with stolen Spanish horses and stolen Spanish weapons hunting more of the same. To the east, in Texas, the Comanches drove the Lipan Apaches temporarily into the arms of the Spanish, to whom they appealed for help at midcentury. Coming as it did at a time when Spain was in an expansive mood in the provinces that make up modern-day Texas, and coupled with new reports of silver deposits in Apache territory, the Spanish responded by establishing a new mission and fort on the San Sabá River in 1757. The mission never drew a single permanent Apache resident within its walls, but it did arouse the anger of the Comanches, who struck it, first in 1758 and again in early 1759, burning the fort and massacring some thirty souls. A punitive army led by Col. Diego Ortiz Parrilla sought the enemy as far north as the Red River, where on October 7, 1759, an entrenched and French-armed force of Wichitas roundly defeated and routed the Spanish troops.

The Comanches themselves came raiding farther south and west when they had a mind to, and after 1763, when English traders replaced the French as suppliers of firearms, they came with awful regularity. The depredations in New Mexico didn't stop there. Amerindian hunters had instincts that drew them to the stricken, and in 1775 restive Navajos to the west joined in the raiding.

The whole weary enterprise in the north might wisely have been abandoned if Spaniards hadn't been made of tougher stuff. Centuries of unbroken medieval war between Moor and Christian had left a unique people on the Iberian peninsula. Though they were remarkably uniform in how they worshipped their God and obeyed their king, their character remained a mix rather than a reconciliation of opposites. In them extremes coexisted: pride and poverty, cruelty and compassion, idealism and cynicism, the highest purpose and the meanest means. Within them was a diamond-hard residue, a genius for enduring, for staying, and when finally gone, leaving behind with half-Spaniards, or quarter-Spaniards, or sixteenth-Spaniards, or those simply touched by the Spaniards' culture, an altered view of the world that was basic and lasting.

Even if New Mexico had not been a complete failure financially and a bad investment spiritually, even if holding onto the northern satellite had not been deemed indispensable to the defense of Mexico, Spaniards had another reason for staying after 1759. That was new hope born of the Bourbon influence out of France, where the new enlightened thinkers believed all was possible if men but applied their God-given reason. The optimism infected more than a few men on New Spain's northern borderlands. In 1776, at the height of the Indian agony, when the outlook was downright dismal, there was expansion—less in territory held than in furthering Spanish knowledge of the West. The Spanish presence in Arizona inched north that year when a presidio was moved from Tubac to Tucson, deeper into tormented lands controlled by the Gila Apaches. The settlement owed its existence to the indefatigable Father Francisco Garcés, who had laid out a pueblo there but was now gone, spending the first half of 1776 on an incredible walk of the West no white man had seen, from the San Joaquin Valley of California through southern Nevada and deep into northern Arizona. The inhospitable Hopis prevented Garcés from making it all the way east to New Mexico, but the resourceful Franciscan did manage to send on to Santa Fe the news that the journey

Coronado and the Spaniards who followed him to New Mexico found in the bare earth colors and blue skies a hopeful reminder of their homeland—but the grand promises the province seemed to hold failed to materialize.

DETAIL FROM "FRANCISCO VASQUEZ DE CORONADO" BY N. C. WYETH; JOHN MORRELL & COMPANY AND IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

On July 29, 1776, Fathers Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Silvestre Vélez de Escalante departed Santa Fe on what was to become a punishing five-month, fifteen-hundred-mile exploratory loop across unknown lands in New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. Two years later Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco, a member of the expedition, made this elaborate map of their wanderings. The region around Santa Fe is at lower right; Utah Lake ("Laguna de los Timpanogos"), the farthest extent of their travels, is at upper left.

could be made, and that only the maize farmers of the mesa tops were an obstacle to a land link between California and New Mexico.

Garcés' letter, written in the waning hours of July 3, was studied with the greatest interest by Father Silvestre Vélez de Escalante in Santa Fe. Not the part about the contrariness of the Hopis—he, too, had visited them the previous summer and knew their ways—but the fact that Garcés had actually come from California, the destination of his own travel plans.

In 1775, doubtless on orders from Viceroy Bucareli in Mexico City, the New Mexican governor, Mendinueta, had asked the twenty-six-year-old priest for a report on how Monterey might be reached from New Mexico. Then, in the following spring, Father Francisco Atanasio Domínguez, the same citified newcomer who had made such a frank appraisal of New Mexico's churchmen, invited Escalante to come from his mission among the Zuñis to Santa Fe, there to discuss the possibility of an expedition to California.

An air of conspiracy hangs about the two clerics. The father-visitor had been instructed to learn what he could about a connection between the interior and Monterey, and to forward any information on the work of Father Garcés, information that would please "both Majesties" (God and king). But the young and eager pair seem to have taken matters into their own hands by actually doing as they did, which was to pick up and go west, not due west through Hopiland, but northwest in a great circle over lands theretofore unknown. Ironically, their departure had been set for July 4, 1776, but a Comanche campaign and then illness

delayed them until July 29, when the two set out with eight other men on a fifteen-hundred-mile journey that would take them up western Colorado, across northern Utah below the Uinta Range, down onto the flats west of the Wasatch to Utah Lake, south into the juniper and sandstone country, across the deep gorge of the Colorado, and finally home. They returned to Santa Fe on January 2, 1777, alive and happy.

It was a stupefying achievement, equaled in courage and luck that year only by the lonely wanderer of the wastelands, Fray Garcés. They did not make it to Monterey, however. In fact, the letters of Domínguez and Escalante reveal that neither thought they would ever reach California, their ostensible destination. For them the adventure was the thing, seeing new lands and new peoples and—inevitably, overridingly—saving heathen souls. Prior to leaving, Domínguez wrote of hoping to reach the Cosninas (Havasupais) in the Colorado River canyon "in order to strengthen the people of this nation in their good intentions of becoming Christians," and throughout the journey Escalante noted in his diary every likely spot for future missions.

Governor Mendinueta, who generously supplied the travelers with the horses and livestock and other necessities for their trip, expressed doubts about the wisdom of such enthusiasm. "If there are not enough fathers for those already conquered," he inquired, "how can there be any for those that may be newly conquered?" The pair might have answered the governor by recounting Christ's parable in which the shepherd left the ninety and nine alone in the desert to go after the one that was lost. For, upon returning, the two gloried in having brought back a single Indian convert, who joined them near Utah Lake. No, optimism had not vanished on the Spanish frontier in that year of war—that year of America's war in the East and Spain's war in the West.

A VETERAN SOLDIER, the Marqués de Rubí, was sent to the crumbling rim of nominal Christendom in 1766 by King Carlos III to report on its full breadth, from Texas to Sonora. What he found was redskins on the warpath, practically everywhere. Papagos were raiding the presidio of Tubac, then Spain's farthest penetration into modern Arizona. Far to the east, in Texas, Comanches and the tribes Spaniards referred to as the Indians of the North (Wichitas, Tonkawas) threatened to link up and destroy the sparsely populated and sadly strung out Spanish outposts. And everywhere in between—west, south, and east of New Mexico—there were Apaches: Lipans, Jicarillas, Faraones, and Natagés east of the Rio Grande; Mescaleros to the south on both sides of the river; and Gila Apaches in western New Mexico and Arizona.

Never had the Apaches been stronger or more brazen, now riding the best horses the Spanish bred, running off and feasting on Spanish cattle, and raiding Spanish supply convoys. So successful were these parasites that they threatened to do in their hosts. Father Garcés saw God's hand in the Apache mayhem. He thought the savages had been sent as a scourge to punish Spaniards for "having lapsed from that primal fervor of conquest of souls for God." If so, then the Spaniards compounded their sin of neglect by openly resisting God's vengeance; all-out war was to be waged on the Apache bands—just as soon as the Spaniards were strong enough to wage it.

Rubí reported his findings in 1769 at a council of war in Mexico City. Some military commanders on the northern frontier were cowards, he said, while others were peculators, cheating the men they led of their meager salaries. The troops were in rags, poorly armed, their morale as low as the spirit of the sorry nags the Apaches had left them. Rubí recommended reform and new martial blood in what was strictly a military solution. The defensive perimeter had to be shortened to conform with what he called the "real" rather than the "imaginary" frontier. Some posts should be abandoned, especially in Texas, where there was no longer a French danger and his Most Catholic Majesty's subjects, too widely spaced for their own good, faced annihilation. New presidios should be built to make taut the chain.

The recommendations were accepted and incorporated into the Royal Regulation of 1772, and Viceroy Bucareli appointed Don Hugo O'Conor commander-inspector to implement them. Four missions and two presidios were abandoned in east Texas, and their inhabitants forced to move to San Antonio, which was, like New Mexico, an outpost north of the fifteen presidios that were to anchor a defensive barrier stretching from Espíritu Santo on the shores of south Texas to Altar in northwest Sonora. The uprooted Spanish-speaking settlers were so dissatisfied with San Antonio that the following year, under their leader Gil Ybaro, several hundred were permitted to return north and found the town of Bucareli on the Trinity River. In a few years the Comanches had them on the move again, not back south toward the presidial line as the *Reglamento* would have it, but east, off the open plains and into the protective fringe of the woodlands where, in the spring of 1779, the settlement of Nacagdoches took permanent root.

Meanwhile, General O'Conor had arrived on the northern frontier with more arms and reinforcements, and was immediately initiated into the shadow world of Apache war. For four years he campaigned almost continuously against the fugitive bands, absorbing some defeats but also achieving his share of victories — successful overall in rolling the Apaches back to the north. By 1776 conditions had become almost tolerable in Sonora and Nueva Vizcaya, but in New Mexico, where many of the Apaches had retreated and where the Comanches were as active as ever, there was no surcease from the violence. O'Conor, in failing health from the effort, asked to be relieved and given a less demanding post. In this

Continued on page 60

"...And the Skies Are Not Cloudy All Day"

Seeking the origins of a western song classic

by John I. White

For ten years (1927–1936), John I. White—known to his listeners as the "Lonesome Cowboy"—pursued a moonlighting career as a radio singer of western songs. In 1930 he became a regular feature on the NBC program "Death Valley Days." The following article is from Mr. White's forthcoming book on songs and songmakers of the American West.

THANKS LARGELY to the great popularity of radio broadcasting, in the early 1930s America discovered and took to its heart what it thought was a genuine western folk song. As the haunting, comforting strains of "Where seldom is heard a discouraging word / And the skies are not cloudy all day" miraculously came out of the air, the country somehow felt that it had a good thing going, stock market crashes and depressions notwithstanding.

Certainly the music publishers, movie makers, and broadcasting companies had a good thing going. Sheet music versions of the hit tune "Home on the Range," some by well-known composers, others by unknowns, were cascading off the presses. Opera stars, crooners, and garden-variety guitar plunkers like myself were sending it over the airways or putting it on records. Kay Francis was singing it to Edward G. Robinson in a movie called *I Loved a Woman*. Even Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd was singing it, to himself, during an isolated vigil in an Antarctic scientific station.

In addition to the public's listening at home or in concert halls, loving the song and not getting tired of it, a nice thing about it was that nobody had to pay royalties to a poet. As an old western folk song, "Home on the Range" was—or so most everyone thought—in the public domain.

Even noted ballad singer John Avery Lomax, although not cut in on the profits from Tin Pan Alley, must have felt a certain sense of pleasure over the popularity of "Home on the Range." For it was he who had obtained the song in 1908 from Bill Jack Curry, a Negro saloon keeper in San Antonio and formerly a cook with cow outfits. Lomax had published it, with piano accompaniment, in his anthology *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* in 1910.

Aside from royalties on his book, Lomax missed out on the cash and largely on the credit, too, insofar as the song-buying public was concerned. On examining a dozen sheet music editions of the song that I squirreled away in a closet four decades ago, I find that only one, the very first, arranged by Oscar J. Fox of the Lone Star State and issued in 1925 by Carl Fisher, acknowledged a debt to Lomax, although most of the others bear a close resemblance to his original.

The earliest "Home on the Range" recording of which I have any knowledge is that made by Vernon Dalhart and released by Brunswick in 1927. In 1928 Jules Verne Allen recorded it for Victor.

As I said, with "Home on the Range," the music publishers and others appeared to have had a good thing going. But suddenly, in the summer of 1934, word went out from the networks to ban the song from the air. Someone was claiming that it was not in the public domain after all.

This sour note was being sounded by William Goodwin, a grain dealer in Tempe, Arizona, and his wife, Mary. On June 14, 1934, the Southern Music Publishing Company filed suit with the Federal Court at New York City in the name of the Goodwins, claiming that the currently popular western folk song "Home on the Range" was simply a working-over of the Goodwins' own composition, one called "An Arizona Home," copyrighted in 1905. The complaint named twenty-nine defendants, including a long list of music publishers, two movie companies, the National Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting Company, and six individuals, among them this writer, whose only notice that he was in hot water came to him through the newspapers. The Goodwins, asking half a million dollars in damages, were after bigger fish.

Although it never was explained to me, my involvement in this legal action apparently stemmed from one, or both, of two things. In 1929, in cooperation with George Shackley, musical director at radio station WOR, I had brought out a folio, *The Lonesome Cowboy: Songs of the Plains and Hills,* which included "Home on the Range." This was copyrighted by the publisher, Al Piantadosi. Although the reasons escape me completely some forty years later, printed copies in my possession state that in 1930 the copyright was assigned to a firm by the name of Geo. T. Worth & Company. In 1932, without even mentioning it to me, Geo. T. Worth & Company issued "Home on the Range" in sheet music, crediting me with the very nice musical arrangement. Moreover, my name

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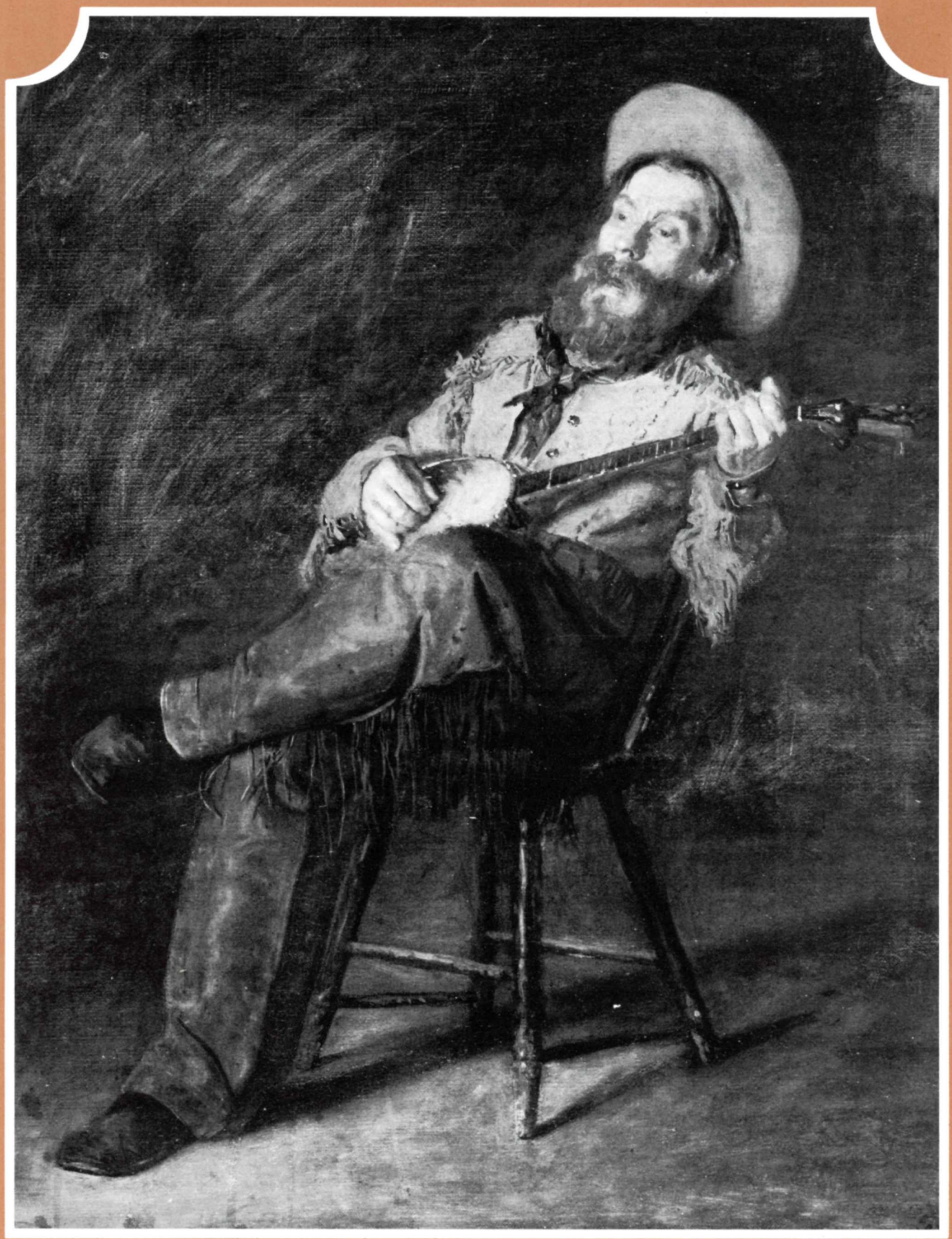
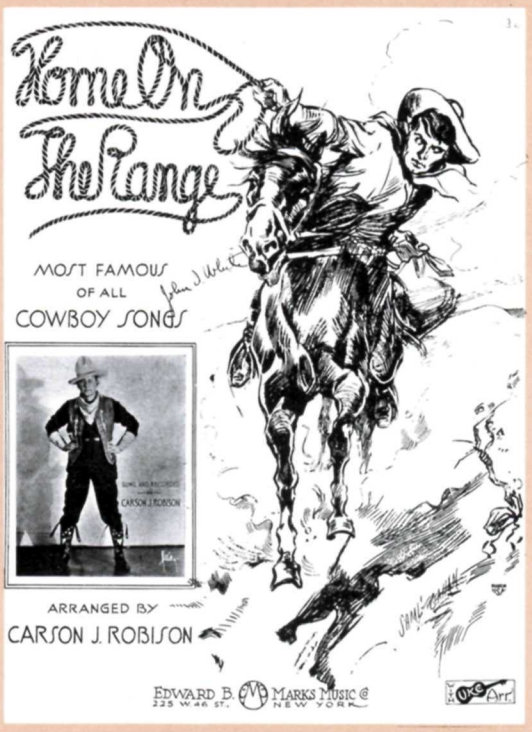
"COWBOY SINGING" BY THOMAS EAKINS; PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF MRS. THOMAS EAKINS AND MISS MARY A. WILLIAMS



ALL SONGSHEETS FROM AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



During the 1930s "Home on the Range" enjoyed a great surge in popularity on records and radio. Among those issuing arrangements was the author of this article, the "Lonesome Cowboy" (above left).

appeared on the front cover three times, which I am sure flattered me no end. But two years later, with the Goodwins including me on their list of alleged copyright infringers, I had some second thoughts.

My notes of forty years ago indicate that David W. Guion, Texas-born radio impresario and an established composer with a reputation for excellent musical arrangements with western settings, was the one individual defendant actually called on by the process server. Living in New York at the time, he probably was easy to find, and it could easily have been proved that he was making money on the song in addition to having done a great deal to popularize it. He was receiving composer's royalties from G. Schirmer for choral and orchestral arrangements of "Home on the Range" as well as for the unique 1930 solo arrangement that was a favorite with concert artists. Unlike most versions, which are quite simple and repetitious, Guion's had a particularly appealing melody for the stanza beginning "Oh, give me a land where the bright diamond sand / Flows leisurely down the stream," which placed his composition in a class by itself.

