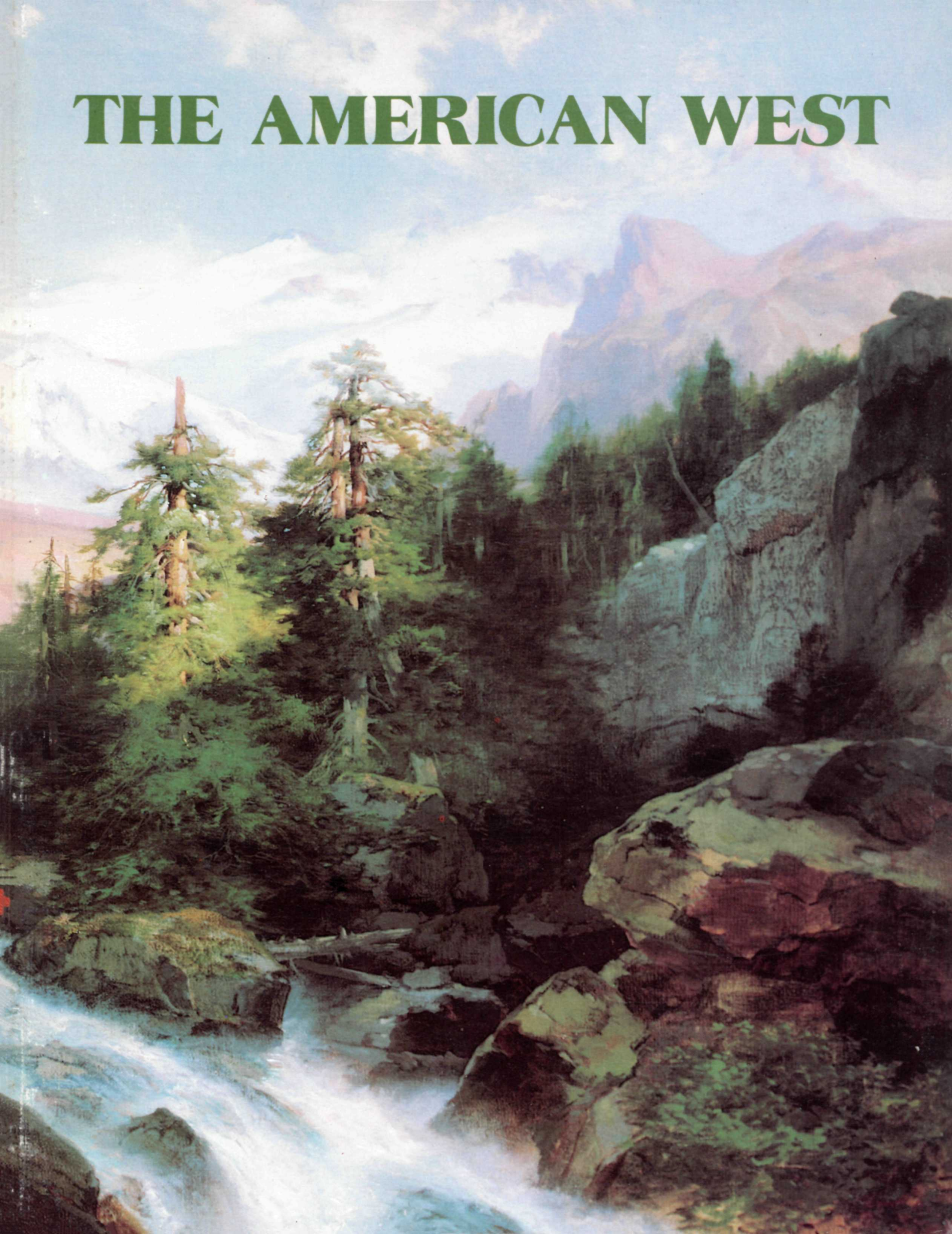
THE AMERICAN WEST



Cover: Western landscape painter Thomas Moran (1837–1926), whose beautiful 1899 work, The Teton Range, Idaho, *is reproduced on our cover, discovered the West as his prime subject in 1871. That year he traveled to the then-mysterious Yellowstone country with F. V. Hayden's surveying expedition; the resulting paintings and drawings, along with the photographs of fellow-expedition-member William Henry Jackson, established both men's reputations and helped induce Congress to preserve the wondrous region as a national park. For the rest of his long, productive life, Moran continually returned to the West, painting at Yosemite, in the Rockies, at the Grand Canyon, in the Tetons. One high-spot came in 1874 when he journeyed to Colorado's remote Mount of the Holy Cross, photographed for the first time by Jackson just the year before. An article on the fabled mount, which details Jackson's and Moran's experiences in rendering it, begins on page 32.*

COVER PAINTING REPRODUCED COURTESY OF KENNEDY GALLERIES, INC., NEW YORK

PHOTOGRAPH FROM COLLECTION OF PATTI MORA ANDERSON

For children growing up in the Sierra at the turn of the century, skiing was more than a sport—it was a necessity. Youngsters learned to use the Norwegian ski (which they called a "snowshoe") almost as soon as they could walk. The photograph above was taken by artist Jo Mora in 1903, during his five-month stay in Gibsonville, California, a small Sierra mining town. Mora—a cowboy, sculptor, illustrator, and painter—was as multi-faceted as the regions he explored. An article on Mora's life and adventures begins on page 16.

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AT SEVENTEEN, beautiful, spirited Jessie Benton, favorite daughter of the formidable Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, defied her father and eloped with a penniless young government surveyor named John Charles Frémont. It was the beginning of an eventful life in which she channeled her impressive talents into her husband's dazzlingly erratic career. In the photograph above, a meditative Jessie Benton Frémont, writing notebook in hand, sits in the doorway of her San Francisco home, Black Point, where she lived just before the Civil War. Roses and fuchsias bloomed in her garden, and from her porch she could see the great bay entrance her husband had named the Golden Gate. Though she hoped to settle at Black Point permanently, it proved a brief period of tranquility before national events again changed her life. For her dramatic story, turn to page 4.

THE AMERICAN WEST
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"I grant I am a woman but . . .
think you I am no stronger than my sex,
being so father'd and so husbanded?"

PORTIA'S LINES FROM SHAKESPEARE'S "JULIUS CAESAR," QUOTED BY JESSIE BENTON FREMONT

The Life of Jessie Benton Frémont

ONE MORNING in the late fall of 1841, a young couple warily entered the book-lined study of Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. They were an extraordinarily attractive pair: the young woman, in the bloom of youth, with dark, lustrous hair swept back from a lovely oval face, and the man, though not tall, lean and hard of body, with an aquiline nose and intense, deep-set eyes.

The senator looked up from his work, frowning to see his favorite daughter with the man he had hoped she would forget. Family legend recalls the scene:

The young couple hesitated. It had taken weeks, and the promptings of friends, for John Charles Frémont and Jessie Anne Benton to gather their courage and face her father. Now they stood before him, tense with their news.

Finally John Charles spoke, blurting it out without preliminaries. He and Jessie were married!

Senator Benton's reaction was immediate. He rose from his chair, his eyes flashing. Towering over the young army surveyor, he roared, "Get out of my house and never cross my door again! Jessie shall stay here."

But Senator Benton's passionate seventeen-year-old daughter had committed herself. Taking her husband's hand and looking into his eyes, she repeated the words of Ruth: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, . . ."

As he listened to his beloved daughter, so like him in spirit, Thomas Benton suddenly knew that he must accept her choice or lose her forever. Gruffly he spoke again to Frémont. "Go collect your belongings and return at once to the house," he said. "I will prepare Mrs. Benton."

JESSIE ANNE BENTON had long been her father's favorite. "We were a succession of girls at first, the boys coming last," she recalled of her childhood, "and my father gave me early the place a son would have had. He made me a companion and friend from the time almost that I could begin to understand."

During Jessie's childhood, Thomas Hart Benton was the Senate's most influential spokesman for Jacksonian democracy. An erudite and dramatic speaker, the very essence of a statesman with his large, strong body and majestic features, he reveled in his role as a representative of the frontier West. "Nobody opposes Benton but a few black-jack prairie lawyers; these are the only opponents of Benton," he would thunder. "Benton and the people, Benton and Democracy are one and the same, sir; synonymous terms, sir; synonymous terms, sir."

By the time she was five, Jessie was accompanying her father to the White House, where they would find President Andrew Jackson—careworn, suffering painfully from rheumatism and old bullet wounds—seated in a big rocking chair drawn close to the fire. Sensing the old man's

by Pamela Herr

Jessie Benton Frémont posed for leading portrait artist Thomas Buchanan Read in 1856, the year she almost became first lady.

COLLECTION OF THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES
COPY PHOTOGRAPH BY J. R. EYERMAN, COURTESY OF TIME-LIFE BOOKS, INC.

For thirty years Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, shown here in an 1850s daguerreotype, spoke forcefully for the frontier West in the Senate.

loneliness, Jessie would try not to fidget as he stroked her brown curls, even when, as the political talk grew intense, he gripped her hair too tightly in his long, bony fingers.

In the Senate Benton roared his support for Jacksonian policies, but at home with his wife and children, his character softened so much that he was known as "the public lion and the private lamb." Even bitter political opponents like John Quincy Adams were disarmed by Benton's obvious affection for his family.

Senator Benton personally supervised his children's education, and precocious Jessie received his special attention. Regularly the senator would escort his lively daughter to the Library of Congress on Capitol Hill, where she spent long hours browsing among the great books and folios while her father attended to his senatorial duties. At home, too, she was given a corner of his study and encouraged to read freely from his fine collection of books in many languages. Long stays in Saint Louis, gateway to the western frontier, further widened her horizons. There her father, ensconced on the shady veranda that encircled their Creole-style home, received a constant stream of visitors from the frontier, for Benton's passionate interest was the West and his dream an America stretching to the Pacific. Young Jessie absorbed his vision as she listened to long mornings of talk with old William Clark about his great journey to Oregon with Meriwether Lewis; and with the buckskin-clad voyageurs and traders, dark-robed priests, and western army officers who could give Benton first-hand

"My father gave me early the place a son would have had.
He made me a companion and friend
from the time almost that I could begin to understand."

information about the vast, unexplored territory that lay between Saint Louis and the Pacific.

In years when the Bentons did not go to Saint Louis, they traveled to the Blue Ridge area of Virginia, where the family of Jessie's genteel and retiring mother, Elizabeth McDowell Benton, had lived for generations, and where Jessie herself had been born in 1824. There she loved best to go rabbit or quail hunting with her father, trotting behind holding the game bag as they roamed the country fields. Stopping at noon under a shady tree, he would read to her from a French edition of the *Odyssey* or the *Arabian Nights* as they lunched on biscuits and apples.

During these idyllic childhood years, Jessie received a broad and generous education—rich in sights and sounds and experiences, in political as well as scholarly talk, in classical literature, history, and languages. It was unusual training for a woman in nineteenth-century America.

By fourteen she was a radiant creature, witty, vibrant, with "a wild strawberry flavor" all her own, as one Washington politician later recalled. But several early marriage proposals alarmed her parents, and she was precipitously placed in an elite Georgetown boarding school. But large-minded, free-spirited Jessie felt suffocated in the cloyingly feminine, socially pretentious atmosphere. One day in an act of desperate protest, she cut off her glorious long brown hair. Rushing to her father, she begged him to remove her from the hated school and let her stay at home and study with him.

She had gone too far. Horrified by her jagged mop of hair, Senator Benton let her down. "Then," Jessie recalled many years later, "I learned that men liked their womankind to be pretty, and not of the short-haired variety."

DURING THE PERIOD when Jessie Benton's ardent spirits were somewhat precariously contained behind the walls of a Georgetown boarding school, a handsome, somewhat mysterious young Southerner, the illegitimate son of an itinerant French teacher, arrived in Washington to await an appointment with the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. John Charles Frémont, who had already tramped through parts of the southern wilderness on two successive government surveys, was soon chosen to assist the brilliant French scientist-explorer Joseph Nicolas Nicollet on an expedition to the region between the northern Mississippi and Missouri rivers. By early 1840, John Charles, with eighteen months of western experience under his belt, was back in Washington and at work under Nicollet's skilled direction on the report and map that would contain the results of their explorations.

Senator Benton, continually interested in westward expansion, was a frequent visitor to the Coast Survey building where the work was in progress. Impressed with the twenty-seven-year-old surveyor who had earned the respect of Nicollet, the hospitable Benton soon invited Lieutenant Frémont to his home. There he was introduced to other men interested in the West and heard Benton's persuasive dreams for the exploration and settlement of the Oregon Country and California.

And sometime during that fateful year, the young lieutenant met the senator's daughter—and found himself so passionately in love that "there was no room for reason." Jessie responded with equal ardor. To her, John Charles was a dashing, romantic, perhaps almost Byronic figure, a man who could carry into action the dreams that were only words in her father's mouth.

But Jessie was very young, and her parents opposed a match with a poor and unknown army surveyor when she could have the pick of all Washington. There were words and warnings and attempts to limit the young couple's contact, but the two persisted, alike ardent and impetuous. In desperation the Benton's contrived (as Jessie later told the story) to have John Charles dispatched on a two-month survey of the Des Moines River region, while she was packed off to attend a relative's weeks-long wedding celebration in Virginia. But Jessie quickly grew restive in the patterned social atmosphere, thick with family ties. When she discovered a kindred spirit in one of her cousins, a young West Point cadet, the two were soon plotting to play a prank on an evening's crush of wedding guests. Exchanging clothes, Jessie put on her cousin's trim cadet uniform while he wore her frilly yellow muslin dress.

"I saw only the proud and lonely man making a new start in life, but for me quite alone."

Mingling boldly among the crowd, the two played their parts so well that they went undetected until an observant uncle spotted the cousin's strong, sunburned wrist protruding from a ruffled sleeve and indignantly ordered the two off to change.

While the psychological implications of this incident would no doubt provide ample grist for a modern Freudian mill, seventeen-year-old Jessie, living in an age when a woman could act only through a man, returned to Washington more determined than ever to wed the young army explorer whose impulsive, imaginative, and ambitious temperament was so like her own.

Soon afterwards, on October 19, 1841, Jessie Anne Benton and John Charles Frémont were secretly married, the ceremony performed by a Catholic priest after several Protestant clergymen had declined to risk the well-known temper of the father of the bride.

While Washington gossiped over the impetuous marriage, Jessie and John Charles, having faced the senator's wrath and in the end secured his blessing, settled blissfully into a comfortable upstairs room overlooking the Benton's walled garden. During this happy time, the two young lovers began a close working relationship that would last a lifetime. Jessie had served an apprenticeship as her father's secretary and assistant, and now she readily took on these duties for her new husband; almost all of Frémont's subsequent correspondence was in her hand.

Some three months after their marriage, Frémont was named to replace his mentor, the elderly and ailing Nicollet, as the leader of an expedition to map the Oregon Trail as far as South Pass in Wyoming Territory—a project that Benton himself had pushed through the Senate. It was the beginning of a formidable alliance between the powerful senator and his ambitious son-in-law—an alliance whose passionate connecting link was Jessie Benton Frémont.

In May 1842, John Charles bid good-by to his young wife, now all the more dear because she was carrying their child. If all went well, he would return in the fall in time for their baby's birth. When they parted, Jessie could not possibly foresee that this and the two succeeding expeditions would take her new husband away from her for five of the next seven years, and that during this time he would be both glorified as a conquering hero and tried for mutiny.

BY LATE OCTOBER John Charles was back in Washington, lithe, tanned, exultant over the success of the expedition. Two weeks later their first child was born, a girl whom they named Elizabeth (Lily) Benton Frémont after Jessie's mother.

For Jessie, the excitement of her husband's return and the birth of their baby soon gave way to concern as John Charles tried to get started on the government report that would describe the expedition to the American public. But "the horseback life, the sleep in the open air" had unfitted him "for the indoor work of writing," Jessie reported. John Charles developed headaches and nosebleeds that "convinced him he must give up trying to write his report." At this point, Jessie explained, "I was let to try, and thus slid into my most happy life work.

"Every morning at nine I took my seat at the writing table and left it at one. Mr. Frémont had his notes all ready and dictated as he moved about the room. . . . So, swiftly, the report of the First Expedition was written. Then followed the proof correcting and this too I mastered; all the queer little signs that must be accurate, and behold! Mr. Frémont's first book was finished."

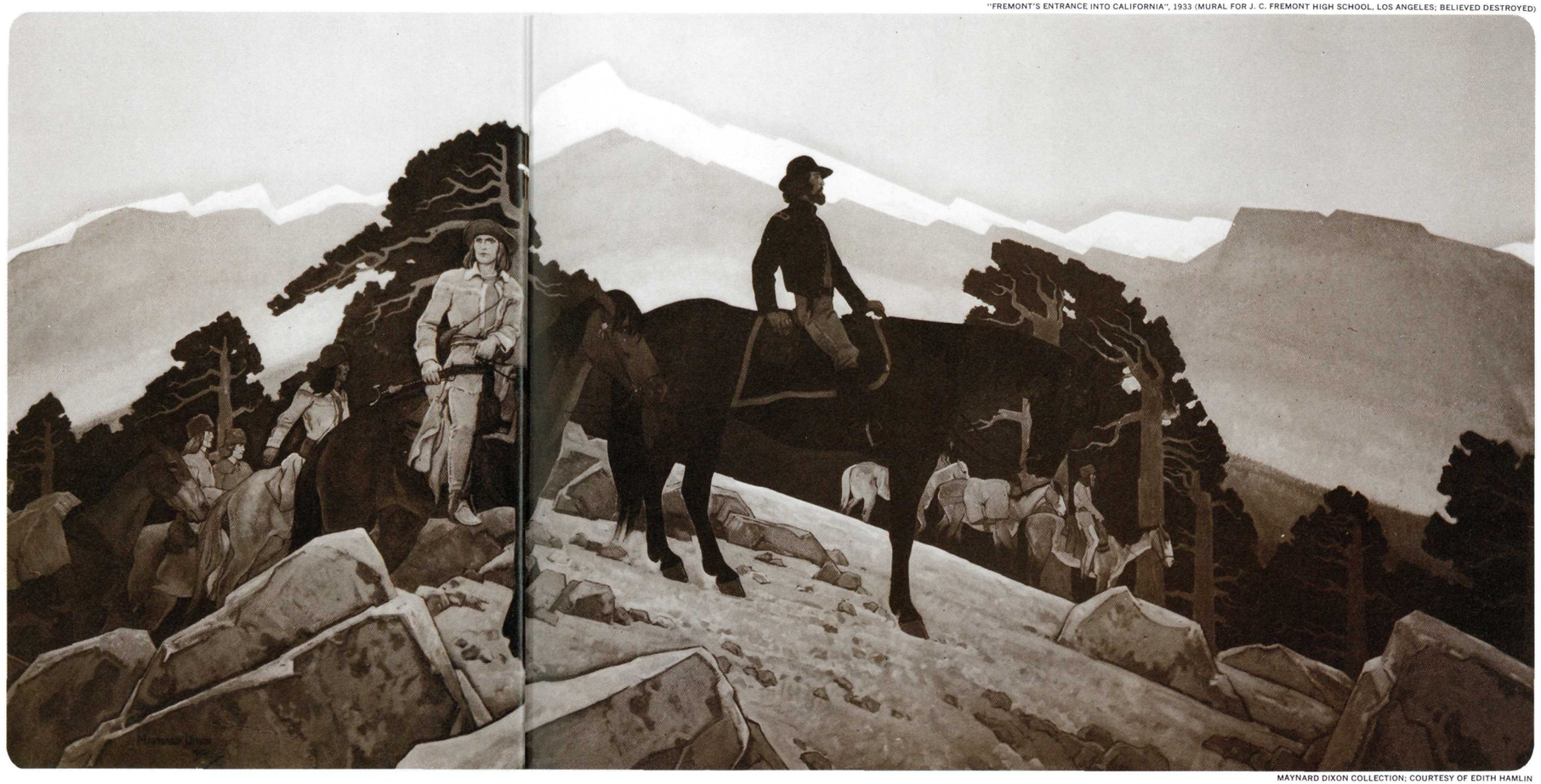
The report was a success. Far from a dry government document, it was an exciting narrative buttressed with solid facts and enlivened with vignettes and vivid descriptions. With it, John Charles—and Jessie—attained their first taste of fame.

