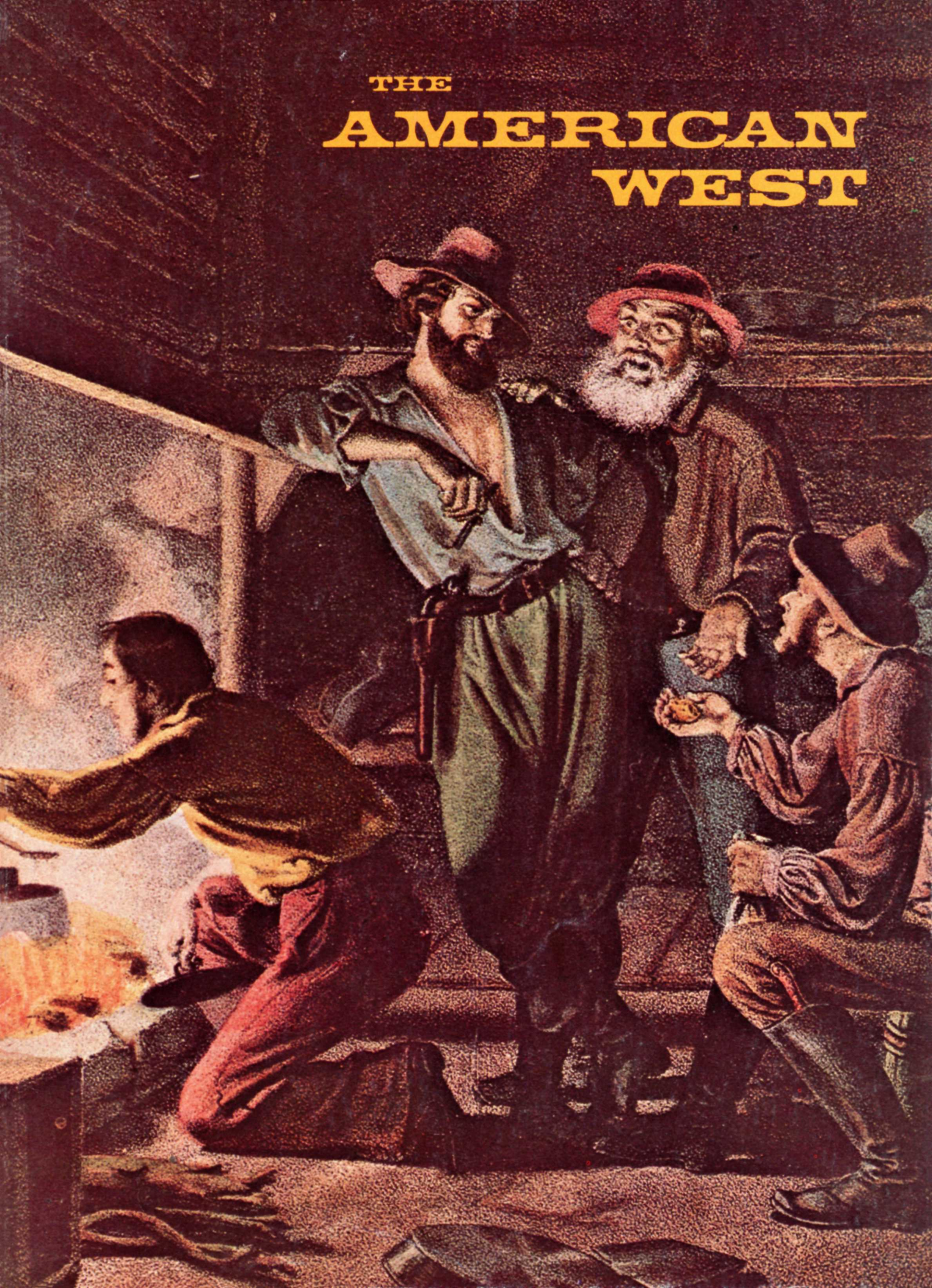
THE
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Cover: "Now I will tell you what we have done since we got here; we have worked eight days and have made $16,000— I believe there is a fortune for everyone who will come and get it. . . . The largest lump [of gold] we have got weighs 2 oz. but there are two men at work near us that have got a piece that weighed 5 oz., and that is the largest lump I have seen, though I have heard of larger ones. My advice to you is to come and make your fortune while there is plenty. . . ."
(Letter from the California mines, September 1849.)

DETAIL FROM "MINERS' CABIN, RESULT OF THE DAY," PAINTED AND DRAWN ON STONE BY CHARLES CHRISTIAN NAHL AND FREDERICK AUGUSTUS WENDEROTH, 1852. COURTESY OF BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY.

ESTABLISHED on the east bank of California's Sacramento River, near the well-known fort and trading post of Capt. John Augustus Sutter, Sacramento City became the focal point of phenomenal activity during the opening months of the California Gold Rush. In August of 1849, Argonaut William L. Schooning wrote wonderingly of the boisterous new settlement:

"This place is eight weeks old and it now has upwards of 1,000 houses, wholesale and retail stores, daily auction houses; in fact it has every appearance of a flourishing city. . . . The houses are principally made of canvas cloth, though there are going up a great many fine frame buildings. The sound of the hammer and saw is heard in every direction. You can form no correct idea how things appear, indeed it is more like a romance or dream than reality. For instance: yesterday we drove our teams into the streets about 9 o'clock in the morning; they stood there perhaps two hours . . . in the evening of the same day I passed along, and on the very ground [where the horses had been] there stood a baker's shop in full operation selling bread and receiving the money for it!"

Repeated calamities from flood, fire, and disease failed to stem the continued development of Sacramento; by the time the above lithograph of its Embarcadero was issued, in 1856, the city had become firmly established as one of the state's leading commercial centers.

Today, because of the providential survival of many of Sacramento's earliest buildings, and thanks to the combined efforts of concerned citizens, historians, government officials, and commercial developers, a six-block waterfront area of the original city—comprising one of the most significant historic sites in the West—has been largely restored to its mid-nineteenth-century flavor and elegance. Bicentennial celebrations at Old Sacramento, including opening of the state railroad museum, are scheduled for July 3–4, 1976; an article on the project appears on pages 20–27 of this issue.

QUOTATIONS ON THIS AND THE PRECEDING PAGE ARE FROM "CALIFORNIA EMIGRANT LETTERS" EDITED BY WALKER D. WYMAN (1952).

THE
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The California Gold Rush: A Special Issue

My Journey to the Gold Fields by A. G. Henderson 4
Reminiscences of an Argonaut

Letters of Gold by Roger and Nancy Olmsted 13
California Lettersheets

Old Sacramento by Lee Foster 20
Bringing a Vanished Era Back to Life

Charles Nahl: Gold Rush Artist by Moreland Leithold Stevens and Marjorie Arkelian 28
A Preview of a Forthcoming Major Exhibition

Vanished Monarch of the Sierra by Ted M. Taylor 36
The California Grizzly

The Idle and Industrious Miner with an Introduction by T. H. Watkins 39
A Tale of California Life, Illustrated

We Were Forty-Niners! by Vicente Perez Rosales 46
The Gold Rush Through Chilean Eyes

A Matter of Opinion 52

The American West Review 53

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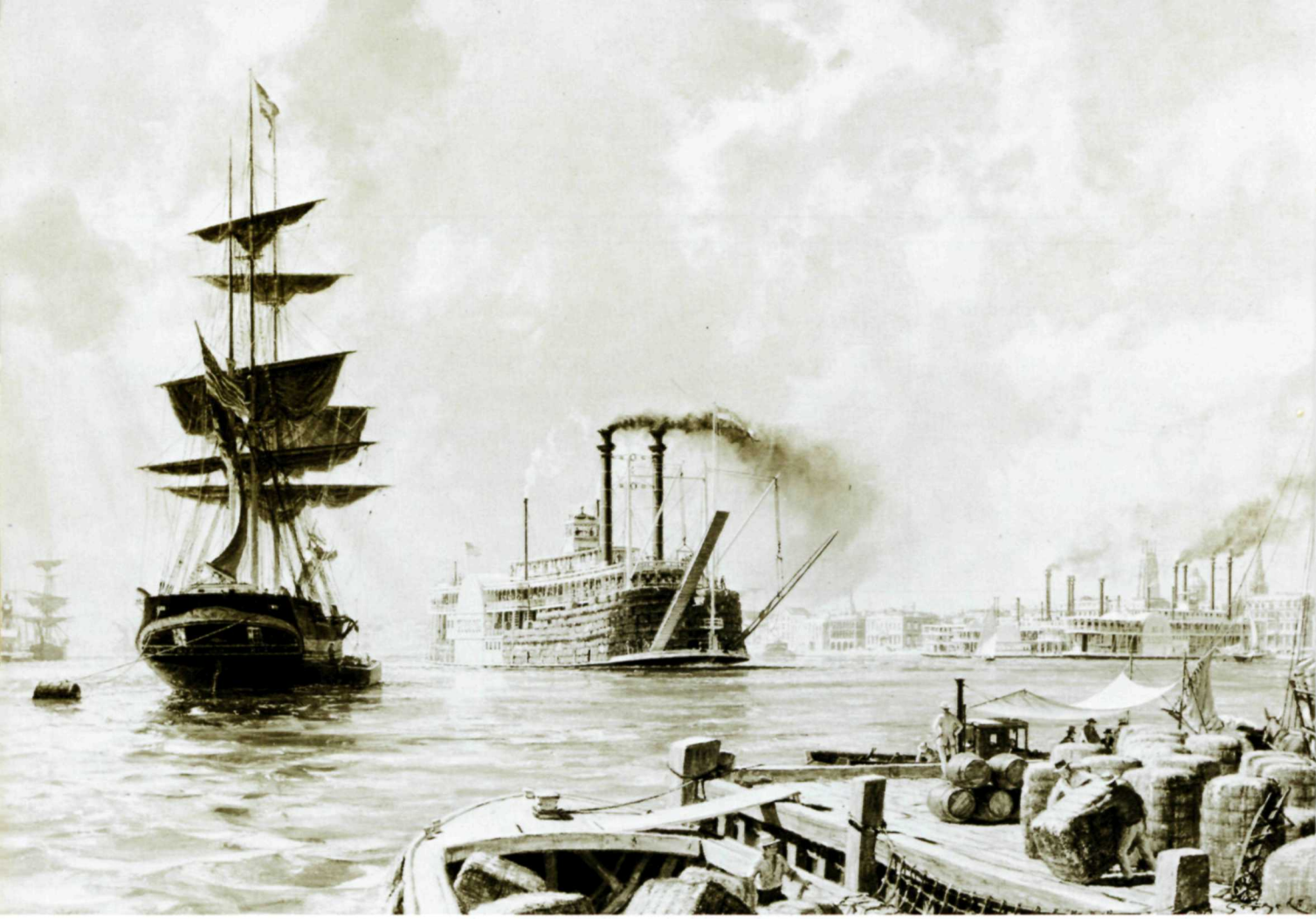


En route to California in 1849, A. G. Henderson transferred from Mississippi steamboat to ocean steamer at New Orleans.

My Journey to the Gold Fields

Reminiscences of an Argonaut

by A. G. Henderson

The following narrative, written in 1879 by A. G. Henderson, a printer and merchant, describes one of the grand undertakings in the writer's life—his four-month journey, as part of a flood of gold seekers, from the Midwest to California in 1849–50. The author's impressions were recorded with the aid of a clear memory and the perspective afforded by thirty years of subsequent living; because the adventures he experienced en route to the diggings were so representative of those encountered by a legion of Argonauts, this selection seems particularly appropriate as an introduction to our special issue on one of the great formative eras of the American West. Henderson's manuscript was brought to our attention by Mildred Higgins of Fayettesville, Arkansas, and has been abridged for presentation here.

DURING THE YEARS of 1848 and 1849 I was engaged in the lead mines [at New Diggings], Wisconsin, twelve miles northeast of Galena, Illinois. It was in the early days of '48 that Gold was discovered in California; we began in the fall of that year to hear extravagant accounts of fortunes being made in a short time.

Early in the winter or spring of '49, a man named Rans Wilson returned to the lead mines with some $10,000 in gold dust, and of course that raised the excitement to fever heat. Rans had gone to Oregon in 1846, and as soon as the discovery of gold reached him he and others started for California and, as he expressed it, "made their pile." He reached our part of the country just in time to keep up what was called the "California fever."

"STEAM PACKET 'TYCOON' ARRIVING AT THE LEVEE, NEW ORLEANS" BY JOHN STOBART; COURTESY OF KENNEDY GALLERIES, NEW YORK

A printer by the name of Benjamin P. Kooser, who had worked in the *Galena Gazette* office with me [and had subsequently] joined Colonel Stevenson's New York regiment and had gone around Cape Horn with it in 1847, wrote back to me that during a week's furlough he had dug out of the southern California mines over $1,100 in gold. As the letter was published it of course added "fuel to the flames"; everybody was going or wanted to go.

I had a young wife and one child and was doing well digging lead ore, but so tempting did the stories of fortunes made in California look to me that it was hard work to make myself contented. Quite a large emigration went overland to California during the spring of 1849, and by fall many of us who had been left behind concluded to go to the new Eldorado by way of the Isthmus [of Panama], although we had [as yet] heard nothing from the friends that had left us in the spring. Many persons went by way of New York, while others went by way of New Orleans.

On the 29th day of October 1849, I commenced my journey from Galena on the steam packet *Bonaccord* and in a few days found myself at St. Louis. The only adventure I met with on the journey was at Keokuk, Iowa, at the foot of the lower rapids. The river was low, and the steamers' freight had to be transferred to "lighters" (a species of flatboat having no roof) in order to get over the rapids. When we got to Keokuk, numbers of these barges were tied up to the shore, and as the river here is deep and the current swift, great care had to be taken to avoid accidents.

In the hurry of attaching these barges to the right steamer, one poor fellow slipped off a barge and disappeared beneath the waters. I expected him to rise to the surface immediately —where several persons were ready to help him out—but he never made his appearance. It was getting dark, everybody was in a hurry, and in fifteen minutes he appeared to have passed out of the minds of the boatmen entirely. I was young then and had come but seldom in contact with death by violence, and the accident and death was long remembered by me; but before I [subsequently] left California I witnessed all kinds of sudden deaths, and an accident of that kind would hardly have left an impression on my mind.

In the course of a few days I started for New Orleans on board the fine packet *Bostona*. On our journey several of the passengers had the cholera, and several poor fellows died and were buried at lonely woodyards on the river bank. We reached that city about the 12th of November, and the *Bostona* was soon abandoned by her passengers. All summer long the cholera and yellow fever had been raging in New Orleans, and when I got there, although the citizens said the place was healthy, my friends told me that the death rate was about forty every twenty-four hours. Of course I was anxious to get to California, and the information made me want to leave on the first steamer for the Isthmus.

I had never seen a seagoing vessel until that time, and my first sight of one was a surprise: there was a low, dark, and dirty-looking vessel lying near where we landed, and to an up-country lad who had always been used to seeing large river boats it looked as though it would be dangerous to even cross the river on her.

After I had gotten a ticket for the Isthmus on the steamer *Alabama,* I started for the river to find that steamer and was much surprised when a policeman pointed it out to me, [it being] the same dirty old tub that had so disgusted me when I first arrived. However, [having paid $45 for a steerage passage to Chagres] with many others I crowded on board. I found the vessel crowded and had to lie down on boxes, trunks, or wherever I could to get a resting place.

In the course of an hour after I got on board, the steamer started for Baleze, the mouth of the river, 110 miles south. The next morning when I awoke, I found the steamer had anchored. The whole surrounding country looked as though it was exceedingly high water, whereas the river was low; I went to the pump for a drink and after a swallow or two I took in the situation—it was salt water! The first and last seawater I ever drank.

In an hour or so a pilot came on board to take us over the bar [and] in a few hours we were at the line where the blue water joins the green.

Soon the vessel began plunging, first diving head first as though she was going to the bottom, then her bow would go up in the air and the stern go down until one would think she would never right herself. I was somewhat nervous and asked a sailor if the sea was not very rough. He laughed and told me it was as smooth as he had ever known the Gulf of Mexico [to be]. He told the truth, but I wondered how much rougher it could get in a storm; I was able to answer that question myself before many days.

My eyes had been wandering around the rail where many others were holding on just as I was, and I could see first one, then another commence paying tribute to Neptune. . . . I had not yet felt any difficulty, but pretty soon my head began to ache, and it got so exceedingly bad that I thought if someone would knock the top of it off with an iron stanchion I might have some chance of living, but I felt convinced that there was no show for me unless something of the kind was done. Almost instantly the terrible pain left my head and I got very sick in the stomach—such sickness as I never dreamed of. I laid down flat on the deck and ["commenced paying tribute"] over the side of the vessel. Oh, but I was sick! Life did not seem worth living, and had I fallen into the water I am sure I would have drowned as I did not have ambition enough to raise my hand to save my life. I can look back now and in imagination the whole scene passes before my vision after the lapse of many years: the plunging steamer tossed about at the sport of the waves, dozens of poor fellows hanging like myself to the iron posts, where the danger was imminent that we would any moment be plunged into the ocean. It was the first experience I ever had of the sea, and indeed the first time I had seen the ocean.

Disembarking on Panama's Caribbean shore, Henderson and several companions chartered a native "bungo" for transportation up the Chagres River. Their "three day" trip to Cruces actually took nine days, and the men nearly starved.

The weather was warm, and it was a sight to see the poor firemen come up out of the hole where they had been feeding the furnace. It was so hot down there they could endure it for only twenty minutes, [by which time] they had to come up on deck or were pulled out by their companions, and lay around like dead men. I saw at least fifteen at one time in this predicament.

In the course of a week we landed at Chagres, the first sight I had of South America. Our steamer was a small one (some 600 tons burden), and we were able to get tolerably near the shore, where we were taken on native "bungoes" or canoes; from there we got on the backs of natives who landed us on dry land.

THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I had ever been in the tropics, and the change from Galena, Illinois, in the month of November was very great. . . . The village of Chagres, situated at the mouth of the river of the same name, had about 250 inhabitants, and the houses were of the most primitive character, being built of cane and bamboo; the inhabitants or "natives" [were] a mixture of Indians and Negroes, and in some instances had Caucasian blood in their veins.

On the steamer crossing the Gulf I got acquainted with Hon. Bailey Peyton of Tennessee, a prominent Whig politician of that state who had been appointed by President Taylor to go to some of the South American republics as U.S. minister, and who was then on his way to his destination. He was accompanied by his daughter and her female companions, besides a couple of servants. Mr. Peyton managed to engage a bungo for his household and started up the river the evening of the same day we landed. He paid a good round price for his passage, and had made a special bargain that the natives should keep their clothing on while going up the river; something they were very loath to do in that warm climate.

The next day after we landed some eight or ten of us started up the river in a bungo we had chartered, and we were told it would not take more than three days to reach Cruces, a town on the headwaters of canoe navigation. In order to be safe we laid in a plentiful supply of provisions for four days; but we were doomed to a sad disappointment

"INCIDENT ON THE CHAGRES RIVER" BY CHARLES NAHL, 1867: BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

—it took us nine days to get to Gorgona, the first place on the river where we could get any provisions for love or money. I came as near to starving to death as I ever want to be. I remember seeing monkeys in the trees near the bank, sometimes six or seven in a single tree, but it was impossible to get them for the canebrush and trees grew so thick . . . aside from which it was dangerous to land on account of alligators.

We passed one place on the shore where there was an abandoned plantation and a clear spot of an acre or so, where we saw a little dog running along, and I do believe that if we could have killed that dog he would have been eaten raw inside of twenty minutes, we were so desperately hungry.

The second day we passed Mr. Peyton's boat and found his boatmen were like ours, without a rag of clothing on. Mr. Peyton was sitting in front of the awning, while the ladies were in the rear. After recognizing several of us, [Peyton] burst out laughing and said, "It was no use, boys. I couldn't make them stick to their agreement over half a day. There is no more shame in those fellows than in so many horses or mules, and I guess we must look at things that way."

We soon passed our old acquaintance and kept on up the stream. The hands would be poling along in a quiet way, when all at once one of them would drop his pole and dive headlong into the water, and after washing and cooling himself for ten or fifteen minutes would climb on board again; each one would wash and cool himself off about every two hours.

When we were out three or four days, we met the bungo of Rans Wilson coming down the river. This was the man who had returned to the lead mines from California in the spring previous with $10,000 in "dust" that had so helped to feed and encourage the California fever. During the summer he had been married, and he and his brother and their wives had started for California about the same time I did. Upon inquiring in regard to their coming down at this time, we learned that their boat had been capsized, and all hands had got a thorough ducking, after which the company had received some discouraging news from Panama, and they were now on their way back to the States. They said they had learned there were at least four thousand Americans at Panama, with no chance to get passage up to California.

There was a great deal of truth in what they told us, [but] we answered their discouraging news with shouts of "The white flag, white flag," etc. This appeared to ruffle Rans and he answered back that we might be sorry we were not along with him before we saw our homes again. In some cases this turned out to be true, for some of the boys died before we got to California, and others after we landed there. However, we paid no attention to the warning then, unanimously agreeing that load of passengers lacked backbone and pluck.

The journey was a tedious one, and when we had starved for nearly two days we came to a cabin on the shore where we got some upland or yellow rice to eat. I did not like rice, but I thought that was as great a feast as I ever sat down to. The next day we got to Gorgona where we procured plenty of provisions.

From this point in the dry season there was a good road that intersected the old road to Panama, and some of the passengers concluded to go to the latter place [directly] instead of going ten miles higher up the river to Cruces; so we parted company with old neighbors that had come down from the lead mines with us, and some of them I never saw again.

The next day—the ninth from Chagres—we reached Cruces and prepared for the overland trip to Panama, a distance of twenty-eight miles. The road between Cruces and Panama was called the old "military road" and was made in the flourishing days of Spain. It is said to have cost a large amount of money and the death of 30,000 African slaves. The whole twenty-eight miles was originally paved with round, smooth cobblestones and was about fifteen feet wide. In some places where the road had been cut in the solid rock, the pack mules had worn holes with their feet from twelve to eighteen inches deep, and in many places the round cobblestones had been displaced, making the journey anything but a pleasant and easy one.

We started from Cruces on foot and encamped that evening at a "ranch" about six miles out; we got nothing to eat. As we carried our own bedding, we had no difficulty in finding a place to spread it down in the yard. There were probably fifty or seventy-five guests like ourselves scattered around, very few whom we knew, and as I look back now I wonder why no robberies took place as all had more or less money. Indeed, it would have been foolish for anyone who had any expectation of getting to San Francisco to have been there with less than $250.

After getting breakfast the next morning we started on our journey to the Pacific over about as bad a road as I ever walked upon. By way of economy our party carried their luggage, and I soon found that the seventy-five pounds I had became heavier every mile we traveled. To add to my misery, before we got to Panama the new boots I started from home with gave out, after which I walked in my socks until they were torn off my feet. Long before I reached the city I was barefooted. The cobblestones were almost hot enough to fry eggs on, and in a short time my feet were so sore with blisters that I could hardly walk. I had a fine suit in my luggage, including a very substantial pair of cloth gaiters that had cost me $5, but I had no time to get them out as each [traveler] was jogging along as fast as he could, and if I stopped to unpack I would have been left far behind.

All journeys in this life have an ending, and this [one] of ours from Cruces to Panama was no exception. Late in the afternoon of a November day we arrived in the suburbs of the latter city and stopped for the night at a house where we got something to eat and had a good night's rest. Although we had made but twenty miles, I was as tired as I ever was in my life.

"THE 'VICAR OF BRAY' IN YERBA BUENA COVE DURING THE GOLD RUSH, NOVEMBER 1849" BY JOHN STOBART; COURTESY OF JOHN HOWELL BOOKS, SAN FRANCISCO
FOR A NOTE OF INTEREST ON THE SUBJECT OF THIS PAINTING, SEE PAGE 64

The third leg of Henderson's journey—Panama City to San Francisco aboard the barque* Circassian*—consumed seven dreary weeks. Upon arriving, the voyagers found the harbor clogged with ships, the crews having left for the gold fields.