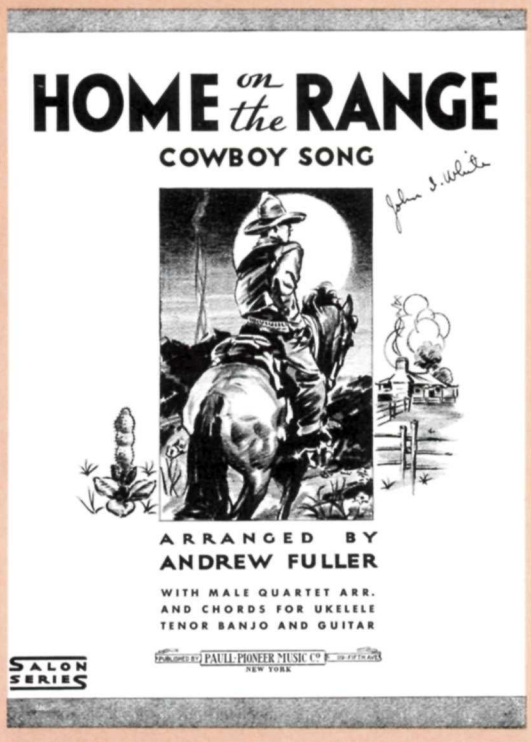
The Goodwins, to prove their point, submitted to the court "An Arizona Home" in sheet music, copyrighted on February 27, 1905, by the Balmer & Weber Music House of Saint Louis. Goodwin was credited with the words appearing below, his wife with the melody.

Oh give me a home where the buffalos roam,
Where the deer and the antelopes play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the sky is not cloudy all day.
Yes, give me the gleam of the swift mountain stream
And the place where no hurricanes blow,
Oh give me the park where the prairie dogs bark
And the mountains all covered with snow.

A home, a home,
Where the deer and the antelopes play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the sky is not cloudy all day.

Oh give me the hills and the ring of the drills
And the rich silver ore in the ground.
Yes, give me the gulch where the miners can sluice
And the bright yellow gold can be found.
Oh give me the mine where the prospectors find
The gold in its own native land,
And the hot springs below, where the sick people go
And camp on the banks of the Grand.

Oh give me the steed and the gun that I need
To shoot game from my own cabin home.
Then give me the camp where the fire is a lamp
And the wild rocky mountains to roam.



Among the many songsheets of "Home on the Range" published during the early 1930s was one (above right) purporting to trace the song's origin to a prospector named Bob Swartz in Leadville, Colorado, in 1885.

Yes, give me the home where the prospectors roam,
There business is always alive
In those wild western hills midst the ring of the drills,
Oh there let me live till I die.

ALTHOUGH HALF A MILLION probably represented considerably more than the Goodwins actually hoped to get, since their melody and eight lines of their lyrics were almost the same as the universally popular version of "Home on the Range," the matter could not be laughed off. To block their suit, someone had to produce strong evidence, not just the opinions of a few old-timers, that the song was current in the West prior to 1905. Therefore, the music publishers raised a defense fund and hired a New York lawyer, Samuel Moanfeldt, to hunt for the real composer or composers of the song.

Newspaper accounts of the Goodwins' court action had brought in to the Music Publishers Protective Association a helpful letter from a Mrs. Giddeon of Chicago. She stated that in 1880, while attending Normal School at Stanberry, Missouri, she and her classmates had regularly sung "Home on the Range" at school functions. She supplied an affidavit to this effect and also gave attorney Moanfeldt the names of fellow students still living in Missouri who did likewise. But none recalled ever having seen the song in print or had thought of writing the words in a diary.

Because "Home on the Range" was generally considered a cowboy song, Moanfeldt next tried Dodge City, Kansas, once the world's leading cattle market. His findings there are described in his report to his client.

"There I interviewed a great number of people such as ex-cowboys, people who were employed as cooks in cowboy camps, ex-stage drivers and buffalo hunters. A great number of written statements were procured by me from these people and they all agreed that this song was well known to and generally sung by cowboys and other people traveling through that section of the country in stage coaches prior to 1890, and that the lyrics and music were practically identical with those now generally used by radio singers, and they all stated that they recognized the tune as soon as the same became popular over the radio."

The lawyer-turned-tune-detective had a pocketful of potentially valuable affidavits but still nothing on the song's origin. Now, following up another clue, he explored a different field —central Colorado.

By the strangest of coincidences, a short time prior to the filing of the Goodwins' complaint, another claimant for the honor of having had a hand in the composition of "Home on the Range" had come forward. He was Bob Swartz of

BOTH PAGES: KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Some sources indicate the author of "Home on the Range" was Ohio-born Dr. Brewster Higley (1823–1911), a Kansas pioneer. His poem "Western Home" appeared in a Kansas newspaper in 1873.

Scranton, Pennsylvania, who in 1885 had tried his luck at mining near Leadville in the mountains southwest of Denver. On August 14, 1930, Swartz addressed a letter to me saying that hearing me sing "Home on the Range" from a station in New York had stirred old memories. To my surprise and, I suspect, to my disbelief, he stated that forty-five years earlier he and two fellow miners had composed the song I had been singing.

Swartz died on March 12, 1932, before he could make much of a case. However, a sister in Pennsylvania had saved a dated letter written by him in 1885 in which he had proudly put down the lyrics to a song he called "Colorado Home" and he himself had produced an old notebook with a melody he claimed to have written down in the late 1880s shortly after he gave up mining and returned to the East. Music historian and composer Kenneth S. Clark interested himself in the matter and with the cooperation of the Paull-Pioneer Music Corporation of New York published the complete story in an insert to a sheet music edition of "Colorado Home" in 1934. The Swartz melody was essentially the one so familiar today. With the exception of two lines, the text was almost identical with that claimed to have been written by Goodwin. In place of Goodwin's last two lines, Swartz contributed this far more virile description:

Where dance halls come first and faro banks burst,
And every saloon is a dive.

In Colorado, too, attorney Moanfeldt experienced little difficulty locating numerous senior citizens who recalled having heard the song half a century earlier. He concluded that Swartz and his buddies had taken the tune and a snatch of the words of an older song and made up verses to fit their own situation high in the Rockies—a common enough occurrence in those days among people living in isolated regions of the country. Where the Goodwins picked up the song is still a mystery. As Moanfeldt pointed out in his report, their lyrics seem much more at home in Colorado than in Arizona.

Moanfeldt now probably had all he needed to nullify the Goodwin action. But he was not satisfied. Finding the original of "Home on the Range" was still a challenge.

In March of 1935 a Dodge City newspaper had obligingly run an item about the controversy with an appeal for information on the song's origin. Picked up and circulated widely by the Associated Press, this brought a response from Mrs. Myrtle Hose of Osborne, Kansas, who had a scrapbook containing a 1914 newspaper clipping with the words of "Home on the Range" and a statement that they were being reprinted from an issue of the same paper run off in 1873. They had been written, the editor stated, by his friend Dr. Brewster Higley. The paper was the *Smith County Pioneer,* published at Smith Center on the northern Kansas prairies.

Unfortunately, no copy of the all-important 1873 issue of the *Pioneer* could be found in its files or ever was found elsewhere. However, from the available evidence and from conversations with early Smith County settlers, Moanfeldt was convinced that the poem, originally called "Western Home," had indeed been written by Ohio-born Higley, an eccentric physician who had homesteaded in Smith County in 1871. Credit for setting it to music went to one of Higley's neighbors, Dan Kelley, a Rhode Island Civil War veteran who went to Kansas in 1872 and made his living as a carpenter and builder.

Among those interviewed in Smith County, Kansas, by attorney Moanfeldt was Clarence R. Harlan, eighty-six years old and blind, brother-in-law of Dan Kelley. Harlan played guitar and with his younger brother, a fiddler, made up the so-called Harlan Orchestra that in early days performed throughout the region for dances and celebrations. Moanfeldt buttressed his evidence with a phonograph record of "Western Home" made by blind Clarence Harlan, who sang the words from memory exactly as they were printed in the 1914 *Pioneer* clipping and stated he had learned the song in 1874. Harlan said that neither he nor his brother had ever written out the melody. Attorney Moanfeldt once played this record for me and allowed me to transcribe the tune. It was in waltz time and close enough to the well-known melody of today as to be recognizable.

The Music Publishers Protective Association never had to use any of the evidence gathered by Moanfeldt in the months he spent tracking down "Home on the Range." Word of his success got around, and on December 6, 1935, the lawyer for the Goodwins called it quits.

THERE ARE two interesting footnotes to the story. While no one ever found a copy of the 1873 *Smith County Pioneer* that would have been the simple key to the entire puzzle, ten years after the controversy ended and "Home on the Range" had been reinstated in the public domain, an eagle-eyed researcher spotted an equally "hot" Kansas newspaper in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka. This was an issue of the *Kirwin Chief* dated February 26, 1876. Printed right on the front page was the poem "Western Home" with Dr. Higley's by-line. Here is the *Chief*'s rendering of the verses, with capitalization and punctuation copied exactly:

Oh! give me a home where the Buffalo roam,
Where the Deer and the Antelope play;
Where never is heard a discouraging word,
And the sky is not clouded all day.

A home! A home!

Where the Deer and the Antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the sky is not clouded all day.

Oh! give me land where the bright diamond sand,
Throws its light from the glittering streams,
Where glideth along the graceful white swan,
Like the maid in her heavenly dreams.

A home! A home!

Oh! give me a gale of the Solomon vale,
Where the life streams with buoyancy flow;
Or the banks of the Beaver, where seldom if ever,
Any poisonous herbage doth grow.

A home! A home!

How often at night, when the heavens were bright,
With the light of the twinkling stars,
Have I stood here amazed, and asked as I gazed,
If their glory exceed that of ours.

A home! A home!

I love the wild flowers in this bright land of ours,
I love the wild curlew's shrill scream;
The bluffs and white rocks, and antelope flocks,
That graze on the mountains so green.

A home! A home!

The air is so pure and the breezes so free,
The zephyrs so balmy and light,
That I would not exchange my home here to range,
Forever in azures so bright.

A home! A home!

The reader will note that nowhere in Higley's verses is there the expression "home, home on the range." The final stanza, however, contains the line "I would not exchange my home here to range." In oral transmission of the words from one singer to another this apparently was converted to "I would not exchange my home on the range," which seems to have made it into a cowboy song and also supplied a good, solid title. The change was a great improvement, as were other changes made by other singers as the song went the rounds orally and underwent a bit of polishing prior to being captured in that San Antonio saloon by the crude recording machine of John Avery Lomax.

Daniel E. Kelley (1843–1905), a Civil War veteran, musician, and entertainer — and a Kansas neighbor to Dr. Higley — has been credited with setting the physician's poem to music.

The remaining footnote concerns Professor Lomax. In the last of his many published song collections—*Folk Song: U.S.A.*—issued in 1947 only a few months before he died at the age of eighty, he discussed "Home on the Range" with, it seems to me, just a touch of bitterness. After poking fun at Dr. Higley, he speaks of reading Homer Cory's newly published book *Corn Country*, in which the author describes a visit to Smith Center and an interview with Higley's son at Shawnee, Oklahoma, where Higley passed away in 1911. Then Lomax ends with this cryptic comment: "When I read Mr. Cory's story, I turned to my files. A folklorist learns to be skeptical of any story of 'ultimate origins.' There I found a letter which stated that 'Home on the Range' was sung in Texas in 1867. Where will the trail end? My guess is that it goes far back beyond Kansas and Texas, as well, into the big songbag which the folk have held in common for centuries."

John I. White *of Chatham, New Jersey, has been (in addition to a radio singer and recording artist) an executive of a map-making firm, a position he retired from in 1965. During the last ten years he has devoted his energies to writing.*

The Bantam of Ballarat

by Vivian Van Vick

HE WAS NO ORDINARY PROSPECTOR—the five-foot, hundred-pound Bantam of Ballarat. Each new strike he made he called a lalapaloosa. By the turn of the century, every desert man in the West knew of Shorty Harris and believed in his ability to "sniff out" ore.

Shorty made the California desert town of Ballarat his hangout and supply station because motherly, six-foot Bessie Hart lived there. Besides, it was in the nearby Panamint Mountains that he had made his first big strike. That was in 1892. Instead of developing his claim, he had sold his half for $7,000 and headed back to Ballarat to propose to Bessie. She turned him down, but dance-hall girls and the thirsty crowds in the saloons soon used up his small fortune.

"I'm not interested in working a mine, or even managing one," he told his Death Valley friends. "My fame will come from my ability to discover gold."

He got a new partner and went into the Black Mountains to the northeast. There Shorty found a rich copper deposit. Since he could neither read nor write, he sent his partner, Jud Decker, to file the claim in Independence.

This mining town was a forest of saloons, and Decker made the mistake of visiting one before filing the claim. A week later, when he remembered why he was there, someone else had reached the filing office ahead of him.

Shorty didn't complain. He went on prospecting—this time in the little-explored Bullfrog Hills, not far from Beatty, Nevada. Lucky again, he located a beautiful outcropping of real jewelry rock. He couldn't wait to broadcast the news of another bonanza.

The desert was electrified. The frantic rush began. Everyone in Tonopah headed for Bullfrog and was joined by the population of Goldfield in the race toward Shorty's claim. Overnight the gold-fevered town of Rhyolite was born.

Shorty never drove a pick into his rich claim. True to his nature, he sold his share for $400. His partner, Eddie Cross, sold his half a few weeks later for $60,000. Shorty didn't care. He reminded his friends that his aim was to *discover* gold.

That summer when the thermometer rose to 130 degrees in Rhyolite, Shorty persuaded Pete Auguerreberry to ride with him to Ballarat and cool off. On the way they spotted a promising outcropping of free gold. Shorty couldn't wait to get to Wildrose Spring to tell everyone of the great discovery.

Once again the stampede of the buckboards began. In ten days a new mining camp, Harrisburg, was flourishing. Knowing Shorty's weakness, the miners quickly bid for his claim. This one he sold for $10,000. But worth far more than that to Shorty was the unexpected fulfillment of his dream for fame. In Harrisburg he was considered to be an absolute genius at prospecting. Crowds clustered about him on the streets to hear every yarn; miners followed him whenever he loaded his burro.

When Shorty wearied of his role as gold-prophet, he interrupted this big, wonderful game by taking a trip east. He scattered his money in Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York as he had in the mining towns. In almost no time he was forced to ride the rods back to Ballarat, dead broke.

There were no more big strikes for Shorty. After 1915 he stopped prospecting altogether. Big Bessie had died. Rhyolite and Harrisburg had become ghost towns. Ballarat was now a skeleton of its former self. Half-starved and crippled with arthritis, he moved into an abandoned schoolhouse.

The frail little man made plans for his burial. Near Badwater, he selected a lonely desert gravesite next to that of his friend, James Dayton.

Death came to Shorty in 1934, and his friends dug the grave in the place he had specified. For his pint-size, they calculated a five-foot excavation would do. However, when the pallbearers tried to lower the casket, they saw that it was too long. Leaving one end in the hole, they lengthened the grave. But when they lowered the casket a second time, dry sand slipped back into the opening, making the coffin stand on a pronounced slope—head up, feet down.

Then they remembered. Shorty had wanted to be buried standing up, so that he "could be ready to step into Heaven." So they shoveled the sand over the slanting casket and placed an old ironing board on it as a grave marker.

Two years later, the Pacific Coast Borax Company provided a stone monument with a bronze inscription that read:

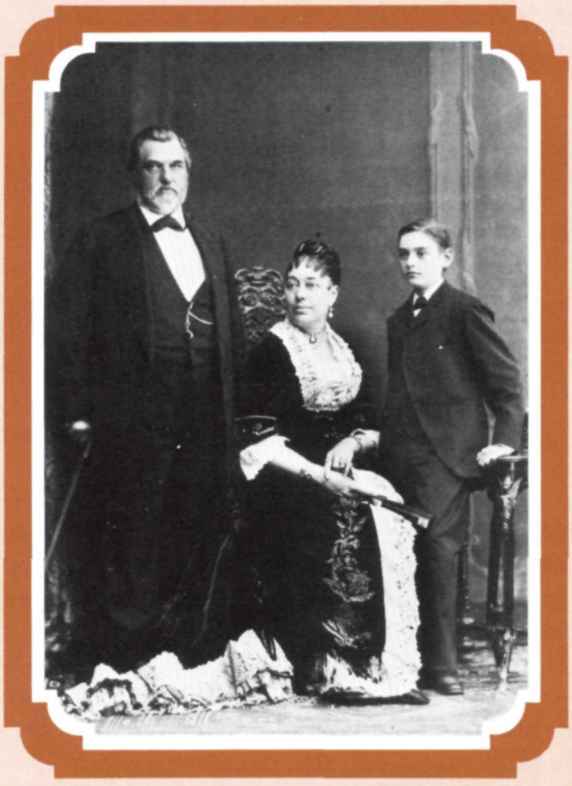
"Bury me beside Jim Dayton in the valley we loved. Above me write: Here lies Shorty Harris, a single-blanket jackass prospector." Epitaph requested by Shorty (Frank) Harris beloved gold hunter 1856–1934. Here Jas. Dayton, Pioneer, perished, 1898.

Shorty Harris represented the last of the great desert pioneers. Not only has he the unique distinction of being buried standing up, but he shares the record for reposing in the deepest and hottest gravesite in America—285 feet below sea level. Shorty would have called it a real lalapaloosa!

Vivian Van Vick *of Citrus Heights, California, is author of* Rocket of the Comstock, *a biography of John W. Mackay.*

Flanked by two cronies and peering from under a battered fedora, the little man who prided himself as a "single blanket jackass prospector" sets outs to strike it rich one more time.

DANE COOLIDGE COLLECTION, ARIZONA HISTORICAL FOUNDATION



The Stanfords: the "Governor," his wife, Jane, and Leland Stanford, Jr.

Monument to Elegance

Leland Stanford's Nob Hill Mansion

by Gunther W. Nagel

LELAND STANFORD'S San Francisco mansion—once called "the finest private residence in America"—played a conspicuous role in the city's Gilded Age. Its beginning was as bright as its end was tragic, with a mere thirty years of elegance between.

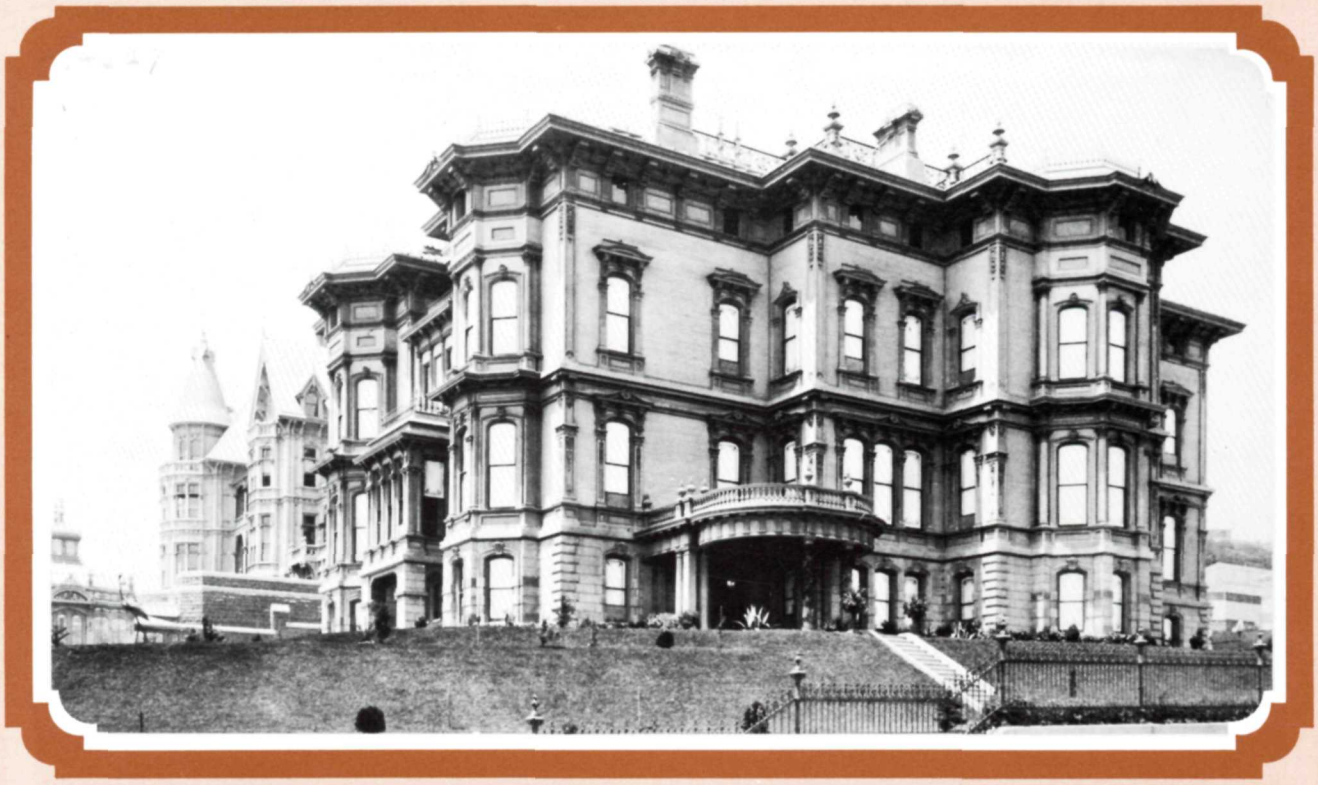
Of the original Nob Hill Nabobs, as the plutocrats of the hilltop were dubbed by those of lower station, the names of railroad magnates Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, and Collis P. Huntington are perpetuated in the grand hotels that occupy the sites where their mansions once stood. Today, all that remains of the Stanford home is the massive stone wall that once supported its foundations on the steep downhill side. The steel-gray granite of which this great retaining wall is fashioned—freighted down from the Sierra a century ago—has become as much a part of Nob Hill as it once was of the mountains from whence it was hewn.