How much of the report was Jessie's and how much her husband's is still a debated question. Historian John W. Caughey, for example, finds that Frémont was among "that choice circle of writers who acquire by marriage a very attractive literary style." However, Frémont biographer Ferol Egan concludes that Jessie's role was "no more than that of any good editor with an ear for the cadence and

John Charles Frémont was painted by Charles Loring Elliott in 1857, just after he lost his bid for the presidency.

John Charles Frémont's career reached dazzling heights as he led a series of exploring expeditions westward in the 1840s. In this Maynard Dixon mural, Frémont and his men pause among Sierra Nevada rocks and snow, gazing toward green and golden California. Jessie Frémont was an essential aid to her husband in writing the vivid, detailed government reports that dramatized these journeys, making Frémont a national hero and California the land of everyone's dreams.

"FREMONT'S ENTRANCE INTO CALIFORNIA", 1933 (MURAL FOR J. C. FREMONT HIGH SCHOOL, LOS ANGELES; BELIEVED DESTROYED)



MAYNARD DIXON COLLECTION; COURTESY OF EDITH HAMLIN

sweep of prose that brought to life an epic of exploration." Jessie herself pointedly called the report—admittedly with a hint of Victorian coyness in her words—"Mr. Frémont's book," but she also made very clear that her own drive, enthusiasm, and talent were essential to its completion. Significantly, through it she found her "most happy life work."

Plans were soon under way for a second expedition to continue from the Rocky Mountains northwest to the mouth of the Columbia River. By the spring of 1843, John Charles and Jessie were in Saint Louis, where she would live during his absence. There John Charles collected supplies for his expedition, including one unusual piece of equipment—a large and unwieldy howitzer cannon, which he asserted would be useful in case of Indian attack.

Shortly after Frémont left Saint Louis for Kaw Landing (present-day Kansas City), where the expedition would rendezvous, Jessie opened a letter from his superior, Col. J. J. Abert of the Topographical Corps. Abert questioned the need for a howitzer on a peaceful scientific expedition: "if there is reason to believe the condition of the country will not admit of the safe management of such an expedition . . . you will immediately desist . . . and report to this office," he ordered.

To eighteen-year-old Jessie, Abert's letter seemed to jeopardize the entire mission. What's more, she saw it as an attempt to remove her husband from command. "I felt the whole situation in a flash," she recalled, "and met it—as *I* saw right. I had been too much a part of the whole plan for the expeditions to be put in peril now—and I alone could act. Fortunately my father was off in the state attending to his political affairs. I did what I have always since been glad to remember." Telling no one, she sent a messenger to Frémont, some four hundred miles away, urging him to start west at once. *"Only trust me and Go!"* she wrote.

"I trust and GO!" she reported his reply.

Jessie's version of this incident reveals much about her character. Abert's letter was decidedly less threatening than her alarmed reaction would suggest. He did not mention replacing Frémont with another man, as she remembered, nor did he order Frémont to return unless the expedition was in danger. There is even some reason to suspect that Abert's letter did not reach Saint Louis in time for Jessie to get any message to Frémont before he left Kaw Landing. In thus dramatizing her own part in saving the expedition, Jessie showed herself to be not only a fiercely devoted wife but also an active woman cast in a passive role—a woman who relished the moments when she felt she had played a real part in the masculine world.

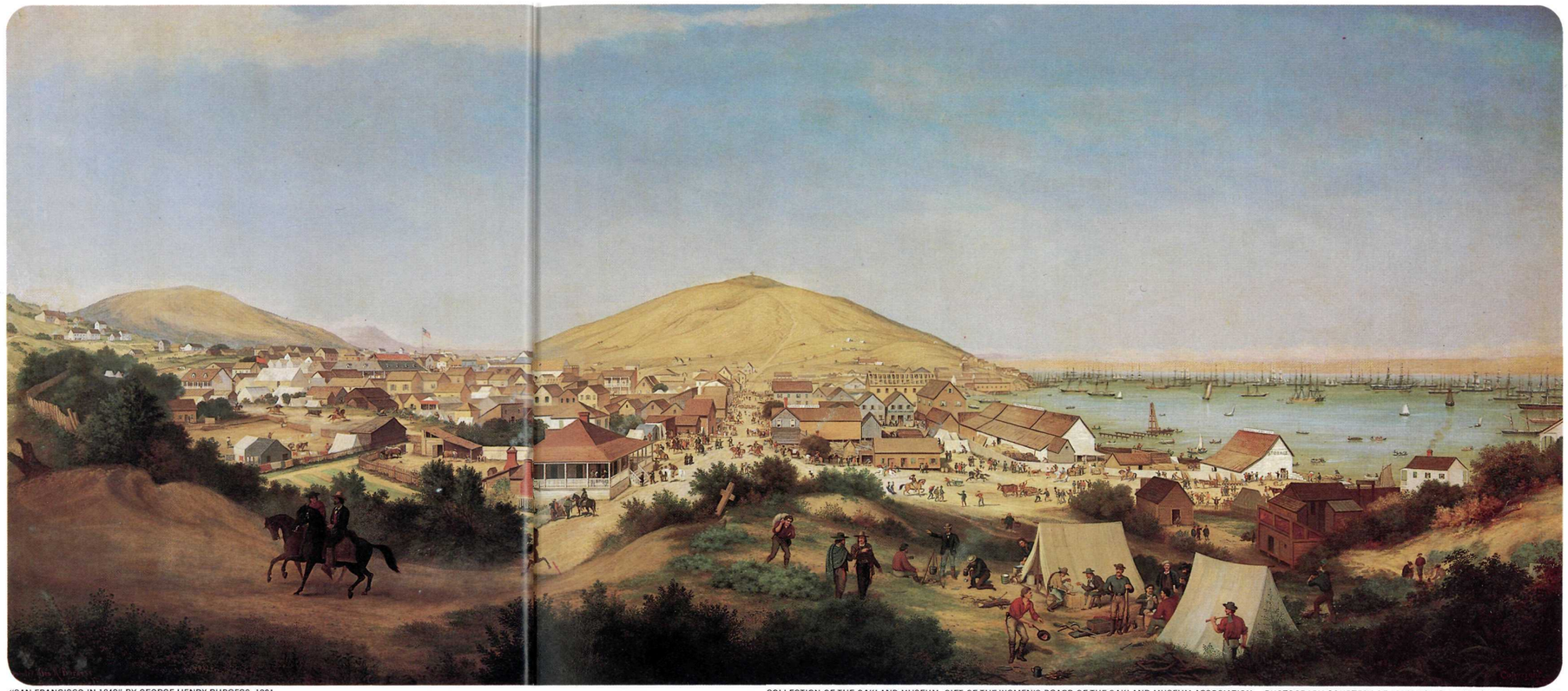
The expedition was gone far longer than anticipated, and as the dreary months passed without word from her husband, Jessie grew frantic. A rumor circulated that the group had perished in the winter snows of the Sierra Nevada, and though this information was kept from Jessie, the unusual solicitude of family and friends convinced her that something was terribly wrong. To calm herself she made a daily ritual of preparing for her husband's return. "I put a strong light every night in my window. Every night I made the little table pretty and put on it the food he would be sure to need."

At last, in August of the second year, "thin, brown, and as hungry as I had foreseen," John Charles returned. Back in Washington, a supremely happy Jessie again helped with the expedition report. It was, she remembered, "a time of work so delightful in itself, so useful, so undiluted by any drawbacks, that it stands in my memory as 'the happy winter.' . . . Nine o'clock always found me at my post, pen in hand, and I put down Mr. Frémont's dictation until one o'clock. . . . At one o'clock punctually the nurse 'Mammy' would come over with the baby and I could stretch my legs while Mammy made the tea and gave us our luncheon. . . . Then after a little play with the baby, Mr. Frémont and I would go off for a long, brisk walk. A slight rain, we did not mind—only a rain storm. It seems now there was never any bad weather."

In engrossing detail the report described the expedition's journey to the rich Oregon Country, but it was the dramatic account of their perilous winter crossing of the snow-covered Sierra Nevada—"rock upon rock . . . snow upon snow"—and their descent into springlike California that captured the public imagination. Printed as a government document of 10,000 copies, it was reissued by private publishers and widely sold. More than any other publication of its period, the report spurred Americans to head west, guided, as one emigrant put it, "only by the light of Frémont's travels." Suddenly John Charles and Jessie were the toast of the restless and energetic young nation.

In 1845, Frémont set out on his fateful third expedition to Oregon and California. More than two years passed before Jessie saw her husband again. During this time Frémont joined Americans who had begun the Bear Flag Revolt, which initiated the American takeover of California, to form the California Battalion under Commodore Robert F. Stockton of the Navy. In the events that followed,

When Jessie Frémont arrived in San Francisco in the summer of 1849, following her husband west to make a new start in life, the city was a rough makeshift place, raging with gold fever. Ships clogged the harbor, and the streets swarmed with adventurers come west to seek their fortunes in the gold fields. George Henry Burgess's painting, San Francisco in 1849, *depicts the scene.*



"SAN FRANCISCO IN 1849" BY GEORGE HENRY BURGESS, 1891 COLLECTION OF THE OAKLAND MUSEUM, GIFT OF THE WOMEN'S BOARD OF THE OAKLAND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JOHN HOWELL-BOOKS, SAN FRANCISCO

Frémont was caught between Stockton and late-arriving General Stephen Watts Kearny of the Army, each of whom carried orders to seize California, once the United States was at war with Mexico, and establish a government there. When Frémont, whom Stockton had named governor before Kearny appeared on the scene, refused to recognize Kearny's authority, the general angrily arrested him and marched him east in disgrace to face a military court-martial.

Jessie had learned of her husband's predicament several months earlier when Kit Carson, Frémont's long-time guide, arrived in Washington carrying letters from her husband for President James Polk. Jessie accompanied the western hero, awkward in a new black broadcloth suit, starched shirt, and silk cravat, to the White House. They were received politely by the president, but when Jessie presented her husband's case, Polk was noncommittal, later writing in his diary: "Mrs. Frémont seemed anxious to elicit from me some expression of approbation of her husband's conduct, but I evaded making any. In truth I consider that Col. Frémont was greatly in the wrong when he refused to obey the orders issued to him by General Kearny."

Frustrated in her attempt to influence the president, Jessie faced the ordeal of the court-martial, aching for her proud, deeply reserved husband. Intense publicity surrounded the Washington, D.C. trial, for to much of the nation Frémont was a conquering hero who had played a central role in the winning of California. Nevertheless, after nearly three months of testimony, the jury found him guilty of mutiny, disobedience, and conduct prejudicial to order and discipline. Hurt and deeply angry, Jessie was convinced that the verdict was the result of jealousy; the West Point officers of the jury resented the spectacular success of a man who was not a regular army officer. President Polk, while approving the verdict, requested that Frémont resume his duties "in consideration of previous distinguished services." But Frémont was not of a nature "to compromise with a wrong," as Jessie put it. He resigned from the army.

During the long and painful trial, Jessie, pregnant with a child that would die soon after its birth, realized for the first time that she could not always control the course of her own life. Beautiful, talented, raised in a home filled with warmth and love, married to a man who had become a national hero, hers had been a singularly privileged existence. But with the court-martial she reached "a new and painful epoch" as she faced the first of the failures that would blight her husband's career. One evening shortly after the trial ended, while Jessie was working with John Charles on the third expedition report, she suddenly collapsed, her nerves shattered. The doctors prescribed complete rest: "I lay on my couch close to a double south window and had air and sunlight," she wrote, "but never again was I to have the joyful work of 'the happy winter.' "

MORE THAN A YEAR LATER, Jessie Frémont, painfully thin, her lungs bruised from constant coughing, stood on the crowded deck of the steamer *Panama* as it entered San Francisco's Golden Gate. In the fog-shrouded harbor, abandoned ships, their crews deserted to the gold fields, swung eerily with the tide. Through the swirling mists she glimpsed tents and a few crude houses huddled at the base of barren, windswept hills.

Jessie had not seen her husband since the previous fall when he had set out on an overland expedition to find an all-weather railway route from Saint Louis through the Rockies to California. They had agreed to meet again in California in early summer to make a fresh start.

Jessie knew that for John Charles the move was essential; he needed to escape the deep humiliation of the court-martial that haunted him in the East. But for her, it was an "uprooting of every fibre" to leave her family and the world she had always known. Well-meaning friends had tried to dissuade her from going, speaking of the very real dangers of the fever-ridden Panama route and the primitive conditions she would find in California. Yet her heart was committed: "I saw only the proud and lonely man making a new start in life, but for me quite alone."

In March 1849, as gold-rush fever seized the nation, Jessie and six-year-old Lily had traveled by steamer to Chagres, Panama; crossed the hot, mountainous, mosquito-infested isthmus by small boat and mule train; and then waited, with thousands of gold-seekers streaming to California, seven long weeks in Panama City for a steamer to take them up the Pacific Coast to San Francisco. In Panama, Jessie, one of the few women among the Americans stranded in that tropical city, had collapsed with fever. Only the constant nursing of a devoted Panamanian family had seen her through.

During her fevered wait, she had received a long-delayed letter from John Charles, written from Kit Carson's home in Taos, New Mexico. In grim detail he told her of the bitter tragedy of his winter expedition in which ten men had died, trapped in the snows of the Rockies.

But now Jessie was in San Francisco at last and wild to see her husband again. Their reunion was a happy one, for John Charles was healthy and vigorous, the shadow of the court-martial gone from his eyes. Jessie learned that by a strange twist of fate they had become rich: gold had been discovered at Las Mariposas, a remote wilderness tract Frémont had acquired in the central Sierra Nevada near Yosemite Valley.

Concerned about her constant cough, John Charles hurried Jessie out of the San Francisco fog to warm, sunny

Continued on page 59

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FORT BOWIE

by Robert M. Utley

THE-MILE-AND-A-HALF HIKE from the parking area to the old western fort is a journey into history. On all sides the landscape evokes the popular image of Apache country—a dry, sun-blasted tangle of rocky slopes and gullies thinly spread with brown grasses and sprouting a profusion of scrubby mesquite, towering agave, yucca, cholla cactus, prickly pear, and spidery ocotillo limbs seasonally flashing their red blossoms. Past the stone foundations of the old Butterfield stage station and corral, the trail leads up a narrow ravine to a grove of cottonwood trees shading strategic Apache Springs, then tops out in a mountain glade cradling the melting mud ruins of old Fort Bowie. Conditioned by motion pictures and television, today's visitor easily imagines Apache warriors lurking behind every ridge.

A century ago such imaginings would have been simply wise precaution, for in truth Apache Pass witnessed important events in the conflict between white pioneers and Apache Indians. Apache Springs afforded reliable water in a parched land and drew Indian and white alike to "that most formidable of gorges," as one traveler put it, through the Chiricahua Mountains of southeastern Arizona. Spaniards clashed with Apaches there in the eighteenth century. Forty-niners, headed for the California diggings, made it a landmark on the principal overland trail across the Southwest. In 1858–61 John Butterfield routed his Saint Louis–San Francisco stagecoaches through the pass and maintained a relay station near the springs.

The Chiricahua Apaches roamed these mountains, supplementing the precarious fare afforded by deer, small game, and desert plants with the plunder of raids into Mexico. As Americans began to penetrate their country in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Chiricahuas gave allegiance to a chief of imposing physique and superior in-

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Opposite: Fort Bowie, Arizona Territory, is shown in 1894, the year of its abandonment. Officers' quarters, barracks, and storehouses edge the parade ground. The large building on the far hill is the hospital. The sutler's store stands at the extreme right, corrals and haystacks at the extreme left. The small stone structure in the foreground is the powder magazine.
Above: Scattered stubs of adobe walls and stone foundations are all that remain of Fort Bowie today, but the wild landscape still evokes the days of Cochise, Geronimo, Crook, and Miles.

tellect—Cochise. At first generally friendly toward Americans, Cochise became their implacable foe when a young army officer wrongly accused him of raiding an American ranch and, following a violent confrontation in Apache Pass, hanged some of his relatives. This "Bascom Affair" of February 1861 set off more than a decade of warfare between Cochise and Arizona's growing white population.

The Civil War led to the founding of Fort Bowie in Apache Pass. Moving to counter the Confederate invasion of New Mexico, the "California Column" marched eastward across southern Arizona in the summer of 1862. In Apache Pass the advance guard ran into trouble: Cochise's warriors, backed by those of the powerful leader Mangas Coloradas, were strongly fortified on the slopes commanding the springs and the old stage road. After hard fighting, artillery was brought up to blast the Indians from their positions. The expedition commander, tough, beady-eyed "General Jimmy" Carleton, had no intention of leaving his long line of communication with California exposed to Apaches at this strategic point. In the stage station, abandoned since war's outbreak, he had his adjutant general pen the order establishing Fort Bowie.

For the next quarter of a century Fort Bowie played a key role in the Apache wars. Garrisoned by California volunteers during the Civil War years, it fulfilled Carleton's hopes in securing the strategic springs in Apache Pass and affording a base for patrols and expeditions against Cochise's marauding warriors. Regulars replaced the volunteers in 1866, but the script remained the same: punishing sweeps through rugged mountains and parched deserts in search of an elusive foe who continued to exact a frightful revenge for the wrongs of 1861.

Continued on page 55

JO MORA

Artist of the Spanish and Indian West

by Ted Taylor

UNDER THE HOT SOUTHWEST SUN, the mustang herd moved along the trail cleared through the *brasada*. Dust hid the head of the column from the three cowboys riding with the herd. Suddenly a braying burro frightened the mustangs, and those in front of the riders bolted forward and into the surrounding *mesquital*.

Jo Mora's pony plunged into the *brasada* in pursuit, sometimes hurling itself broadside into the brush and crow-hopping violently through the thorny tangle. Cut by whipping branches and dazed by a blow on his head, Mora clutched the reins as the wild-eyed horses stampeded just twenty feet away.

Bursting into the open, Mora's pony surged ahead and nearly knocked over some of the leaders. The mustangs behind Mora crowded together, and a companion galloped forward and managed to turn the others at last. As the horses grew calm, more mustangs charged onto the prairie, but other cowboys arrived and helped contain the herd.

JO MORA

The experience was among those encountered by artist Jo Mora some seventy years ago as he traveled throughout the West, preserving his impressions in the tradition of Charles M. Russell and Frederic Remington. Personable, energetic, and witty, Mora observed the people and places of the West, subjects he would later portray with great authenticity and sensitivity in sculptures, paintings, sketches, dioramas, cartoons, and books.

Joseph Jacinto Mora was born in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1876. The artist's father, Domingo Mora, a well-known Catalonian sculptor, had immigrated from Spain to South America, where he had lived among the *gauchos* for eighteen years. He had once visited an Uruguayan battlefield, where he failed to find a single corpse whose throat had not been slit from ear to ear in *gaucho* fashion. Eventually tiring of civil strife in Uruguay, Domingo Mora brought his Alsatian wife and their two young sons to the United States.

While growing up in Boston, Jo and his older brother, Luis, who also became a painter, studied art in their father's studio. Young Jo filled notebooks with sketches of frontiersmen battling Indians and wrote imaginary adventures, which he often illustrated with his own drawings.