I WAS COMPELLED to be a resident of Panama for about one month, and during that time I became quite well acquainted with the aspect of the city and its inhabitants. Inside the walls, I should judge, there were from eight to ten thousand people, most engaged in trade of some kind. They were generally mulattoes, Negroes, and Indians, and a lazier or more shiftless lot I never knew. All the stores were kept by females, who had their husbands or other male relatives do the outside work for them.

Of all the inhabitants one could count only eighteen white Spaniards, and most of these belonged in some way to the governor's family. The only white mechanics in the city were the printers, and they were from New Orleans or Cuba. Now let the reader think of the peculiar situation. Here we were congregated within the walls, four or five thousand Americans—all of them armed, and, of course, some of them as desperate and bloodthirsty villains as the world could produce. Each one of us felt that we had to protect ourselves, as the laws of Panama were entirely ignored—and the officers of the law defied—by that pushing, enterprising, desperate crowd, [with] each one striving to get to the new Eldorado in California.

Only two steamers left per month for San Francisco, and they were always filled to overflowing by through-ticket holders from New York and New Orleans; consequently the great crowd there had to depend on going up on sailing vessels. Every old vessel that could be made to float was chartered or purchased and fitted out by some commercial house to take up passengers. After they had sold from two to four hundred steerage tickets for $200 each, they cared but little whether the vessel they had started out on her voyage ever reached her destination or not. I heard it asserted on good authority that fully twenty percent of the vessels that left Panama that winter for the North were never heard from afterward.

Many of the vessels that were landing passengers on the eastern side of the Isthmus had both cholera and yellow fever on board, and when I look back at the situation after a lapse of thirty-four years, the wonder to me is how that immense immigration escaped with so little sickness and deaths. There

were a few deaths from both these plagues, but as a general thing the emigrants were healthy.

Some of my comrades who were from Missouri paid $200 for steerage tickets to San Francisco on a miserable old hulk called the *Hellespont,* and although I declined to purchase a ticket then, afterwards I was rather sorry I did not. In the course of ten days an English barge called the *Circassian* was chartered by the English consul Mr. Lewis and his commercial partner Mr. Clark, who paid $18,000 for the use of her to take a load of passengers to San Francisco. She was advertised to start inside of ten days; I paid $200 for a steerage passage and my mind was easy, thinking I would get off in that time.

In a short time the *Hellespont's* sailing time arrived, but the vessel was not ready; in fact, on close inquiry the ticket holders learned that nothing had been done yet to provision, water, and fit her up for the voyage, and street rumor had it that the firm that had chartered her had not even bought the provisions and other necessities for the voyage. This . . . had the effect of alarming the ticket holders of the *Circassian,* and we went to work to investigate. This we found to be an up-hill business, as the anchorage where the vessels fitted out was at an island called the Tobogo some ten miles out in the bay. We went to the English consulate and made inquiries, and the agent assured us that the vessel would be ready on the day advertised, without fail. As we learned this was the assurance that all agents made to their victims, it did not satisfy us by any means. However, we did the best we could, and that was to wait until the appointed day.

Punctually we made our appearance at the company's office, and were politely told that the *Circassian* would certainly be ready to sail the next day. Of course we did not feel like making a fuss for so short a time, but after it had been lengthened to four days, we began to get mad and held an indignation meeting on the public square. The meeting was composed of nearly all the two hundred ticket holders, and they appointed a committee of three to wait upon the agents and demand either our money back or $1 a day [living allowance] for each ticket holder until the vessel sailed. I was one of the three, and though [I was] much the youngest man in the lot, the other two insisted that I should act as spokesman.

After talking the matter over among ourselves, we went to the office and had a talk with Mr. Clark and Mr. Lewis. The latter was a very smooth talker and had been well educated, but his partner was a regular specimen of the English bulldog; he had spent nearly all his life on the ocean in the merchant service and was now retired with the title of captain. I told them what the passengers demanded. Captain Clark flew into a violent passion and said they would get the vessel ready as soon as they could, and be d--d to us. Mr. Lewis talked very gentlemanly and assured us the vessel would certainly be ready in a day or two, but as we had heard this story before we took but little stock in it. I reiterated our demands . . . and told them both I was afraid there would be trouble if the men did not get their rights. This fired up Captain Clark, who declared our rights would be "cat-o-nine-tails," and if we did not clear out we might get a dose of it right off. I . . . felt there was no use talking business with Captain Clark, so I answered him that he was not talking to English sailors on board his vessel, he was talking to free Americans, and that no such cowardly ruffianism as his amounted to anything; that if he was very anxious to fight we would try and accommodate him, and that right off. This had the effect of cooling off the belligerent sea captain, who declared he was under protection of the English flag and that any outrage on him would be made a national affair.

Mr. Lewis appeared very much annoyed at the coarse, braggadocio language of Captain Clark and tried to apologize, but would make no promise in regard to the demands of the passengers. I told him that we did not propose to make any threats, but that I was satisfied that if justice was not done in the case, the books, furniture, etc., of the English consulate would make a bonfire before midnight, *if indeed nothing worse happened.* I told him the committee would do all it could to prevent such an outrage, notwithstanding the cowardly ruffianism of his partner.

By the time we had gotten to the door, Mr. Lewis called us back and told us that the *Circassian* ticket holders should be mustered in front of the office in the morning, and he would settle with them. We were there punctually at ten o'clock, and each one on showing his ticket received three dollars, and every morning until we sailed we got our dollar a day.

WHOEVER will take the trouble to look at the map of the two Americas will find that the city of Panama is situated at the head of a deep indentation where the two [continents] join. This great sea with land bordering on its three sides is called Panama Bay [today, the Gulf of Panama], and for sail vessels [the prospect] is nearly always unfortunate, but little wind blowing over it. Panama is halfway between Valparaiso and San Francisco, but a vessel putting out from the former place for the latter gets into what are called the Trade Winds in a few hours, and they take her to her destination in forty days, while it takes sometimes double that time for the same vessel going from Panama although not going half the distance. Consequently the effort of all navigators is to get out into these trade winds as soon as possible; in order to do this they sail down the coast of South America until they get south of the equator, after which by steering directly west they soon get into the trades and then head their prow for San Francisco. By this description the reader will see that it is a tiresome journey from Panama up to the Golden Gate.

A few days before Christmas 1849, the *Circassian* started on her long journey, and for fifty days we keep beating around in that trackless waste of water called the Pacific

When he finally reached the mines, Henderson was almost penniless—but he was confident "that the tide had turned and that thenceforward I should be making money instead of spending the hard earnings I had made in the States."

Ocean. In a short time after starting the sea became rough, and most of the passengers were seasick. I was captain of a mess of eighteen, and I remember that on Christmas morning I called for assistants to go with me to the cook's room to get our allowance of provisions, and only three responded to the call. We brought away the allowance for eighteen men, but when we tried to get them together we found all were sick but ourselves, and it was several days before we could get as many as ten to come to meals.

When we had been out some weeks we came in sight of Cocos Island and lay there three days or more in a dead calm, the weather intensely hot, and the ship rocking [in the heavy Pacific swells] as though every mast in her would go overboard. When there was no wind to fill the sails, of course there was nothing to steady the ship, and her steering apparatus became useless.

A "dead calm" on the ocean was sure to raise a "breeze" among the passengers, who became discontented and quarrelsome. We had two cliques from the state of Ohio: one from Dayton, made up of stalwart young Americans who were not quarrelsome but independent when they thought they were being imposed upon; and the other from Cincinnati, composed principally of Irish, who were very quarrelsome. There were some native roughs among them who were always anxious to set the Irish on, while they stood back and only looked on. During the passage up I believe these two factions had a dozen fights, the Dayton boys always coming out ahead, and one little tough Irishman always getting badly whipped.

The two hundred passengers slept in bunks one above the other, between decks, and when during a storm the hatches were shut down, the air became very foul. I remember an old German whose bunk was just ahead of mine, who used garlic and Limburger cheese and stunk up all that side of the ship.

We had three alarms of fire, and no one but a person who has been out on the ocean in a sail vessel a thousand miles from land can have any idea of the feeling people have when they hear the cry of "fire" on shipboard.

Another misfortune we had to contend with was the drink-

"WASHING GOLD, CALAVERAS RIVER, CALIFORNIA" BY AN ANONYMOUS ARTIST, 1853; M. AND M. KAROLIK COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

ing water. I know it was the worst stuff that I ever tasted, and now after the lapse of many years I can taste and smell the horrible stuff. When we had drunk what we had to have, we used our thumbs and fingers to break the slimy stuff away; and I had a bottle of lime juice with me which I got to my mouth as soon as possible to keep from gagging.

I can assure you that the British consul and old Clark got many a blessing for their rascality. The sea biscuits were alive with worms and bugs, and we had to pound them on the hard oak deck to get the vermin out of them before eating. Our beef was a South American article, and while it was well preserved, I doubt if one could have gotten an ounce of tallow out of a barrel of it. It was red looking, and from this circumstance the passengers got to calling it "old hoss." The pork was excellent; it had been put up in the States.

Captain Hoar was a fine specimen of British sailor—gentlemanly and accommodating; but after 2 P.M. was in bed drunk. We would see no more of him until after dark, when he would make his appearance on deck. There was a movement among some of the passengers when we first started to take the command of the ship out of his hands entirely because the vessel had been badly provisioned, but after he had explained matters by telling us he had nothing to do with the laying in of provisions, and that he had been assured by Lewis and Clark that there was plenty of first-class provisions of all kinds on board, the better class of passengers came to the front and insisted that nothing should be done to interfere with Captain Hoar's navigating the ship.

The first mate was an English mechanic of some kind, but had turned sailor, and as he never got top-heavy until the old man had sobered up we got along pretty well. The third mate was a Yankee whale captain from New Bedford who was working his passage up, and as he always sided with the passengers he was not popular with either the captain or first mate. Poor fellow, he died just as we got to San Francisco.

The tedious days wore on, [but finally] on the fifty-fourth day out we found ourselves making for the Golden Gate—the entrance to the bay of San Francisco—in company with twenty-four other sailing vessels from all quarters of the world. Some of them had been laying off the entrance twenty-four hours while awaiting a favorable wind to take them in. [Before we had succeeded in entering the bay] it became dark, and all the ships had to cast anchor until morning. It was Saturday night, and we had to go to bed and wait until morning before seeing the Mecca of our hopes and anxiety.

ON SUNDAY MORNING all hands were up bright and early, and as the weather was very fine everybody was in good humor. By the time we had finished our breakfast the anchor was raised and the sails set, and in course of an hour or two we were anchored in San Francisco Bay, where hundreds (some said thousands) of vessels of all sizes, and under the flags of the known world, were lying at anchor. There was no use trying to count them as the anchorage was so thickly studded with them that it looked like a large city of ships. Not more than one ship in ten had more than one person on board, and indeed, some of them had been abandoned altogether. It was nearly impossible for sailing vessels to leave the bay at that time, as the moment they came to anchor the hands commenced to get ready to leave for the mines, and no inducement could make them reship. A ship worth $20,000 to $30,000 in New York or Boston was nearly worthless in San Francisco in February 1850, for the reason that money could not hire hands to get them away. Hundreds of these vessels rotted at anchor. Some of them were run up close to the city and sunk in the sands and made into boarding houses, stores, warehouses, and dwellings.

It being Sunday, the passengers were not allowed to go ashore with any baggage. In fact, only the captain's boat was allowed to land any passengers, and he was held personally responsible for them. I asked the privilege of going ashore with him, and I believe three or four of us got to the wharf that way.

Business seemed to be going on the same as on week days, and especially this was the case with the gambling saloons. They were all full, and gambling of all kinds was in full swing. One could not find a saloon [with fewer than] three to ten gambling tables in full blast. All of them had bands of music numbering from three to ten members, and everything was lively. Money was changing hands on all sides, some winning and others losing, but in the long run, of course, the banks were the gainers. "Spanish" was patronized the best of any of the games. When one got to understand it thoroughly, he could see that it was a fairer game to the outside than any other game played by the gamblers, and even this was said to give thirty percent to the banks.

I went into the first establishment of this kind I came to, and the first man I saw "bucking the tiger" was an old acquaintance from New Diggings named Dave Potwen. His brother [Henry] kept a store there and David clerked for him for years, and had at various times lost for him in money and goods thousands of dollars. At last Henry bought for him a through ticket to California. He had left home two months after I did, and of course I was anxious to hear from home. But to all my inquiries he answered only in monosyllables, and I soon found that he was interested in nothing but the game he was betting on. He handed me a dollar and wanted me to play for him. (Gamblers have an idea that a green hand is lucky in playing.) It was the last thing I wanted to do as I wanted to see the town and pick up some other acquaintances from New Diggings. After considerable urging, I concluded to try my luck for him, and was soon five or six dollars ahead. Then I wanted him to take the money and let me go; he would not hear to it but suggested that we have a lunch, which I paid for out of my winnings.

After lunch I was very anxious to get off, but Dave insisted

so hard for me to keep on that I went back to the table and bet perfectly wild until I got rid of the few dollars I had of winnings, including the dollar he had given me. He was anxious for me to take more money and keep on betting, but no inducements he could offer would tempt me. It was Sunday, and the idea of gambling on Sunday was too much for me even with my lax religious ideas. I had become a pretty wild fellow after I left home and could swear more than the average young man, still my early religious training would assert itself occasionally.

San Francisco in February 1850 had no good houses, although it contained a population of from five to eight thousand souls. Most of the houses around the public square were built of sun-dried bricks called adobe, and the place had the appearance of a regular Mexican town, with the exception of the inhabitants.

The city had a large population pouring in every day from incoming ships. Most of these men were without means and had to work on the streets at $4 per day, when they could get work, in order to raise money to go to the mines. Of course they had to cook for themselves in order to live off this income. Board at the cheapest restaurants cost $4 a day, to say nothing of sleeping.

What was called "Happy Valley" was a basin west of the hills the city was built upon, containing from fifty to eighty acres, surrounded on all sides by sand ridges. In this valley were hundreds of tents where the moving population—those just coming into California by vessels, and from the mines in the mountains—resided for the purpose of making living cheaper. They had no rent to pay, and by cooking their own provisions could live on a dollar a day comfortably.

Good order was kept in the city by every man taking care of himself, and I do not remember seeing a single police officer in the place. Indeed, there was but little use for them, for had a difficulty occurred—as some did—pistols or knives would have settled the matter long before a peace officer could have gotten there.

There were three gamblers in the city that I had known in New Diggings when keeping store there, and I had at various times loaned them money when they were dead broke. Chambers and McMickle were [gambling] partners in the lead mines, but when I got to San Francisco they were running separate establishments. The former was the owner of what at that time was known as the Eldorado Saloon, one of the leading gambling establishments, and was supposed to be worth $150,000. The latter, although he had had bad luck for some time previous to my arrival, and had lost heavily, was said to be worth $100,000. The third one, James Clark, was said to be worth $75,000.

Chambers was the only one of the three that could be called a gentleman in the proper sense of the term. Coming from a good family, there could be no fault found in him except his gambling. He told me the city was full of miners who had arrived during the previous season, had made money mining, and were only waiting for the water in the streams in the mountains to go down.

I had run nearly out of money, and a proposition from Chambers to deal Monte at one of his tables for $8 per day and board—or take one-half of the profits—was rather alluring. On the other hand, I had left a young wife and one child at my father-in-law's, seven miles from Galena, and I knew if I went to dealing Monte the news would go back to her as fast as steam could carry it. I soon made up my mind to go straight to the mines, for which purpose I borrowed $30 of Chambers. I slept that night on shore, and the next morning returned to the ship to get my baggage.

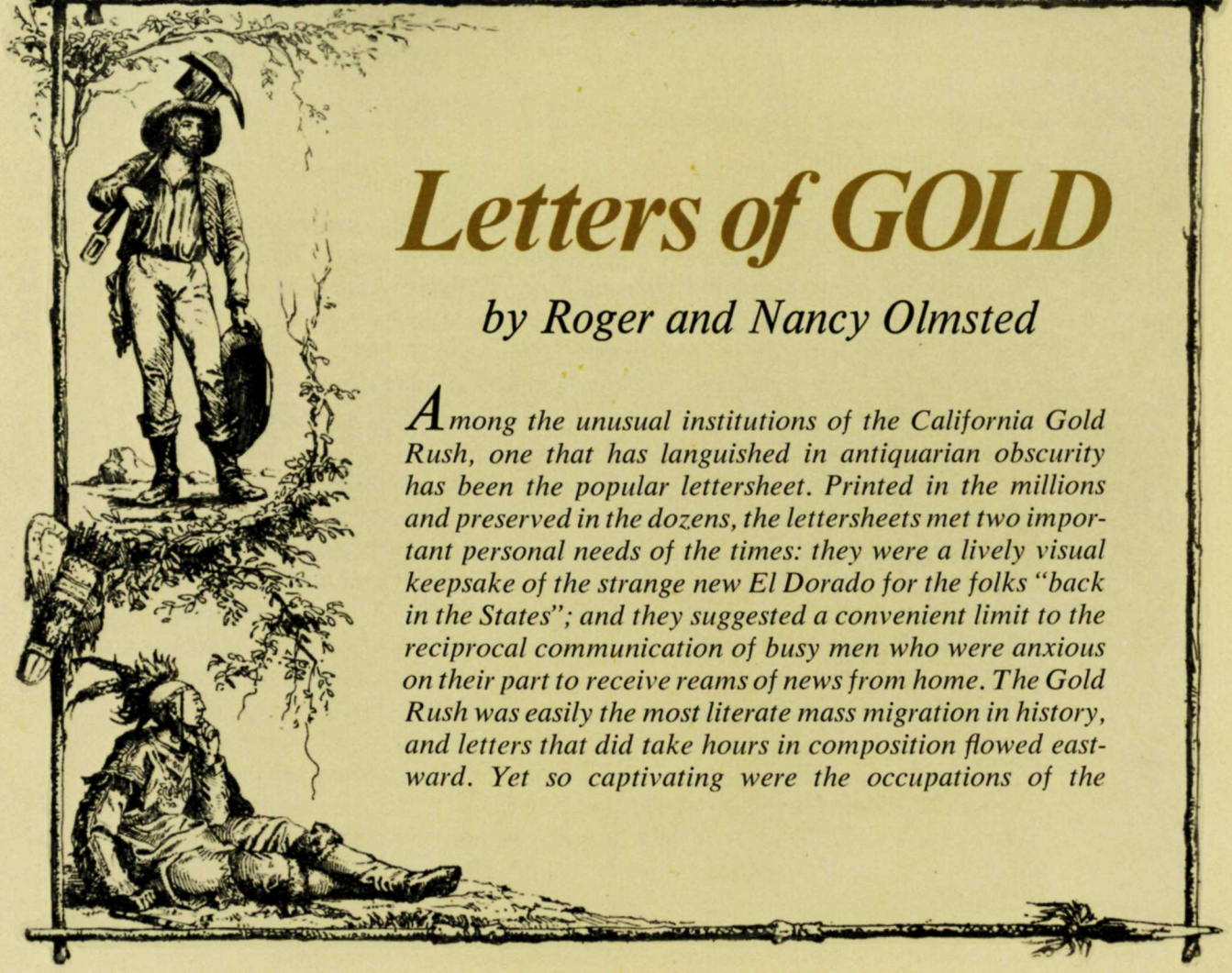
Just as I [had left] my wife on the morning of the 29th of October, 1849, she had slipped my mother's Bible into my hand, and between her sobs, asked me to follow its precepts. In coming up the Pacific the passengers soon had read through all the literature on board, and I found my Bible was a real treasure during the long fifty-four days I spent on board that ship; I believe that during that time I read more in that good book than I had ever done before in my life. I had left my Bible in a sack that I carried some odds and ends in, and when I came to look up my things to go on shore, I found someone had stolen it. I have never seen it from that day to this, but I hope it has done some one good.

I ONLY STAYED in the city of San Francisco one night, and when I had got my things off the ship, I looked around for a way to get to Sacramento and Marysville. Regular steamers ran to Sacramento, but they charged $200 for a passage (to a destination less than one hundred miles distant), and as I had less than $40 this way of going was out of the question.

With about seventeen others we chartered a schooner to take us to Marysville, the nearest point we could reach to the northern mines by water navigation, and before night we had started on our voyage. With the crew we made some twenty-one persons, and when our provisions and baggage were added, our little vessel was pretty well loaded down. When night overtook us we found ourselves in Suisun Bay —a mere extension of San Francisco Bay—and on account of the cold wind and our exposed situation on the upper deck, we went ashore at a little hamlet called New York and tied up till morning. I suffered more that night than I ever had before in my life; and in fact now I cannot say that I have ever passed half a dozen so disagreeable nights in my life [as occurred during that trip]. However, after we had cooked and eaten breakfast we started again on our voyage, and before night we had entered the mouth of the Sacramento River [where the climate was] much milder.

The scenery along the banks of this river was peculiar, and it impressed me as being a country that had been in-

Continued on page 61

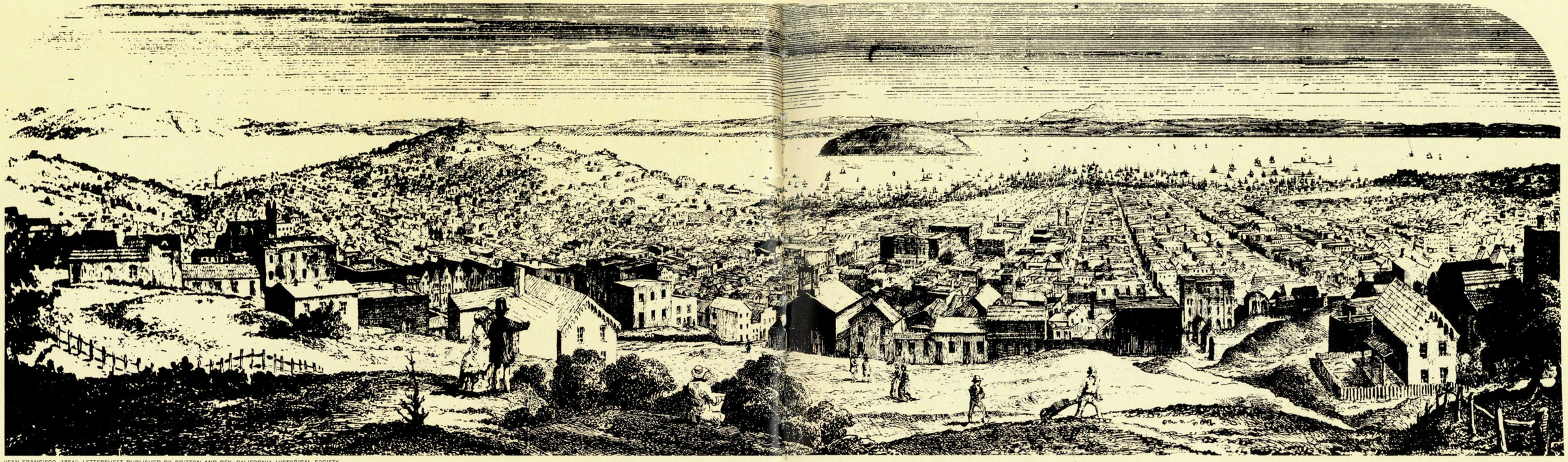


Letters of GOLD

by Roger and Nancy Olmsted

Among the unusual institutions of the California Gold Rush, one that has languished in antiquarian obscurity has been the popular lettersheet. Printed in the millions and preserved in the dozens, the lettersheets met two important personal needs of the times: they were a lively visual keepsake of the strange new El Dorado for the folks "back in the States"; and they suggested a convenient limit to the reciprocal communication of busy men who were anxious on their part to receive reams of news from home. The Gold Rush was easily the most literate mass migration in history, and letters that did take hours in composition flowed eastward. Yet so captivating were the occupations of the

"MINERS AT WORK WITH LONG TOMS"; CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



"SAN FRANCISCO, 1854": LETTERSHEET PUBLISHED BY BRITTON AND REY; CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

moment that a positively amazing proportion of the letters home (on illustrated sheets or otherwise) start out with the brave intention of telling all that has happened and wind up in a hasty scrawl to the effect that the mails are leaving in five minutes.