In 1873 the head offices of the Central Pacific Railroad, of which Leland Stanford was president, were transferred from Sacramento to San Francisco. The following year the Stanford family—the Governor, as he preferred to be called in memory of his position in California government in 1861–63; his wife, Jane; and their son, Leland De Witt, then six years old—rented a house on the corner of Pine and Powell streets while their future home atop Nob Hill was being built. From their temporary residence a block away the family could watch every stage of its construction. As the work progressed, no one was more fascinated than young Leland.

He accompanied his parents east in 1876, where they arranged for the interior appointments for the mansion. While visiting the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, they were particularly impressed by the Chinese exhibit and tried to purchase some of the furniture and works of art. The Chinese government, however, generously insisted on presenting the family with many of the finest pieces as gifts.

As befitted its wealthy owner, Governor Stanford's new home was large (it contained some fifty rooms), attractive (the exterior was Italian in style), and expensive (it reputedly cost $2,000,000 to complete). Its graceful bow windows looked out on one of the finest views in the city. Marble steps led in a graceful curve from California Street to a portico shielding massive double front doors of carved solid mahogany and rosewood. It was all a far cry from Leland Stanford's first California abode—a rough-timbered but well-stocked mining camp store, where at night his wooden counter had become his cot, his boots his pillow, and a buffalo hide his blanket.

When the doors of the Stanford mansion closed behind an arriving guest, a scene of splendor greeted him. Left outside the thick walls were the hurry and bustle of the thriving city, the warning jingle of the gripman's bell as his cable car crossed



Occupying fully half a city block and containing the most costly furnishings in the West, Leland Stanford's fifty-room mansion was a focus of San Francisco society during the 1870s and '80s.

Powell Street, and the rattle of the endless cable in its metal slot. Soft light filtering down through an amber dome high overhead gave an aura of oriental mystery to signs of the zodiac inlaid in black marble on the stone floor of the spacious rotunda.

The sumptious decorations and furnishings in the mansion's high-ceilinged rooms conformed to no single period or nation, but were rather a variegated collection of different treasures from many lands and times, in which reminders of early California were conspicuously absent. The principal rooms opened through wide, silently sliding doors into a great hallway that ended in a conservatory with a sparkling fountain surrounded by exotic plants and blooms. The "India" reception room had furnishings upholstered in heavy black satin with embroidered insets depicting the culture of that ancient land. Across the hall was the "Pompeiian" room, where Mrs. Stanford preferred to receive guests; its frescoes had been painted by well-known Italian artists. A slab of onyx, reputedly cut from a defective pillar in St. Peter's, Rome, was the central feature of the room, and on it stood a box of flawless malachite, whose vivid green contrasted with the soft colors of the onyx. The box held pamphlets listing the paintings and statues in the adjoining art gallery. An electric orchestrion, which rendered operatic arias and other selections, was played frequently during formal dinners in the adjoining dining room, which could accommodate as many as thirty-six persons arounds its lavishly appointed table. After dinner, the guests could stroll across the hall to the billiard room.

A large library opened directly into the rotunda. Its paneling of solid mahogany inlaid with rosewood was handsomely carved in the baroque style and its imposing mantelpiece with several panels of bronze bas-reliefs was flanked by busts of Byron and Milton. On the ceiling prominent artists had portrayed men of accomplishment whom Stanford admired, including Morse, Franklin, Stephenson, and Fulton.

Stanford once said that his whole life had been influenced by the books he had read. The library, with its quiet elegance and air of studious pursuit, testified to this sentiment. A revolving bookcase with an exquisite bronze of Poisey at its apex stood near a wide bay window overlooking the city and the waterfront. Low bookcases lining the walls were filled with more than three thousand volumes. History was well represented by the works of Mommsen, Gibbon, Macaulay, Prescott, and other prominent historians. There was a large section of volumes dealing with China. British and American novelists and poets were represented both in regular editions and prized first editions such as those of Ruskin, each book bearing the author's signature. Science, philosophy, and reference works rounded out the collection, and the whole repre-

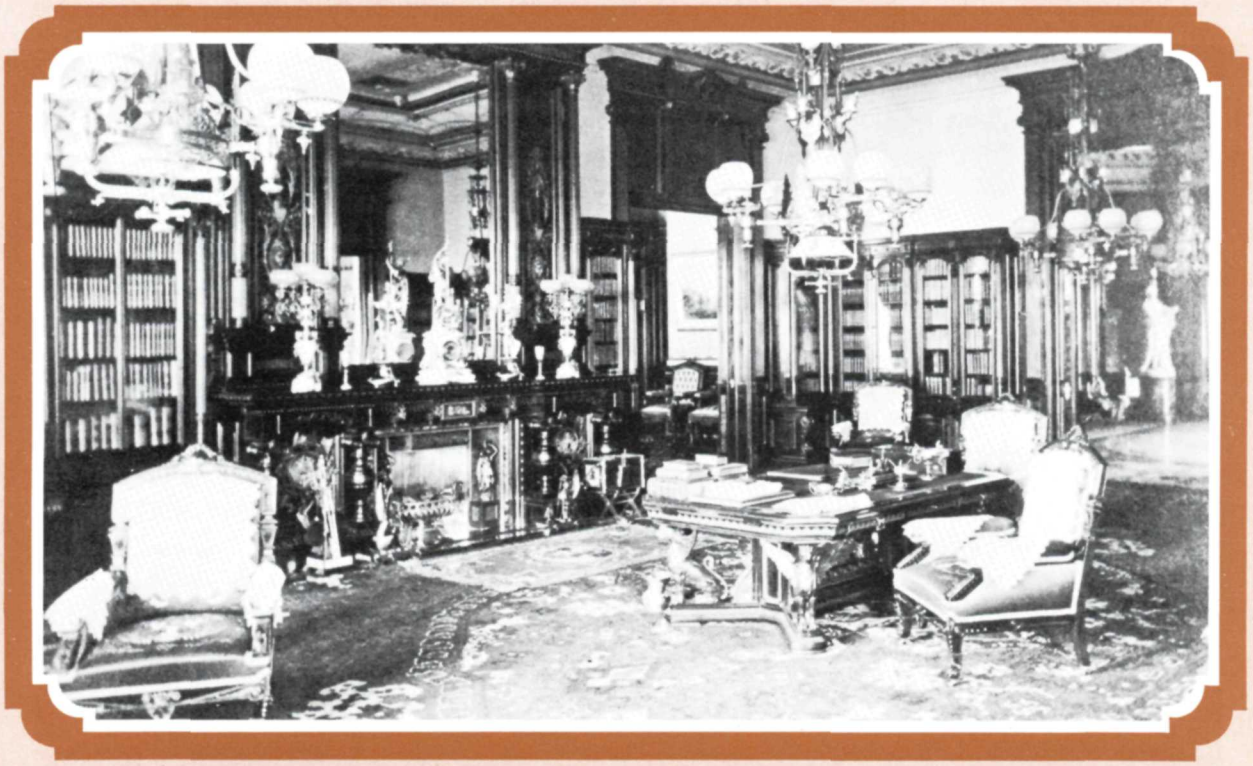
PHOTOGRAPHS THESE PAGES BY PIONEER CALIFORNIA PHOTOGRAPHER EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

Entering through mahogany and rosewood doors, visitors to the Stanford home found themselves in a spacious central rotunda, softly illuminated from an amber dome high overhead.

The mansion's huge dining room—host to lavish dinners for the wealthy, influential, and famous—contained the finest silver, china, and crystal that money could buy.

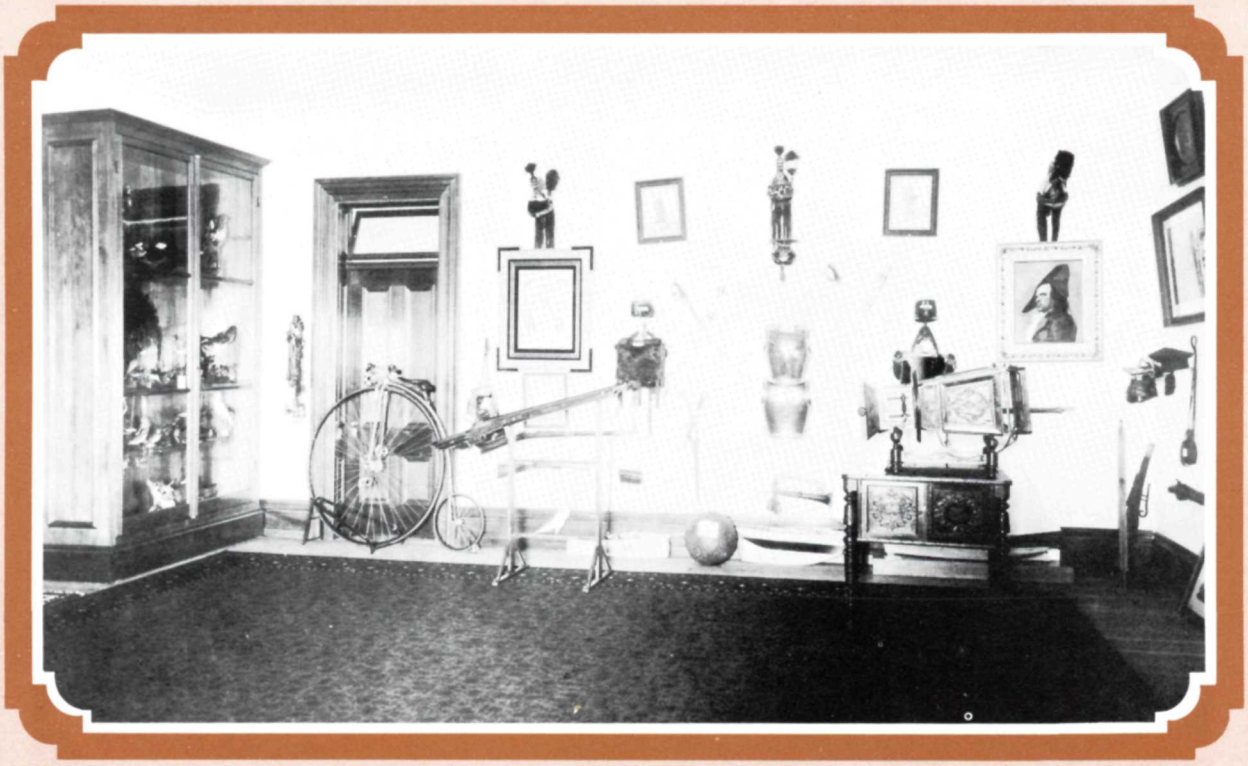
Allegorical lunette paintings by Italian artists dominated the second-floor rotunda. "Asia" is visible in this view; others included "Europe," "Africa," and "America."

Outstripping even the splendors of its namesake, the "Pompeiian" reception room boasted frescoes on every inch of wall and ceiling plus cream-satin-embroidered furnishings.



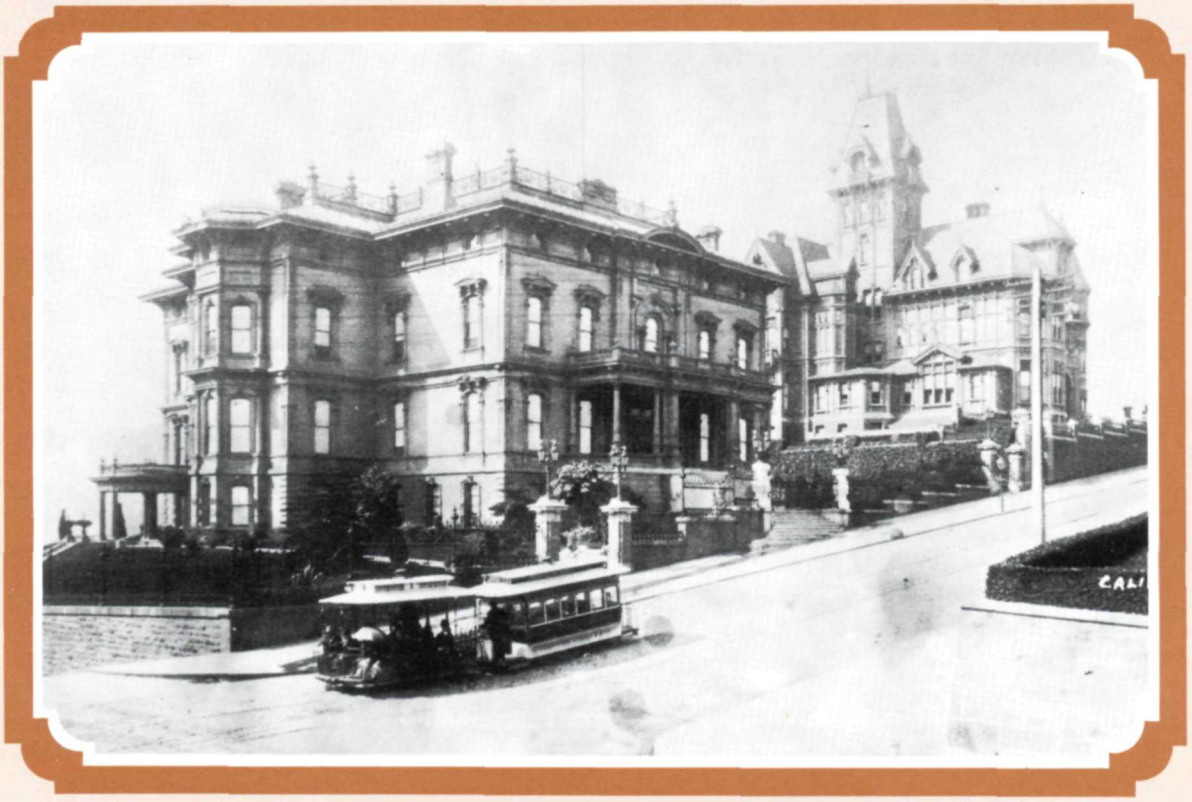
In his library Leland Stanford pondered the writings and deeds of great men. Here also he presented the founding grant for Leland Stanford Junior University to its first board of trustees.

An electric orchestrion gently playing opera music enhanced the beauty of Stanford's private art gallery, said to contain the finest paintings and statuary west of New York City.



Leland, Jr., appropriated several rooms on the third floor of the mansion to house his growing collection of artifacts, including weaponry picked up by him on the field of Waterloo.

A contaminated bottle of Poland water on Mrs. Stanford's bedside table brought her no physical harm but caused great mental anguish during the last few weeks of her life.



California Street cable cars rattle past the mansion in 1880 at the height of its glory. Fellow multimillionaire Mark Hopkins's home occupies the adjoining lot.

sented a late-nineteenth-century "gentleman's library" at its best.

Amidst all this magnificence was a simply furnished sitting room with rocking chairs, sofas, footstools, writing tables, and a piano which Jane Stanford enjoyed playing. This was the liveliest and happiest room in the house, where the whole family preferred to gather in the evenings. Often included were Leland's and Jane's mothers and assorted brothers and sisters of the two families, for whom the mansion was frequently home.

Bedrooms occupied the second floor, while several spare rooms on the third floor were turned over to young Leland for his boyhood collections of miscellany, a hobby which soon became a serious quest for valuable historical artifacts and memorabilia. Below the first floor, but still above ground level because of the slope of the hill, was a spacious ballroom. Also on this level were the servants' quarters (with their own dining room overlooking the city), a pastry room, kitchen, laundry, fuel room, and wine cellar—all less glamorous than the rooms above, but vital for maintaining the vast establishment.

Though Leland Stanford contributed much to the development of mechanical means of transportation—including his railroad empire, the California Street cable line, and the Market Street railway—he did not forsake the more elegant era of high-stepping horses, carriages, and uniformed coachmen. His stables and carriage house, located just across the street from his Nob Hill home, housed blooded stock, burnished harnesses, and glistening equipage.

Receptions and formal dinners were a frequent feature of life in the Stanford mansion, and guests included leaders in society, industry, government, and the armed forces, as well as prominent visitors from foreign lands. These lavish affairs brought public criticism as well as praise, both of which Leland and Jane accepted with good grace.

The Nob Hill home had barely begun to be lived in when Stanford purchased the land thirty miles to the south that became the Palo Alto Stock Farm and, eventually, the site of Stanford University. The city residence, however, remained the family headquarters. It was there, in a hardwood-paneled schoolroom, that young Leland recited his lessons with a private tutor. Despite the seeming handicap of immense wealth, he developed into a bright, likeable lad, as numerous surviving letters of his own and others bear witness. A growing love and admiration for his father caused him to change his name from Leland De Witt Stanford to Leland Stanford, Jr. His untimely death from typhoid fever during a family visit to Europe in 1884, just short of his sixteenth birthday, left his parents devastated.

Youth and jollity had flown from the mansion, but Leland

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Magnificence turned to rubble — only the mansion's stone retaining wall, foundations, and a tottering chimney remain after the great earthquake and fire of April 18–21, 1906.

and Jane were not the sort to give way to permanent despair. For the moment the sumptuous galleries and reception halls could not be viewed with the same delight as before. The thought-filled library became the heart and soul of the mansion, and it was there that a significant event in the molding of character and lives of future generations of young men and women took place.

Out of deep sorrow at losing their son came the inspiration of establishing a great university. "The children of California shall be our children," Stanford proclaimed. In the mansion's library on November 14, 1885, the founding grant of the Leland Stanford Junior University was read to its newly-appointed trustees and announced to the world.

With the unexpected death of her husband from a heart attack in 1893, only two years after the university opened, the Gilded Age in which Jane Stanford had lived so long came to an abrupt end. As the surviving donor, it became her sole responsibility to complete the momentous task she and Leland together had set for themselves. This she accomplished despite an ensuing financial panic, the worst the country had yet seen; a government suit against her husband's estate; and countless other difficulties and frustrations, large and small. The mansion's library continued to be the setting for trustee meetings, at which Jane delivered several formal addresses, outlining her desires as to further construction and her hopes and aims for the future of the university.

In 1903, Jane Stanford handed over full control of the university to the trustees and was immediately voted president of the board. She might then have relaxed and begun to enjoy the fruits of her labor, but for a distressing experience that befell her in her San Francisco home. Though no positive proof of foul play ever came to light, Jane became convinced that someone had tried to poison her. Seeking rest and peace of mind, she sailed for Hawaii. For a short time her health and spirits improved, but the end was near. On February 28, 1905, after a drive and picnic, she suffered a heart attack and died.

For a time the great house on California Street stood silent and forlorn. Then suddenly, on April 18, 1906, fate brought the mansion's fading era to a dramatic conclusion. Tremors from the Great San Francisco Earthquake reduced much of the structure to ruins; the fire that followed consumed the rest. Only Stanford's granite wall, seared but defiant, stood fast on Nob Hill.

Gunther W. Nagel *is an emeritus clinical professor of surgery of the Stanford University School of Medicine, whose former hobbies—history and writing—have become his vocation. Dr. Nagel's most recent book,* From the Pen of a Pioneer: The Life and Letters of Jane Lathrop Stanford, *will be published next month.*

The Poetry of History

by C. L. Sonnichsen

HARDLY ANYBODY with even a minimal reading background would argue against the proposition that poetry and history are natural opposites—as different as moonlight and money. Poetry is emotional and exciting and fanciful. History is dull and dry and factual. Poetry is poetry and history is history, and never the twain shall meet.