The family subsequently moved to Elizabeth, New Jersey, where at age sixteen, Mora began keeping a diary. Many entries reflected his growing fascination with the West. "Billy Lofield," he wrote, "was throwing the lariat we braided. . . . [I] drew [a] picture of an Indian. . . . [We] sat down by old camp, fired revolver, drove shells into tree & cut our initials to remember the day." An entry inside the cover read, "Steal not this book for fear of your life; The owner carries a bowie knife."

After graduating from Pingry Academy in Elizabeth, Mora studied at the Art Students' League and Chase's

This bronze and travertine sarcophagus, a memorial to Father Junípero Serra in California's Carmel Mission, was sculpted by Jo Mora in 1920.

Spanish soldiers, representatives of the men who helped Franciscan missionaries establish the California missions, stand vigil at the base of Jo Mora's Junípero Serra sarcophagus. This is one of four such friezes Mora carved for the memorial.

School in New York and Cowles Art School in Boston.

In 1898, working as a newspaper illustrator, Mora covered one of New England's worst maritime disasters, the sinking of the steamer *Portland*. As the victims' bodies were brought into the lifesaving station, he sketched the scene by lamplight while a reporter wrote the story.

During this period, Mora also drew a popular syndicated *Boston Herald* comic series, "Animaldom," and edited and illustrated children's classics.

In the spring of 1903, the artist "shook the dust of Boston" from his boots and journeyed westward by train. It was not his first trip west, however, for in his book *Trail Dust and Saddle Leather,* published in 1946, Mora stated that he had been in San Antonio, Texas, "right after the Spanish American War" and had ridden "through the Indian territory in the late nineties." He also mentioned having traveled between Mexico City and Texas, and Jo Needham Mora, the artist's son, recalled that his father had once served as a guard on a Mexican railroad train carrying gold. Few other references to this early trip exist, however, and many of the artist's diaries have been destroyed.

Arriving in San Jose, California, Mora visited a boyhood chum, Bob Eaton, and then set out to see and sketch California ranches and missions. He took the train to Gaviota and proceeded to the Donahue Ranch near the present town of Solvang. Nearby, he noted, the crumbling Santa Inés Mission "drowsed in the sunshine, and the Donahue ranch buildings sprawled near the river bottom."

Mora discovered that the California pony suited his compact form. An expert horseman since childhood, the artist rode down gulches at Santa Inés "and up banks that would make an eastern horse forget his personality."

At Donahue's, Mora met angora-chapped *vaqueros* astride center-fire rigs (saddles) cinched on their ponies. Averaging between forty and fifty years of age, these men were among the last of the old-time California cowboys. Fascinated, Mora observed and recorded their rapidly disappearing way of life. They were a subject he would return to repeatedly during his lifetime.

Mora also became acquainted with Father Jack, the Santa Inés mission priest, and visited the dilapidated mission. He noted that the valuables in the vestry had been "thrown around as if worthless. Everything is broken, cobwebbed and profusely splattered with [barn] owl excrement for those birds stay within the mission and without." Later he sat in the shade of an umbrella lashed to a post and painted a picture of the belfry, despite a gusty wind.

A few days afterward, Mora set out to see other missions, wearing "khaki riding breeches, puttees, brass spurs, [and a] grey flannel shirt." He was most impressed with Mission San Juan Capistrano, where he "dreamed awake for awhile" in the twilight. The next morning he visited the geranium-filled garden. Hummingbirds and bees darted about, lizards scurried over rocks and peered from crevices, and twittering swallows skimmed through the air and disappeared into their nests plastered on the adobe walls. "In back," commented Mora, "the old arches still stand. Over the white washed walls are scribbled the names of visitors. I made out some names of artists from New York and felt sorry that anyone with the appreciation for the beautiful should scrawl his name in such a place."

After returning to the Santa Inés region, Mora worked as a cowboy. Then in August of 1903, he left for a five-month stay at Gibsonville, a mining town located near Bret Harte's Roaring Camp between the Yuba and Feather rivers. Arriving at Marysville, Mora and two companions loaded their grips, guns, and a pair of hunting dogs on the early morning stage and "humped out in grand style" with the artist seated beside the driver. Surrounded by freight and mail bags, Mora's friends tried to sleep but "had trouble in keeping from tumbling out." The "roads were scandalously dusty," Mora related. After two changes of horses, the passengers finally completed their seventy-mile ride when the stage rumbled into the five-thousand-foot-high community of La Porte. There they were welcomed by Bob Eaton, Mora's San Jose friend, who drove them the short distance to Gibsonville. Eaton, a mining engineer, also showed Mora the area. He particularly noted the ravages of hydraulicking, a form of placer mining involving pressurized water jets, which was still being used.

Mora's diaries indicate that, though many years had passed since the gold rush, mining activity continued as did many of the old mining pastimes. During his stay in Gibsonville, the artist often played poker at Dad Gould's saloon. Mora and another player once "came very near to mixing it up," but a few days later, they were partners in a whist game. Mora also saw a "big game of stud" at a nearby hotel. "Old Slicky Corbett," he declared, "was dealing. Watched for quite awhile, but I don't fancy his methods." Among Mora's Gibsonville mementos was a deck of marked cards, which, according to his son, had belonged to a gambler who was run out of town.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE CROUCH

Echoes of Old California

Arriving in California from the East in 1903, young Jo Mora began a leisurely horseback tour of many of the state's missions, ranches, and gold towns, where he encountered lingering vestiges of the region's Spanish and mining heritages. In addition to a diary and sketch pad, Mora carried a folding camera, and his surviving negatives provide fascinating glimpses into a now-vanished West. The photographs on the opposite page document roundup and bronc-juggling action on a ranch near Santa Inés. The view below—perhaps the definitive western cardroom scene—was made in Dad Gould's saloon in Gibsonville, an establishment where Mora and another card player once "came very near to mixing it up."

In this plaster cast, Mora captures the motion and excitement of a cowboy riding a bronco. Unfortunately, it can only be enjoyed through a photograph, since the cast was destroyed by Mora when he left home for military service during World War I.

SHORTLY AFTERWARD, Mora again returned to San Jose, and in June 1904, he and a friend from Boston left for Arizona, driving a Studebaker wagon pulled by a pair of mules. Mora strengthened the brake blocks on the new wagon and worked the brakes while his friend handled the reins as the mules traversed the steep, winding Sierra grades.

The travelers spent a sweltering week at Needles, near the California-Arizona border. Mora described it as "a typical desert railroad town full of railroad men, legions of hobos, prospectors, and Mojave Indians. At night," he declared, "[we] generally joined the whole town at the depot to watch the trains come in and see the Indians sell their bead works."

After selling their rig at Needles, Mora and his friend traveled by train, foot, and horseback to the Hopi village at Oraibi, site of a famous snake dance ceremony that Mora was eager to see, sketch, and photograph.

Oraibi, Mora discovered, "was from an artistic standpoint a paradise. Burros to be found all around. Chickens cackled along the streets and house terraces. Dogs everywhere, as adept in climbing the ladders [to the dwellings] as their owners. Naked, potbellied cherubs scampered about. Women trotted along carrying heavy loads of wood and water. Bucks in bright-colored blankets strutted on the housetops. At sunset," he continued, "the bucks would stand like statues on the roofs and seemed to be in a trance."

Everyone congregated at the square on the afternoon of the Snake Dance. Mora recalled that the priests sang for a long time before one began to hand the snakes to the dancers as they moved by. They mouthed the reptiles near the head and held the bodies in their hands.

"Then," commented Mora, "gatherers scattered about to catch the snakes when the dancers let them go. The majority were rattlesnakes and some were good-sized. The priests snatched them by handfuls [and] scattered in different directions on the plains to liberate them."

Excited by the artistic possibilities of the region, Mora settled down at Polacca, midway between Oraibi and Keams Canyon, for an extended stay. Fascinated by the Hopis' "weird picturesque charm," he began a series of pencil, charcoal, pen-and-ink, and watercolor studies. He also attempted to draw all the kachinas he had seen, though he subsequently realized that there were so many characters and designs representing these Hopi ancestral spirits that such an effort could not be completed "even by the best old clan chiefs."

One day while Mora was painting in his studio, the Snake Clan chief, Harry, visited him, "I waved him to a chair," recounted Mora, "pushed the tobacco and cigarette paper bowl within his reach, passed a few conventional *bon mots,* and resumed work. But Harry had something on his mind and eventually came out with it. Where was that book of mine with pictures (very many) of birds?"

"I unbuckled my saddle bags and produced my *Birds of the Western United States.* I handed the book to his eager hands, and heard no more from him till, in seeming despair a half hour later, he sought help.

"From his description, I turned to a page entitled Mearn's Quail. Harry's eyes danced and the long and short of it resulted in my making a detailed drawing in full colors on a Hopi mask Harry developed. We worked out the body markings and the dress accouterments, and a new *kachina* was born, and I had a finger in the pie."

Working periodically as a cowhand, Mora saw much of Arizona Territory during this time. He also visited parts of Utah and Colorado with some Navajo braves, who were competing against the Utes in pony races.

Soon able to speak both the Hopi and Navajo languages, Mora reportedly served as an army interpreter during an incident when a group of Hopis refused to send their children to the government boarding school. His relations with the Indians were enhanced by his friendship with Lorenzo Hubbell, the colorful Navajo trader. The men played cards and hunted together, and after Mora left Arizona in late 1906, they corresponded.

AT MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO the following year, Mora married Grace Needham of San Jose, and they settled on a small ranch near Mountain View, California. During the next decade, Mora completed a number of heroic sculptures and many bronze statuettes, often of the western subjects he had observed during his wanderings. But shortly after he had enlisted in the army during World War I, Mora destroyed the remaining plaster casts. "Had my father not returned," explained son Jo N. Mora, "they might have been sold, and he thought his reputation would be affected had they been broken and improperly mended."

After serving as a horse artillery major at Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky, Mora resumed his art career in 1920. An admirer of Mora's work, Father Ramon Mestres, Car-

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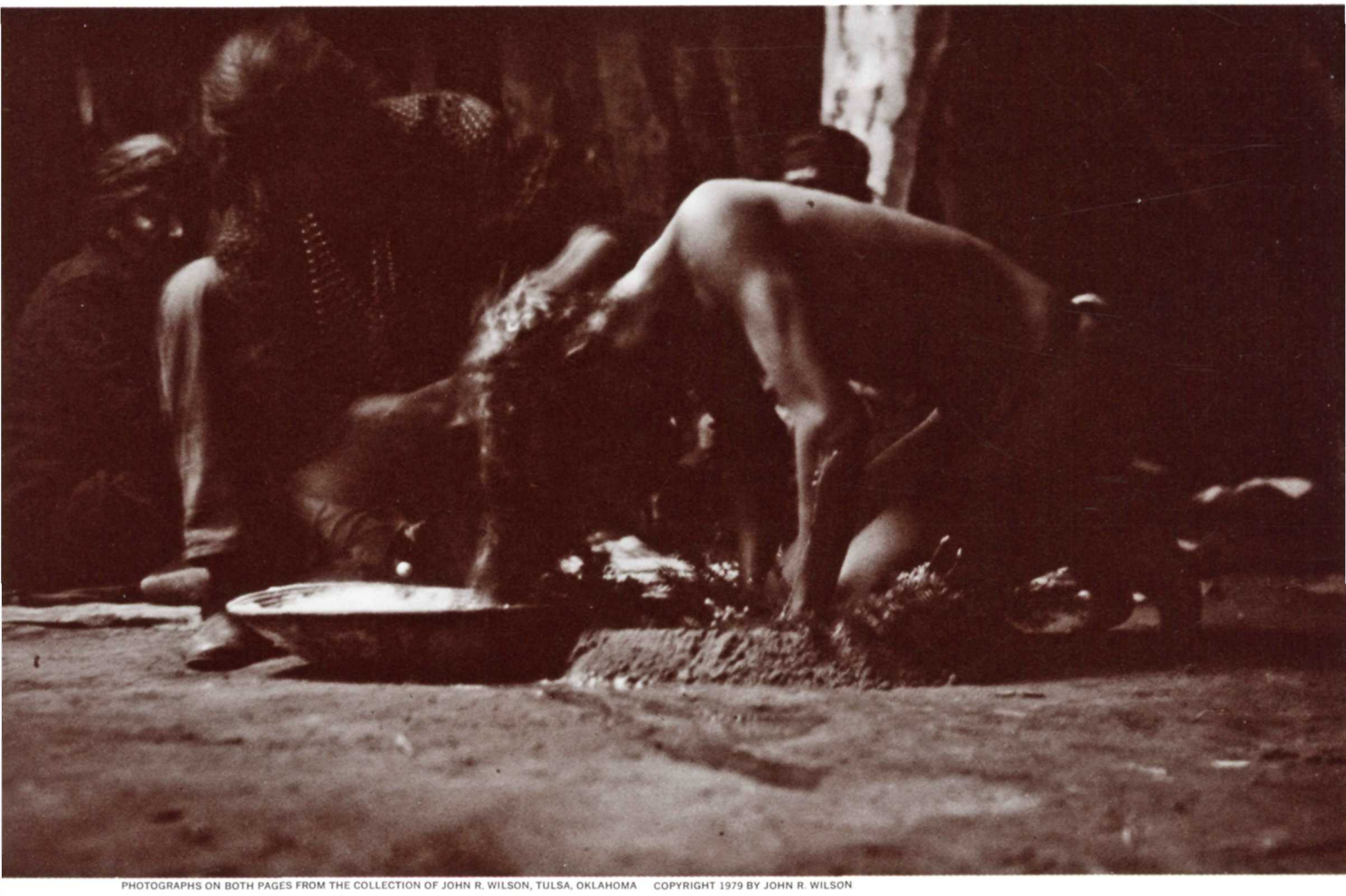
Among the Hopi and Navajo

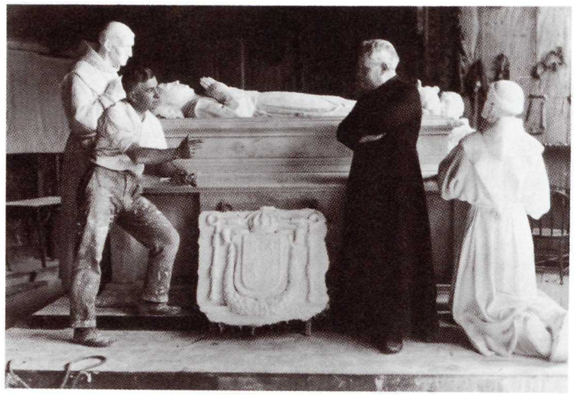
During 1905–06 Jo Mora lived among the Hopi and Navajo Indians of Arizona, sketching and painting portraits of his hosts, learning their languages, and slowly gaining their acceptance. Photographs Mora made of these tribes—including views of ceremonies normally forbidden to outsiders—are among the best in existence. In the picture at near right, a member of the Hopi One-Horned Society visits homes in his village, asking for cornmeal for use during the Wuwuchim ceremony. On the opposite page, Hopis perform the Palkik Mana dance, one of the most beautiful of their ceremonies in costume and tablita. Mora made the photograph below inside a Navajo hogan during a curing ceremony; the kneeling Indian's hair is being washed with yucca soap.

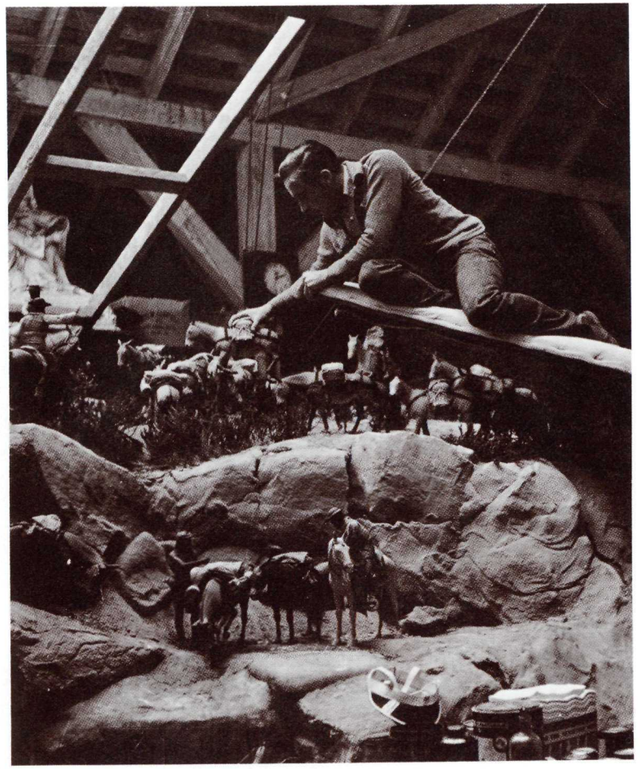


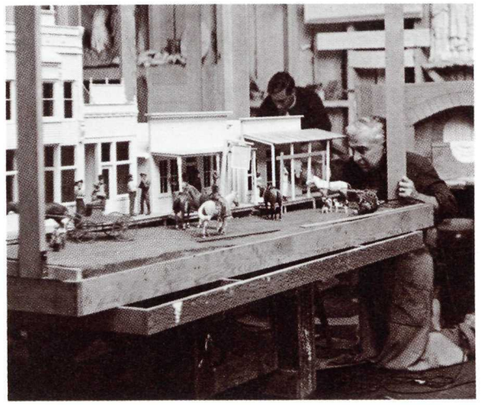
The exhibition "Year of the Hopi"—including Indian photographs by Jo Mora—will soon be circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in cooperation with John R. Wilson.

Jo Mora, Sculptor and Artist

As versatile as he was talented, Jo Mora expressed his art through a surprising variety of mediums, as illustrated in the examples on the following four pages. In the photograph below, Mora and Father Ramon Mestres discuss progress on the plaster model for his Junípero Serra sarcophagus. The Navajo figure at right, like a number of other preliminary castings for bronzes, was destroyed by Mora during World War I.