The typical lettersheet was of thin blue paper folded once, with the illustration on the front, leaving the two inner pages for the letter and the back free for the address if the sheet were folded in half again and then into thirds as a "self mailer."

Yankee printers with the Gold Rush never missed a chance to turn a fast buck in getting out new lettersheets, and we have seen sheets depicting current catastrophes in the Golden State with letters on them dated the day after the event. The most successful single sheet published was J. M. Hutchings' "Miner's Ten Commandments" of 1853. It sold 300,000 copies (the equivalent of one each to every man, woman, and child in California) and bankrolled the launching of Hutchings' California Magazine, *a journal physically comparable to* Harper's *or* The Atlantic *in the East.*

Perhaps not too oddly, the lettersheets in Californiana collections of the leading libraries (from the Bancroft to Yale) as often as not have no letters on them. These holdings largely consist of collections made by people who were interested mainly in the pictures and who therefore valued the "mint condition" sheet that had never seen the mails, much less been all blotched up with ink that bled through the onionskin. Historians have also tended to publish as illustrations these virgin sheets. Since most of the used sheets went east in the form of letters, the vast majority of them must be buried in general collections of personal papers in the libraries—and upstate New York attics.

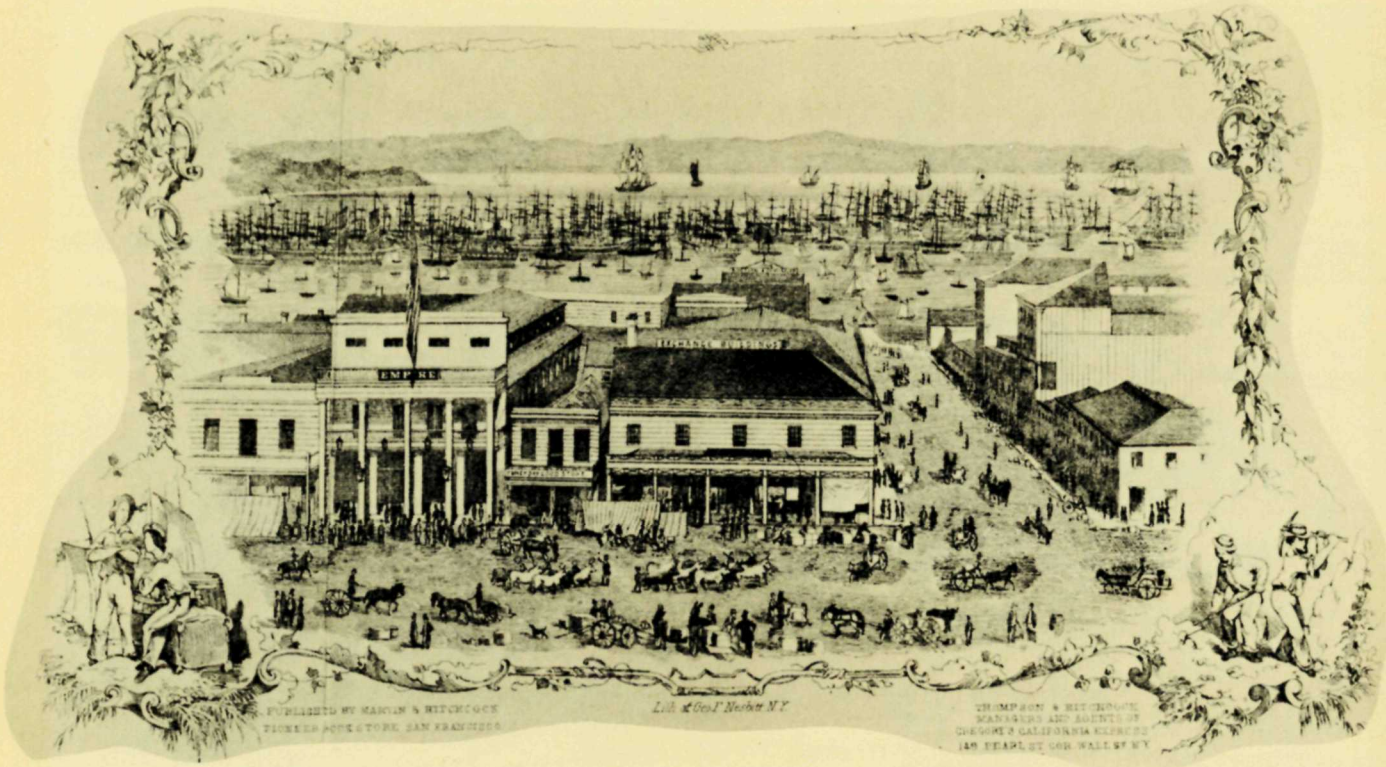
In trying to get together copies of as many as a mere hundred sheets with letters, we were finally able to approach the goal through the curious existence of a philatelic subspecies known as "cover collectors." Just as we admire lettersheets with letters on them, these people like to collect stamps connected to something. Obviously, a Gold Rush lettersheet that had gone through the mails without an envelope is a potentially attractive item to a cover collector.

Joseph Baird's monumental and handsomely illustrated California Pictorial Lettersheets, 1849–1869 *(San Francisco, 1967) might be most interestingly and attractively supplemented by a modest volume of illustrated sheets with letters. Perhaps we are as odd as the picture collectors and the cover collectors, but we find a curious interest in these timely, popular, or instructive scenes from the Great Adventure endorsed with the minutes-before-mailtime comments, reflections, or narratives of the participants themselves.*

This article is based on a pictorial chapter in Mirror of a Dream *by Roger Olmsted and T. H. Watkins, a history of San Francisco to be published this fall by the Scrimshaw Press.*

Roger and Nancy Olmsted are free-lance writers residing in Kentfield, California. Roger is a former editor of this magazine and the author of numerous articles on maritime and western history.

SAN FRANCISCO SCENE, 1850: LETTERSHEET PUBLISHED BY MARTIN AND HITCHCOCK; BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



San Francisco December 9, 1850

Dear Father, Mother, Sisters & Brother

Well here I am once more in the city of San Francisco having lost my all on the the Stanislaus river which so discouraged me that I have left the mines, to which I shall never return. I have worked like a cart horse all the time from sun rise until sun set with the exception of a couple of hours during the heat of the day. As yet we have had but very little rain & the Indians prophesy a dry winter as this is the seventh year. There will be a great deal of suffering in this country during the winter as the mines are rapidly becoming exhausted but there will be a few lucky ones who will strike a pile while thousands scarcely earn their board although they work very hard. It is impossible for any person to imagine this country in its true light unless he has been here to see that monstrous Elephant. As Anthony has said the miner gains nothing but the speculator all. I have learnt much of mankind since I left home, having had a better opportunity to study them in this far off country than I had at home. . . .

Poor Johnny Noyes, son of Peleg Noyes who keeps the halfway house died last Friday morning the 6th at 5 minutes past 3. I sat up with him the night on which he died together with Wm. Welch. If you see his father inform him that he expired without a struggle & the Albany boys gave him a Christian burial. The funeral service was read by the Rev. Mr. Wheeler & I took note of the number of the board which was placed at the head of his grave, so that his folks can have his body brought home if they wish at some future day. The number is 827. His disease was cholera & many are daily dying.

While I am writing the funeral procession of Jack Smith, a sporting man is passing. First in the procession is a band of music followed by about 80 men, then the hearse & three carriages, lastly 18 horsemen. His death was caused by being shot

TEXT FOR THIS LETTER CONTINUES NEAR BOTTOM OF OPPOSITE PAGE

To Willey and May I send this picture showing how the Spaniards catch the Bears in Cal., you must be good children and I will send you some gold in all my letters to show you the way it grows here. The gold here is mostly fine but we found one piece last week worth $2.50. I would like to send that but it is in bad shape to do up. I think our sister Charlotte has done the clean thing by writing me. I am very much obliged to her and will write her an answer in about 2 weeks from this date. I will try to see her Brother as Grass Valley is only 8 or 10 miles from me I have been there. I should like to get acquainted with him very well. It is a hard place to find a person except you know the name of the place. My paper is very dirty & pen so bad so will excuse the bad way it is written. Kiss the Babies & tell all the news give my respects to all Yours Truly N. A. Chandler

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about 3 weeks ago by Judge Jones of Stockton, a man who has murdered 10 or 12 others but who is always found guiltless, as his pocket is long. I saw a specimen of the Missouri giant this morning. He is 19 years old & 7 feet, 4 inches in height. I send this by Mr. Saml. Strong together with a specimen which is the wreck of all I once possessed. Its weight is ½ an ounce. Do with it as you please for I don't want it only to keep it in the family. . . .

I also send a few engravings of this place, they are very correct. The Empire House on this sheet is kept by Mr. John W. Bucklin of New York. He is doing well. You must not have any apprehensions about me for I have so many friends here they would not see me in want. I have now only $1.50 in my pocket but I do not care for before many days are over it will be without the dot in the center, such is California. I am now perfectly satisfied with the mines having given them a good trial for 8 or 9 months. . . . I am well. *(Letter unsigned)*

"FARO," ONE OF TWO SIMILAR GAMBLING SCENES ON A SINGLE LETTERSHEET PUBLISHED BY BRITTON AND REY; BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

This you see is a spesaman of gambling in the mines their is a dam cite of it going on here and i have had my share of it smith and i are just sharp enough for the best of them i wonder how big mary gets along i think she would do well to com here such girls as she are scers here smith carreys the mark yet she gave him nothing more

Jefferson H. Jepson

Forbs town Calafornia Aprel 1855
Dear brother i rite to inform you that i am well at present and hope you and the folks ar the sam paper must bee very Dear in the plase ware you all are i think you Neglect to rite to me or my leters do not come to you. . . . i have been well since I rote with the exception of about thre weeks i was taken with the Disentory and rather neglected it and it got the short of me as i think would not hav been sick i had to hire a hand in my plase at four dollars per day but i got the same pay. . . . i se plenty of men dead broak but i have not yet in that fix i have plenty of money to fetch me home if i wanted to come but i would not come home if i had a pasage in the cabin for nothing. . . . i have got aquainted with a grait many miners they are very joly felows and have good times and very fond of duling. . . . they tell hard story about California and it may bee treu but if a [man] will not gamble and do as he should he can do beter here than he can in the states but i would not advise any one to come for it is very hard geting here with good health i dred the trip going home more than any thing else it is so bad on them darnd old steamers and crossing the istmus. . . . i am working down on the claim ware i was when i rote last the claim paid two thousand dolars the last two weks thare is 12 hand on the claims ware i work. . . . so good by and the best to all

(Letter unsigned)

LETTERSHEET SCENE COMMEMORATING THE HANGING OF SAMUEL WHITTAKER AND ROBERT McKENZIE, AUGUST 24, 1851; BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Mr Wm Hewitt *Sept 1st 1851*

Dear Friend

I send you the drawings of the execution of several of the blackest villains that ever scourged the world as disgraced humanity—I would send you papers if they would ever reach you.

My health is good and has been since I saw you. My success has far surpassed my expectations in business. I have cleared over $10,000 00/100 in the lumber business since the first of May and my prospects are good for as much more before the first of December. I have an interest in a mining operation which brings in the cash in great shape—we are taking out from 100 to 189 ounces a day. We are running a steam engine—I employ a man to represent my interest for $5 00/100 a day. We have ground or claim sufficient to last fifty men through years.

I would write more but time forbids.

Please remember my sincere regards to Miss Wheeler daughter of Mr Wm. Wheeler. She was at Suffield School several terms while I was there and has but few equals in modesty, amiability & talent.

Please say to Mr. Wm. Randall that I disown him as a father, and at the same time heartily dispise him.

I think of returning home this fall or summer on a short visit. Shall have my Mother's Aunt's & Grandmother's remains reburied and a fine monument erected in their memory. I design to have engraved on my Mother's side of the monument "Vengence is mine and I will repay saith the Lord"—

Remember me to all inquiring friends

Write Soon—

Yours most respectfully
Wm. Randall

THE LIVING PAST

OLD SACRAMENTO

Most Ambitious Historic Restoration in the West

Text & Photography by Lee Foster

As I devour with unrestrained enthusiasm the platter of meaty beef bones in front of me, savoring the strong seasoning and tasty grilled flavor, I am thinking back more than a century to the patriarch himself, Captain John Augustus Sutter, who would frequently journey down the Feather River to Sacramento from his retirement farm near Marysville, California, and partake of a similar meal at the Ebner Hotel, which is around the corner from the present Firehouse Restaurant, scene of my dining pleasure.

His favorite dish became known as "Sutter's Devil Bones" after the captain was said to have remarked that "these beef bones are so good that they must have been created by the devil."

Old Captain Sutter had many thoughts, besides his culinary destination, on his mind during his steamboat rides down to Sacramento. Perhaps his main preoccupation, as he watched the slowly passing landscape, was the perplexing awareness that his vast inland California agricultural holdings had been shattered and overrun forever by the hordes of miners who arrived following discovery of gold at Sutter's own sawmill, at Coloma, in 1848. Perhaps Sutter appreciated the ironic possibility that the Devil Bones he would eat that afternoon might be from his own rustled herds, stolen and slaughtered, then sold in the burgeoning town of Sacramento City.

GREGORY-BARNES BUILDING, 126-128 J STREET
WHOLESALE PRODUCE HOUSE; BUILT CIRCA 1853, ENLARGED IN 1883
NOW CONTAINS AN ANTIQUE STORE, SALOON, AND OFFICES

PIONEER TELEGRAPH BUILDING, 1015 SECOND STREET
TELEGRAPH OFFICES; BUILT CIRCA 1866
NOW CONTAINS AN ARCHITECT'S OFFICE AND A RETAIL STORE

BUILDINGS ILLUSTRATED ON THESE PAGES REPRESENT A RANDOM SAMPLING OF THE DOZENS OF ALREADY RESTORED AND RECONSTRUCTED STRUCTURES IN OLD SACRAMENTO

But I doubt that Sutter, even though he was a visionary, could have projected that I and other Americans, searching for an appropriate shrine at which to celebrate the heritage of the West during the Bicentennial year, would choose Old Sacramento as perhaps the most appropriate site.

During and following the Bicentennial celebrations, whether nurturing a pleasant nostalgia or seeking a fresh perspective on the accelerating flux of American life, Old Sacramento can serve as a useful handle on the past.

This most ambitious historic restoration in the West witnessed many events of consequence in the formative "Americanizing" years of 1848–1870. In the beginning the riverbank site had served as the embarcadero for Captain Sutter's nearby trading post, in the heart of the inland empire he had established in 1839 and named New Helvetia after the Latin for his native Switzerland. Within a year after the discovery of gold, however, Sacramento City had become firmly established there and became the funnel for arriving prospectors who then fanned out in search of a Mother Lode. The miners would return to the boisterous settlement to buy supplies, gamble away their hoard, if they were fortunate enough to accumulate one, and inadvertently establish an American society in California.

The setting continued to enjoy a distinctive role during the decades that followed. Overland wagon trains found Sacramento a welcome and unusually hospitable end to the long trek west. The Pony Express terminated here its westward run, ten days and 1,900 miles from Missouri. Overland stage coaches ended the same trip west at Sacramento after twenty-five arduous days on the road. And from here the first transcontinental telegraph message was sent in 1861.

Perhaps most important, it was in Sacramento that a far-sighted young engineer, Theodore Dehone Judah, persuaded four Sacramento merchants—Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Charles Crocker, and Mark Hopkins—to become the principal backers for a scheme to build a transcontinental railroad over the formidable Sierra Nevada mountains. Despite Judah's untimely death, which deprived him of historic recognition that probably would have equaled that of any member of the Big Four, the merchants continued his plan to build (and, for their best interests, ruthlessly monopolize) a thread of iron rails from the Pacific toward the nearest railroad marching west from the Atlantic.

There remain at the site of this early center of western commerce forty-one buildings, many of national significance. The historic records available are both accurate and complete for re-creating some seventy other early buildings, which makes Old Sacramento the premier resource for interpreting our brief western metropolitan history with a semblance of tactile authenticity. Many of the reconstructions planned for Old Sacramento, and most of the restorations, will be completed by July 4, 1976.

HEYWOOD BUILDING, 100–109 SECOND STREET
BANKING AND INSURANCE OFFICES; BUILT IN 1857
NOW CONTAINS A RESTAURANT, SHOPS, AND OFFICES

SACRAMENTO ENGINE COMPANY NO. 3, 1112 SECOND STREET
CITY FIREHOUSE, BUILT IN 1853
(FIRST BUILDING IN HISTORIC AREA TO BE RESTORED)
NOW CONTAINS A RESTAURANT

The words "Old Sacramento" refer specifically to a rectangular twenty-eight-acre area two miles west of the California state capitol and Sutter's Fort, and bounded by Interstate Route 5 on the east and the Sacramento River on the west. The slicing presence of the interstate freeway separates the area artificially from the modern city of Sacramento, but by doing so also defines the restored area with an insular completeness that insures it geographic and spiritual identity.

A UNIQUE COOPERATIVE EFFORT involving the participation of the federal government, State of California, City of Sacramento, and numerous commercial developers and private investors, Old Sacramento will, when completed, represent the successful culmination of fifty-three distinct restoration and reconstruction projects costing some $63 million. Initial enabling legislation for this massive undertaking was passed in 1966; actual construction began three years later. Today Old Sacramento is approximately 65 percent complete. Two to five additional years of work still remain.

A major focal point of the site is a nine-acre State Historic Park devoted primarily to the story of early western transportation and commerce. Among the first structures restored in this area were the Dingley Coffee and Spice Mill and the "Big Four" buildings, all slated to house future interpretive exhibits. Before they became railroad titans, C. P. Huntington and Mark Hopkins ran an aggressive hardware store on the ground level of the latter-named structures.

Scheduled for dedication on July Fourth of this year is another major element of the state park: the first unit of the State Railroad Museum, including the historic engine *Jupiter*

ST. CHARLES STORE, 1023 SECOND STREET
RETAIL STORE; BUILT IN 1857
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
NOW CONTAINS A DRINKING EMPORIUM

BENNETT'S MASONIC HALL, 117-119 J STREET
FRATERNAL MEETING HOUSE; BUILT IN 1854
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
NOW CONTAINS A RESTAURANT AND OFFICES

and six additional pieces of rolling stock, all housed in the newly-restored Central Pacific Railroad passenger station. Still awaiting construction are an even larger railroad museum building, a reconstruction of the Central Pacific freight depot, and a steam navigation building. Visitors to the Embarcadero in future years will in addition be able to visit historic riverboats reflecting Sacramento's maritime heritage.

Another important unit of the state park, opened to the public earlier this spring, is the B. F. Hastings Building, a two-story structure dating from the early 1850s. Here was the western terminus of the Pony Express; the office from which the first transcontinental telegraph message originated; and during the years 1855–57 and 1959–69, the first home of the California Supreme Court. Visitors to the second floor of this building will find the original supreme court chambers restored to their original elegance; downstairs they can explore a communications museum.

The motto guiding development of the remaining eighteen acres of this National Historic Landmark is "preservation for use," a notion more revolutionary than it first appears to be. A commercial developer with private capital must restore the exterior of a building with scrupulous attention to historic detail and then may devote the interior to a bustling commerce reminiscent of the vitality of Sacramento's randy youth. It is virtually certain that Old Sacramento will never smell of mothballs. When this "preservation for use" partnership blossoms between the historical consultant, redevelopment manager, builders, and shopkeepers, then Old Sacramento may be seen as a pilot project influencing national philosophy for viable preservation of historic sites.

The restored Firehouse Restaurant, an actual stationhouse between 1853–1911 to deter the "enemy of a thousand tongues," as the several fires in Sacramento's past were often called, now provides an ambience for a first-rate restaurant. When the proprietors of the Firehouse opened their establishment in 1958, the notion of a completely restored Old Sacramento would have drawn long odds indeed.

The success of the Firehouse, however, gave an impetus to other business ventures; today the culinary enthusiast in Old Sacramento has the pleasant task of having to choose between a number of fine restaurants, to say nothing of the allurements of several saloons, and a discoteque.

Besides the Sutter's Devil Bones dish, I can recommend two other Old Sacramento food specialties: Hangtown Fries and Steam Beer.

Hangtown Fries originated with a crusty miner who worked the streams strenuously and finally struck it rich. His first expenditure after acquiring this sudden wealth occurred at Hangtown, a community that has since sanitized its name to Placerville. The miner demanded a glass of whiskey and the most expensive meal available. Fresh oysters and fresh eggs were by far the dearest items on the bill of fare, so the enterprising chef combined them with bacon, and thereby was born the famous Hangtown Fries. I have found that this oyster-bacon-egg dish, a kind of omelet, is a satisfying repast at any hour of the day or night.

Steam Beer is the appropriate drink with which to assuage your thirst at Old Sacramento. Another Gold Rush legacy,

LADY ADAMS BUILDING, 113 115 K STREET
WHOLESALE IMPORT STORE; BUILT IN 1852
(OLDEST SURVIVING STRUCTURE IN HISTORIC AREA)
NOW CONTAINS A RESTAURANT AND SHOPS

DINGLEY SPICE MILL, 115 I STREET
COFFEE AND SPICE MILL; BUILT IN 1853
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
SCHEDULED TO HOUSE A PORTION OF THE STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

this drink is no ordinary beer, but one produced by a special method that does not require refrigeration, a precious commodity in early California. The word "steam" actually refers to the pressure and ample foam that results from the beer's natural carbonation. Rather than ship ice from Boston around the Horn, the bibulous Gold Rushers experimented with fermenting beer at 60° F. and then cellaring it at 55°. Steam beer has none of the preservatives for retarding "wild" yeasts that can alter a beer's taste for the worse, so each bottle must be drunk soon or kept refrigerated. Admirers of Frank Norris's novel *McTeague* may recall how the dentist in his decline wandered about the steam beer halls of San Francisco, which boasted twenty-seven steam beer breweries in the late nineteenth-century. Today only the Anchor Steam Beer Company remains to perpetuate this brewing tradition.

Some completed buildings house business offices, brokerage establishments, travel agencies, and banks; others contain retail and specialty shops. Walking the corridors of the Cavert Building, for example, I pass a bazaar of quality shops selling handmade jewelry, calligraphy, fancy printing, old advertising graphics and tin containers, various antiques, coffee, tea, and herbs, wine, and western rocks. Historically, the Cavert Warehouse was noteworthy for its ample skylights, which prompted the gifted portraitist, William Jewett, to rent space and execute on the premises five paintings of Captain John Sutter, who by that time, 1856, had become title-rich, as a Major General of California, but land-poor. The swarms of miners had not only trampled his fields but trapped him in a maze of litigation.

THE CURRENT VISITOR to Old Sacramento can become immersed in the drama of re-creating the past, with the attendant excitement of surveying an archaeological dig midway bewteen excavation and final reconstruction. Work here follows the dictum that it is better to repair than to restore, better to restore than to reconstruct, and better to reconstruct than to leave nonconforming buildings or vacant lots.

Restoration has proceeded with modern building materials if such innovations have the same appearance as original materials and are of superior strength. The cement mortar of today holds bricks with a firmness exceeding that of the lime mortar of the 1850s, allowing for the preservation or reuse of many of the buildings' original bricks. When new bricks have been necessary, a deft mixture of clays has provided materials with almost exactly the coloring of now-weathered historic walls, but possessing greater hardness and resistance to the elements.