But the truth is they have much in common. Poetry may get along without history (though the psalms of David and the works of Sir Walter Scott might raise a question), but history without poetry is dead, or in a state of suspended animation.

To state the case properly, one needs to understand his terms. History, of course, is no problem. We all know that history is what everyone agrees to believe about any portion of the human past. Poetry is a little harder to define. To Alexander Pope it was the neat and skillful fitting of familiar ideas into metrical patterns—"what oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed." Since the time of the Romantics, however, the emphasis has shifted from the mind to the heart. "Feeling is all," said Goethe, and that has been the poet's creed ever since.

Poetry starts with feeling, and feeling shapes expression in two special ways. First, under stress of feeling, language begins to become rhythmical ("Darling, I love you! Will you marry me?"). In anger, love, or sorrow, the accents tend to become stronger and to come with greater regularity. As a result, the language of emotion approaches the bounds of meter. In the second place, when our feelings are involved, we reach for metaphor. The Imagists considered a straightforward statement meaningless and insisted that only by seeing one thing in terms of another can human beings communicate. They were right, in the sense that one good image is worth a hundred words. If you tell a man his table manners are bad, he knows what you mean. But if you tell him he is a hog, he feels what you mean. And that explains why figurative language—images, metaphors, connotative or pictorial words—are the lifeblood of the poem.

Everybody feels deeply about something and is therefore a potential poet. To many, perhaps most, young men, the female of the species is the most beautiful and moving of all things, though some can be found whose chief delight is a fast automobile or a good horse. For some people the sight of growing things is a supreme pleasure; a seed catalogue contains more pure poetry for them than the works of William Shakespeare. Some have a passion for the long road; some for money; some for God. For a scholar the objective of all desire is a sabbatical year with a grant from HEW, an important research project, and a fine library in which to complete it. These things in combination are for him what the heavenly Jerusalem is to a saint. They bring him to the verge of poetry.

The main difference between a poet and a scholar is that the poet is impelled to communicate his feelings, whereas the scholar is usually content to convey information. For a man to be called a poet, he has to have deeper and stronger feelings than ordinary men and a gift of expression which helps him to communicate them. If he is without these gifts, he is a maker of verses and not a poet at all.

He can be a poet, of course, without writing in verse. Some of the best poetry of our century can be found in the prose works of Thomas Wolfe and William Faulkner. A selection of Wolfe's chapters has even been assembled and published as poetry under the title *The Face of a Nation*. Charles Dickens's famous description of the death of Little Nell, written (he said) with tears streaming down his cheeks, comes close to blank verse and has been so transcribed. It would not be hard to make a case for the view that the best poems of the last hundred years or so have been written in prose and the worst of them have been in verse.

This can all be brought home to the historian. After all he is human, too, and has his own deep feelings. In fact he probably becomes a historian because of those feelings. He begins his career because he enjoys looking through the windows of the past. He is curious about the deeds and passions of men and women who are now dust and ashes; he loves the drums and trumpets of long ago. He is like the youth in the story of Germelshausen who finds himself in the forgotten village on the one day when the inhabitants awaken from their century-long sleep. He likes the feeling of discovery—almost of creation—as he pushes farther and farther back into Shakespeare's "dark backward and abysm of time." The towers of Babylon rise once more. The armies of Napoleon march before him. The white-topped wagons creak and strain on the Santa Fe Trail.

For a young man with this bent, a great library is the Earthly Paradise. I still remember how it felt, many years ago, to leave the sunlight of Harvard Square every morning

and enter the dim world of Widener Library. I can still recall the rich, musty, faintly spicy odor of old leather bindings, and I suggest that under some circumstances book sniffing can be as enjoyable as girl watching or participating in the gusto of Schlitz. A historian, at least at the start of his studies, can feel this sort of poetry like any other man.

Many people who are not in the history business feel it too. All ancestor worshipers—genealogists, heraldry buffs, the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, to name a few—feel the poetry of the past. Biographers and literary antiquarians know the sensation in some degree. Even devotees of the Alley Oop comic strip are fascinated by Oop's time travels. Collectors and relic hunters of all varieties are part of the picture. If any of these things seems true or important to us—if we are capable of excitement about anything at all—to that extent we are potential poets.

THE SAD PART OF IT is the tendency of these fine feelings to evaporate as the budding historian moves into his chosen path. In a few years he is likely to become dry and dull and a weariness unto student flesh. One asks oneself, Why are there so many bright young faces in the graduate seminar and so few bright old faces at the history conventions? The answer is that we get caught up in the machinery of our business. Wordsworth's ideas about childhood and maturity apply here. We come into the world, he says, "trailing clouds of glory"—but with time the glory disappears. "Shades of the prison house begin to close / About the growing boy," and he "moves farther from the east." Substitute "seminar" for "prison house" and the situation becomes clear.

Our training is at least partly to blame. The demand for objectivity and for precise documentation begins to squeeze the joy out of the young scholar's work and thought. His imagination is handcuffed. He can't make even a tiny joke or a play on words. He must avoid the first person, thus making sure that the historian is left out of history. It is as if Moses had brought down a Historian's Commandment from Mount Sinai: Be thou dull!

The consequences of living in this academic straitjacket begin to appear when the historian mistakes facts for truth. Truth is the sum of many facts, but in this case the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Truth is the forest and the facts are trees which keep us from seeing it. Eugene Manlove Rhodes was commenting on this form of myopia when he remarked that it takes three facts to make a truth. To approach reality, a researcher must draw some conclusions, make some deductions, think about the significance of the facts he has dug up—and this is what our education discourages us from doing. We learn that the objective historian does not make value judgements and that it is a sin to "editorialize." So we look at the trees.

Another explanation for this special sort of negative behavior is our need for security—security from criticism. We trade our freedom for it. We know what can happen to us if we are caught in an error, and anyone who has attended a historical convention and seen an established scholar make mincemeat out of a junior member of the guild knows how much blood a man can lose and still live. Hell hath no fury like an authority on military history who catches a young scholar quartering the wrong military unit at Fort Bowie in 1877. Scholars may be gentle, kindly men in most of the relationships of their lives, but when they are patrolling the boundaries of their little kingdoms, they shoot trespassers first and ask questions later. Consequently the budding historian often finds himself in the position of the man in the parable who had one talent and buried it for safekeeping.

Even scholars need to remember that there is no profit without risk—there is no real history unless a man will ask what it all adds up to, will venture an opinion, will try to throw some light on the array of facts he has assembled. He will never be Emerson's Man Thinking otherwise—and of all people, the historian should be Man Thinking.

Unfortunately it is the same in other disciplines as in history. The joy and the personal rewards go out as professionalism creeps in. Shakespeare specialists get so busy counting something that they cease to enjoy Shakespeare, and Beowulf scholars, according to Tolkien's famous essay, "Beowulf, the Monsters and the Critics," are in the same situation.

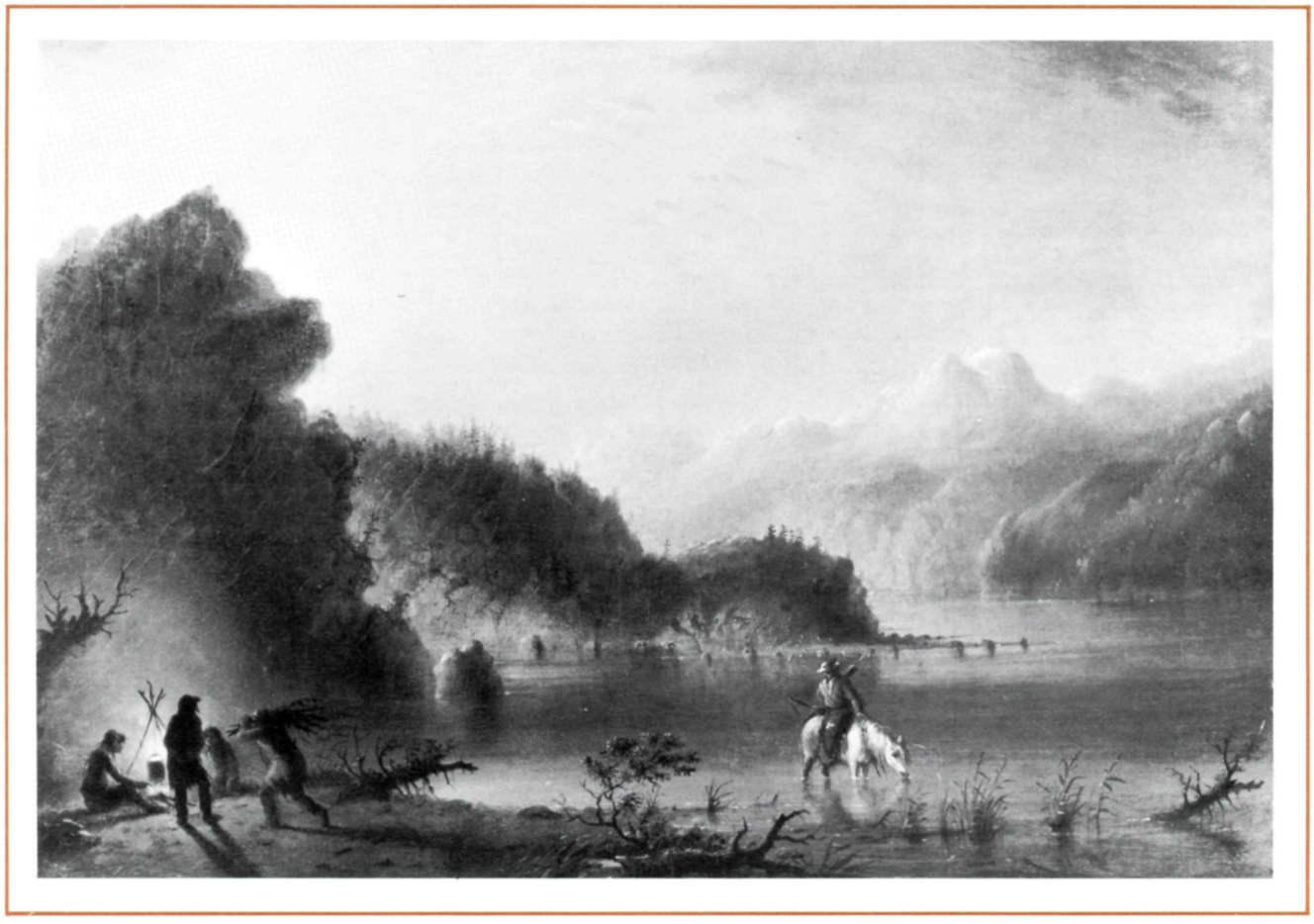
The ironical part of it is that we richly reward a historical writer who disregards the taboos and puts the poetry back into history. We have done it for Irving Stone, Bruce Catton, Samuel Eliot Morison, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Bernard DeVoto, to name a few. They do not prove that every student of history should think in blank verse, but they do show that the imagination need not be left out of historical writing entirely.

The question now arises: How do you get the imagination in? The problem solves itself, at least partially, if a historical writer is excited enough about what he is doing. But some concrete suggestions can be made. It comes down to this: Can you document your poetry—your metaphors, your vivid language? A conscientious historian will not invent conversations—but if he knows what was said, he can put it into direct discourse. If he can find out what kind of day it was when the Indians attacked Custer at the Little Big Horn, he can talk about the weather. If he has been there and knows what the country looks like, he can describe it. If he knows the chief character pretty well, he can explain his feelings and motives. If he has thought about causes and consequences, he can analyze them. If he wants to communicate feeling, these are openings which he can use without violating the decencies of scholarly writing.

Twentieth century writers and critics seem to be the first to have any doubts about the role of feeling and emotion in historical writing. Our predecessors were all for it. Listen to

Continued on page 59

"IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS": JOSLYN ART MUSEUM, OMAHA



No artist has better portrayed mountain life than Alfred Jacob Miller; here he pictures a trappers' overnight camp.

World of the Mountain Man

A slave to his calling but knowing no master, the free trapper enjoyed an unrestrained but precarious existence

by Donald G. Pike

THE ANNUAL SUMMER RENDEZVOUS, or Rocky Mountain Fair, was the most colorful distinguishing characteristic of the American fur trade that evolved during the 1820s and 1830s on the western slope of the continental divide. This congress of trappers, traders, and Indians was a necessary adaptation that the land demanded, and in the course of making business possible, rendezvous also made it memorable. But to the mountain man who trailed the beaver, the fur business was one part rendezvous to eleven parts hard work and survival. The festive surrealism of the July debauchery stood in stark contrast to the compelling reality of living from August to June in a wilderness that sometimes seemed deliberately malevolent. It was during these eleven months that the essence of the fur trade was to be found, the time when the mountain man earned his title.

A great many of the trappers who fanned out through Rocky Mountain beaver country did their hunting in company brigades, working under the direction of master mountain men like Jim Bridger, David Jackson, Tom Fitzpatrick, and William Sublette. The brigades were large, occasionally numbering as many as sixty trappers, and were therefore somewhat unwieldy. But they offered the distinct advantage of being less susceptible to Indian attack—even the seemingly fearless Blackfeet hesitated to take on a score or more of

well-armed mountain men. For actual trapping the brigade was split into smaller groups of three or four men, each group trapping out a small stream for several days before rejoining the main body. The small bands were vulnerable but necessary for unobtrusive operations.

In contrast to the company brigades, most of the free trappers traveled and hunted in pairs or groups of three and four, counting on stealth and increased mobility to avoid undesirable encounters with the Indians. A few genuine misanthropes like Bill Williams eschewed companionship entirely, rambling the mountains in solitude, responsible only for themselves, not risking the chance that a companion's error would put them in danger. Others, like Edward Rose and Jim Beckwourth, went completely native and spent much of their time living and hunting with their adopted bands of Crows. By disposition and conditioning most mountain men lived, looked, and thought so much like Indians that the transition was hardly noticed. But no matter how he traveled to the trapping grounds, every mountain man evolved as a self-contained, self-sustaining complex of equipment, skills, and sensitivities necessary to survival and hunting success.

The familiar figure of the buckskin-clad trapper was an image born in necessity and not universally true. When they were available, woolen pants and shirt were preferred—wool was warmer and stayed fairly warm even when wet—but a few months' hard use usually shredded the fabric. Buckskin was more durable and turned a thorn better, but it wasn't very warm, stretched into sagging folds when wet, shrunk too tight when drying, and hardened into a stiff, abrasive annoyance that chafed every joint. But it was available, and often a trapper could purchase his hunting-shirt, leggings, and moccasins from Indian women, thereby avoiding the bother of making them himself. A heavy blanket capote usually completed his wardrobe, serving double duty as overcoat and bedroll.

While his garb often reflected what was available, his other equipment was selected to make him self-sufficient; little was carried that was not absolutely essential for survival. In his belt he carried a small hatchet and a heavy skinning knife, both of which could function either as a tool or weapon. A favored knife of the later years was manufactured on the banks of the Green River in Massachusetts and stamped "GR" on the blade just below the handle. From it derived the trapper's expression "up to Green River," meaning to sink a blade clear to the manufacturer's stamp on the hilt, or more broadly, to go all the way in any endeavor. Also dangling from his belt was an awl for making repairs to his clothes, a mold for running rifle balls, and a wire worm for cleaning heavily leaded and powder-caked barrels.

Around his neck hung his "possibles sack," containing pipe and tobacco, "medicine" for baiting traps, a few spare parts for the lockwork of his rifle, and maybe even a Jew's harp. Another pouch for lead balls and flints hung at his side, along with a powder horn. When he could afford and obtain one, the preferred weapon was a heavy, half-stocked rifle made by the Hawken brothers of St. Louis, normally firing a half-ounce ball of about .54 caliber, fast enough to be reliably lethal within a range of about two hundred yards. While Hawken rifles were generally accounted the best, a trapper a thousand miles from St. Louis often had to get by with something less—even settling for the smaller caliber smooth-bore fusees made by the British for the Indian trade.

The mountain man's pack animal carried a sack of traps, a quantity of flour and salt, perhaps a kettle, and usually some tobacco and trade goods for that chance meeting with a band of Indians who hadn't quite decided whether they were hostile or not. Some trappers favored mules as draft animals, mainly because they were harder for Indians to run off in a raid, and a lot of Indians wouldn't go out of their way to steal one. Horses were reassuring—they were fast if you had to make a lightning getaway—but as often as not were the very magnets that drew hostiles in the first place.

But the mountain man was more than his animals and gear: he was a creature in tune with the world he inhabited, knowing what to do and when to do it, and equipped with the skills to carry it out. Alone in the wilderness, he was his own cook, surgeon, soldier, wrangler, guide, seamstress, veterinarian, and gunsmith, and he had to be competent in each role. When trapping, he either did it right or caught no beaver and lost his traps in the bargain; either he knew how to care for his stock, or he found himself afoot; and if he failed to protect camp-goods and cache properly, the wolverines and grizzlies spread his pelts and food from horizon to horizon. He had to be able to read a track and from it divine direction, speed, number, and the relative worth or danger of its maker to him. A twig bent out of place, a hawk startled from its roost, a scent on the wind, or the gathering of clouds at sunset might all hold meaning for him—he had to decide which to heed or ignore. When he found himself in the middle of nowhere without gun, knife, flint, or horse, and usually with Indians howling down his neck—as John Colter, Hugh Glass, William Sublette, or Osborne Russell did on various occasions—he had to be able to feed, warm, and defend himself with nothing more than bare hands and his wits.

A man who chose the mountain life had to be judicious, for if he tried to substitute muscle for thought once too often—if he went "up to Green River" when the knife should have been in the sheath—he would be nothing more than a memory come next rendezvous. He had to be able to judge when not to push his luck with the weather, or how badly he really wanted grizzly meat. Where Indians were concerned, he had to decide whether to run, bluster, or attack; to most mountain men a fight avoided was a victory won. Because Indians would seldom fight unless the odds were decidedly in their

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This article is adapted from material in Rendezvous Country *by David Muench and Donald G. Pike, being released this month by the American West Publishing Company.*

"SETTING TRAPS FOR BEAVER"; NORTHERN NATURAL GAS COMPANY COLLECTION, JOSLYN ART MUSEUM, OMAHA

The watercolors on the next six pages are all by Miller; this one shows a pair of mountain men working through the half-light of dusk to set their traps, wading the chill waters into a lifetime of rheumatism.

favor, trappers usually found it wise to avoid a band on the prod. Occasionally mountain men would pick a fight with Indians—out of vengeance, a need to "teach the pesky varmints a lesson," or just for the hell of it (as at the Pierre's Hole rendezvous in 1832, when the revelers raced out to scrap with a migrating band of Gros Ventres who were minding their own business)—but they were always careful to employ the Indians' tactic. A man learned from whomever he could in the mountains.

It was a demanding life, and for many a brief one. Much of the time it seemed to be a life of feast or famine, a rule by extremes in every aspect; it was either plenty of fat cow or starvation; incredible cold or stupefying heat; when the hunting was good there were beaver to burn, and then luck would turn and they lost not only the pelts, but traps, horses, and guns as well. It was not a world the meek would inherit, for only the strong, the alert, and the adaptable survived. Those trappers who survived several decades invariably carried the scars of fights and mishaps, the limps and twisted limbs of broken bones not properly set, and the rheumatism and arthritis that were the reward for thousands of hours spent wading in icy streams.

As WITH every other creature of this wilderness, the cycle of the mountain man's life was governed by the seasons. He may have been the most efficient and adaptable predator at large, but like the grizzly, the wolf, the hawk, or the weasel, his existence was timed to the rhythm of the elements. The weather controlled both him and his prey, dictating when to hunt and when to hole up, offering comfort and abundance at times, and at others testing his mettle as it withered or froze. In rendezvous country the land and its weather were the forces to be reckoned with, and a man had to accommodate himself to them.