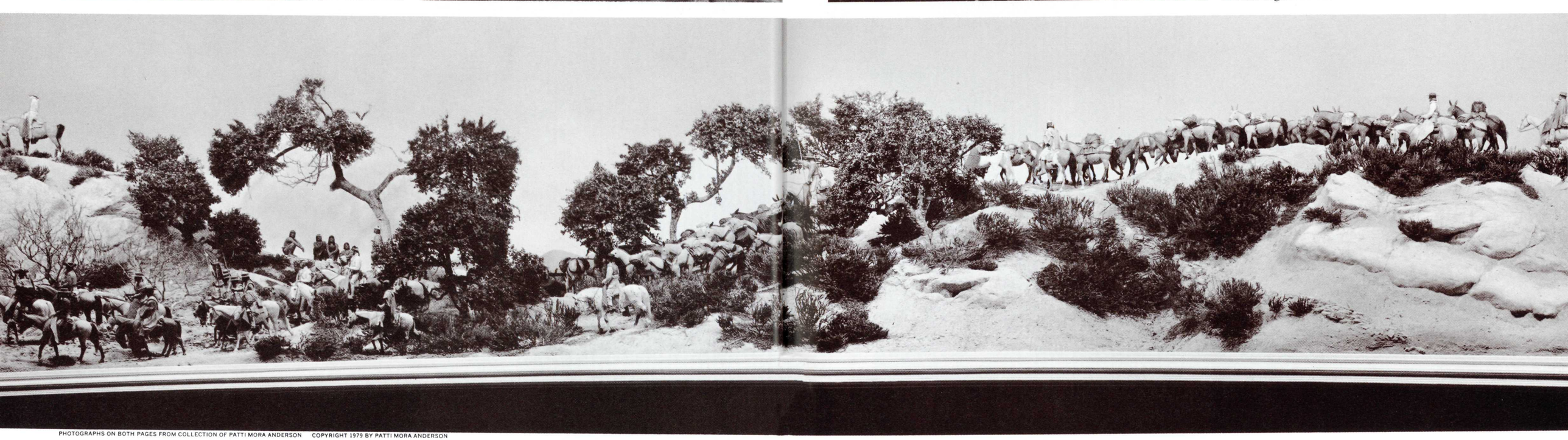




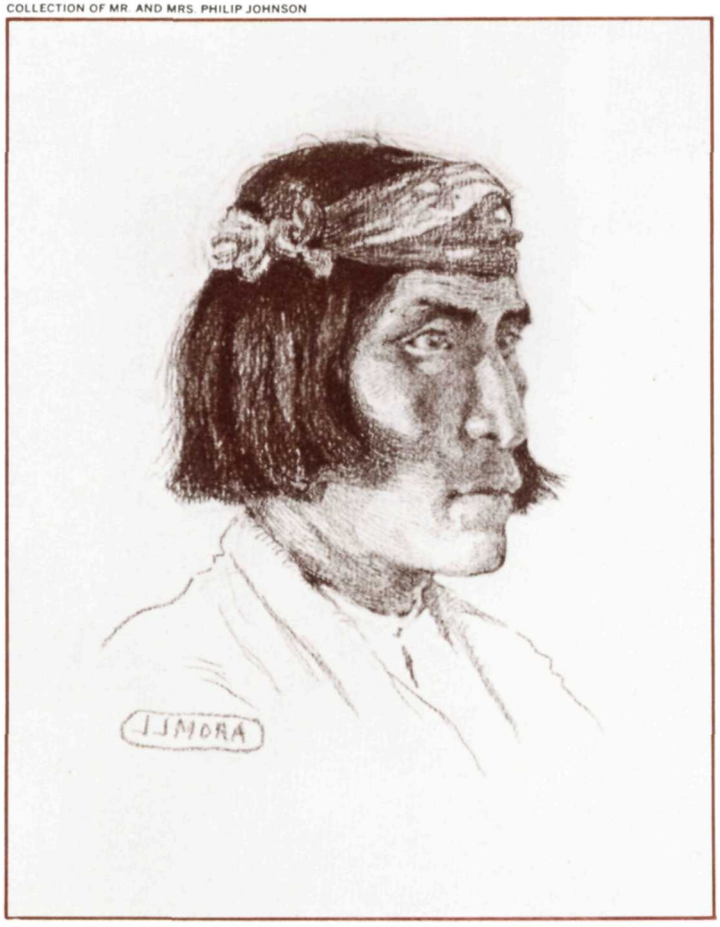


Art of the Diorama

A master in the art of the diorama, Jo Mora created several major museum displays. His crowning achievement in this field was an elaborate re-creation of the Gaspar de Portolá expedition for the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939-40. (The photograph below shows just one segment of the 100-foot-long panorama.) A favorite with visitors to Treasure Island, the exhibit was destroyed by fire in August 1940.



COLLECTION OF MR. AND MRS. PHILIP JOHNSON



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TED TAYLOR

Faces from the Old West

PHOTOGRAPH FROM COLLECTION OF PATTI MORA ANDERSON

COLLECTION OF THE WOOLAROC MUSEUM, BARTLESVILLE, OKLAHOMA

PHOTOGRAPH FROM COLLECTION OF PATTI MORA ANDERSON COPYRIGHT 1979 BY PATTI MORA ANDERSON

Additional examples of Mora's art include two portraits made during his sojourn among the Indians of Arizona (upper left and below); a heroic bronze entitled *The Cowboy* (left), two more might-have-been bronzes (lower left and right); and a series of precast heads for the Monterey County, California, courthouse (above).

COURTESY OF THE HUNTER GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO

The vaqueros, *old-time California cowboys, were a frequent subject of Mora's art. This spirited line drawing is typical of the many fine illustrations Mora rendered with pen and ink for such books as his* Trail Dust and Saddle Leather *and* Californios.

mel parish priest, soon commissioned him to sculpt the Junípero Serra sarcophagus, honoring the founder of the California mission system.

In a studio built on the mission grounds, Mora labored for two years on the bronze and travertine memorial, which he called "the supreme professional effort of my life." The sarcophagus, with Serra in repose, is surrounded by three kneeling *padre* figures: Juan Crespí, Serra's devoted friend is in front; at the corners are Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, who completed the mission chain, and Julian López, a relatively unknown priest. Although the sarcophagus was intended for the padres' burial site in the sanctuary, the size of the completed memorial made it more suitable for the mission reception room, where the work can be seen today along with the altar and cross Mora constructed.

After finishing the project, Mora moved to a new studio and home overlooking Carmel Bay and Point Lobos. His Pebble Beach location was ideal for raising horses, and he and his children, Jo and Patti, often rode the surrounding trails.

From 1936 to 1937, Mora completed the sculptures on the Monterey County Courthouse in Salinas. Using the county's history as his theme, Mora carved the courtyard monument, the reliefs above the main entranceways, and the heroic heads on the exterior of the building. The sixty-one precast concrete heads represent twenty-three different subjects including Indians, Spanish explorers, Mexican ranchers, Yankee traders, American pioneers, and twentieth-century inhabitants.

Authentic dioramas resulted from Mora's concern for detail. Visitors to the 1939 Golden Gate International Exhibition in San Francisco marveled at his hundred-foot portrayal of the Gaspar de Portolá–Junípero Serra expedition, which established the first Spanish settlements in Upper California. Scaled two inches to the foot, the 268 figures had a total of 3,192 assembled parts. Valued at $40,000, the project was completely destroyed in an exhibition hall fire.

Mora's other works include dioramas at the Will Rogers Memorial in Claremore, Oklahoma, and Sutter's Fort State Historic Park in Sacramento, California; Indian portraits at the Valley National Bank in Phoenix, Arizona; the design for a half dollar commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of California statehood; a collection of popular maps and posters; the Miguel de Cervantes statue in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park; the Bret Harte Memorial at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco; the heroic pediment for the San Francisco Stock Exchange; heroic pediment groups for the Don Lee Building in San Francisco and the Pacific Mutual Building in Los Angeles; the Doughboy Monument in San Rafael, California; architectural sculpture for the post office and courthouse in Portland, Oregon; sculptured panels on the facade of the auditorium in King City, California; the plaque commemorating the Rainbow Natural Bridge in southern Utah; and a number of murals.

The historic Casa Serrano in Monterey, California, contains a representative collection of Mora's work: pen and ink drawings, watercolors, a large oil painting entitled *The Moccasin Maker,* and a marble bust of a Navajo maiden. Owned and operated by the Monterey History and Art Association, the building is open to the public free of charge on weekend afternoons. The association has also acquired a half life-size diorama of a *Californio* wedding party, which is on loan to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

A tireless craftsman, Mora believed that students should not remain in art school too long because the teacher would "attempt to impose his personality." He felt that there "is a certain spark to express originality which only a born artist has. An artist," he added, "does not have to starve if he is any good. There's always room for the best."

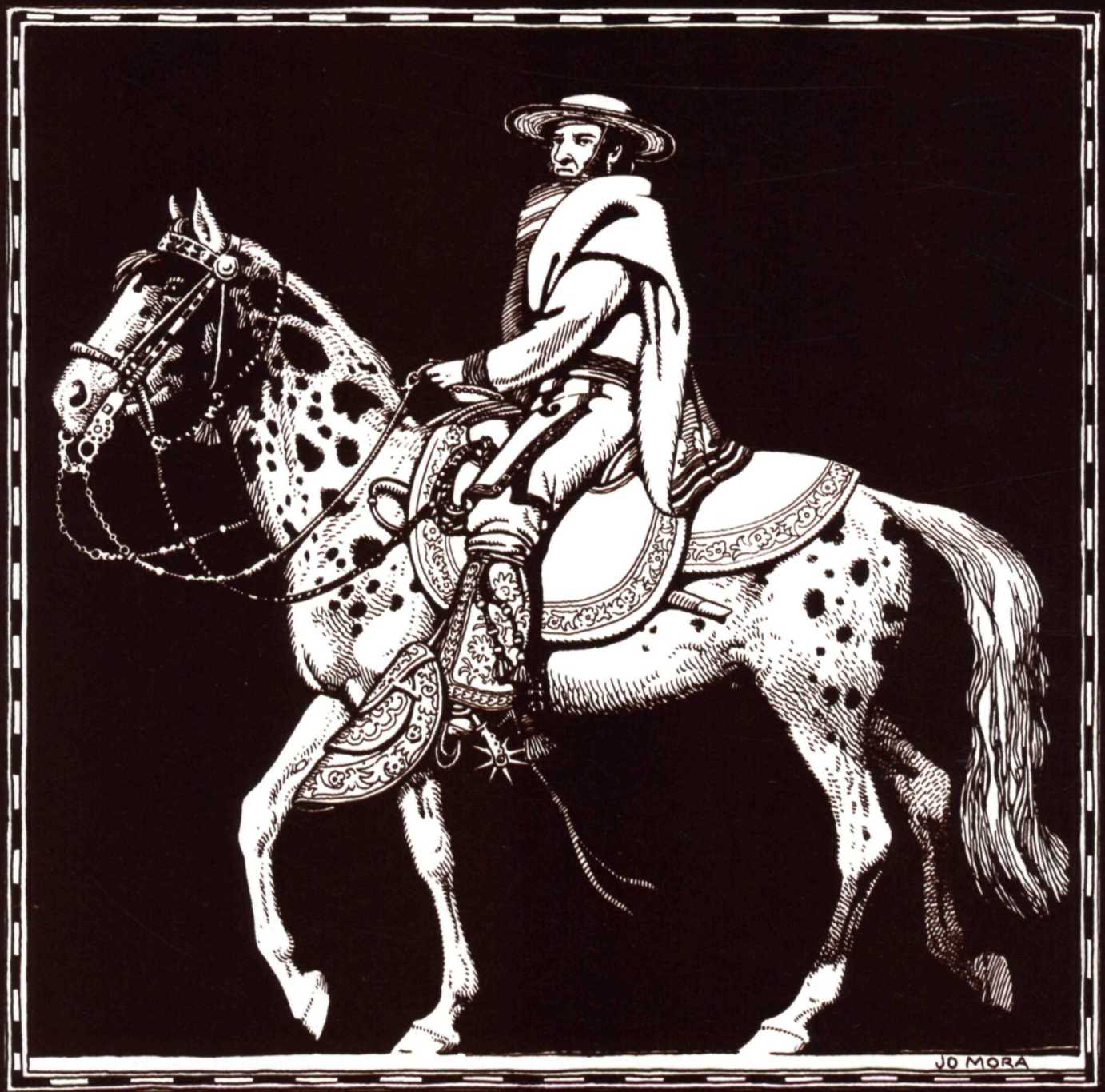
Mora periodically returned to the scenes of his earlier western travels, and he enjoyed hunting big game in Canada and Alaska. He also studied the *gauchos* while visiting South America during a round-the-world cruise.

Toward the end of his career, Mora wrote and illustrated *Trail Dust and Saddle Leather* and *Californios.* These books were praised for their pen-and-ink drawings and their wealth of cowboy lore. At the time of the artist's death in 1947, he was working on a manuscript about the *gauchos.*

"When old Gabriel reaches for his tooter," Mora concluded in *Californios,* "to give the clarion call for that final revue, *vaqueros* and cowboys from all the Americas will be there, slicked up on their top cutting ponies. I'll bet my last two bits the old Alta California *vaqueros* will not be relegated as tail riders to that thrilling cavalcade."

And right beside them on the hurricane deck of a sweet-mouthed pony will be—Joseph Jacinto Mora. **AW**

Ted M. Taylor *is a writer, Monterey Peninsula College journalism instructor, and president of Spyglass Productions, a firm specializing in media presentations.*


JO MORA

THE QUEST FOR THE MOUNT OF THE HOLY CROSS

by Mathias S. Fisch

GREAT MOUNTAINS manifest a majesty that stirs the soul. To view them is not simply to see them but also to feel them. Imagine then the appeal of a mountain upon whose side is etched a colossal cross of snow.

That such a mountain existed somewhere in the vast wilderness of Colorado Territory had been rumored from the time that mountain men first began to roam the region. Was it a reality? Or did it exist only in the overblown imaginations of trappers and prospectors? Hollows and crevices of never-melting snows afford a rich field from which creative minds can fashion a variety of objects.

A letter written in 1869 by William H. Brewer to his wife contains the first known confirmation of the mountain's existence. Brewer and his companions had climbed to the summit of Grays Peak in Colorado's Front Range and from there saw, "some forty miles away," a mountain with a "cross of pure snow, a mile high, suspended against its side."

So the mountain did exist. But exactly where in that great range was the one bearing the pristine cross? And if it could be seen across great distances, would it not be possible to map the exact location?

Dr. Ferdinand Vendeveer Hayden, director of the 1873 Survey of Colorado Territory, was determined to answer these as well as many other questions. Hayden, whom the Sioux had named the "Man Who Picks Up Stones Running," was a remarkable individual. He had begun work at sixteen as a teacher in a one-room country schoolhouse, then gone on to medical school, where he also became interested in geology. In the following years he participated in surveys of the Great Plains region, interrupting his work to serve as a surgeon in the Union Army during the Civil War. After the war he became a professor of geology at the University of Pennsylvania, but his heart remained in the field. Rock hammer in hand, he continued to explore the West, and early in 1873 secured a $75,000 appropriation from Congress for his Survey of Colorado Territory.

Official photographer for the survey was thirty-year-old William Henry Jackson. Hayden was well aware of the value of pictures to confirm what might otherwise be dismissed as "tall tales." And he knew their potential for bringing attention to lengthy reports that were frequently filed away with only cursory reading. Jackson had joined the Hayden Survey in 1870, and his pictures had already brought to the American public the wonders of the Yellowstone and the grandeur of the Tetons.

Jackson himself had dual reasons for wanting to locate the mountain already famous enough in legend to have been named Mount of the Holy Cross. One reason was, of course, professional. The other was personal: he had promised his fiancée, Emilie Painter, that he would find and be the first to photograph the mystical mountain. Later, as he stood on various summits of the Rockies and viewed Colorado's heartland, a vast sea of mountain ranges and peaks, he would question the possibility of keeping this pledge.

On May 14, 1873, Jackson arrived at the survey camp headquarters, located a few miles from Denver at the junction of Clear Creek and the Platte River. He was to be in complete charge of the photographic division, which would work independently from the rest of the expedition. In addition to two veteran trail packers, Tom Cooper and Bill Whan, the group included naturalist Lt. W. L. Carpenter, botanist John Merle Coulter, and cook John Raymond (better known as Potato John because he had once tried to boil potatoes at an elevation of 12,000 feet).

In 1874, a year after William Henry Jackson first photographed Colorado's remote Mount of the Holy Cross, artist Thomas Moran visited the scene. This painting is one of several he did of the peak during his lifetime.

Jackson immediately began preparations for his work. Six pack mules were provided in addition to saddle animals. Four of the mules carried supplies while two others toted the photographic equipment. Jackson's two cameras were packed in specially built cases of sole leather, while chemicals, glass plates, and a tent lined with orange calico that served as a darkroom were all positioned on the other aparejo. The tripod was lashed in place along with rubber bags of water for plate washing.

Perhaps it cannot correctly be said that Jackson "took" a photograph; rather he "made" one. Jackson himself has described the complicated process: "While I was setting up the camera and making the final focal adjustments, the assistant arranged the dark tent, being careful to make it light-tight all around its contact with the ground, and place inside the bath-holder and the bottles of collodion, developer and fixing solution, with a cup of water from the rubber water-bags that are always attached to the pack for use when a natural source of supply is not at hand. With everything ready, I took one of the plates inside the tent and proceeded first, to flow it with collodion, which, when 'set' was immersed in the silver bath until the proper chemical reaction had taken place, when it was placed in the plate-holder ready for exposure—an operation that usually took five minutes. In some instances the camera was placed so far from any possible location for the dark-tent that there was a long interval between the coating and the development of the plate. Wet blotting paper against the back of the plate with a wet towel and the focusing cloth around the holder would keep the plate sufficiently moist for development for half an hour at least. With the exposure made and back to the tent, the plate was flooded with the developer by a dexterous sweep, the image appearing almost immediately. It was then well rinsed and 'fixed' with the cyanide solution equally quick in action, and finally was taken outside for more thorough washing. After drying spontaneously, or by artificial heat, the plate was put in a grooved box and when back in camp was varnished and packed securely for further transportation."

The actual printing was not usually done in the field. The fragile glass plates were dispatched to headquarters in Washington as soon as possible, a risky process, as one slip by a pack mule could result in weeks of retracing the route to replace the broken plates with new exposures.

Jackson's orders were to work east of the Continental Divide: from Longs Peak down the Snowy Range, south to the Pikes Peak area, then back across to South Park where he would join Hayden at the little mining town of Fairplay. To gather the necessary topographical information, Jackson's group climbed all the taller peaks, lugging their cumbersome equipment to each summit to make photographs. These exposures would not only be used by survey mapmakers but would also serve to show the American public some of the vastness and beauty of the area.

Wherever possible Jackson sought information about the mountain with the snow cross. The replies were always the same. No one had personally seen the mountain, but everyone had heard of it. Not until he reached Central City did Jackson receive anything concrete: a Scottish portrait photographer had talked to a miner from Fairplay who had actually seen the cross from a spot on Tennessee Pass. Jackson was elated: Fairplay was the site of the Hayden rendezvous.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC DIVISION rejoined Hayden on July 14, exactly on schedule. Their orders were to explore the headwaters of the Arkansas, cross the Sawatch Range, and proceed to the Elk Mountain region, the very area most likely to contain the elusive snowy cross mountain.

On August 19 the party crossed the Continental Divide at Tennessee Pass and moved down the Eagle River. Four days later they managed to work their way up a westward-branching canyon known as Roches Moutonnée (now called Cross Creek), named for some immense rounded rocks, produced by glacial action, which were said to resemble sheep. These littered the bog-bottomed canyon, which was additionally barricaded by fallen logs and brush.

Directly ahead rose a mountain which, if their present assumptions were correct, was the one they had been searching for so intently. Snow was visible around its shoulders but certainly not in the shape of a cross. To the left, however, was a notched-top mountain that could be obscuring the configuration.

The next morning Hayden and his group began their ascent of the mountain thought to be Holy Cross, while Jackson and his companions began climbing the peak beside it. The terrain was too slippery to pack the photographic equipment by mule, and it had to be lugged on their own backs. Once the men reached timberline the climbing became easier, and Jackson, eagerly in pursuit of the cross, climbed ahead. But, according to his son Clarence, when he reached the summit, he found it shrouded in clouds, reducing visibility to but a few feet. Chilled and wrapped in disappointment, he sat and waited for the others.

Suddenly there was a flash of lightning and a roll of thunder. The clouds billowed and slowly separated, revealing for a few moments the peak across the gulch. There, in all its magnificence, was the snowy cross. As swiftly as they had parted, the clouds rolled together. There would be no filming that day.

When the group reached the apex of Notch Mountain the next morning, Jackson set about securing water for preparing and developing his plates, while the others unpacked the photographic equipment. Only as Jackson began erecting his camera did the others look across the canyon. Then, seeing the cross for the first time, they stood transfixed.

There on the summit of Notch Mountain, on Sunday

Photographer William Henry Jackson spent much of the summer of 1873 searching for the fabled Mount of the Holy Cross. At last, on August 22, he and his party made their way up an adjoining mountain, and Jackson glimpsed the elusive peak for the first time. The next morning he set up his cumbersome camera and exposed eight glass plates, including one that made the now-famous photograph below.

WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON COLLECTION, COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Though its perfections vary according to the time of year and the amount of snowfall, the famous cross is still visible today.

morning August 24, 1873, Jackson sensitized, exposed, developed, and rinsed eight plates—one eleven-by-fourteen-inch and seven five-by-eight inch. One of these was destined to become his most renowned photograph.

The upright couloir of the titanic cross stretched approximately 1,500 feet. Some 500 feet below its top, the arms intersected, each slightly lifted and extending almost 750 feet on either side. The vertical fissure was formed along an outcrop of yellowish schist, which being much less resistant than the gneiss on either side, weathered out into a cleft varying from 50 to 80 feet, being greatest just below the crossarms. The arms were formed by an outward sloping bench on the mountain's face. The pyramid-shaped mountain itself soared to a height of 14,005 feet with its northeastern cross-faced side of granite dropping some 3,000 feet from the summit to the amphitheater, fountainhead of Cross Creek. To the right of the cross was a snow mass later said to represent the Madonna raising her hands in supplication toward the cross. Near the foot and to left was a body of water that became known as the "Bowl of Tears."

In the following years, Jackson revisited Notch Mountain on at least four different occasions. Each time he brought newer and more sophisticated equipment, yet no other pictures surpassed his initial photographs of the great cross. On the twentieth anniversary of his first climb his seventeen-year-old son, Clarence S. Jackson, accompanied him. Several weeks later, as young Jackson was working on the roof of his father's Denver studio, he noticed clouds forming in much the same fashion as they must have done when his father first caught a glimpse of the snowy cross. Grabbing a camera he took a picture that he later superimposed on his father's first photograph. This composite picture of the cloud-framed cross has an appeal denied the barren talus-strewn original.

THOMAS MORAN WAS ANOTHER who contributed to the fame of Mount of the Holy Cross. In 1870 a group of Montana men had organized an unofficial expedition to investigate the stories of mud volcanoes, spouting geysers, and other wonders to be found around the headwaters of the Yellowstone. Nathaniel P. Langford, a member of that group, reported their findings in *Scribner's Monthly,* and Moran was commissioned to prepare the wood engravings to illustrate these articles. While many of *Scribner's* readers raged that what Langford had reported was more fiction than fact, Moran was fascinated by the possibilities and determined to see these "wonderlands" for himself. Hayden, also intrigued, selected Yellowstone for his 1871 survey. Moran sought permission to accompany him by offering to pay his own way, partly on borrowed funds, asking "only to take advantage of the cavalry escort for protection." Hayden, recognizing that paintings would be a great asset to the project, accepted with alacrity.

Moran proved well able to adjust to the rigors of outdoor life, distinguishing himself as a trooper, fisherman, and even occasionally as cook. In addition, Moran and Jackson meshed well, both in the field and in their accomplishments. To Jackson's spectacular photographs he added the dimensions of brilliant color and delicate contrast. Their works aided Hayden in his efforts to establish Yellowstone as the nation's first national park. And Yellowstone established both Jackson and Moran's reputations.

While Jackson was photographing Mount of the Holy Cross in the summer of 1873, Moran was sketching the Grand Canyon of the Colorado with Major John Wesley Powell. Later that same year he was commissioned to illustrate an article on the Rocky Mountains for *Picturesque America.* Regretting that he had not accompanied the Hayden Survey that summer, he had to rely on Jackson's photographs. His thirteen sketches included, along with such views as Longs Peak and Pikes Peak, the Mount of the Holy Cross. This unusual landmark fascinated Moran so much that he was determined to see it for himself and to paint a picture the equal of his *Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone* and *Chasm of the Colorado.* Hayden, welcoming the publicity that such a painting would bring to his survey, authorized a second expedition to the famous mountain.

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DAVID MUENCH

PORTRAIT FOR A WESTERN ALBUM

by John I. White

FIVE-FOOT four-inch Will Croft Barnes had completed a hitch in the Signal Corps and been ranching in Arizona for two years when he was photographed among the sagebrush and fake rocks of a Prescott studio in 1885. A Medal of Honor winner for bravery while soldiering, he had already begun a lifelong career as a writer. Ahead was success as a cattle breeder concurrent with membership in two territorial legislatures, then twenty-one years with the U.S. Forest Service.

Born in San Francisco in 1858, Barnes was raised in the Midwest, where he worked in an Indianapolis music store, studied piano, and sang in a church choir with Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. At twenty-one he enlisted in the Signal Corps and was soon assigned to Fort Apache, Arizona Territory, as post telegrapher.

In late August of 1881, the Apaches cut the wires to the fort, then surrounded the isolated garrison. Barnes, now a sergeant, and a civilian scout named Owens volunteered to ride to Fort Thomas, some ninety miles away, for help. They left at nightfall, Barnes taking a little-used hill trail, the scout the stage route. An Indian bullet found Owens; Barnes got through.

As Barnes told it in his posthumous autobiography, his main hurdle was the Black River, in flood at the time. Nearing the only practical crossing, he spotted blanketed forms moving around a fire on his side of the river. This meant an Indian camp. Barnes decided to swim his horse over, upstream from the camp, although the river was a hundred feet wide and the current strong.

To deaden the sound of iron shoes on the rocks, he tore strips from his saddle blanket and tied them around his horse's hooves. Carbine slung over his shoulder, pistol belt around his neck, he guided his mount into the cold water. The horse, soon beyond his depth, was swept downstream. They struck the far bank almost opposite the Indian camp.

The wrappings had come loose. There was a clatter of hooves, then rifle fire. Barnes could hear bullets ricochet off the rocks as he "beat a tattoo" on his horse's flanks with his spurs and hustled to safety.

In mid-morning he met two troops of cavalry from Fort Thomas already on the way because of the ominous silence of the telegraph line. He guided them to Fort Apache, and the besiegers disappeared into the hills.

For his bravery, more than a year later at dress parade one evening, his country's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor, was pinned on the jacket of the young soldier's uniform.

Barnes also knew the lighter side of soldiering on the frontier. He told of finding an Indian skull and rigging it up with glass eyes, jaw hinges, and a magnet that made the jaw snap shut when current was applied. Placing this fearsome object on a shelf near the door of the telegraph shack, Barnes connected it to a switch on his desk and proceeded to scare the living daylights out of any Apache who happened along. Those who had been initiated would bring a friend or relative, then double up with laughter as the skull suddenly chattered and the visitor panicked.

On another occasion, as the regimental band was solemnly counter-marching before six troops of cavalry and two companies of infantry, a yelping dog with a tin can tied to its tail sprinted from Barnes's telegraph shack. The drum major, walking backwards, baton aloft, was upset, literally, the musicians routed. Although the soldiers and officers' wives were amused, word quickly filtered down from on high that such horseplay, even from heroes, would not be tolerated in the future.

By then Barnes had fallen in love with the Southwest. His enlistment completed, he turned to ranching in the vicinity of Holbrook in Arizona Territory. During holidays from cowpunching he sang himself, as he once put it, into the territorial legislatures of both Arizona and New Mexico, with no more campaign equipment than a folding organ and a line of cowboy ballads. In 1897 he married Edith Talbot at Phoenix.

At the age of forty-nine, rancher Barnes was persuaded by his friend Gifford Pinchot, chief of the infant U.S. Forest Service, to leave the Southwest for Washington, D.C., and the challenging task of promoting range conservation among cattlemen. Perhaps best remembered of his achievements during his twenty-one years with the Forest Service was his rescue of the historic Texas Longhorn from probable extinction. Traveling more than five thousand miles through Texas and parts of Mexico, Barnes managed to locate some twenty-three of the historic animals, which he shipped to an Oklahoma refuge to serve as a breeding herd.

From the time he pulled on his first pair of leather chaps until his death in 1936, Barnes was a prolific writer of western stories, articles, books, and government reports. Notable among his books is *Cattle* (written with William MacLeod Raine), which J. Frank Dobie called "a succinct and vivid focusing of much scattered history."

For nearly thirty years Will Barnes was privileged to be a part of the frontier adventure. The three remaining decades of his life were devoted to preserving, as well as recording through the printed word, the essence of the old Southwest he had come to love in his youth. **AW**

John I. White *is a former radio singer and the author of* Git Along, Little Dogies: Songs and Songmakers of the American West.

FRONTIER ARMAGEDDON

HARPER'S WEEKLY, 1871; CULVER PICTURES

by George Foot

Wisconsin's Tragic Peshtigo Fire

THE GREAT FORESTS that covered a third of the North American continent were one of the New World's most formidable resources. From them would come lumber for the homes, factories, and ships of a new America. Yet to European man, these regions of flickering light and shadow were fearful, brooding places. Alexis de Tocqueville, one of nineteenth-century America's most perceptive visitors, was overwhelmed by these great forests. "Here," he wrote, "everything enters into a stillness so profound, a stillness so complete that the soul feels penetrated by a sort of religious terror." Accustomed to the civilized orchards of his native France, de Tocqueville was stunned by woods so dense, so uniquely unused, that one could stumble upon "immense trees retained by the surrounding branches," which "hang suspended in the air and fall into dust without touching the earth."

In 1850 a continuous canopy of pine forest, covering 200,000 square miles, extended from the shores of Upper Michigan across Wisconsin and Minnesota to the Canadian border. South of this forest the great immigrations of the frontier period were beginning. Unlike the British and French fur traders who had traversed the region since the mid-seventeenth century, the American settlers worked the lead deposits found in the southwestern corner of Wisconsin and established farms amid the open pasture and hardwood stands along the Illinois border. Except for purely local needs, the woods were an obstacle to settlement, and most of the timber in the southern third of the state was burned to clear the land.

Between 1845 and 1860, commercial lumbermen began to move into the northern Wisconsin forest. Having already consumed most of the eastern woodlands, they were eager to supply lumber to the growing population of the treeless plains states. By 1860 there were forty sawmills operating in three Wisconsin counties. Owned by such men as Isaac Stephenson, a New England timber king who had come to Wisconsin in 1845, these mills began the steady demolition of the virgin pine forest.

People and animals flee the flames of the great Peshtigo fire in this Harper's Weekly *engraving based on eyewitness accounts. At least 1,152 people died in the 1871 holocaust.*

The pineries were rapidly converted into farmland, jobs, and hard cash. Given the prevailing land policies, the growing rail network, and the population explosion to the south and west of the Wisconsin forest, there can hardly be any wonder at its swift consumption. Gifford Pinchot, the first chief of the United States Forest Service, clearly understood the process: "Get timber by hook or by crook, get it quick and cut it quick—that was the rule of the citizen."

Yet at least half of Wisconsin's timber never reached the sawmills. Instead, it was consumed by the incessant forest fires that were an integral part of pioneer life in forested areas. The logger left huge piles of volatile slash wherever he cut, the farmer regularly employed fire to clear his fields, while the railroad slashed and burned its right of way. In 1855, a report in the journal of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society lamented the growing destruction: "It is much to be regretted that the very abundance of trees in our state should destroy, in some degree, our veneration for them. They are looked upon as cucumbers of the ground and the question is not how shall they be preserved—but how they shall be destroyed."

IN SEPTEMBER 1871, the Wisconsin north woods was suffering through the longest drought in memory. Swamps and bogs had turned to dust. Streams vanished while rivers shrank from their banks. In Peshtigo, a town of some two thousand inhabitants built along the Peshtigo River seven miles upstream from the waters of Green Bay, only one brief shower had fallen that summer. Yet, for the farmers of the region as well as the crews of the Chicago and Northwestern who were building a railroad from the town of Green Bay north to Marinette, on the Michigan border, the drought simplified the task of clearing the forest. That few of their clearing fires, once started, were ever extinguished, was of little concern. The smell of smoke in the woods was a sign of progress to these forest dwellers.

A forest town such as Peshtigo, however, was vulnerable to the smallest spark. With wood the only building material, every house or bridge or sidewalk was potential kindling. Incredibly, the mounds of volatile sawdust pour-

ing from the mills were spread on the streets, like a powder train, to reduce the summer dust. In the town most of this sawdust was produced by the Peshtigo Company, then touted as the largest manufacturer of woodenware in the country. Owned by William Ogden, the real estate speculator who had literally created the city of Chicago, it turned out thousands of shingles, broom handles, and pails every day.

To the south and west of Peshtigo, connected by crude roads that ran like tunnels through the deep forest, were the farming settlements known as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Sugar Bush. An area of hardwood and clearings set within the pine forest, the Sugar Bush had been settled by a variety of Yankee, French Canadian, and German immigrants some thirty years before. While the great drought kept many of their summer clearing fires lurking around the edges of their fields, most of the one hundred twenty farmers in the area had cleared enough land around their buildings to protect them from forest fires. In the Lower Sugar Bush, the Peshtigo-Oconto Road, cleared up to a half-mile swath for a distance of several miles, was additional insurance that a fire coming from the south would either be detoured around the larger settlements or stopped by the open fields.

By the first week of October, hundreds of small fires were burning through the underbrush of the forest. Even the land itself was on fire, flames traveling underneath the ground, eating through the organic soils before surfacing in another area. While every settler knew of the fires in his own region, few realized that these individual blazes were merely part of a complex of brush fires spread over an area one hundred miles long and seventy miles wide.

On October 1, Judge Noyes of Marinette, seven miles north of Peshtigo, wrote that the smoke was so thick "it was difficult to identify an individual a few rods distant in the day time." Meanwhile in Green Bay, fifty miles to the south, a journalist reported, "By day, flashes of white ashes were continually falling in the streets like snow. Now and then, if the wind blew high, partially burned leaves would fall." On October 4, the smoke was so thick over Green Bay that steamers were forced to rely on their foghorns and compasses during daylight hours. Smoke and ash were reported in every woodland settlement.

On the evening of October 8, a fresh southwesterly breeze began to stir the quiet, smoke-filled air of northeastern Wisconsin. As the wind began to move the hundreds of downwind fires along the forest floor, it ignited piles of slash left from logging and clearing. This dry timber increased the fires' energy, driving flames into the branches of the giant pines. Quickly spreading to the crowns of the trees, the fires leapt from top to top, free of the normal restraints of a surface fire. Separate crown fires quickly joined with others as they raced through the drought-ridden forest, creating a giant storm of fire independent of the wind—and utterly unstoppable.

A SOUND LIKE THUNDER, like freight cars being shuttled in a train yard, was the first sign of the holocaust. As the storm came rolling over the tops of the pines, a wave of fire broke upon the scattered farms of the Sugar Bush with such violence that many people were overwhelmed before they could even attempt to escape. One survivor recalled the scene: "Men, women, children, horses, oxen, cows, dogs, swine—everything that had life was seized with panic and ran without method to escape the impending destruction. The smoke was suffocating and blinding. The roar of the tempest deafening. The atmosphere scorching. Children were separated from their parents and trampled upon by the crazed beasts. Husbands and wives were calling wildly for each other and rushing in wild dismay, they knew not where."

The clearings, which many thought would protect them, were raked by sheets of flame fed by the enormous quantity of fuels burning in the forest. Families ran across open fields until, one by one, they either suffocated or caught fire and dropped to the ground. Others fled in their wagons only to be overtaken on the forest road. Some, confronting the horror of death by fire, chose suicide.

Huddled in open fields, lying flat in sluggish streams, or faithfully waiting in their homes for the apocalypse, the people of the Sugar Bush began to wither and die. As the fire advanced toward Peshtigo, small tornadoes were drawn from the column of superheated air and gas rising into the Wisconsin night. These fire whirlwinds swept away from the main fire, uprooting, then burning everything in their path.

By 9 P.M. the strong breeze that had brought destruction to the Sugar Bush brought relief to the eyes and lungs of Peshtigo's citizens, who had suffered through a smoke-filled week. As the air cleared, however, some residents noted a faint crimson illumination on the southwestern horizon, accompanied by a sound like distant thunder that soon grew to a sullen roar. Bits of burning wood started to fall on the town, setting fire to the pine sidewalks. The Peshtigo Company began organizing a crew to fight the small fires breaking out in its sawdust piles, unaware of the magnitude of the inferno that was then but a few miles distant.

Suddenly the wind rose to hurricane force as the fire storm advanced over the tops of the trees and into the town of Peshtigo. Within minutes all structures on the western bank of the river were ablaze, driving those fortunate enough to escape out into the fire-filled streets. Here, many were thrown to the ground by the passing whirlwinds that unroofed homes before they were set afire. A fire engine was set up in front of the large boarding house where some seventy-five people had taken refuge. But as one survivor recalled, "When the flames struck the building the whole front was on fire in an instant. The hapless inmates had their choice between an atmosphere of fire without and the hell of fire within, and it mattered little which they chose."

Unlike the unfortunates of the Sugar Bush, who had no refuge, the Peshtigo River offered those still able to walk the possibility of survival. Inevitably, in the mad race toward its banks, there were numerous disasters. Amidst the smoke and darkness a man and wife became separated as they made their way to the river. Stumbling upon her after a few panic-filled moments, the husband carried her into the water only to realize that he had saved a total stranger and left his wife to perish at the river's edge. In their fear and haste, "a team dashed by at a runaway speed carrying a load of human beings to the river. In their madness they ran over a small child about four or five years old who had lost his father."

For those who found the safety of the river, the ordeal was not yet over. Many had no protection for their heads and were forced to stay underwater as much as possible, only to be scorched and blinded by the flames when they rose for a breath of burning air. The Peshtigo Company was now a vast furnace of flame as thousands of its newly made pails and tubs were set afire and carried by the whirlwinds onto those clinging to life in the river. Fiery logs as well as cows and horses also joined the human throng in the water. A few people were knocked off their feet and drowned by these intruders, while others were saved by a log or animal floating by at the right moment.

By 3:30 in the morning the fire had passed. Cautiously, in groups of two and three, the bobbing heads began to move toward land. The cold and shock of five and a half hours in the river forced them to seek the warmth of the fires still burning near the shoreline. As dawn spread its light across the town, the pitiful mass of survivors began to wail and moan as each moment of increasing light revealed more of the fire's devastation. Many bodies were found along the river flats, struck down by the flames a few yards from the water's edge. Whole families were now a shrunken mass, while many shriveled corpses could only be identified as human by their teeth.

On the west side of the river, which had formerly contained the town's principal stores and hotels as well as many private homes, only a few cellar holes and the iron skeletons of two locomotives remained. The eastern half of town had fared little better. Where a few hours before the Peshtigo Company's huge factory had stood, only the brick dry-kilns and the stone walls of the engine and boiler room remained.

Seventy corpses were found that morning. Yet it was soon apparent that the death toll was much higher. In fact, of the approximately two thousand people in Peshtigo that night, only about fourteen hundred were alive the next morning.