As might be expected, some elements of the restoration must conform to what we require history to have been, or even to what we might like history to have been. The code enforcement officials of Sacramento have had their say on this point. In 1850, in all probability, some riders who fell off their horses in the middle of the street during the rainy season were never heard from again. No modern city aware of its insurance liabilities can allow citizens to disappear in this manner. Consequently, the present streets of Old Sacramento are not mud but cobblestones, or asphalt covered with a becoming, fine grit of crushed stone. Those who have

BIG FOUR BUILDING, 111 113 I STREET
STORES AND OFFICES OCCUPIED BY LELAND STANFORD, MARK HOPKINS, C. P. HUNTINGTON, AND CHARLES CROCKER; BUILT IN 1852
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
SCHEDULED TO HOUSE A PORTION OF THE STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

RIVETT-FULLER BUILDING, 1108 SECOND STREET
PAINT, WALLPAPER, AND UPHOLSTERY STORE; BUILT IN 1852
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
INTERIOR CURRENTLY BEING COMPLETED

noted this aberration from the historic record have not, to my knowledge, objected.

Similarly, in the 1850s, presumably moonlight and starlight were the primary nightly illumination on the streets. The code enforcers would not condescend to allow this reality to intrude. Gas lamps on the street corners appear to be the most suitable compromise.

A decision to emphasize the 1850–1890 period, an appropriate choice for this site, necessarily destroys what it does not re-create; exclusion of some historically important items is the inevitable result of any policy that freezes an area within one historic time. In 1895 Sacramento was one of the earliest American cities to receive overland transmission of hydroelectric three-phase electricity. Electric lights, electric hotel signs, even electric streetcars proliferated. An alternative historic theme for the area might have been, "What Electricity Did For an American City!" Also, in the 1930s this section of Sacramento was the largest market west of Chicago for migrant day laborers. Three thousand men would line up here on a typical morning and sell their labor to the surrounding agricultural enterprises. These post-1890 features have been excluded from the Old Sacramento plans, by definition. But revisionist historians will be happy to note that all significant artifacts from these later eras have been stored in Sacramento museums. The exclusions appear judicious to me; how few cities are blessed with such ample alternatives!

Whether seeking Gold Rush gastronomy or pleasant nostalgic immersion in the most prominent historic restoration in the West, the visitor will find Old Sacramento a friendly place. The hospitality is as historically valid as are the buildings, for in his day Captain John Sutter was a legend, which even his detractors admitted, as the most generous and engaging host in California.

FOR FURTHER READING

Those interested in delving more exhaustively into Sacramento's fascinating history can turn to either of two large-format, heavily-illustrated works: *The City of the Plain: Sacramento in the Nineteenth Century* by V. Aubrey Neasham and James E. Henley (Sacramento Pioneer Foundation, 1969) or *Sacramento: An Illustrated History, 1839 to 1874* by Thor Severson (California Historical Society, 1973). For the story of Captain Sutter, see *Fool's Gold: A Biography of John Sutter* by Richard Dillon (Coward-McCann, 1967).

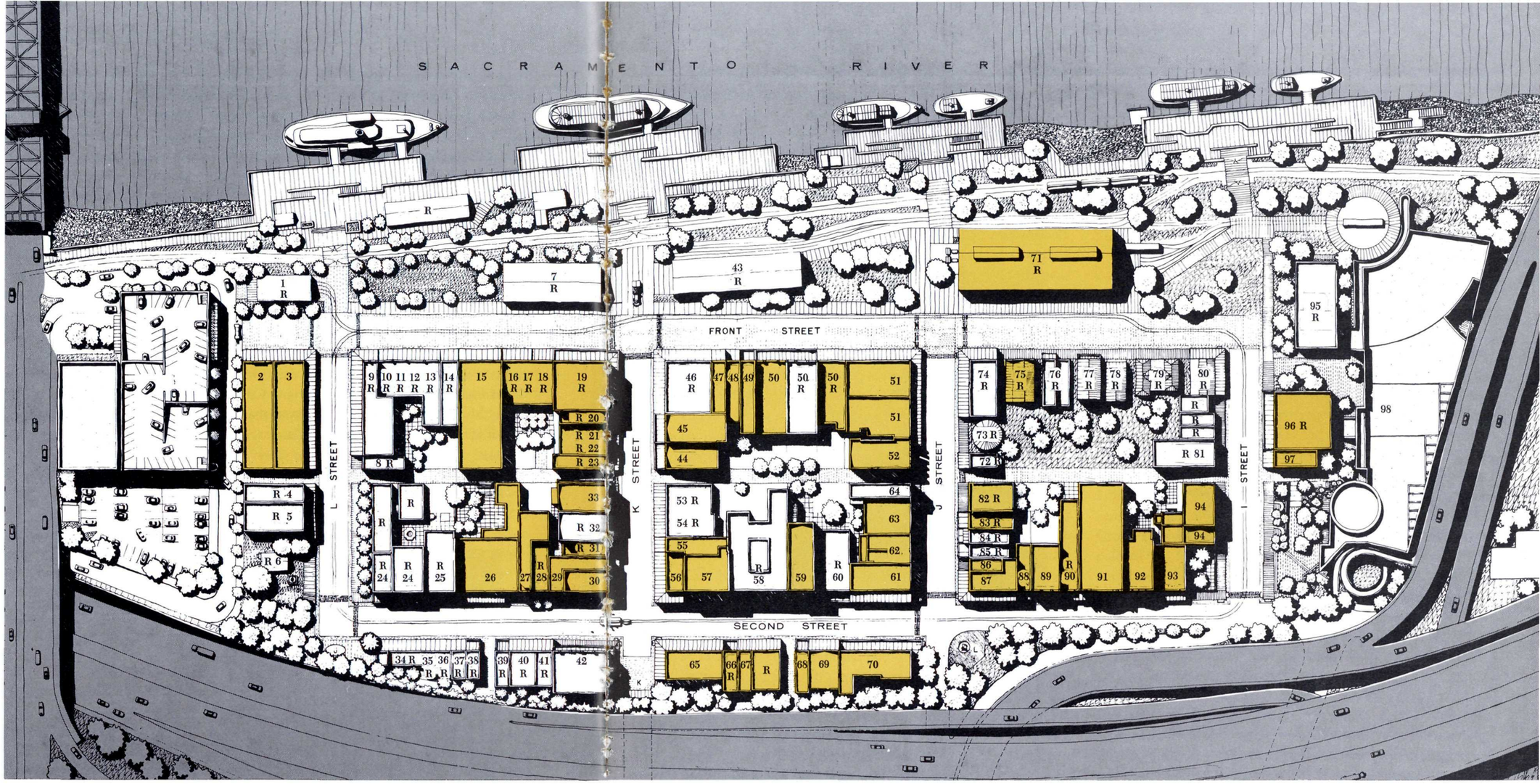
Lee Foster, *a free-lance photographer and writer, is the author of a novel about campus turmoil in the 1960s,* The Message of April Fools, *and a book about growing up in the America of the 1950s,* Just 25 Cents and Three Wheaties Boxtops.

SACRAMENTO UNION BUILDING, 121 J STREET
NEWSPAPER OFFICE; BUILT IN 1852
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A RECONSTRUCTION)
NOW CONTAINS PROFESSIONAL OFFICES

DEMOCRATIC STATE JOURNAL, 130 K STREET
NEWSPAPER OFFICE; BUILT IN 1852
(PRESENT STRUCTURE IS A PARTIAL RECONSTRUCTION)
INTERIOR CURRENTLY BEING COMPLETED

OLD SACRAMENTO

Buildings marked in dark color tones on the map are currently standing (either reconstructed, restored, or awaiting restoration). Buildings marked with an "R" are reconstructions. All others are restorations of the original structures.
As of July 4, 1976, Old Sacramento will be approximately 65 percent complete, with total completion expected in two to five years.
Most museum buildings and exhibits are open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily; hours for restaurants and other commercial establishments vary.



1 Historic Streetcar Barn (Exhibits)
2 Cavert Building
3 Stanford Brothers Warehouse
4 Fashion Saloon
5 Diana Saloon
6 Historic Schoolhouse (Exhibits)

7 Steam Navigation Building

8 W. F. Brown Hotel
9 Adams, McNeil & Company
10 Adams, McNeil & Company
11 Eagle Mills
12 Strouss & Company
13 Cline & Company
14 Brooklyn Hotel
15 Sacramento Cracker Company
16 Lambard Flour Mills
17 Hill, Clark & Company
18 Stevens, Chesley & Company
19 What Cheer House
20 King, Barroll & Company
21 New Orleans House
22 National Hotel
23 Winkle Bakery

24 Clarenden Hotel
25 Pacific Stables
26 Skaggs Building
27 Sacramento Engine Co. No. 3

28 Goodell's Carpenter Shop
29 Rivett-Fuller Building
30 Democratic State Journal
31 Pendergast Store
32 Empire House
33 Ebner's Hotel

34 Jessup Building
35 Aldrich Building
36 Rodgers Building
37 Cienfuego Building
38 Still, Conner & Company
39 Latcher Building
40 Cornwall Building
41 Frey Building
42 Fratt Building

43 Central Pacific Freight Depot (Exhibits)

44 Lady Adams Building
45 Howard House
46 Boyd & Davis Building
47 New York Drug Store
48 United States Hotel
49 Leggett Ale House
50 Booth Building
51 Brannann Building
52 Vernon-Brannann House

53 Harris Building
54 Winkle Building
55 Union Hotel

56 Bank Exchange Building
57 Union Hotel
58 Orleans Hotel
59 Adams Express Building
60 Arcade Hotel
61 B. F. Hastings Building (Museum)
62 Gregory Building
63 Pioneer Hall and Bakery
64 City Market

65 Morse Building (Visitors' Center)
66 St. Charles Store
67 Carpenter Building
68 Pioneer Telegraph Building
69 Smith Building
70 Heywood Building

71 Central Pacific Station (Museum)

72 Warren's Seed Store
73 Round Tent
74 S. Taylor Building
75 Eagle Theatre
76 T. McDowell & Company
77 City Hotel
78 Hotel de France
79 Peoples Market
80 Hensley-Reading & Company
81 F. Ogden Building

82 Bennett's Masonic Hall
83 Sacramento Union
84 Magnolia Saloon

85 Lord's Restaurant
86 Haines Building
87 Sazerac Building & Saloon
88 Our House Saloon
89 Baker-Hamilton Building
90 Barnum Hotel
91 Hall, Luhrs & Company
92 Schroth Building
93 Foster Saloon
94 Mechanics' Exchange

95 City Hall and Water Works (Museum)
96 Big Four Buildings (Exhibits)
97 Dingley Spice Mill (Exhibits)
98 California State Railroad Museum

BASE MAP COURTESY OF SACRAMENTO HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

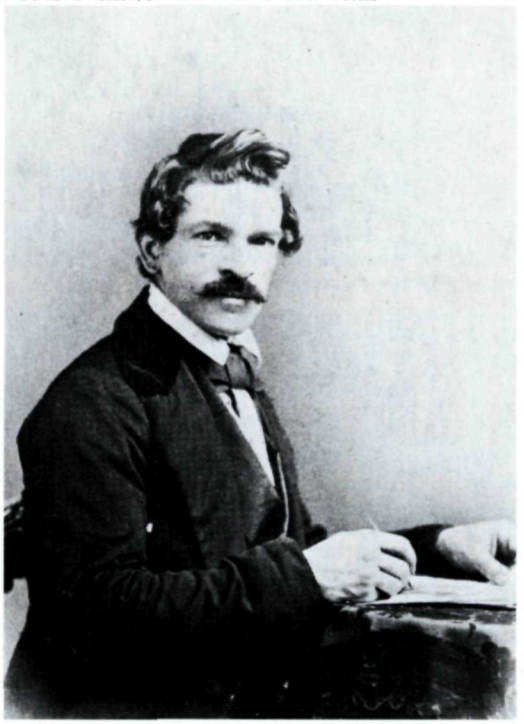
Charles Nahl:

Gold Rush Artist

by Moreland Leithold Stevens

and Marjorie Arkelian

THE OAKLAND MUSEUM, GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. ALFRED R. GOLZE



On July 3, 1976, the E. B. Crocker Art Gallery of Sacramento will open its bicentennial show, "Charles Christian Nahl, Artist of the Gold Rush." The exhibition, which will later visit the Oakland Museum and the San Diego Museum of Fine Arts, will be the first retrospective display of this notable pioneer artist's work and the only extensive showing of his paintings since the California state fairs of the 1850s and the San Francisco Mechanics Institute fairs of the 1860s and '70s.

The artistic tradition of the Nahl family extends back into seventeenth-century Germany, with Johann August Nahl the Elder (1710–1781), a leader in the German rococo movement, probably being the most distinguished member. Charles Christian Nahl was born in Cassel on October 18, 1818, the son of Friederich and Henriette Weickh Nahl. He received his early art training from his father's cousin Wilhelm Nahl as well as at the respected Cassel Academy, and by his mid-twenties developed a local reputation as a successful genre and portrait painter. In 1846 an uncomfortable family situation and a desire to explore the artistic offerings of other parts of Europe resulted in Charles moving, along with his twice-married mother, two stepsisters, and two stepbrothers, to Stuttgart. While there Nahl exhibited *Wallenstein and Seni,* a painting in the Düsseldorfian historical style which so pleased the king of Württemberg that he purchased it for the Royal State Gallery.

Soon afterward the family left for Paris. Nahl copied works in the Louvre and studied under and worked as an assistant to Horace Vernet, a popular painter of romantic extravaganzas, noted for his decorations on the walls of the Palace of Versailles. Charles exhibited at the Paris Salons of 1847 and 1848, but by 1849 the Nahl family found the unsettled political situation in Europe not to its liking, and the European art capital did not seem to be bringing in the monetary rewards that had been hoped for. Through a portrait commission Nahl became acquainted with an American sea captain with whom he was able to arrange passage for his family from Le Havre to New York.

After a difficult six-week voyage, the Nahls arrived in New York on June 30, 1849. Charles exhibited and sold several romantically styled works at the American Art Union in 1849 and 1850. He received additional encouragement when

Augustus Graham, founder of the progenitor of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, took a liking to him and gave him several commissions. Just when financial security and artistic success seemed assured, the family—intrigued by stories of the California Gold Rush—decided to move once again. Booking passage by way of Havana, the Isthmus of Panama, and Acapulco, they made their way to San Francisco, arriving there on May 23, 1851. Entertaining high hopes of making a fortune, the Nahl party left immediately for Marysville and the gold fields. They visited Nevada City briefly and then settled in a camp along Deer Creek near Rough and Ready, California. (For the experiences of another miner on Deer Creek, see the story of A. G. Henderson on pages 4–12 of this issue.)

Unfortunately the Nahls were victimized by swindlers employing a salted claim and achieved only limited success. Charles found the new life-style more taxing than anticipated, and it was not long before he came to realize that his calling lay in making a chronicle of what he was seeing rather than laboring in the dirt for the elusive metal. He was soon back at his own occupation, sketching the Indians, miners, and landscape of the California gold fields. Before the winter of 1851 set in, Nahl and Frederick Augustus Wenderoth, a painter and close family friend who had accompanied the party from New York, established a studio in Sacramento. They had calls for paintings, a variety of commercial work, and portraits, but Nahl received his earliest recognition as a designer of wood engravings. During the 1850s his drawings appeared in a number of pictorial newspapers as well as in illustrated periodicals, booklets, and on lettersheets—items which the miners savored as perceptive commentaries on life in mid-nineteenth-century California. Particularly noteworthy were his pictures for "The Miner's Progress," "The Idle and Industrious Miner" (see pages 39–45 of this issue), "Old Block's Sketch Book," and many engravings in *Wide West* and *Hutching's California Magazine*. These profusely-illustrated publications carried Nahl's name back to the East Coast and eventually to Europe.

In November 1852 a great fire in Sacramento destroyed the Nahl studio and home as well as most of the artist's sketches of life in the gold fields. The day following the fire the family departed for San Francisco, and after an initial struggle once again established itself on a secure footing. During the next few years Nahl, in partnership with Wenderoth and later with his own talented younger brother Arthur, developed a reputation as a fine illustrator, designer of certificates, and portrait painter. Many of his portraits were done after daguerreotypes and suffer somewhat in consequence, but with certain works—particularly his renditions of children—Nahl showed a great deal of sensitivity toward his subjects and developed backgrounds delightfully laden with Victorian potpourris of landscapes, still life scenes, and nature studies.

By early 1865 Charles Nahl's mother and invalid brother Adolph had died. His sister Laura had married Wenderoth and moved to Philadelphia, and his brother Arthur had married and moved across the bay to Alameda, leaving Charles and his remaining sister Augusta alone at their home at 818 Bush Street. It was during the next ten years that Nahl produced most of the canvases for which he is remembered today—scenes of Argonauts crossing the Isthmus and of life among the Indians, the forty-niners, and the Californios. *The Fandango* and *Sunday Morning at the Mines*, both commissioned by Sacramento judge and art museum founder E. B. Crocker, are among his most noteworthy works. Nahl also painted for Leland Stanford and other prominent Californians. Not all of the work for his patrons was of the California genre; those who had accumulated fortunes in the West were desirous of showing others evidence of their "sophisticated tastes," and Nahl found an eager clientel for academic works such as *The Romans and the Sabines, Samson and Delilah*, and *Hercules and Alceste*.

Charles Christian Nahl died on March 1, 1878, a victim of typhoid fever. But even before his passing, Nahl's work had begun to fall from favor. Critics and public were no longer willing to accept the colors and techniques of the early nineteenth century to which the artist had become so bonded, nor did they tolerate the academic-romantic themes to which he often reverted. Not until the mid-twentieth century, when Charles Nahl and his contemporaries have been viewed more objectively, has his virtuosity as a painter, designer, and illustrator of the pioneer scene been fully appreciated.

Charles Christian Nahl, Artist of the Gold Rush
Dates of the Exhibition:

E. B. Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento
July 3—August 29, 1976

The Oakland Museum
September 18—October 31, 1976

San Diego Museum of Fine Arts
November 20, 1976—January 2, 1977

Moreland Leithold Stevens, *who wrote the text for this article, is author of the catalog for the forthcoming Nahl exhibition. He holds a master's degree in art history from the University of Maryland and is a high school art teacher in Roseville, California.*

Marjorie Arkelian, *author of the captions on the following six pages as well as those in the Nahl exhibition catalog, is a specialist in nineteenth-century California art and artists. For the past ten years she has been an art historian and researcher at the Oakland Museum.*

The illustrated exhibition catalog Charles Chritsian Nahl, Artist of the Gold Rush *may be purchased by mail from the E. B. Crocker Art Gallery, 216 "O" Street, Sacramento, California. Price about $10.*

APPROACHING "OLD CHAGRES," ISTHMUS OF PANAMA, 1851
OIL ON TIN, 9¼ X 12 INCHES
KENNEDY GALLERIES, NEW YORK

CHARLES CHRISTIAN NAHL sketched a variety of scenes on the Isthmus of Panama while en route from New York to California in 1851. This view, which he completed four years later, presents the offshore prospect of Chagres as seen by gold seekers just arriving in Panama by steamer. Small boats carry the adventurers into the port from their ship, which has anchored some distance from shore. The old town, dating back to the early Spanish occupation, is to the right. Atop the nearby heights stand the ruins of the Spanish fortress of San Lorenzo, besieged and overrun at various times in centuries past. (Another of Nahl's scenes from Panama appears on page 6.)

THE FANDANGO
OIL ON CANVAS, 72 X 108 INCHES
E. B. CROCKER ART GALLERY, SACRAMENTO

IN COMPOSITION Nahl's *The Fandango*—an interpretation of the carefree spirit of life in early California—greatly resembles the Peter Paul Rubens painting *The Garden of Love*. In both pictures the artists have created a rhythmic wedge of figures sweeping from architecture at one side toward an open space, and there focusing on a man and woman. As well as providing the central motif for the above painting, Nahl's dancers serve as a device for bringing together a varied audience of pleasure-loving types, including beaming lovers, quarreling suitors, and proud caballeros. In actuality, the *fandango* on Spanish Californian ranchos was a stately affair rather than a wild frolic.

PORTRAIT OF ADA BADGER
OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 30½ INCHES
THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

MISS ADA BADGER, the subject of the charming portrait on the opposite page, was the daughter of San Francisco pioneer philanthropist William Gilman Badger, who emigrated to California via Panama in 1850. The undated painting was probably taken from life by Nahl in about 1860. The striking liveliness of the portrait, and the accouterments of butterfly and landscape setting, are in strong contrast to Nahl's more simplistic likenesses taken from daguerreotypes.

SACRAMENTO INDIAN WITH DOGS
OIL ON CANVAS, 41¼ X 48¼ INCHES
THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

WAHLA, a chief of the northern California Yuba Indian tribe, became the protégé of Governor Milton S. Latham during the 1860s. The governor arranged for the education of the young chief and employed him as his personal coachman. Latham's mansion on the San Francisco peninsula was ornamented with an extensive collection of sculptures and paintings by California artists, and he probably commissioned Nahl to create this unusual 1867 genre portrait showing Wahla dressed as a gentleman and accompanied by coach dogs.

JOAQUIN MURIETA
OIL ON CANVAS MOUNTED ON BOARD, 17½ X 23½ INCHES
WARREN HOWELL, JOHN HOWELL BOOKS, SAN FRANCISCO

THE BANDIT "Joaquin," legendary scourge of California mining camps until supposedly meeting a violent death at the hands of bounty-hunting pursuers (his severed head was exhibited in a bottle of spirits), is pictured by Nahl in a moment of peril, opposite. The artist took full advantage of the popularity of the subject and portrayed Joaquin in a number of poses and situations. This 1868 version was completed from sketches Nahl created to illustrate a serial about the bandit in the *California Police Gazette* some ten years earlier. For nearly a century the painting was in private hands; it only recently came to light, sparking a new burst of interest in the story of the outlaw.

SUNDAY MORNING IN THE MINES
OIL ON CANVAS, 72 X 108 INCHES
E. B. CROCKER ART GALLERY, SACRAMENTO

THE ESSENCE of Gold Rush California is crystallized in Nahl's *Sunday Morning in the Mines*. This classic masterpiece, the best-known of all genre paintings representing the era, was commissioned by Judge E. B. Crocker in 1872. In spite of the many figures and almost independent vignettes that tend to crowd both sides of the composition, Nahl has achieved unity through perfection of draughtsmanship and with the use of clear, brilliant colors. On the left are those who have chosen a careless way of life in the mines. The men on horseback are engaged in racing. In his drunken state a youth throws away his hard-earned gold. At a nearby cabin, men have worked themselves into a brawl over a card game. Meanwhile—and in marked contrast to their fellows—the men in the right half of the tableau are engaged in more noble and worthy activities for a Sunday morning. Perhaps Nahl identifies most closely with the letter writer, who is set apart and obviously engrossed in communicating with family and friends at home.

VANISHED MONARCH of the Sierra

Ten thousand grizzlies once roamed the Golden State -today there are none

by Ted M. Taylor

ATTRACTED to a dingy Clay Street basement by newspaper reports of a spectacular wild animal menagerie, San Franciscans in the fall of 1856 gasped at what they found there. Secured to the center of the floor were two big grizzly bears who clattered their irons as they ambled in ten-foot arcs and occasionally stood upright. Close by were seven other chained bears, some of them young grizzlies. Haltered in a stall were two elk, and a row of enclosures held cougars and other animals.

The star of the exhibit, an immense bear named Samson, filled a stout iron cage near the rear wall. Billed as the largest grizzly ever caught, he weighed 1,510 pounds. "The soles of his enormous feet," marveled the *San Francisco Bulletin,* "are very sensitive, and if touched even with a feather, while he is lying down, he draws back his legs, his eyes become red and green, and his growl resembles distant thunder."

And yet, when the bears' owner, mountain man and animal trainer John "Grizzly" Adams, paraded his troupe through the San Francisco streets, the animals reportedly ignored pursuing children and yelping dogs. Some spectators doubtlessly pondered why California grizzly bears were the basis for so many ferocious tales.