When the yearly rendezvous began to break up, usually by mid-July, the warmth of summer still lay heavy on the land. Unless a trapper intended to hunt far to the north above the Missouri, or south toward the Spanish villages of Taos and Santa Fe, or even to seek out the coastal lands near Pacific waters, he did not need to hurry. In summer's heat the beaver had shed the rich coat that made a prime, high-priced pelt. The trapper would have to wait for the returning cold before the animals began to put on the soft underfur that was ideal for felting. In brigades, in pairs, or alone, the mountain men began a leisurely return to favored hunting grounds.

WALTERS ART GALLERY, BALTIMORE

"The Lost Green-Horn." Abroad in a featureless plain, a tenderfoot was at the mercy of his own initiative. It was the Rocky Mountain College, and a passing grade was getting to see the sun rise again.

Wherever they went, they headed for the high country. It was there that the cold returned the earliest and the pelts would be the most valuable. The trapper followed rivers, creeks, and tiny streams, seeking out the mountain meadows and gentle gradients rich in aspen and willow where beaver liked to build their dams and lodges or to nest under the banks. A single hunter usually worked a half-dozen traps, so he looked for concentrations of animals rather than the lone beaver on four miles of creek.

Trapping was a refined art, but one that knew no preordained, inflexible method. The circumstances of stream bed, bank, water force and volume, surrounding foliage, prevalent predators, and local climate combined to create an almost infinite variety of situations—each one taxing the hunter's skill in setting his traps. The mountain man preferred to set his line in the evening, when the gathering darkness offered a measure of safety from Indians. He looked first for runways, where beaver habitually entered and left the water, but most of his sets involved baiting a trap and drawing the beaver to it. Working in the half-gloom of dusk, the trapper forsook the relative comfort of the banks for the chilling cold of the stream, because the water masked the man-scent that would warn off those supremely wary animals. Wading to a suitable site, he set the trap about four inches under the surface, scraping and shaping the creek bottom for proper depth and freedom of action for the trap jaws. When baiting, a succulent willow wand was stabbed into the bank and arched out over the trap; daubed with castoreum, the extract of beaver sexual glands, it was an enticing attraction. Rising to sniff or taste the twig, a beaver's feet drove down onto the trip-pan, and he was caught.

But snaring a beaver and keeping it could often be two different matters. Despite the fact that traps weighed upwards of five pounds, a healthy adult could drag one onto land, gnaw off the clamped foot, and escape. To prevent this the mountain man ran the trap chain into deep water, driving in a dry stake to secure it. A beaver thus prevented from taking the trap to dry ground would dive in terror for the remembered security of deep water, where the weight of trap and chain would hold him until he drowned. If his struggles pulled the stake loose, it would float, marking the trap's location.

The trapper returned to his line in the half-light of dawn, retrieved his traps, and quickly skinned the animals before

BOTH PAGES: WALTERS ART GALLERY, BALTIMORE

"Indian Hospitality." In the red man's country a trapper took his friends where he found them, learned to understand their values, and respected their rites and rituals if he was to walk their land.

returning to camp. During the daylight hours he faced the task of dressing the pelts. This was a dull chore that nonetheless required care and was sufficiently time-consuming to effectively limit his traps to six. The skin had to be scraped clean of all tissue and membrane, and then stretched on a willow hoop to dry for several days before being stamped with the trapper's mark, folded, and packed. The furs had to be protected from downpours—a difficult task when living in the open—and periodically aired and shaken. If a hunter worked with a brigade this dressing of his furs was often handled by greenhorns or camp-tenders. If he maintained a squaw, it was her job. Otherwise he did it himself.

The trapper continued his work through the fall, all the while hunting his own meat, cooking, relocating camp constantly (as much to avoid detection by Indians as to find beaver), maintaining his gear, and always on guard against the mistake that would leave him injured, afoot, unarmed, or bald. The streams were worked down from the higher elevations as winter approached, until by November most of the streams were frozen, the beaver had taken to their lodges beneath the ice, and it was time for a mountain man to find his own winter lodge.

Brigades normally hung together for the winter, seeking out the lowlands and protected valleys where the wind's force might be cut, feed would remain for their mounts, and game to fill the winter pot would congregate. A man with an Indian wife would occasionally seek out her people for winter companionship, but just as often they would find him, moving in to share his robes, eat his food, and make an uproar of his hibernation. He could mend clothing and repair traps, or watch his woman do it while she gabbled incessantly in a language he might or might not fully understand. Responsibilities were few, and his only chore, if he had a squaw, was to keep meat in the pot. Sometimes camp would have to be moved to keep his animals in feed, but real dedication was given to resting his body and catching up on his sleep. Winter was a time for lounging by the fire and contentedly watching the smoke tan the lodge-skins for next year's leggings and moccasins.

All too soon winter would begin to break; the howling winds would be replaced by chinooks that swept the snow and chill from the valleys. The lower waters would reappear as the ice stretched, popped, and rumbled in the thaw, and it would be time to return to trapping, for now was when the

"Escape from the Blackfeet." Unless the odds were undeniably in his favor, the mountain man would adopt the Indian tactic of running away to fight another day, particularly if the opposition were the implacable Blackfeet.

fur lay heaviest on the beaver, cultivated by a winter of chill waters. The hunters followed the thaw during the spring, trapping higher into the mountains until the fur got thin and it was time to find their way to rendezvous.

DESPITE ITS UTILITY, rendezvous became more than a convenient means for trade and supply; it grew, in time, into a frontier pageant that strutted its way into the national heritage, a brief, bold fiber in the cultural tapestry of the American experience. Rendezvous was celebration in the superlative—bizarre, robust, and profane enough to be a grand piece of mythic folklore, if it hadn't really happened.

The event usually began mundanely enough as trappers straggled along singly and in groups to the site agreed upon the previous year, locations that ranged from Pierre's Hole on the western slope of the Tetons, to Cache Valley and Bear Lake northeast of the Great Salt Lake, to the Popo Agie near the confluence of the Wind and Bighorn rivers, or Hams Fork near its junction with Blacks Fork, or along the wide banks of the Green River, a few miles above Horse Creek. Whatever the locations, they offered in common an abundance of water, game, firewood for the trappers and traders, and lush grasslands for their animals.

The citizens of these instant and ephemeral mountain trading centers represented every element of the fur hunting fraternity: American brigade trappers working under the command of specific companies; Mexicans up from the southern reaches of the Rockies; entire villages of Indians, usually Shoshonis, intent on joining the revelry and trading furs, horses, and women for the miracles of iron and gunpowder; French-Canadians and half-breeds, some refugees from the poor wages of the Hudson's Bay Company, others proud inheritors of a century-old tradition of backwoods service as *coureurs de bois* in Canada and the Northwest. But standing tallest of all, bold and independent, was the free trapper—hunting when and where he pleased, selling his furs to the highest bidder, and finding fulfillment in a land where the only law was Nature's. Despite their differences, all the members of this mountain menagerie shared the wilderness life, and through this mutual experience enjoyed an easy rapport. They regaled each other with tales of the past year's exploits and adventures, describing the new country they had seen and speculating over what they hadn't. They

BOTH PAGES: WALTERS ART GALLERY, BALTIMORE

"The Greeting." Arrival of the trade caravans signaled the formal opening of rendezvous, a superlative, bizarre, robust, and profane celebration that was the highlight of the mountain man's year.

compared notes on the ever-fickle mood of Indians they had encountered, and acknowledged with a noncommittal grunt the untimely demise of old acquaintances who had pushed their luck one season too long.

With the arrival of the trade caravans, usually in early July, the trappers began the almost instantaneous disposal of furs that represented a year of arduous and often dangerous labor. Considering the rate of exchange, this wasn't too difficult. Prime beaver was worth about four dollars a pound in the mountains; with an adult pelt weighing in at roughly a pound and a half, the trapper was tossing six-dollar banknotes on the trading blanket—which wasn't a bad price for fur. But the dollar value of pelts was largely academic, in light of the fact that he was paying outrageously inflated prices for supply goods.

As a general rule, what cost the trader one dollar in St. Louis, cost the trapper at least ten in the mountains. At that rate the necessities of life came high: blankets at $20 apiece, lead at $1 per pound, powder at $4 per pound, knives and hatchets between $3 and $6 each, traps at over $20 apiece, and good Hawken rifles at prices approaching three figures. Even simple luxuries like coffee, sugar, and flour retailed at $2 per pint, with tobacco reaching $5 per pound. While the trader may have paid a good price for fur, he was certain never to walk away from a transaction anything less than a big winner. But for the most part mountain men were the sort who placed more value on enjoying life than acquiring a bankroll, and they spent without quibbling. After all, winter might find their scalp adorning a Blackfoot lance; what good was money then?

Even at these inflated rates, acquiring what a mountain man considered necessary seldom consumed even half his pelt pack, and it was then that the trader played his trump card—booze. Alcohol was the fuel that ignited rendezvous, generating the brawling, swaggering, uninhibited behavior that made the event unforgettable.

What passed for an alcoholic beverage in the mountains was nothing more than pure grain alcohol purchased in St. Louis, cut four or five times with branch water at the rendezvous site, with a little tobacco thrown in for color and flavor. It did, however, have two redeeming qualities: it made a great deal of money for the traders at very slight expense; and it got the mountain men incredibly drunk in very short order. The debauch that followed could last a week or more,

"Moonlight — Camp Scene." Summer evenings were a time for exchanging past experiences and fanciful yarns. Companions had become friends and friends had become brothers in the sharing of hardships in a lonely land.

depending upon how long the pelts lasted.

The trappers fought, caroused, and squandered money, draping their squaw of the year, week, or hour in geegaws and bright cloth. They gambled at "hand," the Indian game of chance that knew a variety of refinements but usually boiled down to nothing more than a drunken version of "Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?" Rough-hewn practical jokes were devised, as when revelers doused a stupored comrade with alcohol, touched a match to him, and then howled with delight as he whirled like a flaming dervish through the camp. Shootings erupted, bones were broken, and the year's wages were gambled or frittered away in a few days, but remorse over indiscretion was an emotion seldom seen. The excesses of rendezvous were part of the life, a life the mountain men had created themselves.

The bacchanalian abandon that characterized rendezvous was an almost predictable outgrowth of the business. These were men who chose to live close to the primal side of life, where success was survival, measured in its most elemental terms. Ragged emotion, discomfort, and pain were not relative or ethereal concepts in their world, but real and recognizable absolutes that a man had to cope with every day. They lived under extreme pressure all year, maintaining constant vigilance and almost daily making decisions that determined whether they lived or died. Rendezvous was the one opportunity during the year to let down their defenses and relax, an activity they undertook with the same elemental vigor that typified the rest of their lives.

When the pelts were all traded and the liquor swilled to the last drop, a mountain man, nursing an aching head and an unsteady stomach, often found that in drunken enthusiasm he had gambled away horse, rifle, traps, and supplies for the coming year. It was an odious circumstance, particularly for the free trapper, but one which the traders packing up for the return trip to St. Louis were willing to cure. A quick conference, a pledge of the next year's catch, and the trapper was outfitted and on his way, pointing his moccasins back toward the lonely streams and mountains that were his livelihood and life. He was a mountain man, and there was nowhere else for him to go.

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THE MOUNTAIN MAN

Narrative by Donald G. Pike

IN THE ANIMATED TAPESTRY of America's westering, a fund of pioneer archetypes emerged from the shifting weave of the successive frontiers. The cowboy, the prospector and miner, the town-tamer, the logger, the railroader, and the sodbuster all became more than the substance of national heritage; they also became the pliable yarn in the loom of folk legend and the easy fiction of print (and ultimately of motion picture and video screen). As time and changing values obscured the vitality of the original experiences, the lives and accomplishments of many frontier models were homogenized into the format and formula of popular fiction until fantasy became the dominant reality. Some western types and their eras even became sufficiently synthesized to spawn mythic folk heroes, like Pecos Bill and Paul Bunyan.

Of all the frontier images, the one probably least twisted by the passage of time and the subtle metamorphosis of rosy rearward vision is that of the mountain man. This resistance to erosion is largely due to the fact that here was an individual married to an era—an era with definite limits in time and space. A cowboy could be a lot of things in a lot of places, because his industry changed and spread during a century of development; but the mountain man was a beaver trapper in the Rocky Mountains, arriving about 1820 and departing with the virtual disappearance of the trade after 1840. There were men who stayed in the mountains, just as there are men who still find a living taking fur, but the mountain man as a type in the American mind vanished with the halcyon days of the beaver trade.

What the mountain man was, and what his business and life were like, have remained strikingly stable images in American iconography, a fact borne out in the accompanying portfolio. On the following pages are paintings which represent more than a half-century of expression and interpretation spanning the formative years of western art. To be sure, some of the painters are horrific Romantics, while others limn the fringe of their work with the facile techniques of a particular school, or mix ingredients designed to encourage the curious alchemy of contemporary popularity and a higher sale price. Such are the imperatives of making a living with brush and canvas.

But at the core of each painting is the mountain man, finite and recognizable, living a life so simple in form, so exciting to contemplate, and yet so hard in its consequences as to need no fictional embellishment. Here was the penultimate frontiersman, the standard by which all others would be measured.

Some of the paintings can be faulted for gaps in authenticity—for misrepresenting a detail of costume, equipment, or locale—but such criticism really misses the point. The artists were reflecting the self-image of a nation growing up: proud of its roots, often awed by its accomplishments, even occasionally appalled by individual actions, but inevitably pleased with sharing its heritage. Each artist reflects not only the era he portrays, but the values and preconceptions of his own time as well—nevertheless the mountain man survives, through this collection at any rate, as a relatively stable image. He emerges as a strong, self-reliant character, calm in repose, awesome in his potential for violence, and entirely at home in the wilderness. He is neither misanthrope nor pariah, but a man who has chosen a lifeway sufficiently demanding to preclude the idly curious and the weak-willed. That this image has remained consistent is a testament to the durability of those values the mountain man made incarnate; more durable, certainly, than the world in which he lived.

Of all the men who painted scenes of the rendezvous and trapper life, Alfred Jacob Miller (1810–1874) probably came with the best credentials. Trained by Thomas Sully and polished by an apprenticeship in Paris, Miller enjoyed the additional advantage of accompanying wealthy Scotsman William Drummond Stewart during his 1837 hunting sojourn to the heart of the Rocky Mountain fur country. The trip exposed Miller to every aspect of mountain life, including "Trappers Around a Campfire" (opposite).

HIRSCHL & ADLER GALLERIES, NEW YORK CITY

DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS, GIFT OF DEXTER M. FERRY, JR.

George Caleb Bingham (1811–1879) painted "The Trapper's Return" (above) in 1851, more than a decade after the decline of the beaver trade on the Upper Missouri. Bingham's frontier scenes, while often rigid and static in composition, evince a knowledge of detail acquired during a boyhood spent growing up along the river, where he doubtless saw many such arrivals in civilization by men who had spent a long winter season trapping in the mountains.

Charles Deas (1818–1867) was a Philadelphian, well trained, influenced by George Catlin, and had traveled in the West. Surprisingly, in "The Death Struggle" (opposite), completed in 1845, he seems to be striving for a commission to paint lurid covers for yellow-backed novels. From unlikely Indians to an unskinned beaver, alive, still in the trap, Deas has crafted a brilliant but impossible melodrama; it is probably significant that he went insane in his mid-thirties.

SHELBURNE MUSEUM, SHELBURNE, VERMONT

THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA

MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Probably the most famous rendering of a mountain man and the vagaries of his profession is "The Trapper's Last Shot" (above) by William Ranney (1813–1857). Although he lived and worked in West Hoboken, New Jersey, Ranney had served in the Southwest during the Mexican War, and the experience was reflected in a lifetime of historical and frontier scenes. While not a direct observer of the fur trade, Ranney managed to capture the almost daily drama of the life.

Although born in Germany, and later trained there, Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902) grew up in the United States and made several trips west—one in 1859 with the Lander expedition to South Pass and the Wind River mountains. Bierstadt was inclined to monumental renderings of western landscapes once he reached his studio, but his field sketches and paintings are sparse and striking, as is evident here in the calculating confidence of "Mountain Man" (opposite).

THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA

William Cary (1840–1922) was a New York artist who traveled west in 1860 and 1874. During the latter journey, accompanying the government's Northern Boundary Survey team, he sketched a hunter and guide for the expedition, Jim Butler (above). Though far removed from the old beaver trade, Butler was of the type, a man still making his way in the wild reaches of the high mountain country, and was therefore worthy of the accolade "mountain man."

"An Indian Trapper" (opposite) was only one of a number of paintings, drawings, and sculptural interpretations of the trapper and mountain man that Frederic Remington (1861–1909) produced in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as he helped popularize the images of these and other legendary frontiersmen. A prolific painter and an authentic westerner, Remington loved the country and the vitality of the men and animals who brought it alive for him.

AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART, FORT WORTH


FREDERIC REMINGTON
'89

WHITNEY GALLERY OF SPORTING ART, YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait (1819–1905) was an Englishman who came to America at mid-century and never made it farther west than his primitive shooting lodge in the Adirondacks. Undeterred by a lack of personal contact, he did a series of trapper scenes nonetheless, some of which—like "American Frontier Life" (above) —ably capture the mood and character of the era. (The title is probably that of the Currier and Ives series in which the painting appeared.)

Charles M. Russell (1864–1926) knew the men and the life of a Montana gradually being overrun by civilization, so it was only a short cast backward for him to conjure up the spirits of the trappers who once ranged into Blackfoot country. Attention to detail, a grand landscape, and a vigilant, tough mountain man are natural, complementary elements of "Free Trappers" (opposite), the creation of an individual whom many consider to have been America's greatest western artist.

MACKAY COLLECTION, MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY


C.M. Russell
1911

The Big Sky Development:

A Lesson for the Future

by Robert T. Smith

MEADOW VILLAGE AT BIG SKY, MONTANA; PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT T. SMITH

In 1970 conservationists and developers locked horns over Chet Huntley's "dream" Montana resort; both learned something from the ensuing three-year struggle

IN JULY of 1970, when Chester Robert Huntley said, "Goodnight, David" for the last time, he was perhaps the most famous Montanan in the world. He was not retiring but instead would devote his time to developing a year-round resort forty miles north of Yellowstone Park to be called Big Sky of Montana.

Huntley, like other Americans, had some misgivings about recreational development. The small- and medium-sized developers that dominated the recreational industry in the past had usually attempted to accumulate short-term profits by selling off hastily improved lots to private individuals without any restrictions. The results were predictable and unsatisfactory. People who bought bargain land built bargain structures. In order to maximize short-term profits, typical lots were small, and overcrowding resulted. Inadequate roads hastily bulldozed through forests encouraged erosion and became eyesores after a few seasons. Inadequate waste disposal systems polluted the watershed. Quick-buck artists threw up clusters of bait shops, gas stations, and honky-tonks, further destroying the region. In a remarkably short time what might have been a prime recreational area often became a rural slum.

Both the federal and state governments have worked for many years to prevent the pitfalls of conventional recreational development; their contributions include the state and national parks, wilderness areas, and national forests. But in attempting to balance recreation and conservation, both have run into serious problems, most of which are caused by too many people using too few facilities. Though more urgent priorities have made it difficult for state and federal funds to be used for additional recreational development, the demand nevertheless still exists.

Huntley must have noticed a significant trend emerging in the recreational industry. Sometime in the middle sixties large corporations began replacing or going into partnership with the small entrepreneur and the federal and state governments to provide all sorts of facilities. The big boom came in the Rockies. The success of Vail Associates in their development at Vail, Colorado, caused a number of the nation's largest conglomerates to begin looking for ways to make similar investments. This brought to recreational development really large sums of money, which had never been available before. Corporations, because they are usually blessed with lives much longer than the individuals who create them, can operate on a basis of long-term dollar return. The resorts would have to preserve the environment or long-term profits would be nonexistent.

Huntley had this information available to him when he began to think in a serious way of building a resort in Montana. He was uniquely suited to bring such a development to his home state. First, he was well known and well liked in Montana. Although he had not lived there for many years, he had made it no secret that he always considered Montana his home. Second, his name was big enough to gain him access to people who could provide the money to build his resort.