But the death and destruction did not end with the tragedy of Peshtigo. The storm of fire that destroyed the town continued northward toward Marinette, sweeping by its western edge yet sparing it a similar disaster. The fire fol-

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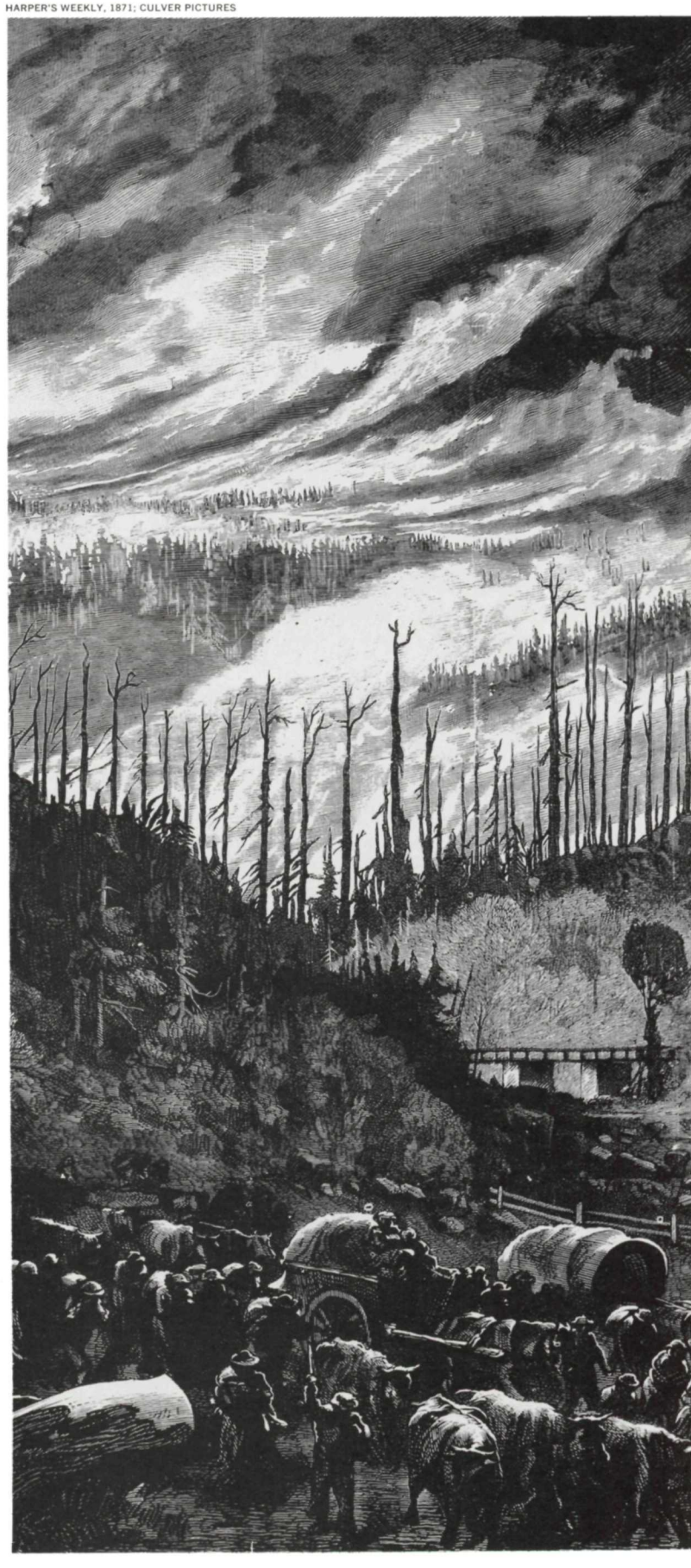
HARPER'S WEEKLY, 1871; CULVER PICTURES



WESTERN HISTORY TODAY

Six years of planning and three years of fund-raising will soon reach fruition at the **Buffalo Bill Historical Center** in **Cody, Wyoming,** when the new $3.75 million **Plains Indian Museum** opens its doors. Construction work, begun in October 1977, has now been completed, and the museum staff has begun the complicated task of creating display cases and transferring thousands of fragile artifacts to their new home. The new building contains 25,000 square feet of exhibit space plus 18,000 square feet for storage and support areas. Opening festivities for the new museum will be held in mid-June.

Northwest Coast Indian art from the American Museum of Natural History will be on exhibit at the **Denver Art Museum** through March 18, while **Alaskan Arctic carvings** in ivory can be seen at the museum through June 3.

"We Loved Wyoming," a group of sixty-five photographs of western tombstones and cemeteries taken by Bob Greger can be seen at the **Belmar Museum, Lakewood, Colorado,** from March 12 through April 30; and at the **Central Wyoming Museum of Art** in **Casper** during May and June. The Belmar Museum, a former calving barn surrounded by a 126-acre park, was converted to a museum as a bicentennial project.

With a stroke of the pen, President Jimmy Carter doubled the size of the National Park System by permanently transferring **56 million acres of Alaskan wilderness** into the system. Based on a little-known 1906 law, the Antiquities Act, which allows a president to declare as "national monuments" areas of "historic or scientific interest," Carter's action will prevent development of a region as large as England, Scotland, and Wales combined. The new preserve includes parts of Mt. McKinley, the nation's highest peak; a glacier the size of Rhode Island; and the area where many archaeologists believe man first stepped onto the North American continent.

On Valentine's Day an exhibit of cherished mementos, valentines, calling cards, and tea sets—some dating back to the 1860s—opened at the **San Jose (California) Historical Museum.** Entitled "The Spice of Life," the exhibit will close June 30.

AIR VIEW OF VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK (SEE BELOW)

Voyageurs National Park, established in 1971, has become the storm center of a classic "use" versus "preservation" controversy. The nation's newest national park, which encompasses 219,128 acres (⅓ under water) of forested lake country on and around **Minnesota's Kabetogama Peninsula** and east to Crane Lake, protects a portion of the beautiful and historic region that served as a major portage route for French fur trappers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Today recreationists are demanding a thirty- to forty-mile snowmobile trail down the length of Kabetogama Peninsula, the wilderness heart of the park; and the removal of the section of Black Bay now in the park, so it can be used for duck hunting. The National Park Service will make a decision on the controversy this spring; meanwhile, citizen input is encouraged. Write Superintendent, Voyageurs National Park, Box 50, International Falls, MN 56649.

One hundred twenty-five portraits of well-known artists, writers, and others—all taken by photographer **Ansel Adams** between 1927 and 1977—will be on exhibit at the **Stanford (California) Museum of Art** from March 21 through May 6.

"Masterworks of Indian Basketry" continues through March 30 at the **Heard Museum, Phoenix,** while "Indian Kitsch," photographs by contemporary Native American painter Fritz Scholder will be on display from March 17 through April 27. The museum's twentieth annual Indian Fair, which includes ceremonial dances, craft demonstrations, and Indian food, will be held April 7–8.

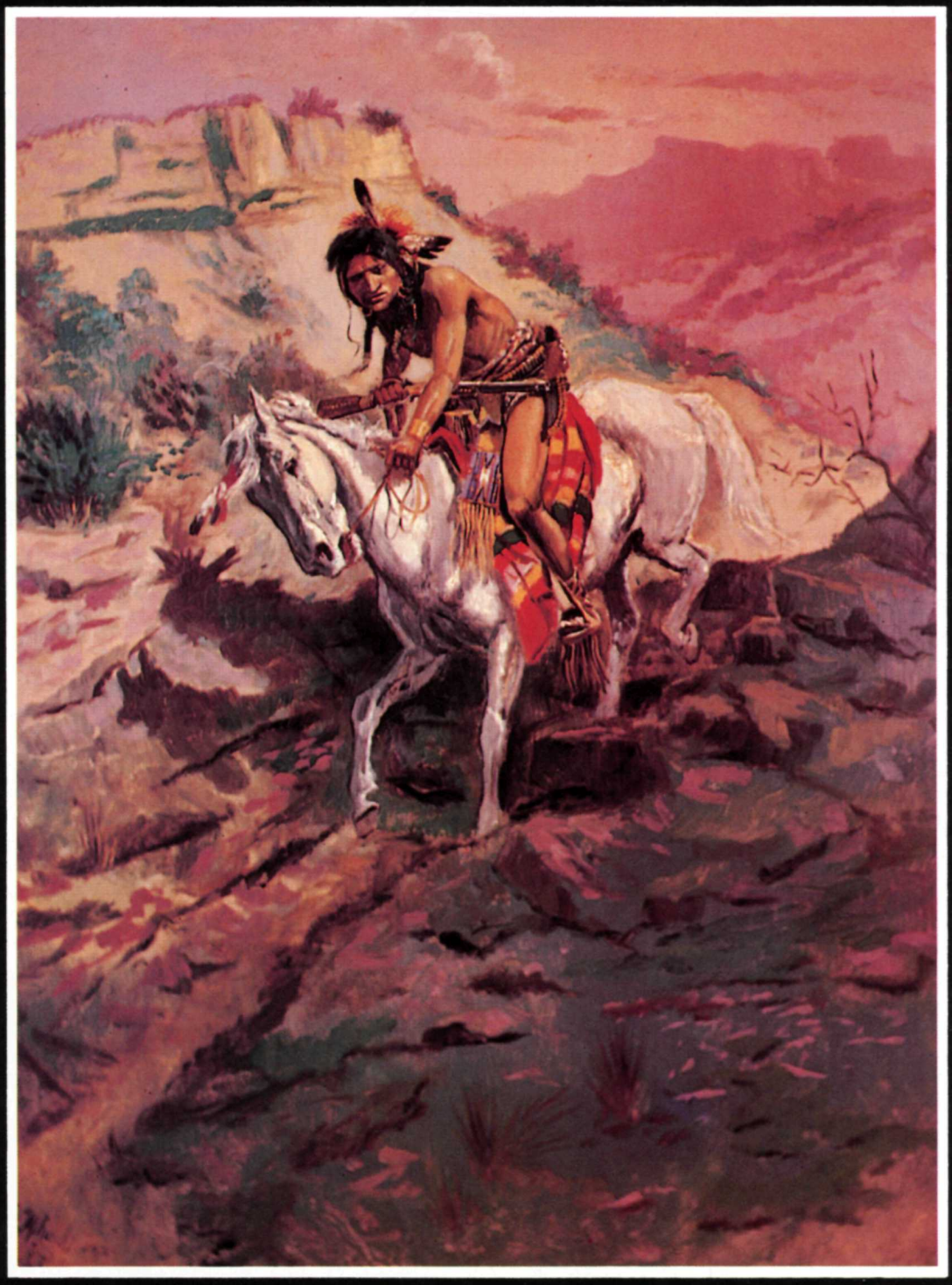
The annual conference of the **Historical Society of New Mexico** will be held April 20–22 in **Taos.** Open to all interested in the state's history, the conference will include, in addition to sessions on New Mexico history, special events at the Leon Gaspard House Museum and the Mabel Dodge Luhan House, and a visit to the Taos Morada. For further information write the Historical Society of New Mexico, P.O. Box 5819, Santa Fe, NM 87502.

"Taking the Measure of the Land," a **cartography** exhibit prepared by the National Archives, will be on view at the **Pacific Science Center, Seattle,** from March 17 through April 29; at **Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota,** May 19–July 5; and at the **Dallas Historical Society,** September 22–November 4. Among the seventy-eight items in the exhibit are an 1804 map of the Louisiana Purchase lands drawn by Lewis and Clark; John Charles Frémont's 1844 map of the Rocky Mountains, Northern California, and Oregon; and an 1848 sketch by William Tecumseh Sherman showing the location of gold at Sutter's sawmill on the south fork of the American River.

"Spanish New Mexican Woodworking: 200 Years," an exhibit of early New Mexican *santos,* furniture, and household items as well as contemporary woodcraft will be on display through May 1 at the **Millicent Rogers Museum** in **Taos, New Mexico.**

Forty-nine commercial and industrial sites were granted **National Historic Landmark status** by the Secretary of the Interior during 1978, but only four are in the West. These include the Bank of Italy (now Bank of America) Building, **San Francisco;** the J. C. Penney Historic District, **Kemmerer, Wyoming,** where merchandiser J. C. Penney created the first chain store; Norman No. 1 Oil Well, **Neodesha, Kansas;** and the E. W. Marland Mansion in **Ponca City, Oklahoma.**

A new exhibit, **Apsaalooke; The Crow People,** recently opened at the **Western Heritage Center** in **Billings, Montana.** The exhibit, which focuses on Crow culture, lifestyle, and history to 1870, includes artifacts from the Heye Foundation, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Denver Museum of Natural History. **AW**



CHARLES M. RUSSELL (1884 — 1926) *The Scout* oil 24" x 18"

J. Frank Dobie

REVIEWED BY WAYNE GARD

HIS TRADEMARK was a roguish grin, and his firm handclasp inspired confidence. He was Frank Dobie (1888–1964), raconteur, teacher, gatherer of folklore, and vibrant voice of the South-

An American Original: The Life of J. Frank Dobie by Lon Tinkle *(Little, Brown, Boston, 1978; 264 pp., illus., biblio., index, $10.00).*

western cattle ranges. Now he has an able and sympathetic biographer in Lon Tinkle, who knew him so well.

Tinkle was fortunate in having reminiscences by Dobie, published and unpublished, and fat packets of letters to and from his wife, his mother, and others. Help came also from Dobie's widow, who outlived him by ten years.

The early chapters are largely a love story. At Southwestern University, Frank was a shy ranch youth from the brush country, more at home in the saddle than in the classroom. But soon he acquired a love of learning—and he met Bertha McKee, whom he later married.

Bertha, frail from childhood, suffered through life from many ailments, including anemia and almost yearly bouts with flu. Yet she was a strong support for Frank. She had complete faith in his ability, and she was the most useful critic of his writings.

With a master's degree from Columbia, Dobie was torn between journalism and teaching. He chose the latter, even though too strapped to take time off for a Ph.D. For decades at the University of Texas he had to battle those who ranked a doctorate above teaching ability, but finally he achieved a full professorship.

In addition to courses in English, Dobie taught an informal, popular class on life and literature of the Southwest, where he talked more about mesquite and javelinas than about daffodils and nightingales. But he often took time off to escape Austin's hay-fever pollen or to make research trips. Finally, in 1947, the university re-

fused to extend his leave, thus ending, on an unhappy note, his teaching connection.

Dobie, who was to write more than a score of books, was a bit late in getting started. He was forty when his first book came out. But after his articles on the Southwest began to appear in magazines and after the Literary Guild chose his second book, *Coronado's Children,* success seemed assured. Soon he had more than a regional following and earned more from writing than from teaching. His heartfelt and most popular work, *The Longhorns,* recalled the sturdy, half-wild cattle that made Texas history; and his most scholarly book, *The Mustangs,* depicted a breed that put above all else its freedom and independence.

Dobie was at home with the ranchman's lingo and wrote the way he talked. His early life also influenced some lifelong habits. His erratic driving led a friend to remark: "Frank doesn't drive a car—he just loose-herds it."

Under the guidance of Dobie, the Texas Folklore Society became a most successful association; and its publications, twenty-one of which he edited, came to be in strong demand.

Dobie's outlook, provincial at first, was broadened by reading, associations, and foreign travel. After World War I ended, he was in France for six months as an army officer; in 1943–44 he gave a series of lectures on American history at Cambridge University; and in 1945–46 he was in Europe again, teaching United States soldiers.

This broader view led Dobie to write on ideas as well as on folklore and range history. It also deepened his concern for the rights of the individual and spurred his interest in politics. As a maverick he raised a strong voice in controversies, including a fight over school textbooks and one on the tenure of a university president. When aroused, Dobie could be belligerent, even bellicose.

Bertha Dobie was a restraining influence. She tried to hold him back not only from showing off and making grandiloquent statements but also from wading too deep into controversies. But her influence was not always enough. Some friends regretted his injection of political views into writings on folk life and his sarcastic public attacks on a Dallas newspaper that had stopped using a weekly column he wrote.

Dobie became the most popular Texas writer. Yet many regarded Dobie the man as more important than Dobie the author. He was as independent as a brush-country Longhorn and let no one deter him from his path. Except when stirred to combat, though, he had a sunny, genial disposition; and the anecdotes he told in the classroom and beside the campfire were long remembered. He always had a helping hand for a younger writer.

Lon Tinkle has handled his material expertly and has included choice bits such as the reminder to Dobie from his mother that in Cambridge he should keep his fingernails clean. Dobie was then fifty-five. Tinkle's easy-flowing prose, enlivened with photographs, makes this biography a moving story of a free spirit with a warm heart. AW

Wayne Gard, *a former president of the Texas State Historical Association, is the author of* The Chisholm Trail, The Great Buffalo Hunt, *and other books on the West.*

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RECENT WESTERN BOOKS

Go Do Some Great Thing: The Black Pioneers of British Columbia by Crawford Kilian *(Douglas and McIntyre, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1978; 188 pp., illus., biblio., index, $12.95).*

This detailed history of Black settlers in British Columbia describes a diverse group—ranging from saloon keepers to prospectors to homesteaders—bound together by a common heritage and a determination to succeed.

Levi's by Ed Cray *(Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1978; 286 pp., illus., notes, index, $9.95).*

This absorbing history recounts the story of the small San Francisco dry-goods company, begun in 1853, which became a western tradition and, in the process, a booming international corporation.

The Flamboyant Mr. Colt and His Deadly Six-Shooter by Bern Keating *(Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1978; 233 pp., illus., index, $9.95).*

This biography recounts the life of a barely literate but brilliant man made famous by his invention of the revolver which shares his name. But—as author Bern Keating points out—that wasn't Colt's only venture: he also invented the submarine cable and once even ran a road show with laughing gas as the main attraction.

The Grass Roots People: An American Requiem by Nancy Wood *(Harper & Row, New York, 1978; 173 pp., illus., $16.95).*

Through telling photographs, extensive interviews, and descriptive narrative, author Nancy Wood brings to life the ordinary people of the Rocky Mountain West.

Dust to Dust: Obituaries of the Gunfighters compiled by Jerry J. Gaddy with illustrations by Dale Crawford *(Presidio Press, San Rafael, California and the Old Army Press, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1977; 160 pp., illus., $11.95).*

This interesting book contains contemporary obituaries of some of the West's most famous outlaws. Billy the Kid's reads in part: "Despite the glamour of romance thrown around his daredevil life by sensation writers, the fact is he was a low down vulgar cut-throat, with probably not one redeeming quality."

PHOTOGRAPH FROM "SOUVENIRS FROM THE ROADSIDE WEST"

Souvenirs from the Roadside West: A Personal Collection by Richard Ansaldi *(Harmony Books, New York, 1978; 72 pp., illus., $5.95 paper).*

This intriguing small book of photographs depicts the cafes, gas stations, and billboards of the Southwest, often in juxtapositions that comment ironically on the old and new West.

The Ascent of Denali by Hudson Stuck, containing the original diary of Walter Harper *(The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1978; 300 pp., illus., maps, $6.95).*

This fine volume gives two accounts of the historic climb undertaken in 1913: one by Hudson Stuck, archdeacon of the Yukon and leader of the six-man expedition; the other by Walter Harper, who acted as guide, interpreter, and dog-team handler for Stuck and was the first man to reach Mt. McKinley's summit.

Back in the Saddle Again by Gene Autry with Mickey Herskowitz *(Doubleday, New York, 1978; 252 pp., illus., discography, filmography, index, $8.95).*

Beginning with his Texas childhood and a youthful stint with the Field Brothers Marvelous Medicine Show, the famous singing cowboy recounts his rise to film and business success.

American Indians in Colorado by J. Donald Hughs *(Pruett Publishing Company, Boulder, Colorado, 1977; 143 pp., maps, notes, biblio., index, $5.00 paper).*

The first volume in the University of Denver's Ethnic History Series, this book provides an account of Colorado's Native American heritage and includes a final chapter on urban Indians.

A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930: Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Broadsides Relating to the First Century of Mormonism edited by Chad J. Flake with an introduction by Dale L. Morgan *(University of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1978; 860 pp., $75.00).*

With more than 10,000 entries, this monumental bibliography supersedes all others as a comprehensive guide to Mormon literature. It should prove invaluable to students of Mormon history and theology.

From Chalk to Bronze: A Biography of Waldine Tauch by Alice Hutson *(Shoal Creek Publishers, Austin, Texas, 1978; 172 pp., illus., appen., index, $15.00).*

Set in the early 1900s, this interesting biography recounts the personal and artistic struggle of a poor girl from a small Texas town who became a successful sculptor.

Wells Fargo in Arizona Territory by John and Lillian Theobald, edited by Bert M. Fireman *(Arizona Historical Foundation, Tempe, 1978; 210 pp., illus., maps, appen., $12.50 cloth, $10.00 paper).*

A map of the Wells Fargo line before 1880, a $300-reward poster for a highway robber, and a receipt for the delivery of a thirteen-pound artificial leg are among the intriguing documents found in this thorough account of the transport and delivery of mail, packages, and treasure in the Arizona Territory.