A subspecies of the once-widespread *Ursus horribilis,* the California grizzly roamed most of the Golden State, with the exception of the southeastern deserts, until finally becoming extinct early in this century. Though the official state animal of California, he survives today only as a symbol on emblems and the state flag.

The grizzly's name is derived from the tawny or grizzled appearance of its long, coarse coat, which admits of more color variation than those of most other mammals. The pelts of California grizzlies ranged from black to yellow brown; some were cinnamon colored, and others had a silver or hoary appearance. Dorsal and lateral stripes were common, as were lighter patches on the face and upper body.

The largest member of the bear family and probably the most imposing animal in North America, the grizzly is characterized by a muscular hump above the shoulder blades and a concave, dish-shaped face. Possessing an extremely keen sense of smell but very poor eyesight, the massive animal generally avoids humans but nevertheless can be fearless and unpredictable.

Theodore H. Hittell, a nineteenth-century California historian and biographer of Grizzly Adams, declared that the California grizzly grew "to a height of four feet and a length of seven or eight and attains a weight of two thousand pounds. . . . His strength is tremendous, being able to knock down a bull or carry off a horse."

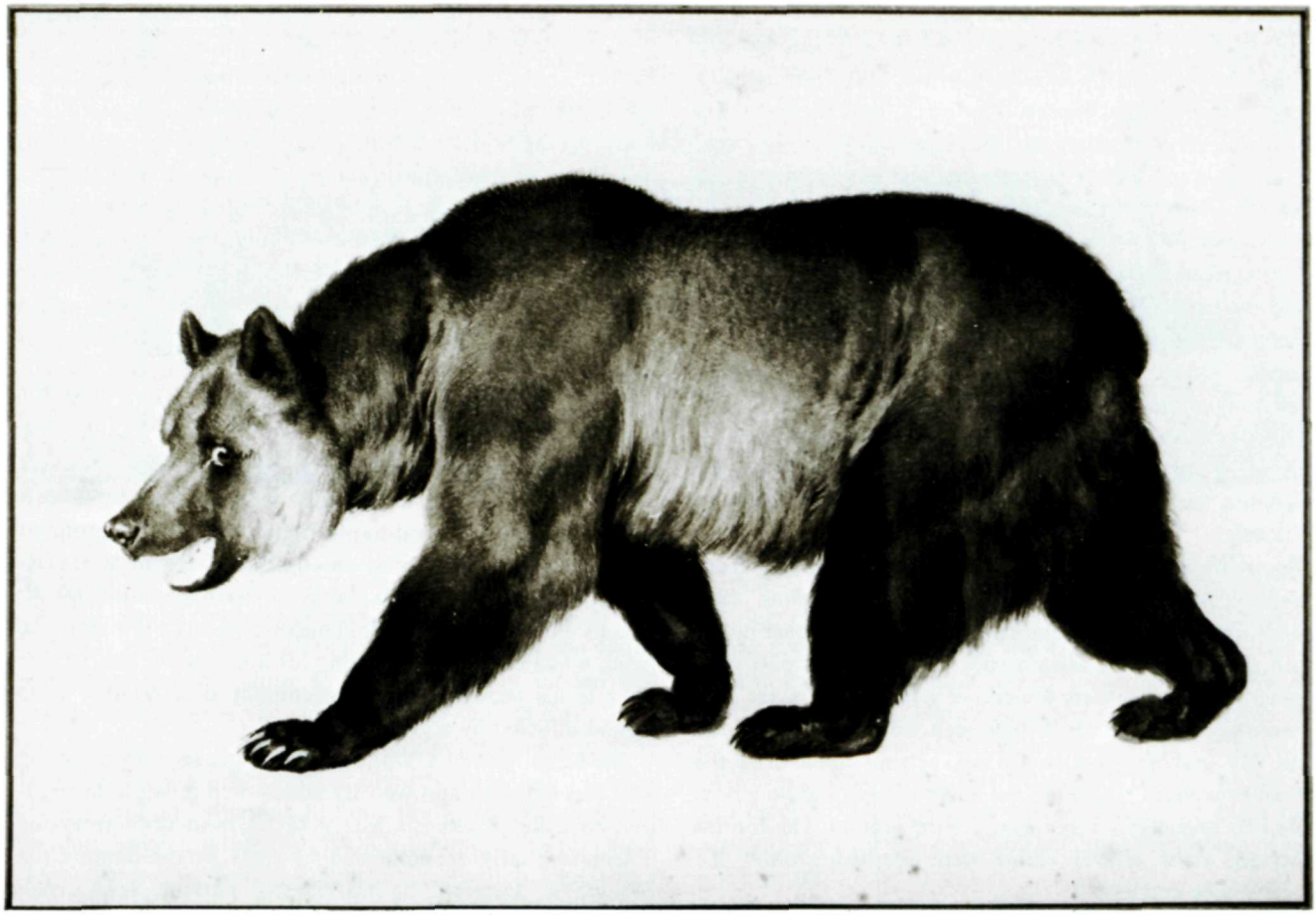
Few early grizzly hunters kept detailed measurements of their kills—and grizzlies probably appeared bigger than they actually were. But it is likely that in less populated times the animals lived longer and grew larger than those generally seen in North America today: a grizzly documented in Harris Newmark's *Sixty Years in California* "tipped the beam . . . at two thousand three hundred and fifty pounds."

The first Europeans to sight California grizzlies were members of Sebastían Vizcaíno's expedition of 1602. While visiting Monterey Bay, they saw the animals feeding on a whale carcass. The bears' tracks, wrote Vizcaíno's chronicler, were "a good third of a yard long and a hand wide."

Over a century and a half later, Don Gaspar de Portolá traveled north from San Diego to establish a settlement at Monterey. His party embarked on a hunt upon encountering numbers of grizzlies near present-day San Luis Obispo. Miguel Costansó, the expedition's engineer, described in his journal the ferocity of the bears: "Headlong they charge the hunter, who can only escape by the swiftness of his horse, for the first burst of speed is more rapid than one might expect from the bulk and awkwardness of such brutes. Their endurance and strength are not easily overcome, and only the sure aim of the hunter, or the good fortune of hitting them in the head or heart, can lay them low at the first shot."

Portolá's men feasted on bear steaks, and when famine struck Monterey in 1772, Governor Pedro Fages returned with soldiers to the hunting ground, which had been named La Canada de los Osos—"The Valley of the Bears." Remaining there for three months, Fages sent nearly nine thousand pounds of bear meat to the presidio and the Carmel and San

BY CHARLES NAHL, CIRCA 1850-1856; COLTON HALL MUSEUM, MONTEREY



One of the few paintings of a California grizzly done from a live model is this one by Charles Nahl, made sometime during the 1850s, and probably showing one of the bears captured by California mountain man John "Grizzly" Adams.

Antonio missions, thus saving the outposts from extinction.

As California's mission and rancho systems prospered, their grasslands supported huge livestock herds—easy prey for the grizzlies, who gravitated from the mountains. Disregarding the Spaniards almost as they had the Indians, the bears often made kills within sight of herdsmen; and rambling through moonlit pueblo streets, the animals sometimes sent serenaders scattering.

In their definitive study, *California Grizzly*, Tracy I. Storer and Lloyd P. Tevis, Jr., conclude that the abundant new food supply allowed the grizzlies, despite attempts by the Californios to destroy them, to multiply "as they had never done before." Storer and Tevis place the animals' population in the region prior to 1830 at ten thousand.

OBSERVERS WROTE that the canny predators, rolling with upraised paws in the grass, often lured inquisitive cows and horses to within striking distance. Sometimes a single grizzly, tumbling in a ball down a hillside, decoyed cattle for other bears to attack.

California's fierce bulls, however, provided a worthy match for the grizzly. Such a combat was witnessed in the Salinas Valley in 1849 by J. Ross Browne, the celebrated western traveler. From a treetop refuge he watched a huge bear surprise a magnificent bull in a nearby creek. After a short fray, the wounded bull broke into a clearing, the bear following:

The grizzly no sooner got within reach of the bull's horns than he seized them in his powerful grasp, keeping the head to the ground by main strength and the tremendous weight of his body, while he bit at the nose with his teeth, and raked stripes of flesh from his shoulders with his hind paws.

Suddenly the bull wrenched his head from the grasp of his adversary and retreated a few steps. The bull charged with such impetuous force that the bear, despite the most terrific blows with his paws, rolled over in the dust. By a well-directed motion [the bull] got one of his horns under the bear's belly.

At length the bull made one tremendous charge; but, blinded by blood, he rolled on the ground. In an instant the bear was upon him. The two rolled in a terrible struggle; nothing could be seen save a heaving, gory mass, dimly per-

ceptible through the dust. Then I saw the bear drag himself from the spot. His entrails had burst entirely through the wound. Shaking the blood from his eyes, [the bull] lowered his head for the final charge. The grizzly struck with such destructive energy that the bull presented a ghastly spectacle; his tongue, a mangled mass of shreds, his face ripped to the bone. The bear was ripped completely open. A few more thrusts from the victor, and he lay upon the sand, his muscles quivering convulsively.

The bull uttered a deep bellowing sound, shook his horns triumphantly, and slowly walked off. As the blood streamed from his wounds a death-chill came over him. Finally his body became motionless, and the victor was dead.

Out of such encounters, formal bear-and-bull fights emerged. Vaqueros probably initiated the contests on the range, and the matches were subsequently held throughout California.

Possessing few firearms, the vaqueros caught grizzlies from horseback with 65- to 110-foot-long rawhide *reatas*. (See illustration on page 17.) Rearing on its hind legs, a bear might brush aside a lasso or seize a rope and haul it in paw over over paw; the *reatas* were sometimes greased to counter this, as were horses' tails, which had been trimmed to the hock joint. (By grabbing a mount's tail, a bear could drag the animal backwards.) At times the bears severed saddle girths, and riders and steeds were thrown to the ground. The contest continued until several *reatas* were secured around the grizzly's neck and legs.

When bears no longer roamed the grasslands, substantial wooden traps were employed to catch them in the mountains. Grizzly Adams captured the 1,500-pound Samson in such a device near the Yosemite Valley. Positioned between a tree and a deeply-driven stake, the enclosure contained a baited mechanism which tripped a lever and dropped a heavy door over the entrance.

Adams stated that the imprisoned Samson took "chips out of the white-pine logs faster than I could have done it with an ax." He distracted the enraged bear by assaulting it with firebrands, hot coals, and a crowbar. During quiet intervals, Adams slept on top of the trap. After the eighth day, Samson was calmer, but nearly two months passed before he could be transferred to an iron cage for shipment to a coastal range camp.

Grizzlies had to be confined with care as they often refused nourishment, and there were instances when the infuriated captives died of rage.

Bear-and-bull events were organized in town plazas, corrals, and walled pits, on Sundays and feast days. After vaqueros brought the combatants into the arena, the grizzly's hind foot was usually roped or chained to the bull's foreleg, and restraining *reatas* were removed from the animals. The length of the bond kept the adversaries together, but prevented the bear from climbing into the stands.

The bull usually began the encounter by charging the grizzly. As long as the bear bit into the bull's snout and gripped his opponent's neck, he had the advantage. If the bull triumphed, victory usually came early in the contest when, with full force, he plunged his horns into the bear's body. A single grizzly might, at times, fight a number of bulls in a day, and large sums were wagered during the bouts.

At Monterey, where formal bear-and-bull fights reportedly began, arenas were located behind Gen. José Castro's headquarters and behind the Pacific Building, once a seaman's hotel. The former pit no longer exists, but the hotel, now a museum, opens on a walled garden where bears and bulls once raged.

A NUMBER of encounters in the wilds between man and grizzly resulted in deaths and maimings. Grizzly Adams himself had several hand-to-paw fights, and though prone to exaggerate, was considered among the West's most experienced hunters. Once, in a battle to the death at close quarters, Adams clutched the furry fold under a grizzly's jaw with one hand, while repeatedly plunging his knife into a vital organ. Despite his prowess, Adams eventually died from a scalp wound inflicted by a grizzly.

She-bears, asserted Walter Colton, guarded their young with "an affection and ferocity with which it would be madness to trifle." Pioneer Charley McKiernan once wounded a female grizzly accompanied by cubs in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Deserted by his hunting partner, McKiernan clubbed the bear with his empty rifle; but the animal grabbed him, crushed his head with her teeth, and left him for dead. Later a doctor closed McKiernan's skull with a silver plate made from two Mexican half-dollars, and the hunter recovered from his injuries.

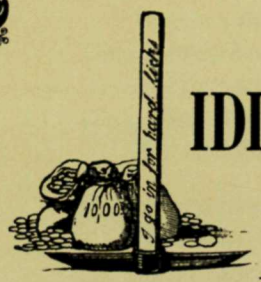
Another survivor was John W. Searles, who in 1870 stalked a bear in dense mountainous undergrowth, probably in Kern County. Suddenly rearing near the hunter, the grizzly was momentarily stunned when Searles' rifle discharged. Then, pinning the hunter to the ground, the bear bit off Searles' lower jaw, severed his windpipe, and exposed the jugular vein.

Fortunately, the weather chilled rapidly, freezing Searles' clothing and closing his wounds. Racked by pain, he found his horse, rode to camp, and was taken from there to a hospital where he recuperated.

Despite such harrowing tales, there are numerous accounts of grizzlies ignoring people in the wilderness, and Storer and Tevis cite only one example where grizzlies may have actually consumed human flesh. The animal's curious nature and limited eyesight resulted in many imagined attacks. Such an incident may have occurred when a swimming grizzly tried to climb into a boat carrying Mexican soldiers in San Francisco Bay.

Hunters sometimes tamed grizzly cubs, and Grizzly Adams

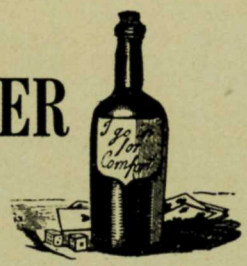
Continued on page 59



THE IDLE AND INDUSTRIOUS MINER

A Tale of California Life

With an Introduction by T. H. Watkins



WHEN NEWS OF GOLD began drifting east in 1848, James Gordon Bennett, writing in the pages of his *New York Herald,* tried to warn all the young men. "Beware of seeking to become rich by sudden and extraordinary means," he cautioned. "Be assured that all the gold in the world will not make you happy; pursue, quietly and steadily, the sober path of industry."

Few paid any attention to him, and a hundred thousand fortune seekers scrambled for California. Most of them were young men, possibly including the pair whose stories are told in *The Idle and Industrious Miner,* a booklet first published in Sacramento in 1854 and herein reproduced on the following six pages. The authorship of this sanctimonious little screed has been attributed to one of two men. The first is Alonzo Delano, a popular versifier of the golden era and the author of *Pen Knife Sketches, or, Chips of the Old Block* (1853) and *Old Block's Sketch Book, or, Tales of California Life* (1856). However, I seriously doubt that Delano wrote *The Idle and Industrious Miner;* this poem is utterly devoid of humor and irony, qualities which characterized his work.

A second and more likely candidate is one William Bausman, about whom we seem to know only two things: that he once wrote a play called "Early California: A Drama in Five Acts," and that he issued a book called *The Protégé: A Poem* —both of which whimpered off into instant and probably deserved obscurity. *The Idle and Industrious Miner* doubtless would have joined these other works in the coffin of history had it not been for the enchanting woodcut illustrations of Charles Christian Nahl, whose work also graced the pages of *Hutching's California Magazine* and other periodicals of the 1850s and 1860s.

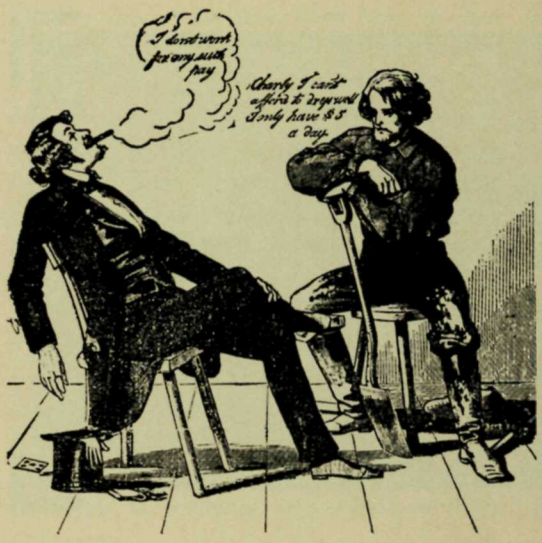
One would not care to question the author's argument that honesty, industry, and sobriety will carry a man further than crookedness, laziness, and drunkenness—although even in the nineteenth century the number of crooked, lazy drunks who made their way through the world quite nicely was remarkable. What we *must* question, however, is the reality of the poem as it relates to California during the Gold Rush. There are two things about the Gold Rush that should be remembered—that it took money to get to California and that it was *hard work* to do so, whether by land or sea. The genuinely poor ones never left home; most of the lazy ones gave it up before arrival. If there were drunks and crooks and careless libertines loose in California (and there most certainly were), it was not laziness that brought them to such a low estate.

What did bring many of them down was the common denominator of the mines: despair. Some men did in fact make fortunes—the lucky ones who got there well ahead of the tens of thousands who poured into California in 1849. For the later arrivals, there simply was not enough gold to go around. Having invested everything in a dream, the average miner found a nightmare of heart-rending work for a pinch or two of gold, as well as rheumatism, pneumonia, flux, fever, loneliness, and the shadow of ruin just over his shoulder. It was a grand adventure, the Gold Rush, perhaps the grandest adventure in American history, but it left an appalling amount of human wreckage in its wake. And like most men anywhere at any time, the California miner turned to whatever he could to ease his pain—including liquor, gambling, and women.

So let us cheer the honest miner and hiss at his dissipated partner. But let us remember that the real fate of neither would have had much to do with the pious certitudes expressed in this poem. It would be more honest to remember all the lost young men of 1849 and the decade that followed as Mark Twain remembered them, as "victims devoted upon the altar of the golden calf. . . . It is pitiful to think upon."

T. H. Watkins, *a former editor of this magazine, is the author of numerous articles and books on the history and conservation of the West. He has recently joined the staff of* American Heritage *magazine.*

ILLUSTRATIONS APPEARING IN THIS ARTICLE ARE FROM THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, AND THE HENRY E. HUNTINGTON LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY, SAN MARINO



Two school-boy friends, with buoyant hearts,
And grown to man's estate,
Repaired to California's shores,
To fill their cup of fate:
Endowed with noble gifts of mind,
And vigorous in health,
Their future seemed a harvest-field,
Abundant in its wealth.

Lured by a hope of rapid gain,
The mines at once they sought,
Contented with a cabin home,
In a secluded spot;
Their start in life was equal, and
At first the race was fair,
But soon resembled that between
The TORTOISE AND THE HARE.

Men do not always realize
Their cherished dreams of youth,
For often wormwood lies concealed
Within the bud of truth.
While one the glittering prize plucks down,
Another's reach is vain—
Ambition does within him, and
He never tries again.

'Tis thus our story takes its rise,
To trace the different ends—
The efforts, triumphs and mishaps
Of these respective friends;—
How nobly one achieved the goal
Of fortune and renown,
And how the other's sun of life
In clouds of shame went down.

And now, behold! at early dawn,
Before the mists have fled,
Our zealous hero seeks his claim,
Beside a river's bed;
As yet unused to toil, his hands
Are cramped and numbed with pain,
But in his heart an honest pride
Forbids him to complain.

The future is a promised world,
In which his fortune lies,
And industry, alone, he feels,
Can win its golden prize.
Already, in the vale below,
He hears the pick and spade,
And hastes to greet the busy throng,
And join their delving trade.

Sad, there should be a converse side
To such a pleasant view,
But history demands the pen
To frame its record true.
The early morn had come and gone,
And in the amber sky
The sun had slowly climbed his course
And stood at nooday high.

Nor sun, nor moon, nor thoughts of fame
Disturb the sluggard's rest,
Last night's debauch had left its sting,
And borne away their zest.
This, then, is how the idler friend
Commenced a bad career,
So fatally and madly run
Within his mining year.

Requited toil! Eureka! Look!
And read within those eyes
Their speaking luster, as they dwell
Upon the glittering prize!
The vein is struck! ah, noble heart!
A thrill of joy is thine!—
A purer and a better thrill
Than that produced by wine.

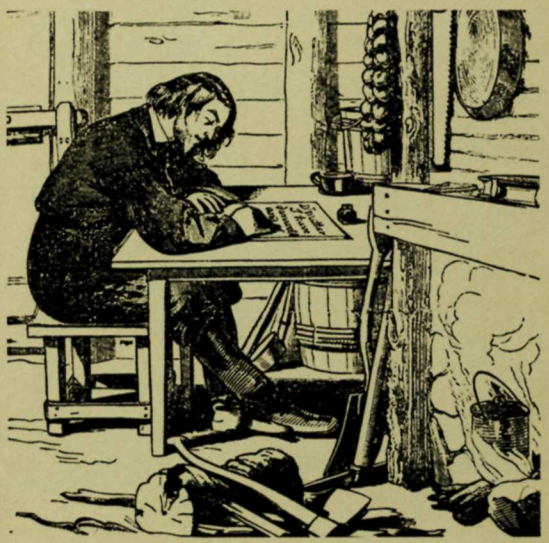
A thousand thoughts of home, and bliss
Reserved for coming years
Have swiftly flashed across thy soul
And melted thee to tears—
Tears—not of grief, or vain regrets,
For thou art still a man—
But, thinking of thy poverty
And gazing in the pan!

Turn to the other loitering friend
Yet on a drunken spree—
His tools neglected, and his face
The type of idiocy,
The bottle is his chief delight,
No care disturbs his brain
He smokes, and chews, and yawns, and drinks,
And wakes and drinks again.

Or when he leaves his cabin walls
To dig an hour or so,
Ill luck attends him,—so he thinks,—
Wherever he may go.
Forever armed with some excuse
He deems his cause is good,
Till want assails him at his door
And drives him forth for food.

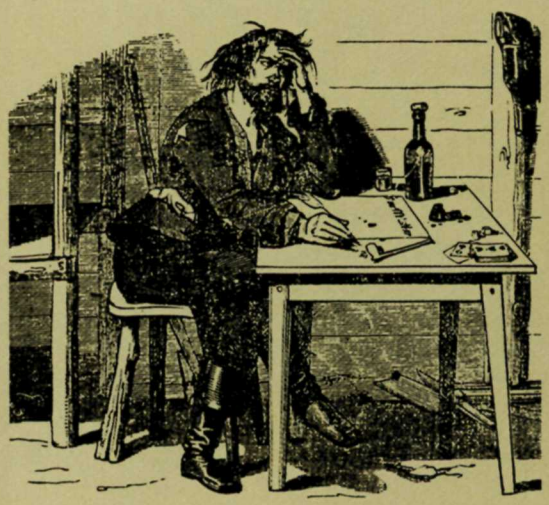
Embittered at his low estate—
Unmindful of its cause—
The sluggard mopes away his hours
Indifferent to applause,
His noble friend appeals to him
To stimulate his pride,
By representing wealth to flow
On fortune's courted tide.

He dilates on his own success,
Then offers half his claim
To share his fellow's wretchedness
And rescue him from shame.
Alas! when emulation dies
There's no Promethean coal
To kindle up its wasted fires
And re-illume the soul!



What other heart could feel a thrill
Of pleasure more sincere
On hearing of his great success
Than that of "mother dear";
So down the thoughtful miner sits
Elate with joy to write,
His tools about him, and his "stew"
Before him, full in sight.

There's not a hope his breast contains—
An anguish or a fear,
But memory retains to break
Unto that mother's ear;
He told her all, and asked her prayers
To keep his heart from guile:
And when he sweetly slept that night
His face revealed a smile.



Oh! Woeful picture of distress!
The idler takes his pen,
His ragged coat and shaggy beard
Denote him worst of men;
But there is still within his soul
A principle of truth,
Which he has borne unspotted through
His days of well-trained youth.