After all, he had reached the top of his profession. There were really no more worlds to conquer in newscasting, and he had all the money he could ever use. Why not return to Montana and bring his dream to reality? On August 6, 1969, the *New York Times* reported that Huntley had been in Montana looking over property and renewing acquaintance with old friends, including Governor Forrest Anderson. In the middle of October, Huntley announced that he would leave the "Huntley-Brinkley Report" sometime in the first half of 1970 but added that his departure depended upon the coming together of various aspects of a fifteen-million-dollar resort he was developing.

Even before any public announcements were made, Huntley must have had a specific site in mind. He had hunted and fished in the upper Gallatin River Valley all his life. It was easily accessible through Bozeman and it was near Yellowstone Park. The scenery was spectacular, and the fishing was some of the best in the world. There had been several attempts to develop resorts there over the years, but generally speaking they were undercapitalized, small dude ranches, which failed to offer the kind of conveniences the modern resort user wanted. The area was a prime target for such a development.

Two of those who had dabbled in the resort business in the Gallatin Valley were Sam Smedling and Don Corcoran, both acquaintances of Huntley. Quick to see the advantages of a joint business venture with Huntley—they had the land, he had the name and the contacts—they agreed that the 8,720 acres they held on the West Fork of the Gallatin River would become the core of the proposed development. In addition, land farther up the side of Lone Mountain was needed for ski runs, and although it formed part of a national forest, acquiring it through trade was not expected to be a problem.

Huntley apparently had little difficulty in finding financial backers. Chrysler Realty Corporation became the principal backer of the project with 51 percent interest; the rest would be provided by a variety of investors, including the Montana Power Company, Northwest Orient Airlines, the General Electric Pension Fund, and others. Huntley himself retained a little over 1 percent interest. The readiness on the part of these hard-headed businessmen to invest what would eventually amount to about twenty million dollars indicated the soundness of the project and also an awareness of the recreation boom sweeping America.

Even though Big Sky's corporate leaders would have to face the conservationists, they were certain they could convince the majority that Big Sky would become an economic asset to Montana and not an ecological disaster. They had several strong arguing points. First, they would point out that good conservation was good business, especially good recreation business. Second, Big Sky was not a fly-by-night operation, but rather one that brought to the development adequate funds to insure that waste disposal systems, roads, and other hardware of conservation would not be skimped on. Aesthetics would be seen to for the same reason. Third, they could contend that because they had a special interest in preserving the environment they would become a positive force for effective conservation, as had happened with Vail Associates in Colorado. Their ace, of course, was Chet Huntley, probably the most effective salesman in America.

Continued on page 62

A Matter of Opinion

Readers' Letters

Receiving the following letters from readers served to remind us that: one, George Armstrong Custer and the Battle of the Little Big Horn combine to form one of the most fascinating and volatile topics in American history, and two, achieving total accuracy in a historical magazine will probably forever remain an editor's impossible dream.

TO THE EDITOR:

On the "Matter of Opinion" page of the July 1975 issue I read with great interest Anne A. Taylor's reminiscences of an incident from her younger days. Her article brings to mind an old saying I learned some years ago: "Five fools can ask more questions than one wise man can answer." It is no strange coincidence, then, that five men visiting the Custer Battlefield during the summer of 1928 would come away with the "qualified" opinion that "Custer was a damn fool."

I have spent the better part of my life studying the Custer battle on the Little Big Horn. Hardly a week since 1952 has passed by when I haven't read in some book or magazine article new opinions and ideas of what happened on the slopes of the Greasy Grass. Since no reliable white "survivor" has ever been found, and no Indian interviewed who had fought in that battle could agree with his fellow combatants on a story that made complete sense, I have finally come away twenty-three years after I began, and several thousand dollars poorer, with the educationally qualified opinion that no one today is really qualified to tell us that Custer was a damn fool.

Someday, however, when science has accepted and mastered the occult, we may go back in a dimension of a sort and see that battle on a sultry Sunday afternoon and smell the burnt gunpowder and sweating bodies of red and white men locked in a struggle to the death. The projection into the past will show us the anxiety of troopers in dusty clothes and grimy faces, some wounded and others resigned to death. In that time of re-projection, perhaps we will all proudly call Custer a Damn Brave Soldier who faced death as few critics could, and as all fighting men desire.

Edward R. Schwemler
Fresno, California

TO THE EDITOR:

Photographer Art Gore's cover on your May 1975 issue brings back vivid memories of my boyhood on a Kansas farm, circa 1915, when one of the onerous daily chores was the gathering, cleaning, candling, weighing, and packing of eggs in the identical kind of crate shown in the photograph.

I would not presume to fault Mr. Gore's photographic technique or the artistry of his composition, but (contrary to your inside-cover comment) authentic it is not . . . unless the passage of sixty years has done more damage to my memory than I suspect.

Item 1: I am sure that the papier-maché tray shown beneath the wooden crate's lid was not invented until many years later when the larger, double, solid-sided crate came into general use. The horizontal dividers were made of the same red or brown cardboard as the vertical dividers shown in the photograph.

Item 2: When candling eggs, the lamp was placed on the workbench or table alongside the egg scales so that the motion of the operator's hand could be continuous from receptacle to candler to scales to crate. I never saw a candling lamp on a wall with a tin can lid behind it.

Item 3: Looking into an unshielded light while candling was murder on the eyes. Accordingly, a special candling lamp with a metal shield was generally used. The shield had a hole about 1½ inches in diameter in it, just level with the flame. The operator held the egg momentarily against the hole, clearly illuminating its interior without causing glare in the eyes.

Item 4: The brown and white enameled pitcher is beautiful —we had one just like it—but for gathering eggs it would be impractical unless one had only a dozen eggs (and then just try to pick the eggs out of it!). An old tin milk bucket would have been really authentic . . . though maybe not so photogenic!

Item 5: We would not have been caught dead taking those pale, puny, flavorless Leghorn eggs to market. The only eggs worth eating in those days were the rich, tasty, brown eggs of a Rhode Island Red, Plymouth Rock, or Buff Orpington. (Of course, you had to have real, smoke-cured ham to go with them, not this soggy, tasteless mush that passes for ham nowadays!)

I can hardly wait for Mr. Gore's book to be published in September. Forty-seven more pictures should keep this old nit-picker busy all winter!

William M. McCullough
Visalia, California

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.*

Frontier America: The Exhibition and the Catalogue

REVIEWED BY MARY LOU KELLEY

WHEN is an exhibition catalogue *more* than an exhibition catalogue . . . a reference book of lasting value? When its text places the objects mentioned in broad perspective, as this one abundantly does, even for readers who miss viewing the exhibition itself.

Frontier America: The Far West, a comprehensive illustrated catalogue for the exhibition, "Frontier America," including contributions by Roland Dickey, William Truettner, Frederick Dockstader, John C. Ewers, Jonathan Fairbanks, Elisabeth Sussman, Gilian Wohlauer, and Anne Farnam *(Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1974; 233 pp., intro., illus., biblio., checklist, $29.50 cloth, $7.95 paper).*

Organized by the Boston Museum and sponsored through matching grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and Philip Morris Incorporated, this traveling exhibition visited the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego through August 17, appears next at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City (September 17–November 2), and then goes to the Milwaukee Art Center (December 5–January 18). Exhibition and catalogue alike expand our general conception of western art to include not only descriptive pictures of the West designed by and for easterners, but also aesthetic objects made by Indian inhabitants before and after contact with white intruders, and then by white settlers who eventually obliterated the frontier.

Besides commentaries on each of the 142 black-and-white and 47 color illustrations, the catalogue contains nine interpretive essays that make it *more* than a catalogue. The punched-star motif of the silvery cover comes from that of six front panels of an indigenous article of furniture, a pie safe (shown above) lent by the State Historical Society of Colorado, a product of the Rourke Ranch in

southeastern Colorado. According to the catalogue entry, this "standard piece of kitchen furniture" was "made by the ranch hands from discarded packing cases." According to the entry for an even more elaborate example, "pierced slits and holes, arranged in a variety of patterns in the tin (panels), let air into the safe to ventilate its contents, which were protected from insects, mice and other pests." A design at once functional and decorative thus becomes an appropriately decorative cover.

The catalogue's Introduction by Jonathan L. Fairbanks, curator of American decorative arts and sculpture at the Boston Museum, states the intent of the exhibition: "to capture the variety of life when not only the individual was tested but the whole nation was savoring its destiny." In his overview of the presentation which follows, he offers a generalization with which Professor John C. Wilmerding, noted art historian and author, took issue during an invited lecture. Says Mr. Fairbanks: "The romanticized versus the real West is to be seen at a glance throughout the exhibition by comparing the painted image with the photographed image." Neither Professor Wilmerding nor I see the distinction he then cites between the painted landscapes of Albert Bierstadt and the photographed ones of Timothy O'Sullivan, which seem equally majestic and impressive in their own ways.

Each of the remaining essays serves to introduce a section of related illustrations—not exhaustively, but in a readably succinct nutshell.

Writing of "American Indians before European Contact," Roland F. Dickey emphasizes the diversity of cultures which gave rise to stunningly simplified sculptural forms as well as sophisticated linear patterns in basketry, pottery, painting, and mosaic. We see the latter art beautifully illustrated in an ornamental blade inlaid with turquoise in a geometric pattern.

William H. Truettner summarizes America's changing attitude toward wilderness, beginning as "an intellectual and urban pursuit" and culminating in a vision of the West as a modern-day Garden of Eden. Artistic examples of the former include pictorial records by George Catlin, Paul Kane, and Seth Eastman; of the latter, photographs as well as paintings by the last of the great romantic artists.

John C. Ewers surveys "The American West as a Theater of Conflict" as interpreted by both Indian and white artists. Perhaps most interestingly, we see the twain meeting in a sketch of a mounted brave, and an action scene of the Battle of Little Big Horn, both executed by Indian artists from personal experience and both combining elements of the two traditions with vigor.

We learn from Frederick J. Dockstader of Indian inventiveness in adapting objects acquired in trade with European peoples—buttons, beads, and machine-made cloth. And in a regal wool shirt studded with mother-of-pearl but-

Continued on page 50

The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony

REVIEWED BY CLAUS M. NASKE

ALASKA has stimulated the imagination of journalists and other writers for many years. All too often the results have been slipshod and inaccurate or merely anecdotal. Additionally, writers have often failed to relate Alaskan historical processes to those of the larger world on the "outside." This is not the case with Professor Miller's sharply analytical and interpretative work on the Matanuska Colony, in which he not only examines the genesis and development of this settlement but also deals with the larger question of the persistent American usage of frontier images and its accompanying vocabulary. In this tightly written book Professor Miller deftly sketches the development of Alaska's various geographic regions before the Matanuska Colony and notes that it was characterized by a seasonal economy extracting natural resources and a very hesitant growth of a resident population. Against this Alaskan background and the problems brought about by the Great Depression of the 1930s, the author details the development of the Matanuska Colony, an outgrowth of numerous factors such as persistent rural poverty, widespread unemployment, the back-to-the-land movement, a common faith in land settlement and small farming as alternatives to relief programs and guarantees of family security, and disillusionment with cities and industrialization of rural life, accompanied by a nostalgia for the vanished frontier and its opportunities.

The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony by Orlando W. Miller *(Yale University, New Haven, 1975; 329 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., appen., notes, index, $15.00).*

The author observes that the colony survived and succeeded because of the economic opportunities World War II brought to Alaska, something not foreseen by the planners in 1935.

Despite decades of frontier boosterism, agriculture has been a near failure in Alaska, for in 1969 there were only 332 farms of 3,000 acres or larger, and only 148 of those produced $2,500 or more in products annually.

Miller concludes that by the 1970s Alaska had become a romantic adventure, a way of acting out a fantasy of frontier independence and individuality by a largely urban people.

Not only is Miller's book as definitive a history of the Matanuska Colony as is likely to be written, but it also brings residents of the forty-ninth state, or of "the last frontier" as they repeatedly proclaim, face to face with the reality of Alaskan life and the mythology of the frontier. This is a very fine piece of work and a most welcome addition to the analytical and interpretative literature of Alaska.

Claus M. Naske *is associate professor of history at the University of Alaska.*

Frontier America: The Far West
(Continued from page 49)

tons in a stylized bird design, we find a particularly striking example.

Gilian S. Wohlauer describes how the pioneers adapted to their "totally new environment." That saga unfolds through documentary images both painted and photographed, and such artifacts as trappers' hats.

Mr. Dickey attributes the long-lived regional styles of the Spanish Southwest to "infrequent contact with mainstreams of culture." In carved and painted devotional images, we find these styles well represented.

In the words of Elisabeth Sussman, "western furniture evolved from the necessarily crude to the self-consciously rough"—from benches and chairs of spartan simplicity to outlandishly extravagant chairs proud of their origin as antlers!

Lastly, Mr. Fairbanks refutes the popular belief that frontier housing arose only from logs. Photographs of many adobe houses, including Brigham Young's, prove his point.

Mary Lou Kelley *is a free-lance magazine and newspaper writer who specializes in art and Americana.*

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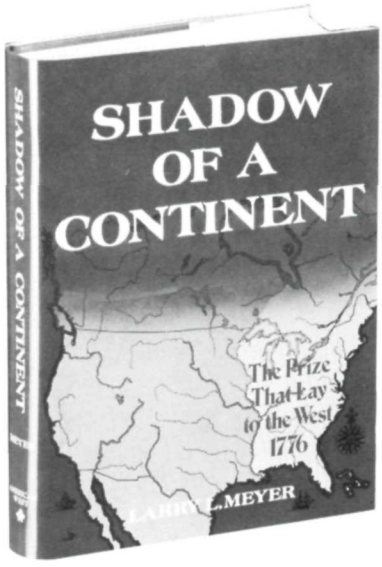
New from The American West



SHADOW OF A CONTINENT: The Prize That Lay to the West—1776 *by Larry L. Meyer.* A bicentennial book that focuses on the America west of the thirteen colonies. This monumental work traces the imperial struggle for ownership of the western reaches of the continent, from the first Spanish explorers to view this land at close range to the revolutionaries of 1776 who saw it on their horizon. A popular account, yet one of serious historical significance, it is based on the idea that the trans-Mississippi West was first a beguiling mystery that had a hold on the minds of men from many nations and eventually a symbol of manifest destiny for an emerging nation, a nation that owes much of its present strength to winning the prize that lay to the West.

Larry L. Meyer is former editor of *Westways* and author of over one hundred magazine articles. 100 black-and-white photos, plus maps in two colors. 320 pages, 6¾ x 9⅝ inches.

Regular edition, $17.50; introductory price until 12/31/75, $14.95
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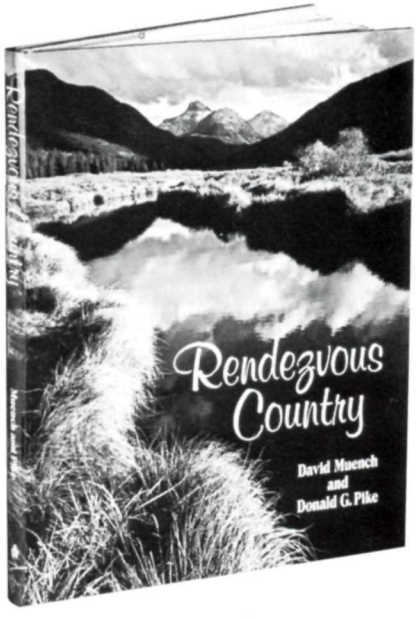

RENDEZVOUS COUNTRY *by David Muench and Donald G. Pike.* Rendezvous country stretches across the spectacular valleys of the Central Rockies, where in the days of the fur trade trappers came down from the mountains to trade beaver pelts for supplies during the annual summer rendezvous. This book captures the stunning beauty of both the mountains and the valleys through the lens of that fine scenic photographer, David Muench.

The lively text by historian Donald G. Pike describes this beautiful country, its vegetation, animals, native Indians, and, of course, the Mountain Men like Kit Carson, Jim Bridger, and a host of equally colorful characters, as well as those who followed them to settle the land.

A portfolio of paintings by Alfred Jacob Miller provides an eyewitness view of the annual summer rendezvous in the Old West. Muench and Pike are the photographer-writer team that produced *Anasazi: Ancient People of the Rock.*

57 full-color pictures, 37 other illustrations. 160 pages, 8½ x 11 inches.

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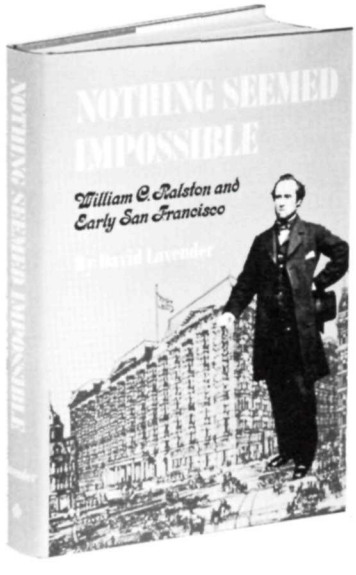

NOTHING SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE: William C. Ralston and Early San Francisco *by David Lavender.* Until his mysterious death while swimming in the waters of San Francisco Bay, nothing seemed impossible to William C. Ralston. His life was full of challenge, excitement, famous people, and foreign travel. His accomplishments included founding The Bank of California, building the famous Palace Hotel, and involvement in the Comstock Lode, the great diamond hoax, shipping companies, real estate, and industrial mills. The fascinating story of an unusual man, told against the romantic background of San Francisco and a climate of commercial daring that will never be known again.

David Lavender has been fascinated by western history for almost fifty years. He is a long-time resident of California, an acclaimed popular historian, and author of more than a dozen books, including *California: Land of New Beginnings, Bent's Fort,* and *The Rockies.* 124 illustrations. 416 pages, 6⅜ x 9½ inches.

Regular edition, $12.95 *October 15*

Available at bookstores or from: American West Publishing Company
Attn: Book Department, 599 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306

Siskiyou Trail

REVIEWED BY PAUL R. TREECE

SISKIYOU TRAIL, the twelfth volume in the American Trails Series, is about the origins of an overland connection between Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay Company post on the north bank of the Columbia River, and the Central Valley of California in the 1820s and 1830s. The trail in no way resembled the well-used California Trail of the 1840s and 1850s. In fact, not until the concluding chapters of the book, when the U.S. naval expedition which traveled over and mapped the trail in 1841 is described, was this reader convinced that there existed a regularly-used path through the wilderness deserving a name. Dillon's main thesis is that the origin of the trail was the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company's policy of deliberately stripping "the streams bare of beaver, down to the last cut" south of the Columbia, in order to discourage American expansionism.

Siskiyou Trail: The Hudson's Bay Fur Company Route to California by Richard Dillon *(McGraw-Hill, New York, 1975; 381 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., index, $9.95).*

The narrative rests on a solid foundation of geographic knowledge, and it is apparent that the author personally is familiar with all parts of the trail. And, although the narrative has no footnotes (in keeping with the popular orientation of the series), the fact that the book is well researched cannot be questioned. Dillon examined Hudson's Bay Company records during two trips to England and has dipped into the manuscript wealth of the Beinecke Library at Yale as well as the Bancroft, Huntington, and other depositories. He has also made good use of published sources.

Unfortunately, this solid groundwork on the author's part seems not to have always been followed through by others. Three maps included in the book are inadequate, many of the geographic features mentioned by the author being omitted, e.g., Astoria (Fort George). The index is not as complete as could be desired. A chart conveniently detailing the company's annual beaver harvest from the region around the Siskiyou Trail would have been useful in permitting readers to make a generalization about a possible relationship between the malarial plague which decimated the California Indians in the early 1830s and the beaver harvests later in the decade.

The positive features of the book, however, outweigh its few shortcomings. There is something about lusty mountain men groping about the wilderness in geographic ignorance which is inherently interesting to many Americans. Further, Dillon writes well and is not afraid to draw sharp characterizations, such as, "George Simpson was a bastard. . . . He was born with a chip on his shoulder." The book is informative. For example, readers learn with regret that American mountain men failed to follow the example of the Hudson's Bay Company's policy of nonviolence, whenever possible, in regard to relations with the Indians. Readers discover that the grizzly posed almost as great a danger to users of the Siskiyou Trail as did the Indians. The extreme example occurred when the 1841 American exploring party spotted twenty-four grizzlies in one day and killed six.