California Shipwrecks: Footsteps in the Sea by Don B. Marshall *(Superior Publishing Company, Seattle, 1978; 176 pp., illus., appen., biblio., index, $14.95).*

In this captivating work, author Don B. Marshall chronicles over four-hundred years of California maritime history with fascinating photographs, detailed charts, and a well-researched narrative.

Coyote Was Going There: Indian Literature of the Oregon Country compiled and edited by Jarold Ramsey *(University of Washington, Seattle, 1977; 295 pp., illus., map, notes, biblio., $14.95).*

This anthology not only preserves a body of Indian literature that might otherwise have been lost but also provides insight into the mythology, music, history, and culture of an imaginative and proud people.

REVIEWS

Rocky Mountain Rendezvous: A History of the Fur Trade Rendezvous, 1825–1840 by Fred R. Gowans *(Brigham Young University, Provo, 1977; 320 pp., intro., illus., maps, biblio., appen., notes, $4.95 paper).*

REVIEWED BY FEROL EGAN

THE SHORT LIFE of the Rocky Mountain fur trade remains a classic adventure in the American frontier movement. The roll call included such epic heroes as Jed Smith, Jim Bridger, Thomas Broken Hand Fitzpatrick, Kit Carson, Joe Walker, and Joe Meek as well as all their friends.

They lived life to the fullest; placed their own hides on the thin line of survival; endured the best and worst of times; and often gave their lives in the hunt for beaver plews. They lived with and learned to know the Indians better than anyone before or since, and they crisscrossed vast stretches of blank space on the maps of Western America and cut trails for explorers and settlers to follow. They were a rare breed, cut and tailored for the trade. All of this comes out in *Rocky Mountain Rendezvous.*

Fred Gowans has compiled a handbook to all the fur-trade rendezvous held from 1825–1840. He begins with the birth and ends with the death of a way of life. In the process, he has located the sites of these mountain fairs where furs, goods, gossip, and good times were the currency during a celebration of another season of wilderness survival. Each rendezvous is pictured, mapped, and carefully described by the author and by fine quotations from memoirs, journals, and other accounts left by the men who crossed the high mountains and celebrated life in the deep valleys they called holes.

For fur-trade scholars the book is important as a guide to rendezvous sites. For casual readers or newcomers to western history, it serves as a fine introduction to a hard time in a hard country—a time that today is covered with a patina of romance.

But the passing of time is what it comes down to in the end. This was eloquently stated by Robert Newell to Joe Meek after the 1840 season: "We are done with life in the mountains—done with wading in beaver dams, and freezing or starving alternately—done with Indian trading and Indian fighting. The fur trade is dead in the Rocky Mountains, and it is no place for us now, if ever it was. We are young yet, and have life before us. We cannot waste it here; we cannot or will not return to the States. Let us go down to the Wallamet and take farms. . . . What do you say, Meek? Shall we turn American settlers?" AW

Ferol Egan's *latest books are* Frémont: Explorer for a Restless Nation, *which won the Commonwealth Club gold medal for nonfiction; and* The Taste of Time, *a novel of the West.*

Photographs from the Border: The Otis A. Aultman Collection by Mary A. Sarber *(El Paso Public Library Assn., 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, TX 79901; unpaginated, intro., illus., limited ed., $15.00).*

REVIEWED BY AL LOWMAN

THE EL PASO PUBLIC LIBRARY earns rousing applause for making these Otis A. Aultman views available to a general audience. The Missouri-born photographer arrived at El Paso in 1909, just in time to record the historic meeting between Presidents William Howard Taft and Porfirio Díaz. From then until his death in 1943, he created a magnificent visual record of persons, places, and events on both sides of the Rio Grande.

From the river's left bank are scenes of old El Paso—its streets and buildings, its inhabitants and occasional famous visitors. Especially memorable are portraits of the aged Albert B. Fall, his countenance radiating a certain grandfatherly malevolence; and of pioneer aviatrix Kathleen Stinson and her mother, a picture that leaves little doubt from whom the girl inherited her spunk. The poverty of Juárez and the rustic elegance of Cloudcroft are also preserved in this collection.

In Part II of the book we are given views of the Mexican Revolution: the battles at Juárez, Casas Grandes, and Rellano. Aultman was the first photographer to arrive at Columbus, New Mexico, following Pancho Villa's 1916 raid. The bodies were still warm as the camera shutter clicked. There are numerous scenes of the Mexican Army in camp and in action. Obviously Pancho Villa fascinated Aultman as he did other newsmen covering the revolution.

In a prefatory essay Mary Sarber has sketched an all-too-brief account of the photographer and his pictures, an account

that leaves the reader wanting to know more about this local legend whose adventures and eccentricities are still recounted by El Pasoans. The photographic reproductions by Charles Binion are faultless, as is the presswork by Lyman Dutton. The captions are tersely stated. They understandably and necessarily take for granted that the viewer has basic knowledge of early twentieth-century history in the borderlands. The entire volume has been presented in glowing format by the Southwest's premier book designer, Carl Hertzog. AW

Al Lowman *is a research associate at the University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. He is the author of two books and numerous articles on southwestern cultural history.*

Frederic Remington and the West: With the Eye of the Mind by Ben Merchant Vorpahl *(University of Texas, Austin, 1978; 294 pp., intro., illus., index, $15.95).*

REVIEWED BY FORREST G. ROBINSON

MANY OF US, I imagine, think of Frederic Remington as an American artist of western subjects whose productions, though craftsmanlike and energetic, were something less than masterpieces, and as a man whose swollen physical bulk and rather short life had prolonged overindulgence as their common cause. Perhaps, too, we dimly intuit that the quality of the art and the early demise of the artist were somehow related. Ben Merchant Vorpahl's superb study of Remington's life and work tends to confirm our preconceptions. We learn, for example, that the artist's "work—occupied almost exclusively with death as subject and theme—so thoroughly mirrors the event of Remington's death, [that] it may be regarded by a student as having a literally 'deadly' dimension." But we learn a great deal more—about Remington himself, about the development of his art as an exercise in terminal self-discovery, about his place alongside Wister and Roosevelt in the creation and popularization of potent western mythologies, and about some of the darker dimensions of our history and culture. This is a compelling book, subtly, even artfully, argued, often surprising and disturbing, uniformly persuasive.

Professor Vorpahl insists, quite properly, that impressions of the West have always been "intensely subjective." In Remington's case, "the West stands both for one thing and for many things—or,

to put it another way, Remington began his career by attempting to apply a series of unsatisfactory templates to the West but ended it by redeeming them all with a crucial realization." In his last decade, Remington came to recognize that the subject of his life's work was himself, and that his theme, with its locus in the West and its expression in over seven hundred paintings and drawings of violent conflict, was death. Quite understandably, the artist was halting in his approach to this dismaying revelation. It was easier, after all, to light out for the territories in angry flight from personal disappointment, or, as if to confirm a fond, heroic self-image, to join the Indians. The West was useful as a foil to the pretensions of the genteel establishment. It could be portrayed as the home of vigorous and aggressive young men whose example might serve as an implicit critique of a nation gone soft in the midsection. The same example, as Roosevelt well knew, might help to inspire an invigorating little war. Over time, the glamor and the heroism of these images proved illusory. The Indians, when they could be found, were either degraded or threatening, and the realities of war were awesome and dismaying. The violence common to most of these images was not, however, an illusion, nor, finally, was its source, Remington himself.

Summary may suggest the general drift of Professor Vorpahl's argument, but it does nothing to convey the wealth of material he has mastered, or the ease with which he mingles social history, cultural history, and the interpretation of the visual and literary arts. This impressive range, along with sharp psychological insight and a usually supple, suggestive style, give this volume greater interest and broader currency than studies of a more conventional stripe. As biography, it gives us a portrait of Remington more complex than any we have seen; yet the complexity of the man is so deftly contextualized that our sense of his period is simultaneously enriched. Culturally, the book is a sobering reminder of the strain of violence that has figured so prominently in the American experience. Many readers will be startled at the frequency with which this fine study of Remington prompts them to reflect on D. H. Lawrence's characterization of the "essential American soul" as "hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer." AW

Forrest G. Robinson *teaches literature and American studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He has published studies of Sir Philip Sidney and (with Margaret G. Robinson) Wallace Stegner.*

Tall Ships on Puget Sound: The Marine Photographs of Wilhelm Hester by Robert A. Weinstein *(University of Washington, Seattle, 1978; 144 pp., intro., illus., map, notes, $14.95).*

REVIEWED BY PETER PALMQUIST

TALL SHIPS is guaranteed to delight the collector of fine western photographs as well as those who relish maritime history. The photographs are superb. Meticulously composed by master photographic craftsman Wilhelm Hester during the period 1893–1906, the images provide remarkably clear and detailed glimpses of the schooners, barks, brigantines, and other sailing vessels that once plied the Pacific Northwest coast. Shipbuilding, dry-docking, and portside commerce are all intimately revealed.

Although other photographers have taken outstanding photographs of ships, few have equaled Hester's truly inimitable images of the officers and crews who sailed these proud vessels into the Puget Sound area for cargoes of lumber or grain for transhipment to the four corners of the globe. Whether the photograph shows a venerable ship's captain posed sternly on his poop deck or a fresh-faced apprentice standing stiffly between the bos'n and the sailmaker, Hester produced uncommonly insightful portraits of great dignity. Moreover, his intense empathy with the seafarer led to a unique pictorial document of his life. Looking closely we see the ship's mascot (be it parrot, cat, or dog), the sailor's tools and handcrafts, even unparalleled interior studies of the captain's personal quarters.

An outstanding producer of books and articles dealing with the West's maritime and pictorial heritage, author Robert Weinstein is clearly at the helm of this monograph. It is evident that he has studied Hester's photographs unceasingly for the smallest clue that might lead to a greater understanding of the events shown. Likewise, his intensive search into the origin and motivational forces behind Hester's photographic career provides a vivid glimpse of the art of marine photography at the turn of the century.

In his preface, Weinstein observes that Hester's photographs could inspire, each in a different way, a maritime historian, sailing-ship enthusiast, regional historian, or photo-art historian. Weinstein has provided a well-researched, informative, nicely designed and valuable document that will be useful in each of these areas. Finally, the photographs themselves are properly and sensitively presented, providing an outstanding forum for Wilhelm Hester's magnificent pictorial legacy. AW

Peter Palmquist *is a photographer at Humboldt State University and the author of* Fine California Views: The Photographs of A. W. Ericson *and* With Nature's Children: Emma B. Freeman, Camera and Brush.

The Genteel Gentile: Letters of Elizabeth Cumming, 1857–1858 edited by Ray R. Canning and Beverly Beeton *(University of Utah Library, Salt Lake City, 1977; 127 pp., intro., illus., biblio., limited ed., $12.50).*

Not By Bread Alone: The Journal of Martha Spence Heywood, 1850–56 edited by Juanita Brooks *(Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 1978; 149 pp., intro., illus., appen., index, $10.95).*

REVIEWED BY JERRY A. HERNDON

THESE TWO BOOKS give an interesting perspective on the Mormons of the 1850s as viewed through the eyes of two perceptive, articulate women—one an insider, the other an outsider. Martha Spence Heywood documents the commitment and devotion that Mormonism evoked in a woman seeking fulfillment, as well as the doubt, frustration, and occasional bitterness she felt as she lived the cause of Zion. She records both her joys and her forebodings, as she hears rumors of plural marriage but holds grimly on to the faith. We follow her through her marriage into a plural family and her participation in the founding of a new settlement, Salt Creek (present-day Nephi). She records her frequent loneliness and her determination, despite personal tragedy, as she supports herself and her children amid the occasionally malicious infighting of the Salt Creek community.

Elizabeth Cumming's letters reveal a sensitivity and tact appropriate for the wife of the man appointed to replace Brigham Young as governor of Utah Territory. Of particular interest are her descriptions of the intrigues set afoot by Chief Justice Eckels to undermine Alfred Cumming's efforts to secure a peaceful settlement with the Mormons. In regard to the Mormons, Mrs. Cumming's mood is consistently dispassionate. Arriving in Salt Lake, she is impressed with the Mormons' industry and hospitality. Though inclined to discount their "fanaticism," her descriptions of the reasons Mormon wives gave her for their dedication to polygamy are objectively handled, providing the reader with worthwhile insights into the psychology of the faithful.

Both books are attractive in format, and both are superbly annotated, reflecting credit on the presses issuing them. **AW**

Jerry A. Herndon *is professor of English at Murray State University in Kentucky.*

This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind by Ivan Doig *(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1978; $9.95).*

REVIEWED BY RICHARD B. ROEDER

THIS is a difficult book to characterize. In part it is a family history, the story of a boy, a father, and a grandmother who together "became something-both-more-and-less-than-a-family and different from anything sheathed in any of the other phrases of kinship." It is the tale of a boy growing up in small-town and rural Montana during the 1940s and 50s, in a physical setting sometimes beautiful but also stark: "Ringling looked much its best in a storm." It is an account of maturation and of a man who needed more space than this background could offer.

The book is also western story-telling at its best. The author states that from his father came a love of language and story, and that from his grandmother came the book's cadence. They were good teachers and he an apt pupil. Doig transmits to posterity a piece of Americana through the authentic language of people whose humor made a tough, sometimes sad, elemental way of life bearable.

Doig's stories are set within a work-a-day world. Much of the book depicts the scenes and rhythms of sheep raising: lambing, docking, trailing, herding, haying, and winter feeding. This part of the book includes suspense and vivid action as the threesome work to save sheep from acts of self-destruction, such as a stampede in a July storm. That father and grandmother work nineteen months without a day off conveys some notion of the endlessness of the chores of caring for sheep. As the author notes, the world he describes is fast disappearing, as local control of large ranches gives way to absentee, impersonal ownership by corporations.

The structure of the book is perfect for its purpose. Doig reveals a mind in action by interpolating his narrative with flashbacks, memory traces, and the language of his characters. This is an excellent, absorbing book and may become a classic of regional literature. **AW**

Richard B. Roeder *is a professor of history at Montana State University and coauthor (with Michael P. Malone) of* Montana: A History of Two Centuries.

We Have Met the Enemy: Oliver Hazard Perry, Wilderness Commodore by Richard H. Dillon *(McGraw-Hill, New York, 1978; 231 pp., map, index, $12.95).*

REVIEWED BY ROBERT J. SCHWENDINGER

IN CONTRAST with earlier biographies of Perry (the first in 1840, another in 1935), Richard Dillon's is an exciting one—in addition to being a penetrating psychological study of a man whose shortcomings as well as positive qualities are marvelously perceived.

The story of Perry's heroic efforts during the War of 1812—from the incredible task of creating a fleet out of green wood miles from shops, mills, and indispensable supplies, to his determination to ensure they were seaworthy vessels—is a chronicle of an inteprid naval pioneer. His courageous encounter with the British at the Battle of Lake Erie, his brilliant naval maneuver, and his compassion toward the wounded and dying of both sides, creates a singular, compelling portrait.

Commodore Perry's vision and perseverance had a profound influence on our country. He believed a confrontation at Lake Erie was essential to opening up a territory that had been closed for almost a decade. It was a critical juncture in the war of "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights," and his victory routed the British at the Northwest frontier, permanently dashing their hope of blocking further American expansion in the West.

At the great Battle of Lake Erie, when Perry's flagship, *Lawrence,* had taken a merciless pounding for two hours against overwhelming odds, the battle appeared lost. Dillon writes: "She was a wreck. Much of her rigging and canvas was shot away, hanging like funeral shrouds or towing slowly behind her like great masses of kelp. Smashed spars fell to the deck slimy with blood, and dragged shredded sails with them. . . . Death stalked the littered deck in eerie silence."

But the battle was not over, for Perry then pulled off one of the most daring acts ever performed at sea. Under heavy fire, he left the *Lawrence* in an exposed gig on a perilous sea, and transferred his flagship to the unscathed *Niagara,* "perfectly fresh" from having been spared engagement. Sailing broadside into the British fleet, he forced surrender.

Dillon cogently expresses the result: "From abject defeat, Perry had—singlehandedly—thrashed five vessels. It was awesome; Perry had fled a wreck; now, he had wrecked a fleet."

Richard Dillon is an old pro with some thirteen historical books behind him, including astute studies on the maritime history of the West Coast. The particular excitement his writing achieves stands out as a model that entertains as well as informs. This biography is one more success in a distinguished career. **AW**

Robert J. Schwendinger *is a university instructor and lecturer on maritime history, literature, and lore. He is currently completing a book-length study of Sino-American maritime history.*

From the High Plains by John Fischer, illustrated by Paul Laune *(Harper & Row, New York, 1978; 181 pp., $10.00).*

REVIEWED BY W. EDWIN DERRICK

THE HIGH PLAINS region of the panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma was the boyhood home of John Fischer, the long-time editor of *Harper's Magazine* who died in August 1978. Autobiographical in nature, *From the High Plains* illustrates the social and cultural trends common to this area by portraying the lives of the people who pioneered there. These included the homesteading family of Mary Caperton, the author's maternal grandmother, who migrated from Alabama to the High Plains in 1891, as well as the famous Civil War scout and cattleman, Colonel Charles Goodnight, who was ninety-two years old and a living legend when the author met him in 1928.

This personalized account of the High Plains is told with good-natured humor and deep-seated respect. A witness to many of the events he describes, Fischer also includes much of the region's folklore and legend, not to embellish his story but to give insight into the character of the people. Thus the author integrates such topics as the domination of the plains by the Comanches, the slaughter of the buffalo, the introduction of cattle, the wild west days of the cowboys, the discovery of oil, and the continual quest for water.

The cultural geography of the High Plains changed significantly in the final decades of the nineteenth century as modern America evolved. With a vivid and interesting style, Fischer demonstrates how the Indians were eliminated by ranching pioneers, the roaming buffalo replaced by grazing cattle, and the open prairies changed to fenced pasture. This book is a tribute to the region it portrays, capturing with distinction the essence and spirit of the High Plains. **AW**

W. Edwin Derrick *is an instructor in the Social Sciences Department at Langston University in Oklahoma.*

FORT BOWIE

(Continued from page 15)

Peace came at last in 1872. Guided by Tom Jeffords, a pragmatic prospector who had made his personal peace with Cochise, General Oliver O. Howard rode boldly into the heart of Cochise's stronghold in the Dragoon Mountains. Seated on the ground, surrounded by menacing warriors, the one-armed "Christian general" of Civil War fame faced the great chief of the Chiricahuas. For ten tense days they negotiated. At last they reached a settlement that brought a precarious, short-lived peace to Arizona. Tom Jeffords was named Indian agent, and for a time his agency stood in Apache Pass near Fort Bowie.

Fort Bowie also figured prominently in the Geronimo wars, which plagued Arizona following the death of Cochise. The thick-set, scowling, bad-tempered Geronimo emerged in the late 1870s as the most skilled of all Apache war captains. From lairs deep in Mexico's Sierra Madre his warriors spread terror through southern Arizona and New Mexico. Military expeditions alternated with peace conferences as one of the army's ablest Indian-fighters, General George Crook, tried to bring the hostilities to an end. Often, as his strike columns of regulars and Apache scouts plunged deep into Mexico, Crook made his headquarters at Fort Bowie.

In the end Crook failed, through a combination of factors more to his credit than not, and the laurels went to General Nelson A. Miles. On September 3, 1886, in Skeleton Canyon, Geronimo surrendered to Miles and with his people rode at once to Fort Bowie. From here they were escorted to the railroad and entrained for imprisonment in Florida.