"Dear mother!" this is what he writes,
And saddened by the word,
He feels a gush of tenderness
Within his bosom stirred;
With too much power it wracks his mind
And from the bottle's store
He turns the liquor out, and drinks
Till he can write no more.

Morn—Sabbath morning! at his door
The thoughtful miner sits,
His sister's Bible to peruse
As such a morn befits;
The birds are sporting near his feet,
Rich flowers are by his side,
And as he reads, his heart resolves
That God shall be his guide.

He goes not where the noisy throng
Resort at games to play,
But profits by a goodly work
On this, a goodly day.
As twilight falls, his evening meal
In silence he partakes,
And soundly sleeping through the night
Again at sunrise wakes.

"Dear *Mother!*" it were well to pause
And leave the page unfilled
Nor tell how deep in vice the hand
That traced the line was skilled!
Amid a throng of curious men
That Sabbath night it tossed
The only coin the idler owned
Upon a card, which lost.

"Make way!" a dealer sternly cries,
Who hauls the money down;
"Make way!" the second one repeats,
And hurls an angry frown.
A dozen hands lend willing aid,
And backward through the crowd
They drew their humbled victim, whom
They left subdued and cowed.

"Hands off!" a drunkard grown to be,
It were a bootless task
To drag the idler from the bar
While it contains a flask.
His truest friend exhorts in vain—
In vain the landlord's threat,
He struggles for another glass
On which his heart is set:

In pity fill a bumper up,
To quench his burning thirst!
He has no greater joy in life,
And fate may do its worst.
The moon shone softly down that night
Where stupefied and pale,
A senseless man deserted lay
Within a quiet vale!

Fly, thou guilty culprit, fly!
The fatal weapon aimed
Would doom thee to a felon's death,
For thou art thief proclaimed!
Fly to some cavern, where with wolves
Thy home may haply be—
Not one amid the mob bestows
A kindly thought on thee!

A gallows to thy maddened brain
Appears in frightful view,
And to avoid its frowning form
Seems more than thou canst do
This is remorse—alas! too late,
For months of wasted time;
Before thy better nature changed
And thou were steeped in crime!

Through forest and on road pursued
The guilty man at last
Escapes unhurt, and lays him down
To think upon the past;
Oh, God! how sorrowful his groans—
How bitter flow his tears,
When recollection paints the hues
Of boyhood's brighter years!

Concealed within a worn-out claim,
He deems himself secure,
And finds his guilt the only thing
His thoughts cannot endure.
He gazes on the rattlesnake
With neither dread nor care;
But yields himself completely up
A victim to despair.

Long hours past—thrice had the day
Its course of glory sped,
Yet, on that wretched man, the sun
No ray of comfort shed.
By hunger driven forth at last,
He begged a crust of bread,
But found the hearts of those he asked
To all his pleadings dead.

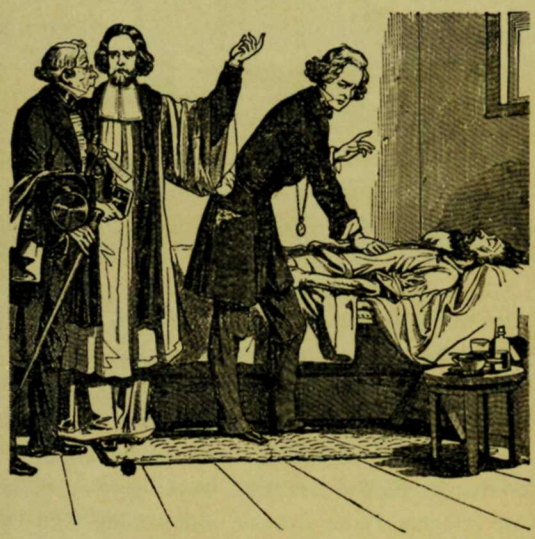
"My God!" he cried, "and must I starve
Where Plenty yields her store!"
And seizing on a tray of food
Rushed wildly for the door.
The landlord struck him with a knife
Before he could depart;
At which the frenzied culprit turned
And stabbed him to the heart!

Inclosed within a prison's walls
Through all the dreary night
A madman's frantic cries resound
To curd the blood with fright;
A pack of prowling wolves have caught
The rattling of his chains,
And pause to mingle with the sound
Their own unearthly strains!

Not long that noble frame shall writhe;
Not long that strength be shown;
For death is smiling through the bars,
And claims them for his own.
E'en while these startled eye-balls glare,
The heart grows icy cold;
He falls—what else concerns his fate
Is easy to be told.

Around the felon's corpse there stand
Three men of gentle mein,
By whom such sights as these, perhaps,
Had many times been seen.
The earliest and fondest friend
Bends o'er it, filled with grief;
The man of God has named the cross
And its repentant thief.

To die from home, alas! is sad;
But oh, far sadder yet,
To feel our crimes are what the world
Refuses to forget.
Then let a tear of pity fall,
Nor curse the idler's doom,
He was a miner—may his faults
Lie buried in his tomb!



Ah! holy spectacle of love!
A sister's gentle hand—
A pious mother's fond embrace
Are what its joys command!
The long lost son is back again
From California's shore—
The brother's ample purse is filled
With pounds of shining ore!

He brings them home his winning smile—
A form robust and strong—
And soul unspotted by the crimes
Of those he fell among.
He tells his friends, that wish to know
The cause of his success,
That those who seek the mines must work,
AND DRINK AND GAMBLE LESS!

"CHILEANS": AN ILLUSTRATION FROM HUTCHINGS' CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE, 1856

We Were Forty-Niners!

The Gold Rush Through Chilean Eyes

by Vicente Perez Rosales

Setting foot in California simultaneously with forty-niners from the "States" were large numbers of Argonauts from foreign lands. Among the most numerous (and literate) of these were the Chileans, some seven thousand of whom arrived during the first years of the gold rush. One of these was Vicente Pérez Rosales, who, along with his brothers Roberto, César, and Federico, and a shipload of other Chilean fortune seekers, booked passage from Valparaiso to San Francisco in December 1848. Rosales' lighthearted and often humorous narrative, a portion of which follows, is one of a collection of Chilean gold rush diaries translated into English for the first time and just published by the Ward Ritchie Press. Our excerpt begins in March 1849, when Vicente and his fellow adventurers were departing from Sacramento by overland trail for the northern mines.

ON THE DAY FIXED the get-ready signal was given early in the morning. By ten o'clock our [rented carts and their Yankee drivers] were got underway in the care of two men of our band, the rest of us staying behind to load up our own van that was to haul our provisions and bedding for the trip. We had a lot of trouble with the confounded horse we hitched to it; it seems he did not like the kind of conveyance we had hooked on behind him. He acted up so much that for a few moments we feared the whole van would come apart. Finally, though, we got the non-swiveling van under way as well, but it was by then a long way behind the others. [The front wheels of this cumbersome four-wheeled contrivance did not pivot; to negotiate a sharp turn the Chileans had to unload the van, bodily lift it and turn it in the new direction, then reload.] We said goodbye to the three comrades who were to stay and keep an eye on the rest of our things until we could send for them.

Our first day's trek was only six leagues. I do not need to tell you that we were worn out when we stopped, for we had to take time out to unload and reload our van every once in a while. Then we had to race and try to catch up with the carts, which did not stop until the middle of the afternoon. The stopping place was the bank of the [American River]. The cart drivers told us we had to camp there because there would be no water from there on. We went on to make our night camp just below the first rapids of the American River, navigable to this point.

As soon as we had unhitched the horses we started preparing our camp. We chose the base of a large oak and arranged ourselves around it like the spokes of a wheel. In this country the dew settles down like rain, so that by morning our bedding was soaked through. Our "beds" had been reduced to the merest excuse for sleeping arrangements.

A piece of rug underneath, a blanket on top, a backpack

"A ROAD SCENE IN CALIFORNIA": LETTERSHEET ILLUSTRATION; CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

or bag for a pillow, plus your clothing, that is all you have. The only thing we took off were our boots. We ate jerky and flour cakes, and slept the sleep of the just.

At the crack of dawn we were up, getting the horses ready, and rolling up the bedding. Then with good heart and satisfaction we left the river in the same order as we had used the day before. The freshness of the morning, the beautiful appearance of the country through which we were passing, totally uncultivated and without a suggestion of a human habitation anywhere; the flowers, the birds, the trees, all new to us; all of this made us willing to overlook the difficulties we began to encounter toward noontime. It was hot, and the mud forced us to push the carts by hand at almost every step of the way.

At the end of a march of about five leagues we ran into an arroyo or small creek. It had so little water, and that was so dispersed in a swamp, that it was possible to do but little toward satisfying our thirst. We took a short rest there, and when we were ready to start again so as to catch up with the carts which had gone on ahead a long way with the rest of our party, we noticed with dismay that our little dray horse was bleeding at his shoulder joint. It was due to the harness, which had certainly not been made by skilled London leather workers.

It was plain we would not have a horse at all if we went on this way . . . . We could not stay where we were because we had no food and did not know the country. The sensible thing seemed to be to abandon the big van, but in that case we would loose our bedding and our most essential tools. We had to decide at once, so we made up our minds to pull the cart ourselves and give the horse a chance to recuperate. We tied ropes to the front and rear hooks, and César, Federico, Jorge, and I took hold of them. We sent Cipriano on ahead, and began a long climb that would not end till we reached a spot two leagues from Sutter's Mill where we were due to arrive the following day.

The road became steeper and more tortuous every moment, and we were very much afraid a wheel might break. Although the axle was iron, as were also the wheel rims, the iron was so worn it could give way any minute. The hills with their ups-and-downs followed one another endlessly and the bogs between them made the job even harder.

Our courage would have been shot all to hell by the heat, mud, and exhaustion if it had not been that we knew how we looked. Imagining how our friends in Santiago would laugh if they could see us slaving away like this kept us laughing like lunatics. So we kept on, boasting to one another of our strength and skill, and inventing reasons to explain away any missteps we made.

We soon realized not knowing the road would have been no handicap to us. There was a trail of bottles strewn along the whole way. If you want to locate a Yankee, all you need do is follow the empty cognac bottles and you are sure to find him.

After about four hours of this we caught sight of our carts parked on a high plateau covered with grass. The view revived our spirits—but that did not last long, for a short distance further on we found a swamp blocking our way. In it a troop of Yankees were swearing like frogs around a cart that had broken down, and another that was sunk deep in the mud.

Our recourse at this juncture was to take a brief rest, and then, recommending ourselves with all our hearts to our absent Dulcineas, we charged into the nasty barrier and, fighting tooth and nail, triumphantly pulled our contraption through to the other side of the muck, arriving more proud of ourselves than if we had won a battle.

There never was for anyone in this world a more laborious

The text for this article is excerpted from a chapter in We Were '49ers! Chilean Accounts of the California Gold Rush *by Edwin A. Beilharz and Carlos U. Lopez, just released by the Ward Ritchie Press,* © *1976 by Ward Ritchie Press.*

"HOW THE CALIFORNIA MINES ARE WORKED": LETTERSHEET ILLUSTRATION; CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

task than we had in covering the few hundred yards we had to cross to reach the carts. But this day was full of anticlimaxes. The carts had only stopped briefly to rest the animals, and then had gone on their insolent way, leaving us with no choice but to let them go and fall to the ground on our backs, panting like worn-out oxen.

Two more days of struggle brought Vicente and his companions, still dragging their indispensable van, to a campsite in the vicinity of Sutter's Mill on the American River, where a year earlier James Marshall had made the discovery triggering the California Gold Rush.

WE HAD BARELY got settled down to wait for our remaining comrades and supplies they were to bring, when we decided, for good or ill, to busy ourselves with looking over and reworking the abandoned diggings [near Sutter's Mill]. We resolved to start the following day.

We set out very early in joyous procession, each one carrying his pan, poruña [a dipping tool], crow bar and shovel, and, after walking along the river bank some distance through debris left by former miners, we started our prospecting. We worked till dark, some digging, some carrying the soil and others washing it. Our success was not brilliant, but we felt happy when we got back to camp and weighed our gold. It turned out to be only an ounce; but that was because we did not know the terrain.

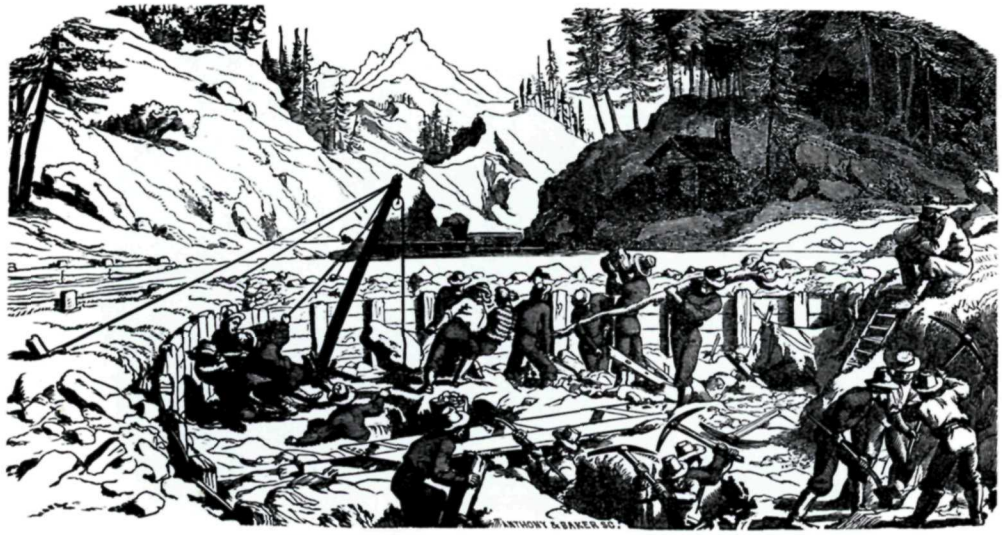
Our arrangement the following day was that one of us would stay in camp and cook. Our menu was to be rice, beans, and tea. We then scattered and started digging at several places. Later we decided to work on a layer of virgin clay. It contained a lot of gold but was hard to deal with because the clay had to be completely dissolved and each stone washed by hand to set the gold free. This kind of deposit is called in Chile a "royal mantle" because of its formaiton and because it slopes up toward the hill. This aroused our hopes, but it did not yield any more than that of the day before. We had picked a bad spot.

The drawings accompanying this article are all by Charles Nahl. The wood engravings themselves (as well as those in the preceding article) were executed by Thomas Armstrong, a gifted English artist who developed his craft at the Illustrated London News *and subsequently was responsible for many of the finest engravings from the California Gold Rush era, including those in Alonzo Delano's books and* Hutchings' California Magazine. *Armstrong's skillful interpretations of Nahl's drawings are in large part responsible for the charm and flavor of these illustrations.*

You cannot imagine all the fantastic things we talked about at night in our tents, how we laughed at each other's appearance, at our diet of beans, and at our constant weighing of our gold. Since they had heard me say we were working a "royal" mantle, everyone tried to think up an even more imposing adjective for it. None of the names stuck, though, until Felipe suggested one when he arrived. His was "Justinian's Mantle." He told us he had read that when the emperor Justinian engaged in conjugal love he wore only his mantle. We spent the days that elapsed from the time we left our companions and the time they arrived at the mill in fruitless labor. No sooner would we start working one spot than someone would get us all excited by saying he had found a better one. That sort of thing got us nowhere; but then nothing would have done any good. There was plenty of gold, but not enough for all the men in California looking for it.

We were working a new site we called the "solar" diggings when our absent friends suddenly appeared. That made us happy, as you can well imagine. They joined in our work there because we had decided to give the rivers time to go down and stay at the mill till they had done so. Meanwhile we could repair the mining machine we had brought with so much difficulty.

We had begun to lose confidence in it when we saw how



"RIVER MINING": LETTERSHEET ILLUSTRATION; CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

many men had brought mining machines, only to abandon them for the riffle boxes and cradles of California. This bothered me, because no matter how clever I think I am in designing machines, I am not so presumptuous as to believe everybody could be mistaken except me. We did finish it, though.

Next day we hauled it triumphantly in our marvelous cart to a place that looked promising.

It operated all that day with a constancy and tenacity that deserved better luck. Everyone worked in the water, either bringing it sacks of dirt, or pouring water into the funnel—we were never able to place it properly so the water would flow in on its own. This doubly heavy labor continued till after dark. It must have been a very poetic scene. Everyone was doing his uttermost. Some were barefoot, others were in the water with their shoes on. All were soaking wet, sleeves rolled up all the way to our necks: a group of valiant men, but looking more like an army of madmen who were trying with might and main to find the philosopher's stone [fabled in the Middle Ages to have the power to transmute base metal into gold]. All we got was a bit more than three ounces of gold, nothing to brag about.

That night we were told of a very good spot some three miles away on the other side of the river. It was the Don Pancho diggings. We thought it should be investigated, and we delegated Vicente [the writer of this account], one of the Garcés men, Casali, and the two peons to set out for it next day at dawn.

The south fork is a fairly large river, and cannot be crossed except by boat. Though there are places where it looks fordable, the current is too strong. About two hundred yards from our camp there were two rafts whose owners had got rich ferrying passengers and baggage to the northern mines. Men were carried across dry, for a dollar each, but the horse had to swim.

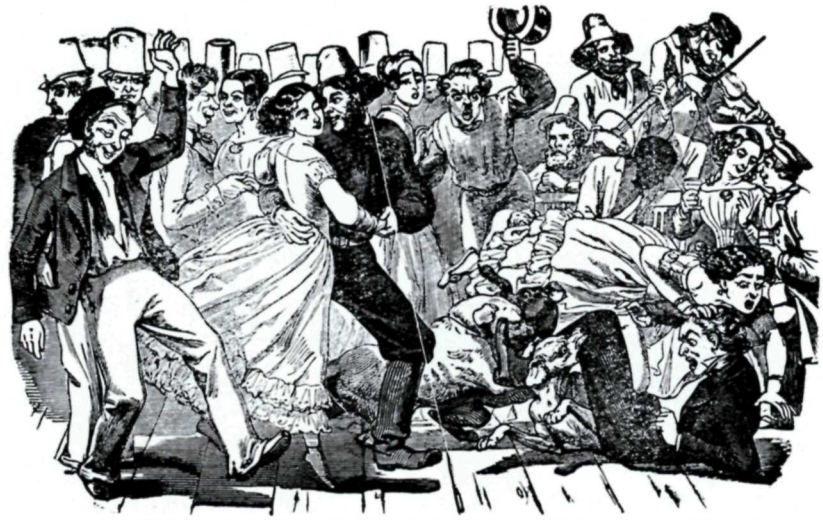
The following day you could have seen our bold adventurers, wearing blouses, backpacks, and mining tools, marching in quickstep down to the point of embarkation. We kept Piti, Casali's dog with us. When we reached the river we were delighted to see that the owner of one of the rafts was accidentally absent. A penny saved is a penny earned, we said, so let us board the raft and commit ourselves to the hands of God. The whole company then boarded, with the baggage, and Piti.

Onward ho! Who could have foreseen that in the middle of the river we would lose our balance. Splash! All of a sudden we were under, and the raft on top of us: we had been dumped most unceremoniously into the bottom of the river: all of us, the dean [Vicente Pérez Rosales himself], the baggage, and Piti.

The upset was so sudden that we all went to the bottom before we could let go whatever we had in our hands. You would have thought the dean wanted to see if there was any gold at the bottom of the river, but he, without letting go of his gun in his right hand, was trying with all his might to free himself from the thighs of Urbino which were around his neck and carrying him down. Malicious tongues say that the dean, caught in that watery vise, went so far as to promise that he would never drown himself, if he had any choice in the matter. Even today he cannot look at a river without his teeth hurting.

Picture the terror of the amiable dean by the time he finally got his neck free. Need I tell you how light the body of the poor devil felt then? After a few good strokes he was seen to appear on the surface of the water, a bald-headed old man, blowing water like a whale, and allowing himself to be carried downstream by the current. . . . Slowly, and without being seen, he climbed out of the water onto dry land.

Nevertheless, our baggage, guns, provisions—and Piti—had been swept away by the river. Casali wept bitter tears at the loss of his faithful retriever, whose final destination no



"THE GREEN DEVIL SALOON" FROM "PEN KNIFE SKETCHES, OR, CHIPS OF THE OLD BLOCK" BY ALONZO DELANO; BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

one could guess. What had happened, though, was that the poor animal had been caught under the raft; and was still there when the raft was recaptured and carried to shore. The dog looked dead, and was left lying there for two hours. Two days later the dead dog turned up alive at our camp.

Everyone quieted down then and went back to work.

The river, swollen with melting snow, invaded more and more land, and, suddenly, cut us off from our mining machine and our carts. We thought the rise of the river was a temporary aberration and we could wait and get our things when it receded, so we took it as a joke. But it was not so funny when we saw our machine and carts start navigating down the river toward the Pacific Ocean.

Failing in the mines, Vicente and his comrades embarked on an equally luckless venture as merchants in Sacramento; they eventually ended up back in San Francisco, where they purchased a lot, constructed a two-story, eight-room frame building, and opened a restaurant.

WE HIRED a famous French cook called Monsieur Michel, who got, besides board and room which was worth $200 a month, a salary of $500; that is to say, $8,400 a year. That is a good deal more than the Secretary of State earns in Chile. We hung over the door of our cafe a large sign, "Citizen's Restaurant," and got under way with a full force in the summer of 1849.

In the beginning, needless to say, the business went well —everything went well at first in California; it was only when things reached the middle that they collapsed. We were, at one and the same time, the masters and the servants of the restaurant. Barring some lapses of memory, excusable because we were new at the work, we did not do badly as servants.

Then, everything in San Francisco took on a new aspect.

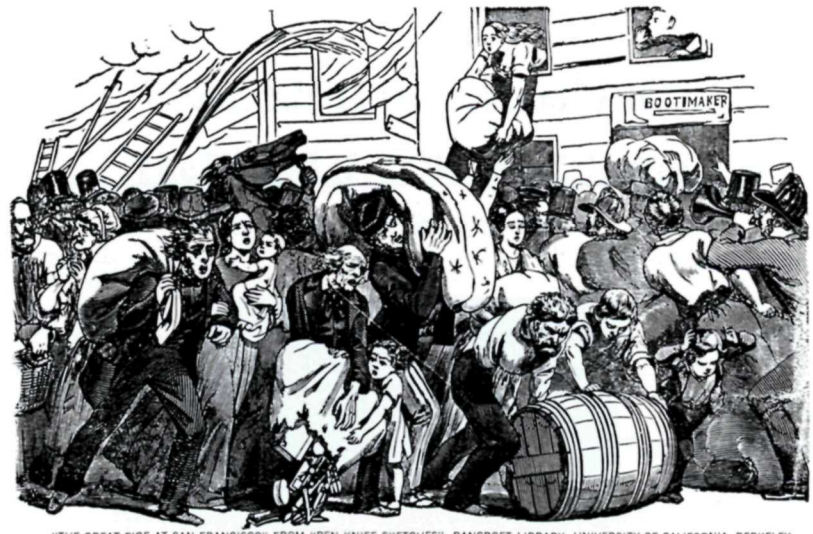
Up to that time, we had engaged in dealings only with men because no women were to be found in the streets.

The mercantile spirit which speculates even with immorality did not lose much time in seeking out substitutes for the fair sex. Paintings of women totally nude and very badly drawn were hung in the best cafes of the city. These nauseating pictures which covered the walls of the saloons would have put the most wanton satyr to flight in any other place; but here, offered along with gambling tables and liquor, they filled the pockets of their lucky owners with gold. With such a precedent to go on, it was only to be expected that the mercantile spirit would not lose much time in producing the real thing, of flesh and blood, as repulsive as the painted representations.

The passenger ship from Panama on its first voyage brought two daughters of Eve of the sort called "liberated." Those who went down to watch the steamer come in at the western headland, when they saw the hats and sunshades of women, became so enthusiastic and ran down to the pier so fast that they drew in everyone they passed; so a thousand men were waiting on the beach. . . . On the next voyage seven more arrived, and were received with the same gallantry.