The narrative is not without humor, as when a tribe that obviously had had earlier contacts with whites informed a fur hunting brigade that they were known as the "Goddamnyous." There is pathos as when Ewing Young's cutthroats captured and shackled two braves. "The spectacle of the demobilized and humiliated warriors so shocked and demoralized their comrades that they began driving the stolen stock back to Young's camp." The chains caused the luckless captives to drown in an escape attempt.

This book helps to fill a gap in our knowledge of the history of the West Coast.

Paul R. Treece *is assistant to the director of Central Ohio Technical College in Newark. He currently is writing a full-length biography of Granville Stuart.*

Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian by Michael Paul Rogin *(Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1975; 373 pp., intro., illus., notes, index, $13.95).*

REVIEWED BY THAYLE K. ANDERSON

PROFESSOR ROGIN traces the development of the ideological basis for the Jacksonian Indian Removal Policy—a rationale which enabled federal and state governments to grossly exploit the southeastern Indian tribes, to defraud them of their lands, and finally, with their forced migration, to perpetuate what Rogin defines as genocide. Citing myriad examples of familial images in Jackson's letters and speeches and employing biographical psychoanalysis, Rogin portrays a president who saw himself as a strong benevolent father protecting the interests of his primitive children and guarding them against their own immaturity.

Rogin comprehensively explores the emergence of a national attitude in which Indians were perceived to be "children who could not mature," and where America's founders became sanctified as father-figures. He then shows in exhaustive detail how the same national pattern of authoritarian paternalism took place in Jackson's career when he engaged himself in the Creek wars. The author thoroughly documents the growth of this fixation in Jackson as Indian fighter, as statesman, and finally as president.

After treating Jackson's execution of his Indian Policy in harrowing detail, Rogin then treats it as a frame of reference for an interpretation and analysis of the *laissez-faire* capitalism, liberal egalitarianism, governmental reform, and western expansion of the age.

Although Rogin's psychoanalysis of Jackson's earlier life is not always convincing, and although he glosses over the Indian depredations which occasionally surface in his account, *Fathers and Children* is a copiously documented, clearly written work founded on rigorous scholarship.

Thayle K. Anderson *is associate professor in English at Murray State University and is editor of the* Kentucky Philological Association Bulletin.

Indian Petroglyphs of the Pacific Northwest by Beth and Ray Hill with introduction by Doris Lundy *(University of Washington, Seattle, 1974; 320 pp., illus., maps, biblio., index, $19.95).*

REVIEWED BY RAYMOND WILSON

PETROGLYPHS, an important tool in studying Indian culture, have often been neglected as a subject for serious consideration. Negligence in this area can be attributed to the uncertainty of speculation surrounding these symbolic rock carvings as well as to the difficulty of dating most of them. Use of an erosion method and carbon dating have proved unsatisfactory in most instances. Realizing the limitations involved, the Hills have produced a work detailing the petroglyphs of the Northwest Coast, which has over five hundred known sites. The book is profusely illustrated with over nine hundred pictures.

The authors include information on sites in Alaska, Puget Sound, the lower Columbia River, and the Dalles, along with other scholars' interpretations of the petroglyphs and the myths and traditions associated with them. Most petroglyphs were carved near villages or mouths of rivers and within view of the ocean. West Coast petroglyphs were meant to be instrumental in gaining supernatural power over the inhabitants of the sea, especially salmon and whales. Other purposes they served were in ceremonial killings, in religious ceremonies and shamanistic practices, or even perhaps in merely passing the time away. Throughout the work the authors express their hope that giving precise locations of the sites will not invite vandalism.

More information could have been included on the tribes of each specific area and their customs, although an overview of the region's inhabitants and religion is presented. The index could also have been more detailed. Because of the numerous illustrations, this volume is worth its rather substantial price, and it should be a valuable aid to anyone interested in the Indian cultures of the Northwest.

Raymond Wilson *is a doctoral candidate in history (specializing in the American Indian) at the University of New Mexico.*

Indian Heritage, Indian Pride: Stories That Touched My Life by Jimalee Burton (Ho-chee-nee), foreword by W. W. Keeler *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1974, 176 pp., illus., $12.50).*

REVIEWED BY ODIE B. FAULK

AMBROSE BIERCE, the cynical wit of the post-Civil War era, defined aborigines as "persons of little worth found cumbering the soil of a newly discovered country. They soon cease to cumber; they fertilize." Bierce obviously was exercising his satiric humor, pointing out the prevailing white attitude toward the Indians. However, he was wrong in suggesting that the native American soon would be dead, for despite great adversity they have endured —and are even increasing in numbers.

This autobiography by Jimalee Burton, a renowned Cherokee artist, is highly personal, biased, and prejudiced. Unlike most other books about Indians, however, this one is biased and prejudiced in favor of the native American. The writer makes no attempt to hide her contempt for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and its host of do-gooder bureaucrats, for the degrading educational system forced on young Indians, and for tourists, anthropologists, and others who have sought to speak for the Indian. She tells with pride of the contributions of Indians in many fields of endeavor—including her own.

But principally this is a reminiscence of the author's youth in the Indian Territory when her parents operated a trading post and she observed the sacred ceremonials, religious culture, and modes of living of various tribes in the vicinity. She speaks with pride and love of that bygone era, as does W. W. Keeler, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, in his foreword.

A handsome volume, the proceeds from which are being donated to the Cherokee Foundation, the book is lavishly illustrated with Jimalee Burton's pen-and-ink drawings and color illustrations. These alone make the book worth the price.

Odie B. Faulk *is head of the department of history at Oklahoma State University. His latest book is* Crimson Desert: The Indian Wars of the American Southwest.

Pages From Hopi History by Harry C. James *(University of Arizona, Tucson, 1974, 258 pp., illus., biblio., notes, constitution and bylaws of the Hopi tribe, $9.75 cloth, $4.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM S. MURPHY

THE HOPI INDIANS who built their villages in northern Arizona's Painted Desert have long fascinated anthropologists and historians. Here was a tribe which sought peace while surrounded by the nomadic and warlike Navajos, Utes, Apaches, and Comanches. The Hopis found the mesa country an ideal locale to pursue an agrarian existence. While the Hopis sought to live in harmony with their environment and neighbors, they were not a timid people. They resisted intruders with a fierce determination to maintain their culture. The Spaniards, during their occupation of the Southwest, tried unsuccessfully to subjugate the Hopis and force them to accept the Catholic faith. Early Hopi contact with Americans was a similar disaster. The author notes that the agents sent to administer government policy came "with deep seated prejudices against the Indian, with intolerance for his religious beliefs, and with a determined dedication to do everything within their power to make the Hopi over into an imitation and second-class white man . . ." The agents found the Hopi determined to hold fast to his religious beliefs. "The greater the pressure to get him to abandon his ceremonies, the more tenaciously he resisted." Currently, the Hopi finds himself living in a beleaguered land. Extensive coal deposits have been found under Black Mesa, within his domain. This will provide fuel for nearby power generating plants which will pollute the skies. It is the final irony. Harry James writes with sympathy and restraint about a proud people who have suffered unjustly in the past, and who today are seeking an identity. He brings into sharp focus the dreams for tomorrow of the Hopi tribe. Let these dreams be shared by others before it is too late.

William S. Murphy *is a writer and photographer. His books include* A Pictorial History of California *and (coauthored with Robert Kirsch)* West of the West.

James Madison Alden: Yankee Artist of the Pacific Coast, 1854–1860 by Franz Stenzel with a preface by Mitchell A. Wilder *(Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, 1975; 209 pp., illus., map, biblio., appen., notes, index, $25.00).*

REVIEWED BY MONROE BUSH

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN art and illustration is an exasperatingly vague one. James Madison Alden's legacy of 670 known watercolors is a prime example of the imprecision of the two terms. From 1854 to 1860 Alden ranged the West Coast; San Diego to the Canadian border, eastward to the continental divide, up the Colorado River, eastward again into Yosemite. Relentlessly he painted the wonders of the new land he found.

Alden, born in 1834 the son of a Boston sea captain, used a folio of his adolescent sketches to entice his uncle, naval officer James Alden, Jr., to arrange for his enlistment and East Coast training in cartographic drawing, and then for his assignment in 1854 to his uncle's ship which was on loan to the United States Coast Survey, operating out of San Francisco. This book is largely a report on the six years of that experience, tracing the pioneer course of the surveying expedition. Unfortunately there is not sufficient data available for Dr. Franz Stenzel to give us more than a shadow of the man Alden himself, but to the extent his work can speak for an artist the profuse reproductions, in both color and black-and-white, carry their own subtle autobiography.

Alden's watercolors are, at best, lyrical in a somewhat Japanese approach to their subjects. At another extreme some are voluptuous. More than a handful are simply wooden and rigid. They contain flashes of inspired artistry, but more often achieve only representation which is, of the period, heavily romantic. The documentation is excellent; the author's style, straightforward. It is appealing, if not important, Americana.

Monroe Bush, *writer and former foundation executive, is now assistant director of development at the University of California, San Francisco.*

American Indian Food and Lore: 150 Authentic Recipes by Carolyn Niethammer with a foreword by Ann Woodin *(Collier-Macmillan, New York, 1974; 191 pp., biblio., notes, index, sources for foods, $4.95, paper).*

REVIEWED BY MAGGIE CAVAGNARO

REACH FOR THE DELICIOUS golden pollen of the cattail or dig in the soft marsh mud for its bread-like root—and you will reach also into the dim past toward the heritage of another people, who lived in harmony with the land that supported them.

At least once in our life, we should experience the joy of a meal that we ourselves have gathered and prepared from native plants. Carolyn Niethammer coaxes us to walk with her through the deserts, marshes, and mesas of Arizona and New Mexico to collect, clean, dry, and partake of the bountiful harvest of our great Southwest.

Carolyn, a professional journalist, food writer, and cook, takes us on her collecting excursions and gives us the kind of rich detail that can only come from someone with firsthand experience. She introduces us to contemporary members of the Navajo, Zuñi, Hopi, Apache, and four other Indian nations who carry on or at least remember some of the "old ways," then she combs available literature to round out her information on 51 different plants in a volume of 150 recipes. Complementing this are carefully rendered drawings of each plant by Jenean Thompson.

Modern culture tends to obliterate our past and destroy ethnic uniqueness. This book does more than offer lists of native plants and their aboriginal uses; it provides also a sense of history, a wealth of information on traditions nearly lost to us, and a real record and service for the ethnic groups of the Southwest to whom the book is dedicated.

Many of the plants included occur widely in the United States, and in her gentle way Carolyn encourages us to make history come alive by reaping this rediscovered harvest.

Maggie Cavagnaro, *a resident biologist at Audubon Canyon Ranch in Marin County, California, is coauthor of* Almost Home.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

By Larry Zelenak

The Pacific Crest Trail by William R. Gray with photographs by Sam Abell *(National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 1975; 199 pp., illus., maps, index, $4.75).*

Threading 2,400 miles from Mexico to Canada, the Pacific Crest Trail is the nation's longest footpath. A National Geographic team spent seven months hiking the trail, under conditions ranging from the searing heat of the Mojave Desert to the freezing cold of an igloo atop Mount Rainier. A pleasant, informative text and over a hundred beautiful color photographs tell the story of the journey.

The H. F. Robinson Collection: A Catalogue of Photographs compiled by Robert J. Brewer *(Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, 1974; 40 pp., illus., intro., $4.00, paper).*

Herbert F. Robinson (1865–1956) was an irrigation engineer by vocation, but his avocation was photography. His work as an engineer took him all over the Southwest of the early twentieth century, and he took his camera with him wherever he went. This book catalogues the more than one thousand Robinson negatives in the collection of the Museum of New Mexico, many of them portraits of the Indians of the Southwest.

Suns and Serpents by Gar and Maggy Packard *(Packard Publications, Albuquerque, 1974; 64 pp., illus., biblio., index, $4.95 paper).*

The rock carvings of the puebloid Indians of Arizona and New Mexico were used as messages, trail markers, religious symbols, and decorative art. The writings of nineteenth-century explorers and scholars, along with the work of anthropologists in recent years, have revealed the meanings of many of these carvings. This book is the first attempt to explain to the interested layman the significance of the symbols found in the carvings.

Indian Basket Weaving by Sandra Corrie Newman *(Northland Press, Flagstaff, 1974; 91 pp., illus., intro., appen., glossary, $4.95, paper).*

Although this is basically a "how-to" book, explaining the weaving of Pomo, Yurok, Pima, and Navajo baskets, it also offers glimpses into the cultures of the basketmaking tribes.

High Odyssey by Eugene A. Rose *(Howell-North, Berkeley, 1974; 160 pp., illus., index, $5.95).*

An illustrated account of a remarkable three-hundred mile solo winter ski trip up the backbone of the Sierra Nevada in 1928–29 by Orland Bartholomew (1899–1957). Bartholomew's fourteen-week trek, which included a climb to the summit of Mount Whitney, is regarded by the author as "perhaps the most ambitious and adventurous feat by one man during this century."

Historical Atlas of California by Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Haaze *(University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1974; 225 pp., maps, biblio., index, $9.95).*

A cartographer and a historian have collaborated to produce this atlas of the history and geography of California. Some of the 101 maps present previously unpublished information. This is an essential reference work for students of the history of the Golden State.

Nevada Place Names by Helen S. Carlson *(University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1974; 282 pp., intro., biblio., $15.00).*

Indians, fur trappers and explorers, emigrants and religious groups, prospectors and miners, ranchers, railroad builders, and government officials all helped name the towns and physical features of Nevada. This volume, which explains the sources of those names, will be of interest to both the serious researcher and the curious browser.

THE POETRY OF HISTORY

(Continued from page 27)

Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poesie* (1595):

". . . it is not ryming and versing that maketh a Poet . . . but it is that fayning notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by."

The Greek historian Xenophon, he adds, "made an absolute heroicall poem" out of the *Anabasis*.

Two hundred and forty years later Percy Bysshe Shelley expressed the same view in *A Defense of Poetry* (1821):

"Poets were called in the earlier epoche of the world, legislators or prophets; a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, but he beholds the future in the present. . . .

"The parts of a composition may be poetical, without the composition as a whole being a poem . . . And thus all the great historians Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, were poets; although the plan of these writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subjection by filling the interstices of their subjects with living images."

Imagine a graduate student in our time "filling the interstices of his subjects with living images"!

A little later in the nineteenth century Lord Macaulay remarked that a historian should ideally be a combination of poet and philosopher. We can go part way with him, for we award the highest historical standing to philosophers of history: Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, W. H. McNeill, Vilfredo Pareto, and a handful of others. The poet-historian makes his way in our time with a little more difficulty, but he is with us too, and not without honor. He is the rare writer who has the feeling and the power of language to convey to us his vision of truth. Take the beginning of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s *The Age of Jackson,* in which he describes a morning with Jackson's predecessor in the White House:

"For the White House the new year began in gloom. The President's wife spent a sleepless and painful night, and Mr. Adams, waking at daybreak, found the dawn overcast, the skies heavy and sullen. He prayed briefly, then fumbled for his Bible and turned to the Book of Psalms, reading slowly by the yellow light of his shaded oil lamp. 'Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.' On he read to the ultimate assurance. 'For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.'

"The familiar words assuaged disappointments of four years. To Adams, the first psalm seemed almost a personal pledge. 'It affirms that the righteous man is, and promises that he shall be, blessed,' he noted with precise gratification in his journal, and went to his desk for his usual early-morning work. As his pen began to scratch across the paper, the lamp, its oil low, flared for a moment, then flickered out. Mr. Adams sat in the gray light."

The passage sounds fictionized, but Schlesinger has been at pains to substantiate every detail. What he contributes from his own stock-in-trade is evocative language—words which convey feeling as well as meaning; adjectives and verbs which paint pictures. The skies are not just gray; they are "heavy and sullen." Adams "fumbles" for his Bible. He reads by "the yellow light of his shaded oil lamp." When he writes, his pen begins "to scratch across the paper." This is legitimate use of the imagination, and it is open to every writer of history outside the graduate school. It follows the same road as the newspaperman's commandment: "Show me; don't tell me!"

Schlesinger makes Jackson a believable human being, commenting on his "natural grandeur which few men could resist," his "grim, majestic visage," his "calculated rages." He makes Jackson even more real by introducing little vignettes from Jessie Benton Frémont's memoirs:

"Jessie Benton knew she must keep still and not fidget or squirm, even when General Jackson twisted his fingers too tightly in her curls. The old man, who loved children, liked to have Benton bring his enchanting daughter to the White House. Jessie, clinging to her father's hand, trying to match his strides, would climb breathlessly up the long stairs to the upper room where, with the sunshine flooding in through tall south windows, they would find the General in his big rocking chair close to the roaring wood fire. The child instinctively responded to the lonely old man's desire for 'a bright, unconscious affectionate little life near him,' and would sit by his side while his hand rested on her head. Sometimes, in the heat of discussion, his long bony fingers took a grip that made Jessie look at her father but give no other sign."

Such passages are appetizers—the frosting on the cake. The bulk of the book is solid, meat-and-potatoes fact, but Schlesinger has his vision and he speaks from his heart. He knows what the Age of Jackson was and how it fits into the pattern of our history. He loves it and understands it and wants his reader to love and understand it too. His enthusiasm generates a language and a method which make communication possible. He writes history; he does not get lost in the facts. He is aware of something which many Americans saw once but few see now. Emerson saw it in 1884 and wrote it into an essay called, significantly for the purpose of this study, "the Poet":

"We have yet had no genius in America, with tyrannous eye, which knew the value of our incomparable materials, and saw, in the barbarism and materialism of the times, an-

other carnival of the same gods whose picture he so much admires in Homer; then in the Middle Age; then in Calvinism. Banks, and tariffs, the newspaper and caucus, Methodism and Unitarianism, are flat and dull to dull people, but rest on the same foundations of wonder as the town of Troy and the temple of Delphi, and are as swiftly passing away. Our log-rolling, our stumps and their politics, our fisheries, our Negroes and Indians, our boasts and our repudiations, the wrath of rogues and the pusillanimity of honest men, the northern trade, the Southern planting, the western clearing, Oregon and Texas, are yet unsung. Yet America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for metres."

PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS need to remember — and to teach — that bricks alone do not make a building. An architect is needed to make something out of the bricks. Somebody is needed to assemble the facts according to his design, to try to understand what they mean. Most historical writers have to be content with making contributions to history, but some can be historians. For these chosen few, history is as much feeling as fact, and they can pass the feeling on to others. They can teach the rest of us to enjoy history and not be ashamed of our reactions. They resemble Sir Philip Sidney trying to find a way to say what he felt:

" 'Foole,' said my Muse to me, 'Looke in thy heart and write.' "

You will note that Sidney's muse did not say, "Look in thy Turabian."* The Muse of History does not say such a thing either. What she does say to those who stop to listen is: "Call no man historian unless he makes you feel."

C. L. Sonnichsen *is a retired professor of English and is editor of the* Journal of Arizona History *and chief of publications for the Arizona Historical Society. His 1974 book* Colonel Greene and the Copper Skyrocket *was winner of a Western Heritage Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center, and a Spur Award from the Western Writers of America.*

**The author here is referring to a popular college guide for writing theses and dissertations.*

A STATE OF LESS THAN ENCHANTMENT

(Continued from page 9)

he was rewarded with the governorship of Guatemala for his sterling—if incomplete—services.

The month after England's thirteen colonies formally declared their separateness, Spain's Council of the Indies separated the northern territories from the rest of New Spain into the *Provincias Internas,* a single governmental department under Commandant-General Teodoro de Croix, who was to attend first to reducing the hostile Indians. The French-born Caballero de Croix had served in various capacities under the Marqués de Croix, Bucareli's predecessor as viceroy of New Spain, had returned to Spain with his uncle in 1772, and now in 1776 returned to the Americas to head up the Interior Provinces.

It was inevitable that Bucareli and Croix would grate on one another and clash as often as they did. The viceroy had just lost control of almost half of New Spain to the forty-six-year-old soldier with friends in high places. Croix, for his part, returned coolness with coolness during his nine-month "familiarization" stay in Mexico City; and even before he reached the lands he would administer, reports from the various governors of the northern provinces convinced him that he needed two thousand additional troops to carry out the king's will on the fifteen hundred miles of bleeding frontier. The fiscally conservative Bucareli was appalled at the six-hundred-thousand-peso annual cost of meeting such a request and brushed him off, saying Croix would probably change his mind once he actually inspected the provinces that O'Conor had tamed.