The cafe owners were alarmed by the competition which their badly painted monstrosities had to meet from these real monstrosities who kept on arriving. They planned and carried out the most incredible and obscene projects that human shamelessness can improvise in such situations. They hired these creatures, at a gold peso each, to pose in plastic displays in the cafe dining halls. They set up platforms on both sides of the room, and on them, totally nude and assuming indecent poses, they placed these exemplifications of California modesty and decency.

The doors of the exhibition were opened at eight in the evening to the sound of music. The curious men, who had left a good part of their gold dust at the door, were pushed rapidly through the exits by those coming on behind them, before they had time to look. They came tumbling out the



"THE GREAT FIRE AT SAN FRANCISCO" FROM "PEN KNIFE SKETCHES"; BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

rear door, cursing like fiends. I remember a Chilean of good family, Don J. E., whose name I will not further clarify, said to me, "My friend, the devil tempted me, and then cleaned me out of all the gold I had in my purse, a half-pound! I was pouring onto the scale enough to pay for my entrance when a shove from behind made me dump it all; and then I was pushed forward so I couldn't get back to recover the extra gold."

This kind of vice was not, however, the only miry basis upon which a new, rich, and sovereign state would rise in time. Robbery, murder, arson and gambling also bore a good deal of the load.

Every day the sound of music in some gambling hall, or the beat of a drum or Chinese gong in others called the compulsive gamblers to the table amid the intoxication that dancing and drinking produce. And every night someone was wounded, clubbed, or beaten up; and from each gambling hall the losers would sally forth and try to recoup their losses by robbery and assault.

I had occasion to observe a gambling scene in which a crafty Oregonian played a role. He approached the table and without saying a word placed a little sack containing about a pound of gold on one card of the deck. He lost. With the same silence and gravity, he set down another of the same size, and lost again. Then, without losong his calm manner he took from his belt a snake that must have contained about six pounds of gold. He stacked it on a card, took out his gun, cocked it and pointed it at the dealer as he waited silently for the result. He won! "With that I won," he remarked sarcastically, gathering up his winnings without a change of expression. "That's certainly lucky." And with that he disappeared.

California had by this time lost almost all its attractiveness for venturesome foreigners, so far as the opportunities that had drawn so many people of such different types to her shores. . . . What was needed there were not foreigners striving to achieve success by their own labor and for their own profit, but rather men who would work for salaries and wages. It is not surprising, then, that those who had considerable capital at their disposal either lost it or resigned themselves to leaving the country in disillusionment. We were thinking of doing the same thing, when fate, which had treated us so badly, gave us the *coup de grace*. What drove us out of this ex-land of promise with so harsh a dismissal was one of those terrible fires, wiping out everything, which broke out in the last months of 1850.

We had been in bed about two hours, after having made up our minds to go back to Chile, when a flickering red light coming through the windowpanes threw a glow into the room where we were sleeping. The fire had been set deliberately, as so many were, in the hotel already mentioned which had the infamous display of living nudes. We never would have imagined that a fire, more than three blocks away from our building, could have brought us any damage. We were rejoicing over the evil end being put to all that ugliness, and calculating the increase in price of our building due to the shortage that was to follow, when, about an hour and a half later, fate demonstrated to us that shining thoughts of profit may continue to be shining but cease to be profitable. The fire spread in all directions with the same reckless speed that we have seen it spread through our wheat fields in Chile at harvest time. In the midst of that immense and roaring bonfire enlivened by exploding gunpowder casks in the stores, with the air filled with sparks and burning bits of wood, and the blazing walls fanned by the wind, the whole region was involved. We were hemmed in by flames on every side, and we, like everyone else, owed our escape solely to the swiftness of our flight.

Two and a half months later, in the garb of seamen, we were in peaceful Chile tenderly embracing our mother, poor as ever, but satisfied that we had not abandoned the fort before the last bullet had been fired.

A Matter of Opinion

Of Grizzlies and Pioneers

WOOD ENGRAVING BASED ON DRAWING BY THOMAS HILL, 1888

"I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see." (Alfred, Lord Tennyson in Locksley Hall.) *In 1890, just as the final curtain was being drawn across the western American frontier, historian Charles Howard Shinn attempted to probe the future for those symbols most likely to endure from the era just past. His interesting essay, which appeared in* Century *magazine, is excerpted here.*

A GREAT MANY PERSONS have told stories about grizzlies and about pioneers. But there is an aspect in which the grizzly and the pioneer may be said to represent the beginnings of a chapter of national folklore, or the first halting steps towards the development of a noble myth.

I remember that an old silver-freighter who walked all day long for many successive weeks across the Nevada desert beside his high ore-wagon, once said to me: "I had a curious notion lately. I thought that, perhaps, when the American frontiersman had been dead a hundred thousand years, the stories that would be written and believed about him would be like those of the demigods." My old silver freighter was well educated, and knew his mythology better than I did. He had full faith, too, in the permanence of the myth-making spirit. "Some fellow, I don't know who," he said, "has got to stand right out to represent all this pioneering that hundreds of us have been doing for generations. It may be a fellow with buckskins and a Kentucky rifle, or it may be a fellow with a slouch hat and a mule-whip. We can't any of us tell yet awhile." Ten years later the railroad reached the camp; he bought a small California farm and settled down, as miners, prospectors, stage-drivers, and frontiersmen of every class are doing all the time.

I have often meditated upon the idea which the old teamster of the desert had evolved, in his crude way, feeling, far better than he could express it, the influence of the fast-passing epoch. As I consider the subject, two things, the grizzly and the California pioneer, seem on the way to take such form as to outlast railroads and cities. In a lesser sense they already belong together in literature, but perhaps they are slowly and surely assuming places side by side, or at least in the same group, in a new myth of the American continent. In the course of time—in five centuries, or twenty centuries —it may be that two giant shadows of the past, the Argonaut and his grizzly, will loom up over the Sierra, as Hercules and his Nemean lion in the legends of the Greeks.

No man is ever able to say of those things which lie within the present reality: "This is to perish; that is to broaden and grow, striking roots into universal nature until all men bear witness to its immortality." Nevertheless, when the last grizzly has perished, when the old race of miners is as far lost in traditions as the first Cornishman who picked up stream-tin, [and] when the great California valleys and all the shining slopes of the long, parallel mountain ranges beside the Pacific are clothed with continuous gardens and orchards, and mighty and populous cities grow from the villages of today, there ought to be a background of sublime fable to inspire poet, artist, and sculptor.

It is the first step towards a myth that always proves the

Continued on page 60

The Time-Life "Old West" Series

REVIEWED BY RICHARD H. DILLON

ACADEMICS and aficionados of Western Americana do not always see eye to eye. Where the former love detailed footnotes, the latter often find these pockmarks of scholarship objec-

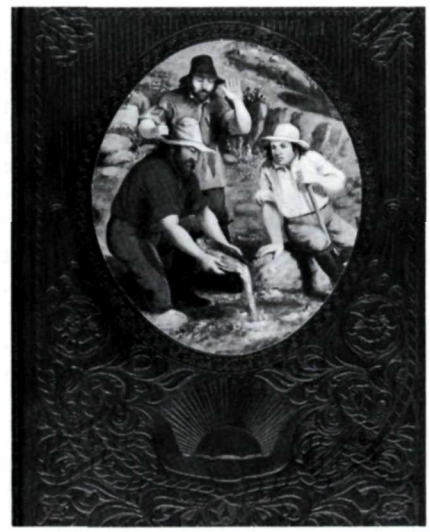
The Old West Series by the editors of Time-Life Books with various authors *(Time-Life, New York, 1973–1976; each volume approx. 240 pp., illus., maps, biblio., index, $9.95).*

tionable. But both town and gown usually agree on one point—a committee-written book is likely to be an inferior product of historiography. Some westerners would put it more bluntly—"No damn good!" Now, where does that leave us, with a whole *series* of team-written books to review?

Actually, better off than we might suppose. For a long time, for example, California's Lane Publishing Company was reluctant to attribute its Sunset books to individual authors. And Lane produced popular books of quality.

If Sunset could do it, why not Time-Life? Well, one rub is that many critical readers feel that the good Sunset books would have been even better had a single writer "taken the ball and run," to use the lingo of Madison Avenue and the Oval Office. This is exactly the case with the Time-Life Series. Each book might have been made even better, in this reviewer's opinion, by the imprint of a single strong personality in the author's seat.

The Old West books bear the name of an individual author on each title page, but a peep at the verso reveals in addition the names of a bewildering brigade of writers, editors, researchers, and assistants, as well as a host of production technicians. Cynics will say that Time-Life flips a coin—perhaps an antique double-eagle?—to determine just who gets a by-line on which book. The frequently bland texts suggest that there may be something to the jibe.



These selfsame critics may have a point, too, in labelling the series an Elephants' Graveyard where staff writers from the late, lamented *Life* magazine go to die. Most of the names of the authors are unfamiliar even to collectors of Western Americana. The sole exception, so far, with eleven of a projected twenty titles completed, is Ben Capps, a well-known member of the Western Writers of America. The others run to Time-Life teamsters or ex-*Life* staffers turned free-lance. They are all pro's, ready to write on anything from vermouth to Virginia City to vivaria, on demand. But their hearts and expertise simply are not in the task when compared to an Egan, a Billington, or a Bartlett.

Time-Life would, this reviewer feels, have done better (and possibly at less cost, despite having a captive writing squad to draw on) had it chosen free-lancing experts of Trans-Mississippi nonfiction from the ranks of the aforementioned Western Writers of America or the Western History Association. It is, perhaps, a riskier business when all corporate controls are removed, but one which W. W. Norton and the American Association for State and Local History were not afraid to tackle in their joint project, the upcoming Bicentennial series of state histories. Can you imagine Lawrence Clark Powell's *Arizona* reading just like the *New Mexico* of Marc Simmons, Dave Lavender's *California,* or Marshall Sprague's *Colorado?* No way! These writers are rugged individuals who will put a personal stamp of authority on their texts, whatever the similarity of format.

The individual volumes of the Old West Series are books of about 240 pages, uniformly bound in a simulated tooled leather on heavily padded boards so as to give the feel of a nineteenth-century photo album. They vary in external appearance only in that a different illustration appears in the oval frame on the front cover of each, keying the prospective reader to the contents. This nostalgic, antiqued, packaging—outlandish and Disneyish in the view of some nitpickers—does not bother this reviewer so much as does the sameness of the textual style within and the frequent interruption of the running narrative by inserted, boxed featurettes on special themes. These digressions—textual changes-of-pace, like the many illustrations—are doubtless meant to lighten the burden of the word-weary reader. But they can be annoying and, for all of the hordes of editors, they sometimes carry information repeated in the main text.

However, even if these volumes were written in *beche de mer* or pidgin, they would nevertheless still be worth twice their price for their illustrations alone. These constitute a treasure-trove of western iconography. And they are not just the tired old hack photographs and paintings of many earlier books on western history. It is the zealous picture researchers whose names deserve to be on the title pages. The books' indexes are o.k.; the brief bibliographies are good; the simplified sketch maps are excellent; and the careful acknowledgments and text and picture credits serve

Continued on page 54

The Old West Series
(Continued from page 53)

as marvelous aids for tracking down good quotes or illustrations. But above all, the selection and quality of the photographs, paintings, and drawings reproduced make this series a "must" acquisition for serious scholars and amateurs of western Americana. Quite aside from its value as a useful miniature reference library, the series will introduce readers to little-known men whose photo-documentation rivals that of Timothy O'Sullivan. These include L. A. Huffman, Erwin Smith, and Solomon D. Butcher.

To sum up, the Time-Life Old West books will delight the ordinary citizen, who reads Americana as an avocation. And, despite the aforementioned criticisms, the series is also destined to be valuable to even the most doubting-Thomas of professors and collectors. This will be especially the case as the remaining projected titles are added, for nobody has ever before attempted to provide a "five-foot-shelf"—indeed, a whole library—on the gamut of western experience. To do so, and at a relatively modest cost to the reader, is a prodigious effort and one which is, so far, more than a fair-to-middlin' success. These are editorial teams which are really worth rooting for!

The Trail Blazers by Bil Gilbert. 1973. Paintings by Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt, George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, and Alfred Jacob Miller suggest the romance of America's epic of exploration, from Lewis and Clark to Frémont and the Geological Surveys, just as the photographs of William Henry Jackson, Timothy O'Sullivan, and others document the drama of mountain men, military and scientific expeditions, and the Santa Fe trade. Maps and botanical/zoological prints are put to good use, too.

The Soldiers by David Nevin. 1973. Highlights of this volume are reproductions of the art of Frederic Remington and Charles Schreyvogel, color plates of Army uniforms, and the various depictions of Custer's Last Stand which used to decorate saloon walls. Also historic photographs, not only of garrison life but of winter campaigning against the Sioux, Apache scouts, black troopers, and rare sights like Gordon's Stockade in the Black Hills. Much ado in the text about Custer and the Little Big Horn, of course.

The Indians by Benjamin Capps. 1973. Ben Capps writes well of Indian lore and war, and his prose is accompanied by photo-portraits by Edward S. Curtis and the art of Bodmer, Miller, and Catlin. But he only has space here for the horse Indians, and this volume might be better titled "The Plains Indians." Little Big Horn is here (again) but not much is included on the Navajos or Nez Percés, and nothing on, say, Captain Jack and the Modocs of California.

The Railroaders by Keith Wheeler. 1973. The impact of railroads on the West was tremendous, inspiring plays, dime novels, and sheet music, the covers of which join old photographs to illustrate this volume. The roles of Thomas Hart Benton, Jefferson Davis, the Big Four of the Central Pacific, Thomas Durant and Sidney Dillon of the Union Pacific, and Oakes Ames of the Credit Mobilier

are spelled out. The actual builders—the real heroes—receive their due as well: Theodore Judah, James Strobridge, John Casement, and the anonymous Chinese and Irish track crews.

The Cowboys by William H. Forbis. 1973.
It is impossible to encapsulate the myth of the cowboy in 240 pages, but the author has had a good go at it. His overview of long-driving trail herds, cattle barons (Charles Goodnight, George Littlefield, Granville Stuart), and tough Kansas cowtowns is illustrated by the ubiquitous Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell, plus W. H. D. Koerner, and by the splendid photographs of Erwin Smith of Texas and L. A. Huffman of Montana.

The Gunfighters by Paul Trachtman. 1974.
Thank God, few of these thugs are made into heroes in this bloody book of feuds and shoot-outs, illustrated not only with Charlie Russell's art and rare photographs of Jesse James, etc., but with too many gruesome shots of corpses. There is a lot of coverage of Tombstone's O.K. Corral fight and the Johnson County War, also details of shootin' irons. The author is aware of the ambivalence and self-interest of such lawmen as the Earps.

The Forty-Niners by William Weber Johnson. 1974.
The Gold Rush is a kind of base line for western history, and the familiar yarns of Captain Sutter, Jim Marshall, and the Argonauts rushing to the Mother Lode, and, eventually, San Francisco, are re-told well. The choice of color art (Charles Nahl, Alburtis Browere, William S. Jewett) is outstanding. Photographs, cuts, and cartoons also supplement the text. The narrative draws on classic accounts, such as that of J. Goldsborough Bruff.

The Expressmen by David Nevin. 1974.
This volume treats all kinds of transportation and communication folk, from Adams expressmen to freighters like Russell, Majors, and Waddell, and the stagecoaching empires of John and David Butterfield and the ineffable Ben Holladay. Much attention is paid to the Pony Express and Wells, Fargo's great enterprise, but also to the telegraph, Snowshoe Thompson, Concord coachmakers Abbott and Downing, Death Valley's twenty-mule teams, camels, and wagon manufacturers Joseph Murphy and John Studebaker. The book is illustrated with oils by Remington, Russell, and Oscar Berninghaus; fine woodcuts by Charles Nahl; and the fresh, interesting watercolors of Henry Van Beckh.

The Pioneers by Huston Horn. 1974.
The story of the early settlers is illustrated by oil paintings (William Ranney, Charles Wimar, Father Nicolas Point); an unexpected and charming watercolor by Bayard Taylor; and a whole album of splendid sodbuster photographs by Solomon D. Butcher of Nebraska, pictures which are not only great documents but (unconscious) art. Much text is devoted to wagon trains, the Donner Party, homesteaders, and (especially) the Mormons.

The Townsmen by Keith Wheeler. 1975.
We sometimes forget the urban Old West of "instant cities"—San Francisco, Oregon City, Denver, Omaha. Here is the story of cowtowns, mining camps, and end-of-track towns, with their ordinary citizenry of shopkeepers, bartenders, and soiled doves as well as extraordinary promoters of the ilk of Isaac Kalloch, the wenching Baptist minister. The towns contributed fraud (via speculators' "paper" towns) and violence (in county seat wars), but also brought women's suffrage, theater, and books.

The Great Chiefs by Benjamin Capps. 1975. In this sequel, Ben Capps picks up the Apaches, Comanches, Shoshones, Nez Percés, and Modocs missed in his earlier book. (Also Wounded Knee.) His approach is to single out the great chieftains of these tribes—Cochise and Geronimo, Quanah Parker, Washakie, Chief Joseph, and Captain Jack—as well as Sitting Bull of the Sioux and Lone Wolf of the Kiowas. Again, art by Catlin and Miller appears, plus photo-portraits of great dignity.

Editor's Note: Two additional volumes in this series—**The Rivermen** by Paul O'Neil and **The Texans** by David Nevin—have recently been released by Time-Life Books.

Richard H. Dillon *is author of a number of books including* Exploring the Mother Lode Country *and* Siskiyou Trail.

California Gold Camps

REVIEWED BY DON GREAME KELLEY

GOLD MINING in San Francisco? "Mining Claims were once staked off on Russian Hill after a Mr. McMurty found gold while digging his cellar, November 2, 1860 (*CHSQ,* XXXVIII, p. 339)." One other San Francisco County entry appears in Erwin G. and Elisabeth Gudde's *California Gold Camps:* "San Francisco Beach. . . . An account of gold washing on the beaches is given in [California, Division of Mines] *Bulletin,* 193 (p. 180). It was carried on by means of small washing plants, mainly south of Fleishacker Zoo. The gold was usually more plentiful after heavy rains. The estimated yield between 1939 and 1941 was about $13,000."

California Gold Camps: A Geographical and Historical Dictionary of Camps, Towns, and Localities Where Gold Was Found and Mined: Wayside Stations and Trading Centers by Erwin G. Gudde *(University of California, Berkeley, 1975; 467 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., notes, glossary, list of places by county, $19.50).*

A glance at the last section of the book, "List of Places by Counties," led back to those tiny nuggets of unexpected information in the main text (which deals—if a rough estimate is correct—with at least 4,500 places associated with the finding of gold). It surprised this Bay Area resident to find San Francisco County here at all—the least likely, if you had asked me, of all of California's fifty-eight counties to appear among the *fifty-two* recorded as gold-producing areas. Even seaside Orange County has its Trabuco District, "in the Santa Ana Mountains" where "small amounts of placer gold have been mined"; and the other Golden Gate county, Marin, appropriately has three locations where gold was once dug or placered. Even more of a revelation to this reader was the discovery that the roster of six counties *not placing* in the gold sweepstakes includes San Benito County, a mineral-rich locale.

All of the above is of course reviewer's serendipity, but such pleasant exercise is bound to be every reader's, who is not merely "consulting a dictionary." All who treasure the late Professor Gudde's *California Place Names* as in-depth illumination of the state's history, its richly mixed Indian-Iberian-Russian-Anglo ancestry revealed to eye and ear, will find this successor volume (seen through the press by the premier collaborator, Mrs. Elisabeth Gudde) a still deeper penetration into that part of the California story which is most intimately linked with statehood and the proximate reason why. One kind of example shows in comparison of the two books under, say, "Coloma": the earlier volume devotes ten lines to this locale; the present one, forty-eight lines. A perhaps more clearly differentiating type of example is that provided, in *Gold Camps,* by the hundreds of no longer visible names (belonging now to the palimpsest of history that a cumulative map would comprise, if we had such a thing), each of which had very explicit and personal meaning to one miner, to a couple of buddies, or to a small "company." Freeze-Out, Rotgut, Rum Hollow, Ten-Cent Gulch, Poverty Flat, Pot Luck City, New Years Diggins, Sucker Bar, and *seven* Rough and Readys—such were the temporary tenting places beside the riffles, the squattings, the dirt scratches; places where perhaps more sweat was shed than gold dust bagged, weight for weight. Sometimes they were remembered because somebody made some kind of memo, or filed a claim in a tobacco tin or local office. If they are worth remembering at all, it is for the collective recollection they provide of a very special experience out of which a state of our nation grew.

Gold Camps has the same amalgamated glossary and bibliography as concludes *Place Names;* in both, it is also biographical. The numerous illustrations in half-tone are from the contemporary sources.

Don Greame Kelley, *former editor of* Oceans *magazine, recently collaborated in the preparation of a Gold Rush exhibit at the California Historical Society.*

California Gold Rush Overland Diary

REVIEWED BY THOMAS H. HUNT

THIS OVERLAND JOURNAL is number ten in the Arthur H. Clark Company's American Trails Series, and it continues the fine tradition established by previous volumes. For students of the western emigrant trails, the great historical value of this 1850 account lies in McKinstry's participation as a member of one of the first recorded wagon trains to follow the wagon route established along the north bank of the Platte River between Fort Laramie and the Upper Platte Ferry (Casper, Wyoming). Prior to 1850 it had been generally accepted that the north bank of the Platte was too rough for wagon travel, and the route had been south of the river through the Black Hills. In subsequent years this north bank trail was to become a favored route for westering emigrants and the one preferred by the various Mormon groups en route to Salt Lake City.

The California Gold Rush Overland Diary of Byron M. McKinstry 1850–1852 with comment on a modern tracing of his travel by his grandson Bruce L. McKinstry and a foreword by Ray A. Billington *(Arthur H. Clark, Glendale, 1975; 401 pp., illus., index, $15.00).*

The McKinstry journal is well written and covers not only the overland crossing in 1850, but also the writer's experiences in the gold fields of California and his homeward trip to Illinois in 1852 via the Isthmus of Panama. The gold rush entries and the return trip, however, while of some general interest, are rather sketchy and certainly of no special historical significance.

The editor of this volume is the diarist's grandson, Bruce L. McKinstry, and he is to be congratulated for the great amount of carefully researched and solidly based information he has presented to the reader. The editor and publisher are to be commended for the format chosen to integrate McKinstry's running commentary into the historical text. Two different type faces are employed—one for the diary entries and another for the editorial comments—and these alternate so as to allow the editor to comment on matters raised in the text without interrupting the general flow of content or resorting to tedious and disruptive use of footnotes. It makes for smooth and enjoyable reading.

Bruce McKinstry is a bona fide "trail-buff," and, according to his biographical notes, has devoted most of his free time since 1948 to following out the route of his emigrant ancestor and to making productive contacts with others who share his interest in early trails. He supplies the reader not only with a wealth of information from his own personal fieldwork and observations, but also provides contributions from many of his trail-wise colleagues—a source of information which might otherwise be lost to the general public. This is a most valuable contribution to the history of these early emigrations and to the more specific study of the trails themselves.

One serious criticism might be made of this otherwise most admirable addition to the literature of the emigrant movement, and that criticism pertains to the total absence of any maps to accompany the text. Since a great deal of the value of this volume lies in the editor's many years of careful fieldwork along the emigrant routes, and since much of his commentary has to do with specific questions about these trails, it would seem only logical to expect that the reader be supplied with accompanying maps. If a full set of such maps was not deemed feasible, then certainly one of that section along the north bank of the Platte, which was pioneered by the McKinstry wagon train and which gives this volume its primary claim to historical importance, should have been included.

Thomas H. Hunt *is a professional artist and author of* Ghost Trails to California.

Geology of the Sierra Nevada by Mary Hill *(University of California, Berkeley, 1975; 238 pp., illus., maps, charts, appen., notes, glossary, index, $8.95 cloth, $3.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY NICHOLAS ROSA

A BOOK that gracefully tells you a great deal in a little space is a find. Mary Hill's masterful book in the California Natural History Guides series tells what the Sierra Nevada is made of, how it was and is being made, and how you might see the evidence of these things for yourself. This book is to be used, not just read, and belongs in the Sierra visitor's automobile or pack.

A mountain range is rock, and rock is minerals. The Sierra Nevada is many kinds of rock, presenting an impressive array of minerals, many of them intriguing, some beautiful, a few precious to economically-oriented man. Geologically wise prospectors of the last century recognized not only the rock and mineral telltales of the Sierra, but also the ways of its geological features. Those who learned how a stream behaved understood how and where it concentrated its gold. Those who realized that ancient streams behaved like modern ones pinpointed more gold in fossil stream beds beneath the rock strata.

Four hundred and more million years "old," the Sierra is yet young, yet changing. This is an earthquake zone: blocks of rock still rise, sink, sideshift. Quoted at length in the book is John Muir's eyewitness account of the terrible Sierra quake of 1872. Many of the great talus blocks visitors play mountain goat on in Yosemite Valley were shaken from the cliffsides barely yesterday. On and off through a few millions of the years, glaciers contested volcanic vents for the shaping of the Sierra's character. Vestiges of the glaciers remain, and we readily recognize their more awesome works. To the naive eye, the volcanoes seem long ago. Yet Mono Lake is just one of many young craters; Mono last erupted in 1892. Not far to the north, Mount Lassen last spoke (and with authority) in 1915.

Nicholas Rosa, *a California naturalist and science writer, is currently working on a book about volcanoes.*

VANISHED MONARCH OF THE SIERRA

(Continued from page 38)

used his bears as pack animals. During exhibitions in San Francisco and while working for P. T. Barnum on the East Coast, Adams wrestled with his bears and rode on their backs. The nimrod frequently recalled how his pet grizzly, Ben Franklin, had saved his life during one fight with a wild she-bear and had helped spare him on other similar occasions.

As California's population spread from the mining camps, grizzlies were subsequently decimated. Devices hunters employed to kill the animals included whaling guns secured to trees, heavy-caliber rifles, and steel traps. Grizzly hides were prized as bedding, and bear meat was a popular food. The paws, surprisingly tender and succulent, were considered a delicacy, and bear oil was used in cooking and for hair grooming.

Probably the most effective means of eradication was poison, which hunters mixed with honey or sugar or placed in the body of a freshly-killed steer. Big Sur ranchers eliminated grizzlies from the Santa Lucia Mountains by putting strychnine in balls of fat hung from live-oak tree limbs beyond the reach of hunting dogs.

Monterey County's last grizzly was killed in 1886. At about the same time, the last grizzly was taken in neighboring Santa Cruz County. The last grizzly used as a museum specimen was shot in 1908. After twenty-two years in captivity, Monarch, the last California grizzly in a zoo, was put to death in 1911 in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. In 1922 a grizzly may have been shot in Fresno County; and two years later, a great humpbacked bear was spotted in Sequoia National Park—the last probably sighting of the subspecies.

In 1868, Bret Harte, editor of the *Overland Monthly*, explained the meaning of the publication's symbol—a grizzly crossing railroad tracks. After noting that the railroad, representing civilization, foretold the bear's doom, Harte wrote of the California grizzly: "Look at him well, for he is passing away. Fifty years and he will be as extinct as the dodo. . . ."

Today grizzlies still may be found in considerable numbers in Alaska and Canada, and a few are even said to survive in portions of Sonora, Mexico. But in the western United States, once home to some 100,000 such animals, a dwindling remnant of fewer than 1,000 grizzlies remains, most in remote sections of the Rocky Mountain region. Look at them well . . .

Ted M. Taylor *is a Monterey, California, teacher and a Monterey College journalism instructor. His free-lance credits include magazine and newspaper articles and educational filmstrips.*

OF GRIZZLIES AND PIONEERS

(Continued from page 52)

most difficult. Already, the world over, men have come to know the old cañon-keeper and forest-dweller as "the grizzly," not the grizzly bear. He has become differentiated, and is on the way to still further separations from other bears, and other creatures of the high order that furnish noble subjects for art. Sometime, I am sure, an American Thorwaldsen will know how to hew a Sierra grizzly out of some gray cliff of Rocklin granite, and there it will remain while the world endures, supreme as the Lion of Lucerne. . . .

The Pacific Coast . . . has already adopted the grizzly in its common speech. Where the oriental sage said of the wise man that he walked forth "alone, like the rhinoceros," the similar comparison known to the man of the land between Arizona and Alaska has been a comparison with the grizzly. A man is said to be "as strong as a grizzly," or as dreadful when aroused, or as much of a boss, or "a regular grizzly of a fellow." It is not a light phrase; it goes deep down to the roots of the matter; it is the last word said.

By a thousand camp-fires since the first trappers met grizzlies in the Rockies men have told stories of the mighty creature, and when the last grizzly is gone from the cañons the body of literature that will continue to grow up about him may some day be like the marvelous dragon literature that has sprung from the bones of the pterodactyl. The grizzly in his best estate has not only no equal for strength and dignity in the "three Americas," but he rivals the lion and tiger. Civilization is claiming his haunts so rapidly that two or three generations will see him as extinct as the saber-toothed tiger or the great cave-bear of Europe. This early perishing may give the grizzly another advantage in his progress towards a permanent place in art and literature.

Again, grizzly stories that frontiersmen tell have all the unconscious dignity of their subject; they rise at times to the height of an epic of the Sierra, and they possess a singular vitality. One must gather them up from explorers like Lewis and Clark, Kit Carson and St. Vrain, from placer-miners' stories of '49, from Spanish-California missions and stock-ranches, and from the lonely American preemptors' cabins in the Siskiyous. One must cast aside the mere "newspaper yarns" invented by men who never saw a grizzly. Then one discovers this fundamental fact—that the grizzly has somehow impressed himself irrevocably upon the imagination of the man of the Pacific Coast, and this in a way that the black and brown bears have never yet done to any people. In the delightful German tales Bruin is a good-natured, stupid fellow, whom one cannot but like even while smiling over his adventures. The bear in the Negro folk-lore of the South assumes much the same place. But the grizzly stands apart, so different in his very nature, and so impressive in every aspect, that another long step towards the creation of the noble and satisfactory myth appears to have been taken by the pioneers, the true myth-builders and makers of literature in their log-cabins, by their winter fires. How long a step has thus been gained we shall know better when the grizzly is gone from the Sierra. . . .

WHAT FIGURE may fitly stand beside the grizzly, as the grizzly will look to men a thousand years hence . . .? The grizzly is American to the backbone, and his qualities are appreciated wherever he is known. His companion is to be found, if anywhere, in the first American pioneer of the Rockies and Sierra, the Gold Seeker, brave, rugged, and honest as the grizzly himself. My old silver-freighter had a glimpse of the truth. "Some fellow has got to stand up and represent the whole crowd." The fact of the growing grizzly legend helps one's imagination to seize upon the more complex fact of the growing pioneer legend, which, like the other, needs only time for its fulfillment.

The Argonaut—let us call him that because he seems to like it best—has even fewer years remaining than the grizzly. Name him as you will—prospector, placer-miner, frontiersman of the Pacific Coast, son of four generations of pioneers; call him Californian or Arizonian, whichever you choose—there he stands at the end of the road; and though he spreads out his grasp to Alaska and Mexico, the continent is crossed, and he is disappearing, as priest and *vaquero* disappeared before him.

Strange indeed is the law of the growth of the myth-spirit, which works continually among men, but only at long intervals to full achievement. The goddess of myths either seizes upon the first of a type to lift it to the stars, or else she waits until the last of the race of heroes goes forth . . . to his death before she pours her cup of immortality on his name and line. The goddess may not choose among the founders of the Atlantic colonies with their heroic histories. Perhaps she will not even take the buckskin-clad Boones and Crocketts, though over them her spirit hangs uncertain. If it may not be trapper nor hunter, voyageur, guide, nor pioneer of the Atlantic slope, or the Mississippi Valley, what is more likely than that the imagination of the race will sometime, when the last pioneer is dead, crystallize the story of the whole westward march into some Sierra Titan leaning upon his mighty pick, as Thor upon his Mjolnir? The hills will be empty of gold; the waters will have reclaimed the deserts; new conditions of life may have come to pass over all the lands from Maine to California. But every child will hear the stories of old-world dragons and new-world grizzlies; of old-world giants and new-world pioneers.

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.*

MY JOURNEY TO THE GOLD FIELDS

(Continued from page 12)

habited but a short time. It was heavily timbered, with here and there a settler's cabin with a small clearing around it. These settlers had come across the Plains the year before, and becoming convinced that the black alluvial soil of the river bottom would raise fine crops when it was cleared off, had settled in the wilderness, although it was plain to see that during high water the whole country would be overflowed. Indeed, it did not take them long to find this out, for eight or ten days before we started up everything had been submerged, and the settlers were just now returning to their claims.

When we got a little higher up the river we found large mounds where thousands of cattle had been starved to death or drowned; and singular to relate, you could not see a native California animal among them. They were all American cattle that had been brought over the Plains the season before. The men, women, and children had saved themselves by fleeing to the high lands, miles back from the river, but their cattle had all been destroyed. The native cattle had scented the danger afar off and fled to the high lands and mountains for safety.

We had heard that there was high water up the Sacramento River, and just after we got fairly into the mouth of it we met a boat with half a dozen rough-looking customers in it, and asked how things were up the river. Directly we got back the suggestive answer, "Hell's afloat and the river rising!" While the river bottom was very rich and undoubtedly would raise big crops when cleared of the timber, I was satisfied that it was no place for a poor man to locate, as it never would be available for farming purposes until the banks were covered with levees just as the lower Mississippi.

Going up the river in a sail vessel was rather slow at times, especially when surrounded by dense forests of timber where it was hard to catch the wind. In order to lighten the boat as much as possible, we made it a practice for at least one half of the passengers to walk along the bank till dinner time; then we tied up and cooked our meal by a fire already started by the pedestrians. After eating, the boat again started with the other half of the passengers walking on the river bank, and they in turn would make a fire for us to cook supper by and camp during the night. The weather was comfortable, and with our overcoats and blankets we got along as well as could be expected.

We soon arrived at Sacramento, a place at that time [having] three or four thousand inhabitants. The houses all looked new for they had been built within a year; in fact, the place looked very unlike San Francisco. It was a thoroughly American town, and we had all seen houses before of the same kind; nearly all the inhabitants were from the [midwest], and most of us felt quite at home.

After landing and replenishing our stock of provisions, we looked around the place. I found here an old acquaintance from Galena named Grubb, who had been an auctioneer there. He was carrying on a wholesale and retail grocery business and said he was doing well. His storeroom was about 24 x 75 feet, two stories high, and built of sheet iron that had been brought from New York all the way around Cape Horn, as numerous other buildings there and in San Francisco had been. He opened my eyes in regard to business when he told me he paid for the use of that house $25,000 per year! Rents for all kinds of houses were enormous; and even the ground rent for the privilege of building a business house on a good street reached as high as $5,000 per year. Now the reader must recollect that this very locality had all been overflowed within a month, and without enormous expenses in building levees all along the river front, was subject to the same misfortune every season.

Sacramento City at that time was the business headquarters for all the northern mines, and merchants had heavy stocks of goods. In fact, the wharf was lined with ships that hailed from all parts of the world and had come past San Francisco without breaking bulk, expecting to find a better market than they did at the Bay—and as a general thing they succeeded in accomplishing their ends.

I tasted Grizzly Bear meat here for the first time in my life, having paid $1 per pound for it. I thought it was the best meat I ever put in my mouth, but perhaps my appetite had more to do with it than anything else. The men that brought it to market had killed it in the mountains and after keeping 100 pounds of it for themselves, had sold the balance for $1,000 and then had the hide for bedding. I thought this was a big story, but afterwards I became convinced that it was the truth, as these animals have been killed in the Sierra Nevada mountains weighing as high as 2,500 pounds.

Everything about the place appeared orderly, although of course gambling was carried on in every saloon in the city—and there were plenty of them. There was a constant stream of teams coming in from the mines empty and returning with loads of provisions and other supplies needed in mining camps. On account of bad roads in the mountains, these teams only carried their loads to the foothills, where they were transferred to pack mule trains—one man managing from ten to twenty mules.

I heard considerable news in Sacramento of old acquaintances who had crossed the Plains the year before, and as a general thing, it was good. Nearly all of them from the lead mines had done well in gathering up gold dust, but some had lost it all by gambling. Notably, there was a Captain Head who had formerly been a commission merchant in Galena, Illinois, had crossed the Plains in 1849, and located at what was called Rough and Ready diggins. During the winter he had managed to get together $7,000 in dust and had concluded to return home in February—a few weeks before I was at the City of Sacramento. He got down there and went

to gambling, and in less than two weeks the Masonic Fraternity was called upon to buy a ticket for the foolish old man to send him home.

AFTER "DOING" SACRAMENTO, we started up the river for Marysville, a new and flourishing town on the lower Yuba River, situated among the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and only three miles from where that river empties into the Feather River. It looked queer to see a schooner the size of the one we were in—and as near the foothills of the mountains as we were—jogging up the Feather River with sails; but there were many ships of three hundred tons that were going up the same stream, some of them ahead and some behind us, all making for the same point.

After a time we reached Yuba City on the left bank of the Feather River, opposite to where the Yuba River empties into it. Here we found several good-sized vessels unloading, not because that was the place the owners of the goods wanted them landed, but because they could not, on account of the depth of the water and the rapid current, go up the Yuba River to Marysville. We soon got up to the latter place, paid our fare, and landed our "plunder."

When we had landed at San Francisco, I had concluded that a fellow passenger from Jackson County, Iowa, named John Gavney (an Irishman), and myself would go as partners to the mines. He owned a farm near Bellevue, Iowa, was an old bachelor, and a hard-working man. As a general thing miners worked in pairs; and not only your comfort every day but many times your success in the mines depended on the kind of partner you had.

After staying one night at Marysville, we started for the mines on foot. [We] concluded to go to Rose's Bar on the main Yuba, and see what we could do there in the way of getting gold. This was the first place the gold hunter came to in going to the northern mines where he found anything to work for; and as thirty-five out of every forty of the adventurers that were then coming into California by way of the Pacific Ocean were penniless when they got this far, of course the place was crowded.

We looked around the Bar and saw others gophering among the rocks, picking up a little dust all the time, but so little that we could see no encouragement to commence; and in fact everything looked so different from what I had been led to expect that I must say I was almost disheartened. The Bar was over half a mile long and when all the prospectors got to work it appeared as though it was literally covered with miners. No one appeared to have a "claim" on any particular part of the Bar, but every man worked where he pleased, provided some other person was not there before him. As near as I could estimate the miners were making from $1 to $6 per day.

I looked around the diggings for nearly two days and then told my partner that I had come to the conclusion that we had better go farther up the mountains. We were on the main Yuba, and three or four miles up the river Deer Creek —quite a large and rapid stream—emptied into it. On the morning of the third day . . . we packed up a few things and started for the crossing of Deer Creek. It was nothing but a mountain path we had to climb, and we had not gone over a mile until we came to where it was snowing. We had to go such a round-about way, and the path was so exceedingly difficult, that we tramped fully nine miles before we got to Deer Creek Crossing, where night overtook us. We were very glad to pay half a dollar apiece for a chance to put our blankets inside a public tent and rest till morning.

When I got up the next morning, I had some difficulty pulling my blanket off the ground as it had sunk several inches into the wet, soft soil, and the thought of paying half a dollar for sleeping in the mud did not make me feel in a first-rate humor.

It had cleared off during the night, and there was a heavy white frost on the ground, and as the foot passengers had to cross Deer Creek on a large round log, we had to wait until about ten o'clock until the sun melted the frost from the log. We stood outside the tent—about twenty of us—watching people on mules, horses, donkeys, and ponies going past to cross at the ford. One procession of about thirty mules, with miners and their tools, blankets, and provisions, was passing us when a rough-looking customer who was standing not far from me rushed out with a six-shooter and the expression, "D - - - you, get off that mule!" and one fellow slid off a mule and took to the brush without saying a word or stopping to make any explanation. The excited individual with the revolver had recognized an animal stolen from him some weeks before, and took this course to replevin his property. After he got possession of his mule, he immediately became an aristocrat and left us foot-sore fellows to our fate.

Deer Creek was very high, the water deep and swift, and the log we had to cross was still very slippery, and it is a wonder to me we all got over in safety. We had used up all the lunch we had started with, and as we had only $2.50 between us (and one meal cost $2.00) it was plain to us that our supper was uncertain; but we jogged along and trusted to Providence to bring us around all right.

Gavney understood that a cousin of his was part-owner of diggings on Deer Creek ten miles above, and we concluded we could stay all night there if we could not do better; but when we got there we found his cousin had sold out and left some weeks before. We crossed the Creek here again and started through the tall pines for any place that fortune would take us. We had not left the bridge half an hour before it became dark, and as we plodded through the mud and slush we said but little to each other but kept very busy thinking of the pleasant homes we had left. We were both very tired and hungry, and as we had leaky boots the reader can form some idea of our feelings.

After tramping for some time, we discovered a light ahead, which we found to be the cabin of a company of miners. There was only one at home and he was cooking supper for

his comrades, who had not yet quit work. He had a cheerful fire burning in the big fireplace, and everything looked so comfortable to us two tired tramps that we naturally wished to stay overnight, so we asked him if we could. He good-humoredly said we were welcome to spread our blankets on the ground floor if we could stand it. So far as Gavney and I were concerned, we were well satisfied to be near a fire even if we had to sleep on the ground, in our cold and chilly condition and with our feet thoroughly wet.

In the course of half an hour after we arrived the miners came from their work, and by the time they had washed, supper was ready. The cook asked us to set up to the table; we were very hungry and the warm victuals looked tempting; but before I made any movement to participate, I explained to him our financial condition. "Sit right down," said he, "and if you ever get able to pay us, do so." We did not wait for any more words, but ate and enjoyed supper with them. Being as wet and chilly [as we were], the fire felt good, and we hugged the chimney corner pretty close—so close, indeed, that a large log fell on my left foot and hurt my big toe, so that I expect to carry the wound to the grave.

By sun-up we were well rested and feeling in the best of spirits, and after getting breakfast and telling our host that we would pay him as soon as possible, we [resumed our quest]. About nine o'clock we came to some miners working in water and mud almost knee-deep, and asked them if they wanted to hire any hands. One of the men spoke up and said he would give a man ten dollars to work his place the balance of the day, as he wanted to go up to Caldwell's Store to get some things. I laid down my blankets, intending to go right to work, as I knew my partner had the ague and should not get wet; but before I could turn fairly around he had thrown down his blankets and was in the mud and water. As he looked much more like a working man than I did, and I presumed would stand the work for that day anyhow, I made preparations to start up the mountain.

I took Gavney's rifle and got my blankets on my back again, determined to keep on until I found an opening of some kind. I kept on the beaten path for about four or five miles when I came to a cluster of miners' cabins, some of them inhabited and others empty, within half a mile of what was known as Caldwell's Store. I asked [the first man I came to] if he knew any person that wanted to hire a man for a week or two. He said he did not, as nearly all the miners around there had stopped work and were waiting for the water in the rivers and creeks to go down. "But," said he, "I presume you want to make about wages, and I can easily show you where you can do that."

So he went up to his house and brought me a cradle, dipper, shovel, and axe, and told me that right there in that gulch where we were I could make wages. He left me, understanding, unfortunately, from my conversation that I knew how to work in the gold mines. I had read about gold mining and had the theory in my head, so I went ahead, using the best judgment I had.

I had been over an hour in getting things fixed up when my friendly neighbor came down from his cabin and told me to come up to dinner. I did not pass any words with him but went right along. We had a good meal for the mountains, and it was cooked by a St. Louis lady by the name of Mrs. Judge Stamps. She was the wife of my accommodating neighbor, and I soon learned that her husband was one of the local judges and was a man highly thought of in the community.

I went [back] to work about one o'clock, and as I had everything ready, I was soon engaged in my first gold mining operations. I had to dig dirt, put it into the sheet-iron screen at the head of the cradle, and then I dipped water on the dirt with one hand and rocked the cradle with the other. The dirt and water went down through the cradle, and at the tail end there were several riffles that caught the gold, black sand, and other heavy substances.

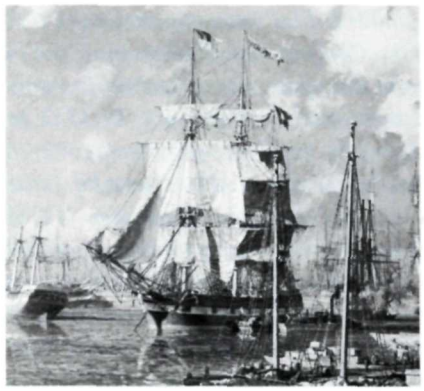
I worked with a hearty will until about five o'clock, when Judge Stamps came down and said that as it was Saturday night I had better stop and "pan out my gold." As soon as he put his hand on the riffles he told me I was losing my gold, as the riffles were packed as solid as rock with black and white sand, and the gold went right over them with the muddy water. I should have stirred up the sand in the riffles every fifteen minutes. However, he soon panned out my gold, and I saw enough to convince me that I had done something during the four hours I had been working—but it was very little. The Judge took it up to the house and weighed it, and lo! I had $5.75 for my four hours' work; and I will give you my word that I felt like a new man.

Just think of it: I had started from home in the lead mines in October 1849 with near four hundred dollars in my pocket, and had been paying out a constant stream of money until it was all gone; and this was the first money I had earned. The sum was not large, but such as it was, it convinced me that the tide had turned and that thenceforward I should be making money instead of spending the hard earnings I had made in the States.

In the next paragraph of his original manuscript, A. G. Henderson tells of being reunited with his mining partner. Then, inexplicably, his narrative ends—and were it not for diligent research on the part of Mary Ethel Flo of the Jackson County, Iowa, Historical Museum, we would know nothing more. Through Mrs. Flo, however, we learn that Henderson returned from California to Wisconsin in March 1851; whether his year in the mines was as fruitful in material wealth as in adventures remains a mystery. In 1853 he moved his family to Dubuque, Iowa. A year later he moved again, this time to Maquoketa, Iowa, which became his home for the next quarter-century. For a time Henderson owned half-interest in a newspaper; during the Civil War he served as a lieutenant in the Union Army; later he was proprietor of a grocery store. Henderson's wife died in the same year that he wrote the above account—1879—and at about the same time that Henderson himself fades from our grasp.

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 and WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY. Annual dues are: Regular Member $16.00; Sustaining Member $30.00; Student Member & Emeritus Member $10.00 (includes only the WESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY 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 sixteenth annual conference on the History of Western America will convene at the Denver Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado, on October 13–16, 1976.



The Vicar of Bray: *A Note of Interest*

ONE OF THE PLEASURES of assembling material for THE AMERICAN WEST is that of stumbling over serendipitous bits of western history. In this issue it was learning, as a result of correspondence relating to use of the beautiful John Stobart painting on page 8, that the subject of this picture—the three-masted bark *Vicar of Bray*—still survives. The *Vicar of Bray* was one of some seven hundred vessels bringing Argonauts to San Francisco in the gold rush year of 1849; she ranged the world's oceans for three more decades before being grounded in the Falkland Islands in 1880. Her stout wooden hull, now used as a pier, was recently located there by San Francisco Maritime Museum director Karl Kortum; one day this last survivor of the California Gold Rush may return to San Francisco as a memorial to a colorful bygone maritime era.

QUALITY PRINTS OF "THE VICAR OF BRAY" CAN BE PURCHASED THROUGH JOHN HOWELL BOOKS, SAN FRANCISCO. A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT THE PROJECT TO RETURN THIS GOLD RUSH SHIP TO SAN FRANCISCO.