The ill feeling between viceroy and commandant-general then went into its long-distance phase. When Croix finally went north and made a partial inspection, he decided even two thousand troops would be inadequate. There were Indian uprisings—some completely out of hand—in all the provinces. He forwarded horrendous casualty and damage reports, adding that the governments were inept and corrupt, and that the military officers had sunk into "all the abominable excesses of drunkenness, luxury, gambling, and greed," setting bad examples for the troops. O'Conor, Croix clearly implied, had lied about the true state of things in the north.

An attack on O'Conor, Bucareli's appointee, made Bucareli burn, but with Croix regularly airing his dissatisfactions to José de Gálvez, the powerful chief minister of the Council of Indies in Spain, the viceroy could only defend O'Conor by pointing out that some officers presently serving under Croix had filed encouraging reports. The commandant-general persisted in his demands for the two thousand troops which, even if they had been available, would never be sent. In February of 1779, Croix received a royal order to cease offensive war against the Indians and to try to win them over by gentle means. It was a heavy blow to Croix, followed by another one in September when José de Gálvez informed him that Spain had gone to war with England. That meant no reinforcements, ever, and that he was on his own.

In truth, Croix had been pretty much on his own all along. Apparently a natural complainer but nonetheless an able officer, he had had his local successes along the impossible boundary that knew few silences between war whoops. He had organized local militias among the settlers to provide a defensive capability that would free presidial regulars for

offensive war. As early as November of 1777, while Englishmen digested the debacle of Burgoyne at Saratoga, Croix convened the first of a series of war councils with his frontier commanders, mainly to decide what to do about Texas and New Mexico. Out of them evolved the resurrection of a divide-and-conquer policy. The Apache bands were to be split up—the Lipans to be warred on and the Mescaleros to be wooed with concessions. Where possible, the Spaniards were to ally themselves with the Comanches, who were themselves to be isolated from other tribes and set against the Apaches, their natural prey. The stratagem worked especially well in Texas, largely due to a man who was not a Spaniard. With their acquisition of western Louisiana in 1763, Spain inherited from France Athanase de Mézières, an officer at Natchitoches, old post of the dashing St. Denis. Indeed, de Mézières had once been married to a daughter of St. Denis and, like his father-in-law, was Paris-born, educated, cultivated, successful as a trader, and possessed of that same uncanny skill in dealing with the red man. Through diplomacy, de Mézières had kept the Wichitas and Tonkawas from joining in permanent alliance with the Comanches. To Croix he was an invaluable adviser who refined the scheme to break the power of the eastern Apaches. In 1779, about to be rewarded for his services with the governorship of Texas, de Mézières died after being thrown from a horse.

EARLY THAT SAME YEAR the Comanches assaulted the Lipans mercilessly, costing the Apaches three hundred of their number and sending the survivors to the Spanish, begging peace and protection. The Lipan humiliation was a windfall for the Spaniards in their plan to break the power of the eastern Apaches. How the Comanches could succeed where the Spaniards often failed points up not only the fighting heart and skill of the Comanches but the lack of the same for the Spaniards. The effectiveness of the common soldier—or leather-jacket—so called for his multi-ply leather coat used as armor against Indian arrows—had long been disadvantaged by inferior weapons and poor training. Croix managed to improve both. But troops had to be led, and well led, by officers of courage and imagination; on the northern frontier there was a dearth of these, too. Fortunately for Spain, Croix had at least one—Juan Bautista de Anza.

Following Anza's great successes—the opening of an overland route from Sonora to California in 1774 and his escorting of settlers there in 1775–76—Croix put him in command of the armed forces in his native Sonora. In the year he was there, he gave further proof of his abilities by putting down a Seri uprising. Clearly a comer, in 1778 he became civil and military governor of New Mexico, appointed to that office by the king, not by Croix. Anza immediately inspected all the villages in the province, redesigning fortifications and laying plans to bring the settlers into defensible pueblos from their scattered fields, where they were easy marks for Apache and Comanche raiding parties. In his resettlement plan the governor was frustrated by the recalcitrant ranchers, who complained to Croix and anybody else who would listen.

In little else did Anza fail. In the cold August of 1779, he led six hundred soldiers, militia, and Indian auxiliaries north out of Taos on a little-used trail through Colorado's Front Range, to seek and destroy the notorious Comanche chief Cuerno Verde and his band, who had been terrorizing New Mexico for ten years from their Colorado sanctuary. Near modern Pueblo, Anza's force trapped the Comanches and killed Green Horn and his finest warriors.

Anza was more than an efficient bloodletter. The following September he went on a mission of mercy to the Hopis, decimated by drought on their mesa tops, and offered food and escort to those who wished to resettle along the Rio Grande. A few months later the proven pathfinder was off on a delayed project—that of finding a trail from New Mexico to Sonora, with hopes of stimulating needed trade between the two provinces and breaching the rugged homeland of the fierce Gila Apaches, the most exasperating of all the Apache bands. Anza left Santa Fe on November 9, 1780, and struck southwest from the Rio Grande at Fray Cristobal over the desolate crags of the Mimbres and Chiricahua mountains, entering Arizpe in mid-December. Though the route would not be the one later profitably used by the Spaniards through the Gila Apache country, Anza had again shown himself master of the possible.

While Anza served Croix well, the reverse was not to be true. Modest successes attended Croix's management of the frontier from Texas to Sonora. But the commandant-general had not gone farther west, and that was where disaster occurred.

At the strategic junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers, the Yuma Indians revolted in 1781 against their arrogant Spanish "friends" and slaughtered them. The land link between California and the other "interior provinces" was permanently severed. Croix needed a scapegoat and found it in Anza, who, so Croix said, had misled his superior by representing the Yumas as peaceable. Actually, Anza had warned that the tribe required tender treatment, and Father Garcés, who had stayed on at the Colorado River settlement to his martyrdom, repeatedly advised Croix of the deteriorating situation. Curiously, a few months before Croix blackened Anza's reputation, he had authored a report praising the man for his exceptional gifts. No matter. Anza's career was capped. In 1783, the same year the other general war on the North American continent was officially concluded in Paris, Croix was promoted to viceroy of Peru. Succeeding him as commandant-general was the governor of the Californias, Felipe de Neve, who joined in the slander of Anza and meant to have him relieved of his command and his service record cleansed of honors. Neve, however, died a few months after taking the post. Anza stayed on as New Mexico's governor for another four years, weaning the Navajos away from an alliance with the Gila Apaches and

cementing treaties with the redoubtable Comanches that gave New Mexico a generation of relative peace and prosperity. Then he returned to Sonora with the lesser title of provisional commander of the province's armed forces and captain of the presidio of Tucson. He died within the year.

The urge is always strong to scratch the past for good guys and bad guys, for successes and failures, for those who made history and those who were unmade by it. New Spain, resurgent at the time of the American Revolution, presents many opportunities. Some historians have singled out Croix for blame in the eventual failure of Spain on its far northern frontier; others, in defense of Croix, have disparaged Bucareli as a visionless bureaucrat. If responsibility must fall somewhere, perhaps it should be on the forceful brow of José de Gálvez, the chief author of Spain's expansion into California at a time when her purchase on the rest of the West was already weak. Yet Gálvez was a man of vision. He made things happen. Those who write histories tend to remember movers and shakers kindly, even though external events often intrude on a man's dream and reshape it into a nightmare.

Croix, in reporting on Texas in 1781, said that not until the present Anglo-American war "is concluded can anything advantageous be done to keep the greedy nations of the Indians of the North content and quiet." The commandant-general correctly recognized the other war as the key event. He simply mis-identified those "greedy nations."

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THE BIG SKY DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 47)

BY THE END of April 1970, fairly detailed planning had taken place. Two clusters or villages would be constructed, one called Meadow Village and the other called Mountain Village. They would be separated by a distance of about seven miles. The principal attraction at Meadow Village would be a golf course designed by Arnold Palmer Associates. Generally speaking, Meadow Village would be designed for more sedate activities than Mountain Village which, it was expected, would provide all the attractions of a small European ski resort: that meant good skiing and a lively after-ski social life. Between the two, there would be a guest ranch—in fact Sam Smedling's old Lone Mountain ranch—which would provide a place for those who desired a more rustic, traditional western vacation.

Initial support for the project was widespread. The Bozeman Chamber of Commerce was delighted, as were most other state and local politicians and businessmen. Real estate values would rise and new business opportunities would manifest themselves. The development meant jobs for those in the building trades, a principal sideline activity for many farmers and ranchers in the area. Most people agreed that it would bring in people and money without industrial pollution.

The popularity of conservation as an issue no doubt created opposition which would not have developed otherwise—hard-core opposition, about 1,500 strong, organized under the banner of the National Forest Preservation Group. Big Sky's critics seemed to be motivated by three factors: first, a fear of big, eastern money, a dirty word in the populist West; second, the fear that with that eastern money would come other problems associated with the urban East, such as overcrowding and organized crime; third, a fear that Big Sky would destroy the natural environment of the West Fork of the Gallatin. A few objected to Big Sky because they thought it would be a rich man's playground but seemed to say it would be "OK" if it were going to be some sort of relocation center for the urban poor. Even the most dedicated of the opponents to Big Sky probably did not believe they could completely block the project. What they hoped to do was to fight a delaying game.

Huntley's first reaction to the opponents of Big Sky was mixed. He was somewhat disappointed that they did not fully accept the plan, but he believed that the voice of the conservationists and other critics should be heard in order to keep the developers, himself included, honest. However, as the protests became less constructive, Huntley began to lose his temper. He became upset over what he called "ninety-day-wonder ecologists and smart-alec editors." He accused one of the leaders of the opposition, in a head-to-head confrontation, of "marching majestically backward from conclusion to fact." Although Huntley was sometimes given to self-pity (on one occasion he complained to a reporter that "the ringleader of the opposition claims I'm going to bring in marijuana and heroin and naked women"), he also mounted a full-scale selling job throughout the state.

He tried to address at least two meetings a week and hammered on the theme that Big Sky was "the greatest thing that ever happened to Montana." He asked what was wrong with tourists leaving a few tracks in the snow if they also left their money behind in the state. He pointed out that Montana had a depressed economy and that tourism was the best hope for an economic rebirth. "Dammit," he would say, "we can't build a fence around Montana."

The National Forest Preservation Group focused its attention on two features of the Big Sky project. The developers needed additional land in order to fulfill the requirements of their master plan: a seven-acre parcel of land near Meadow Village to complete a fairway on the proposed golf course;

and, more importantly, about three sections of land for the site of Mountain Village and the ski runs. This happened to represent only a small portion of land that one of the major investors hoped to receive as part of two projected exchanges with the National Forest Service. An attempt to block these land exchanges would become the first objective of the National Forest Preservation Group.

Another key feature of the master plan was the improvement of an existing logging road, which connected the sites of Meadow Village and Mountain Village. The Big Sky developers hoped to get the road built with federal and state funds, thus saving themselves about 1.2 million dollars. Blocking the use of public funds for the road became the second objective of the National Forest Preservation Group.

The tactics adopted to block both the exchanges of land and the funding of the road were identical. Every administrative decision would be challenged and appealed to the next higher authority. When all possible administrative appeals were exhausted the process would begin once again, but this time battling through the courts. With these tactics the National Forest Preservation Group hoped to call unfavorable attention to Big Sky.

ALTHOUGH both exchanges of land eventually took place and the road was built, the conservationists, the developers of the resort, and the federal government learned important lessons from the three-year battle that preceded the opening of Big Sky.

Conservationists learned they could not expect to be effective if they took the position that the only good environment was one untouched by human hands. Furthermore, they learned they would have to be extremely careful in the future to avoid being led astray by those who only wished to use the conservation issue to provide themselves with a soapbox. The sensible conservationists did learn that if they selected their targets carefully, they could accomplish something positive, for much of their more constructive criticism was heeded by the developers.

The Big Sky promoters learned that they would have to exercise a higher level of public concern than they had perhaps used in other areas because of the watchful presence of conservationists. The attempt to get public funds to build the 6.7-mile road between Meadow Village and Mountain Village was an obvious attempt to cut corners by taking advantage of political favoritism and public apathy. Their subsequent failure to get those funds taught them they could not expect to get away with such behavior, at least in the recreation industry. They also learned that if they behaved in a responsible way toward the environment they would keep the support of the general public.

The federal government learned—not for the first time—that it is one thing to put altruistic legislation, such as the Environmental Protection Act of 1969, on the books but it is another thing to put it into operation. Government agencies at all levels found themselves unaware of the provisions of the act and unequipped, when they did become aware, to implement its provisions. In both the case of the land exchanges and of the road, agencies did not know that environmental impact studies were required, and when they found out they did not have personnel to prepare such statements. Even the Environmental Protection Agency itself was ill-equipped to process such statements when they did get them. As a result of this mishandling the Big Sky project was delayed considerably and at great cost.

In spite of the delays, Big Sky had begun to take shape, with some of the facilities opening, by the winter of 1973–74. But it was still a very long way from completion. During the winter Chet Huntley, the founder and guiding force behind the project, was stricken with cancer. Doctors gave him only a few months to live. An effort was made to allow Huntley to participate in the formal but premature opening of the resort in the spring of 1974. But the race was lost and Huntley died three days beforehand.

The ceremony took place amid heavy equipment, piles of lumber, tar paper, junk, and dirt common to half-finished construction sites. Visitors in the first few weeks after the opening came away less than impressed. They saw the confusion of the moment rather than the dream that had sustained Chet Huntley and others associated with the project. The architecture looked less than spectacular and the scattered nature of the project was accentuated because of inadequate transportation between the various parts of the complex. Most of all there was a sort of shoddiness about the completed buildings which especially disturbed the *New York Times*. However, the defenders of Big Sky were quick to respond. They said that the critics should wait until the project was completed before making a judgment.

They are no doubt right: to make a final judgment on Big Sky even now would be unfair, but there are several aspects of the project which indicate that it marks a new and sensible approach to effective utilization of the natural environment. The will of one man, Chet Huntley, successfully molded the power of corporate America to accomplish what was a very personal objective. Huntley's commitment to conservation left an indelible stamp on the total project. Thus far, Big Sky has demonstrated that corporate America is willing to make short-term financial sacrifices in constructing such a resort complex, in order to guarantee the preservation of the surrounding environment, and thus insure long-term success of its investment.

How well Chet Huntley's dream is realized in years to come will depend in large part on a watchdog attitude by both government and informed citizenry, coupled with a continued commitment to sound conservation practices by the corporation which controls the resort.

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Membership in the Western History Association is open to anyone interested in the history and culture of the American West. Inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, William D. Rowley, Department of History, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89507. Membership is on a calendar-year basis and includes THE AMERICAN WEST, WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY, and NEWSLETTER. Annual dues are: Regular Member $16.00; Sustaining Member $30.00; Student Member $10.00 (includes only the WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY, NEWSLETTER, and Annual Conference material); Sponsoring Member $100.00 (Institution). Life Member $300.00, paid in a twelve-month period. Individuals or institutions not wishing to become members may subscribe directly to either THE AMERICAN WEST or the WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY at regular subscription rates.

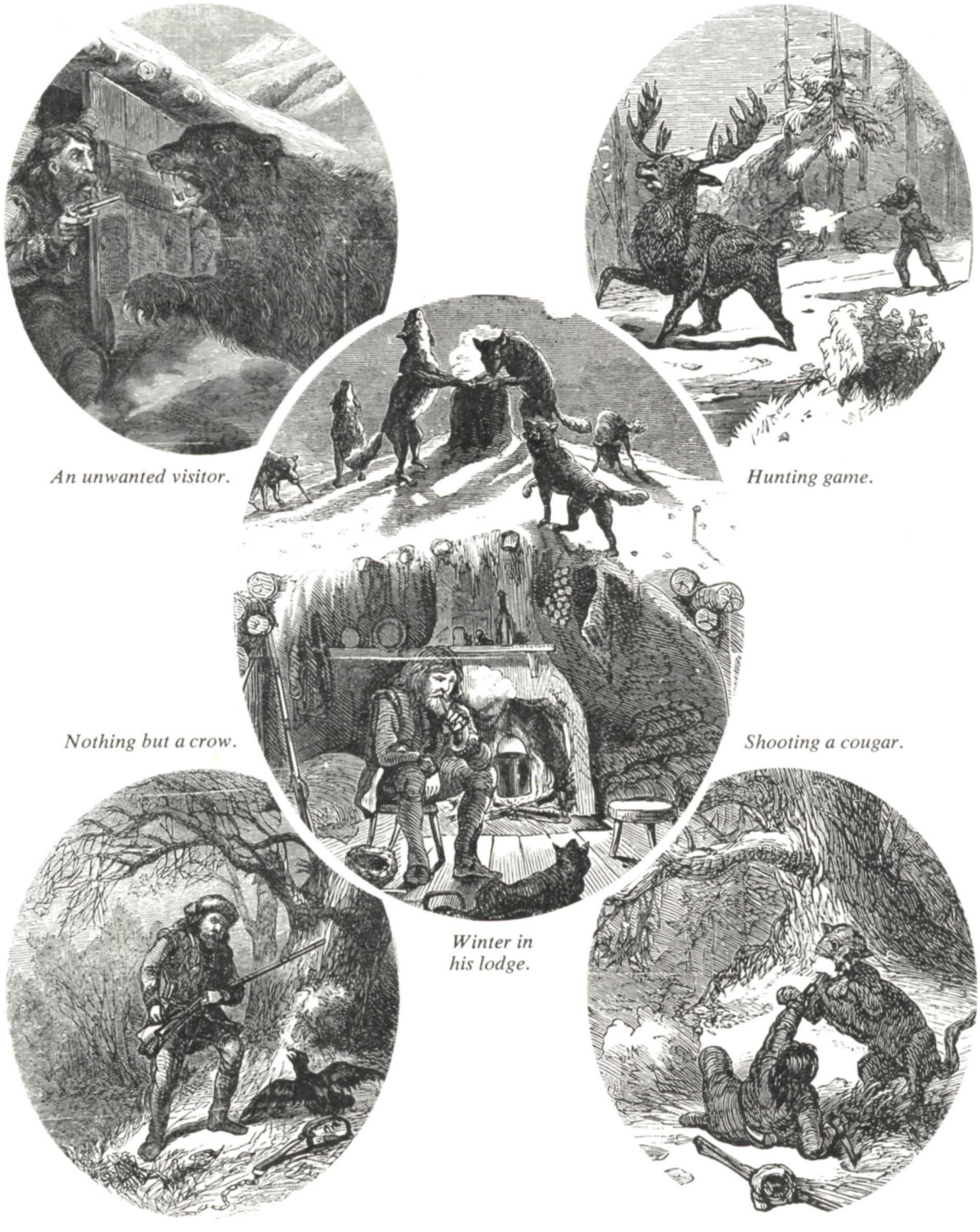
The Western History Association's fifteenth annual conference on the History of Western America will convene at the Fairmont Mayo Hotel, Tulsa, Oklahoma, on October 8–11, 1975.

Forthcoming in THE AMERICAN WEST

In its early days photography was sometimes a frustrating enterprise, and especially so for **The First Photographers of the Grand Canyon,** who accompanied geographical survey expeditions in the Southwest in 1871–72. George C. and Virginia McConnell Simmons tell the story of five men who struggled to overcome odds in documenting one of the world's natural wonders with cumbersome glass-plate cameras and silver-nitrate baths.

A more direct challenge to both geographical surveyors and others in the 1800s were the unconquered mountaintops of the frontier. In **Pioneers of the Western Peaks,** Anita Nygaard enumerates the extraordinary and often funny experiences of individual climbers and groups, both men and women, who determined to be "first on the summit."

Col. Samuel F. Cody, though no relation to "Buffalo Bill" Cody, had much the same appetite for adventure. In another forthcoming article, J. David Truby and Shirley J. Schofield unfold the colorful life story of **The World's First Flying Cowboy,** who started off as one of the youngest-ever Texas trail bosses and subsequently became a traveling showman and daring pioneer aviator in western Europe.



Scenes in the life of a Rocky Mountain trapper, as sketched for Harper's Weekly *by artist William Cary in 1868.*