Today, at the end of the hike from the parking area, one stands on the dusty Fort Bowie parade ground where ranks of blue-clad cavalrymen once passed in review before Generals Crook and Miles, and where Geronimo's Apaches climbed into the wagons that would transport them to the railroad. Eroding adobe walls and stone foundations define the edges of the parade ground. Bowie Mountain looms steeply behind the remnants of the hospital and the commanding officer's quarters. Helen's Dome punctuates the irregular skyline to the west. A white replica flagpole rises from the center of the parade ground.

Little imagination is needed to visualize the Fourth Cavalry band, drawn up in smart alignment beside the flagpole, playing "Auld Lang Syne" in parting gesture as the wagons bearing Geronimo's people started them on the journey to Florida exile and the long, savage Apache wars drew to an end. **AW**

Fort Bowie National Historic Site is administered by the National Park Service. For further information write the Superintendent, Dos Cabezas Star Route, Willcox, Arizona 85643.

Robert M. Utley's *first assignment on joining the National Park Service's Santa Fe office in 1957 was a study of Fort Bowie, then proposed for addition to the park system.*

ARMAGEDDON

(Continued from page 43)

lowed the west bank of the Menominee River a few miles further north, then leapt across to the eastern shore to consume the Michigan forest. The scattered woodland settlement of Birch Creek was the last to burn. The fire swept through this tiny community, killing nineteen of its one hundred inhabitants and leveling every building.

While the firestorm was ravaging the mainland forest and towns, another disastrous fire was traveling northward on the Wisconsin peninsula. Fanned by the same wind and encouraged by the same drought, this fire had begun near New Franken, a small lumbering settlement twelve miles northeast of Green Bay. As the fire gathered strength it continued up the peninsula, striking a number of towns. Forty-four were killed at the Belgian settlement of Rosiere and fifty-nine at Williamsonville, while the villages of Union, Brussels, Forestville, and Clay Banks were largely destroyed. Among the fifty-nine dead in Williamsonville, the small settlement lost fourteen of its sixteen children and eleven of its fifteen women.

Immediately after the fire, Peshtigo's maimed and injured were evacuated to Green Bay and Marinette, while tents were erected on the still-warm ground to house hundreds of destitute survivors. What remained of the great fire that had raced up both sides of Green Bay on the evening of October 8 was extinguished by a heavy rain that began to fall the following day. The downpour mercifully buried the human ash scattered over 2,400 square miles of burned land.

Relief from neighboring communities had come within hours of the disaster. But from the state capital, Madison, boxcars of supplies were not sent north to Green Bay but south to the city of Chicago. The same wind that had carried the smouldering flames into the crowns of the virgin pines had also fanned a fire that leveled the city's core. It was estimated that three hundred people died that night in Chicago. Yet in the town of Peshtigo alone, twice that number had perished. A conservative estimate of the death toll from the Wisconsin fire totaled 1,152, of which 600 were from Peshtigo, 255 from the Sugar Bush settlements, and 297 from the various towns and clearings swept by the flames.

The official death roll indicates how complete the disaster had been. This fragment of that long list suggests some of the magnitude of the devastation:

"Doyle, Patrick, wife and seven children, known to have been upon their farm at the time of the fire. Nothing had

been heard or seen of their remains since.

"Helms, Charles, wife and son. Mr. Helms traveled a long distance in the fire. The calves of his legs burned loose; dragging on the ground, held by the cords. Was taken to the hospital at Marinette, but soon died.

"Perault, Nelson, wife and eight children, and a Frenchman with them, name could not be ascertained.

"Seveikert, Michael, wife and five children; also his wife's father and mother; names not ascertained.

"Tousley Mrs. C. R.; Mr. Tousley cut the throats of his two children and his own; all found dead.

"Two travelers, strangers, names unknown."

AFTER THE INITIAL SHOCK of the disaster began to recede, the survivors attempted to find an explanation for the unparalleled violence of the conflagration that became known as the Peshtigo fire. A consensus of opinion settled upon the many bogs scattered throughout the area. Judge Noyes confidently stated, "Our opinion is that the combustion of the gases that exuded from the burning peat beds very much intensified the fire." The phantom of "combustible gases" was an ideal explanation, for it laid the blame upon nature, not man. The unconscious need to be relieved of the inevitable guilt that follows such a disaster was best expressed by a columnist for the *New York Tribune* when he wrote, "No moral underlies the terrible story; all that frightened human nature was capable of came into play that direful night; the slaughter resulted from no sin of omission or commission on the part of man."

At its height, the Peshtigo fire released energy equivalent to the detonation of a twenty-kiloton bomb every minute, but none of its contemporary investigators could have possessed the conceptual framework to formulate an adequate description of its behavior. Instead, theories of marsh gas and "carburetted hydrogen" were used to explain phenomena that would remain misunderstood for many years. Even now, the physics of intense forest-fire behavior are only beginning to be explained.

Still the basic pattern of such a disaster is known. The metamorphosis of a fire from a two-dimensional blaze on the forest floor to a three-dimensional fire reaching into the crowns of the trees requires a quantity of fuel that is only generally available where logging and clearing operations have left abundant piles of slash on the ground. Without these additional fuels, crown fires could not occur. The "blowup" of a fire from two to three dimensions is a serious occurrence, but this was merely the beginning of the Peshtigo fire.

The next step in such a conflagration is the joining of numerous small fires into one large mass. This is the firestorm, which has as much in common with an ordinary forest fire as a candle does with a cutting torch. Such a fire does not move rapidly over an area; it consumes all the fuel in its path. The energy released would create the whirlwinds that played so much havoc in Peshtigo. It would also account for the reports of dark, balloon-shaped objects traveling through the air, then suddenly turning into a mass of flame wherever they struck. This phenomenon, which formed the basis of the marsh-gas theory, was, in fact, a result of superheated gases cast off by the storm that were capable of causing ignition of kindling fuels at distances far beyond the range of the flames themselves.

The fire that swept over northeastern Wisconsin on October 8, 1871, had more in common with a large thunderstorm than with a surface fire. The convection columns formed by the escaping gas must have reached twenty-five thousand feet, carrying burning wood and embers miles ahead of the flames to create more small fires in advance of the main front. The result was the utter devastation of thousands of square miles of forest, along with the decimation of its human and animal population.

Peshtigo was only the first great Wisconsin fire. Similar disasters occurred in 1874, 1880, 1887, 1891, and 1908. While none of them would claim as many lives, many did destroy greater areas of the forest. For the next quarter of a century the Wisconsin forest would continue to be cut and burned in the same manner and with the same results. It was not until the very end of the century, when discussion of remedies for saving the Wisconsin forest had become academic, that any attempts were made to control logging operations and their attendant fires.

Twenty-seven years after the Peshtigo disaster, an 1898 report described the once forested area that had been swept by the fire as "bare or brush land with some settlement." The vast conifer forest around Peshtigo before 1871 now appeared on geographic maps as the "northeastern sand barrens." Describing the balance of the once-great Wisconsin pinery, the report continued: "The fires, following all logging operations or starting on new clearings of the settler, have done much to change these woods. Nearly half this territory has been burned over at least once; about three million acres are without any forest cover whatever, and several million acres more are but partly covered by the dead and dying remnants of the former forest."

The most fundamental damage caused by these fires lay in the destruction of the second growth of forest that struggled to establish itself after logging or clearing fires. These repeated brush fires resulted in the annihilation of any future forest as well as the depletion of already poor soils.

The state report following the Peshtigo fire was overly optimistic when it claimed, "In many cases the fire will ultimately be a benefit . . . for a large proportion of the timber is valueless for the purposes it has hitherto been used, and [people] will hereafter be obliged to seek legitimate farming operations which will doubtless prove far more renumerative."

Such dreams of a vibrant agriculture where forest once stood were in reality a cruel fantasy that permitted the clearing of the forest, then lured thousands of immigrants to lands that were generally without value. By 1928, despite decades of promotion by private speculators, 82 percent of all the former forest in the northern part of the state remained stumps and brush. In 1927 alone, nearly 25 percent of the entire area was sold for taxes. Half a century after the Peshtigo fire, a description of this barren legacy of cut-over lands revealed "gaunt, ghostly looking

dead pines still erect, gaunt trunks burned off at the base and in falling arrested by other half dead but standing timber, half-buried logs, overgrown and hidden by underbrush or by groves of saplings; in short timber living and dead inextricably intermingled and nearly all worthless."

The story of Wisconsin is, in large part, an extension of the story of most of America's virgin forest: billions of board feet of timber burned or wasted; forested land transformed into arid desert; and thousands of lives, more than all those killed by the Indian, consumed by disastrous fires. A generation after de Tocqueville marveled at its wild splendor, the forest was gone. While it is easy to blame the timber barons, railroad builders, and land speculators for this unprecedented disaster, they were merely the agents of the American pioneer, who by the millions demanded that the land be cleared of forest. The pioneer ethic that "won the West" forever lost the New World's grandest living creation—the primeval forest. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

It is surprising that a disaster as spectacular and horrific as the Peshtigo fire has attracted so little interest. Apart from Robert Wells's *Fire at Peshtigo* (1968), one must resort to less accessible sources. The "Report of the Green Bay Relief Committee Having in Charge Matters Pertaining to Burnt Districts in Wisconsin," published in the *Wisconsin Assembly Journal* of 1873, seems to have been overlooked by all previous researchers, although it is clearly the most valuable primary source available. An overview of Wisconsin during this period is provided by Robert Nesbit's *Wisconsin: A History* (1973). The fate of the Peshtigo area and other northern Wisconsin lands after the logging boom abruptly ended is detailed in *Farming the Cutover* by James Clark (1956). For those interested in the physics of forest fires, a standard reference is *Forest Fire: Control and Use* by A. A. Brown and Kenneth P. Davis (1973).

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HOLY CROSS

(Continued from page 36)

On August 8, 1874, Moran began his trek, encountering the same difficulties crossing Roches Moutonée that Jackson had met. In a letter to his wife he wrote, "The valley was worse than anything we have yet encountered," and he reported that his ascent of Notch Mountain was "the toughest trial of strength I have ever experienced." But the view of the cross at the 12,000-foot elevation was worth every effort. It was, he wrote, "one of the grandest I have ever seen."

Moran returned to his Newark, New Jersey, studio with only a thin portfolio of drawings, for "the trip was too strenuous to leave time or inclination for the sketch pad." Working from a tenacious memory, he began his seven-foot ten-inch by six-foot canvas. In the foreground he painted with minute detail Cross Creek cascading down the boulder-choked ravine. In the central portion sprawled fallen timbers reminiscent of the tangle of Roches Moutonnée. As the eye climbed upward the base of the mountain was obscured by opalescent mists, creating a subtle graduation of distance. Above towered the snowy cross.

While many proclaimed the painting his masterpiece, there were a few who lamented that he had taken liberties with the facts: the cross, which faced across the canyon, could not actually be seen from that position in relationship to the creek. To his critics Moran replied, "The idealization of the scene consists in the combination and arrangement of the various objects in it. At the same time, the combination is based upon the characteristics of the place. My purpose was to convey a true impression of the region . . . not its strict topography."

The painting was exhibited at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, where it was awarded a gold medal and a diploma "for excellence in landscape." It was later purchased for $5,000 by Dr. William A. Bell, vice-president of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, and hung in his mansion at Manitou Springs, Colorado. In 1886 the home was almost totally destroyed by fire, and the painting was saved only by being cut free from its frame, which was permanently attached to the wall. It now hangs at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

Inspired by the success of *Mount of the Holy Cross,* Moran later painted at least one additional canvas bearing the same title. A thirty-by-forty-inch version completed during the 1890s (and reproduced on page 33 of this issue) is now in the collection of the Denver Public Library.

THE NUMBER of canvases of the Mount of the Holy Cross attest to its inherent appeal for artists, professional and amateur alike. But perhaps the most unusual painting of the Mount was the one in the "World's Greatest Gold Camp," Cripple Creek, Colorado. Attorney J. Maurice Finn, declaring it a scandal that such a fine town possessed not even one mansion, proposed to remedy the situation by constructing a three-story, twenty-six-room house with towers at each of its four corners. Completion of "The Towers," as Finn called it, was to coincide with Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt's 1901 visit to the Cripple Creek gold district.

The mansion was completed on schedule, although the paint might still have been a bit damp when the vice-president arrived to see it. Finn ushered him through double doors leading into the rotunda. There, filling the wall near the semicircular stairway, was a giant fresco of the Mount of the Holy Cross. Cross Creek cascaded in the foreground—but this time it was real water that splashed down to fill a trout pond below. Theodore Roosevelt—as well as the citizens of Cripple Creek—was duly impressed.

The mountain's fame was not limited to pictures and

paintings. In 1879, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the poem "Cross of Snow" in memory of his deceased wife. It read in part:

> There is a mountain in the distant West
> That, sundefying, in its deep ravines
> Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
> Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
> These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
> And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

The snowy cross, symbol of the Christian faith, was also an inspiration to the devout, and it was natural that many became interested in making pilgrimages to view the marvelous phenomenon. The problem was (and still is) the mountain's inaccessibility. Located in rugged terrain some twenty miles from a good road, this northernmost peak of the Sawatch Range was not easily reached. In 1928, however, the *Denver Post,* on the instigation of publisher Frederick Gilmer Bonfils and Dr. O. W. Randall of Eagle, Colorado, decided to promote annual pilgrimages. On page one of its March 28 edition, the *Post* announced its intention to "hammer away with all the resources at its command until Christians everywhere recognize the beauty and worth" of a visit to the "most magnificent and holiest natural shrine in the world."

The newspaper and the Mount Holy Cross Pilgrim Association tackled the project with such enthusiasm and determination that on May 11, 1929, President Herbert Hoover signed a proclamation making Mount of the Holy Cross and its surrounding 1,392 acres a national monument. (It had previously been part of Holy Cross National Forest, established in 1905 by President Theodore Roosevelt.) Thus preserved, it would be in no danger of "ruination from mining or irrigation projects . . . or other undesirable catch-penny schemes."

In 1931 the *Post* and Randall jointly financed the construction of a six-mile road near the town of Minturn to a point called Camp Tigiwon, where by 1934 a lodge had been constructed. In 1933 the Park Service had hauled stones and logs up Notch Mountain and constructed a shelter house at the 13,000-foot level, and the next year completed a trail up the mountain.

When the first pilgrimage was scheduled, a Denver pastor urged those too ill or infirm to make the climb to kneel in prayer at the hour set aside for services on the summit of Notch Mountain. This was the beginning of various reports of the mountain's "miraculous healing powers." The pastor also urged the sick to mail handkerchiefs, which would be carried to the summit, prayed over, and returned. The response was so great that two rangers had to assist in carting the load. Finally the pastor offered to dip the handkerchiefs in the Bowl of Tears, as well as baptize some of the pilgrims.

By 1950, however, less than fifty persons were visiting the shrine each year. There were several reasons for the decline. The last *Post*-sponsored pilgrimage had occurred in 1938, and during World War II the area was declared "off limits" because of a nearby army camp. Then, too, some people believed the right arm of the cross was disintegrating, due either to a rock slide or the natural accumulation of debris. A few persons even charged that a perfect right arm had never existed and that Jackson had touched up his photographs. Careful scrutiny of the negatives proved that Jackson had worked on some, but that he had not touched the cross on his most famous photograph, although he had added a waterfall. Like Moran, Jackson had not attempted to deceive but only to improve. It seems clear that the right arm did exist and still does, its perfection in direct proportion to the previous winter's snowfall and the time of year when it is viewed.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman signed a bill authorizing the abandonment of Holy Cross National Monument and transferring its administration back to the U.S. Forest Service. Mount of the Holy Cross and Holy Cross National Forest were now a part of the White River National Forest area. Friends of the mountain, upset by the change, were only slightly placated the next year when the U.S. Post Office issued a Colorado statehood commemorative stamp showing the peak with the snowy cross as part of the design.

Today the elusive cross of snow is still visible only to mountain climbers, or but distantly from the road at Shrine Pass or a few other high places. Yet it remains immortalized on film and canvas, and in the hearts of many. **AW**

HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

Clarence S. Jackson has collected his father's photographs and related his career in *Picture Maker of the Old West: William Henry Jackson* (1947) and, with Lawrence W. Marshall, written specifically about his photographic expeditions to Holy Cross in *Quest of the Snowy Cross* (1952). Robert L. Brown sifts fact from fallacy in *Holy Cross: The Mountain and the City* (1952) while Thurman Wilkin's *Thomas Moran: Artist of the Mountains* (1966) discusses the artist's life and paintings.

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Jessie Frémont

(Continued from page 13)

Monterey, the old California capital, where they rented a wing of a picturesque red-tiled adobe with pink roses blooming in the garden and magnificent views of the sea. But Jessie found that housekeeping required all her ingenuity: "It was barely a year since gold had been discovered, but in that time every eatable thing had been eaten off the face of the country, and nothing raised. . . . Housekeeping, deprived of milk, eggs, vegetables, and fresh meat becomes a puzzle." Meanwhile their sudden new fortune became decidedly more tangible to her as she struggled to find storage space in their cramped quarters for the hundred-pound sacks of gold that began to arrive from the Mariposa mines.

Once they were settled, John Charles was eager to show Jessie the California countryside. During the long dry summer her lungs gradually healed as the Frémonts traveled the region in a specially built mule-drawn coach-camper. "The wild oats were ripe," she recalled, "and gave the soft look of ripe wheat fields to all the hillsides; the wild cattle were feeding about or resting under the evergreen oaks; . . . the sky was a deep blue, without a cloud." It was a blissful time for John Charles and Jessie, who would stop in "San Francisco for news and San José for soft weather." San Francisco, Jessie observed, was changing rapidly as gold seekers crowded the makeshift city. Even on Sundays she could hear the steady ring of hammers as people rushed to build shelters before winter set in.

In September 1849, delegates eager for statehood met at Monterey to frame a constitution for California. Jessie argued forcefully against slavery under the new constitution as she entertained at informal dinners served from a rustic plank table on her patio. Proudly she demonstrated that without slaves—or even much hired help, for most men were at the mines—she could live with style. "I should have liked my clothes ironed," she remarked half-ruthfully, "otherwise I felt the need of nothing." She was immensely gratified when by unanimous consent slavery was prohibited in California.

Several months later on a dark and rainy night in late December, Jessie sat reading to her daughter by the fire when they heard hoofbeats through the storm. Moments later John Charles burst into the room, "dripping wet and brilliantly happy." He had ridden seventy miles from San Jose, where the first legislature was meeting, to tell her the news: he had just been elected California's first senator, and they would leave for Washington immediately.

WHEN THE FREMONTS arrived in Washington after a difficult isthmus crossing, they found Congress torn by the slavery issue. Only after long and bitter debate was California admitted to the union as a free state as part of the Compromise of 1850. But Jessie, who thrived on politics, was able to enjoy her new role as a senator's wife for just a few months, for John Charles, who had drawn the short term, was defeated for reelection by the proslavery faction of the California Democratic Party.

The Frémonts settled in San Francisco long enough for Jessie to give birth to a healthy baby boy and to survive the burning of their house in one of the fires that regularly swept the flimsily constructed and turbulent city. In 1852 a year in Europe brought Jessie a taste of elegance and leisure as the Frémonts enjoyed their Mariposa fortune. When the family returned to the United States in the spring of 1853, they found the nation even more bitterly divided over slavery; even Thomas Hart Benton, who for thirty years had been Missouri's spokesman in the Senate, was defeated for reelection because he opposed the extension of slavery into the western territories.

Party alliances were also shifting. Many Northerners could no longer support Whig Party candidates sympathetic to the extension of slavery, and by 1854 a faction had broken away to form the Republican Party. Seeking a presidential candidate with a national following for the 1856 election, the new party settled on forty-three-year-old John Charles Frémont. "The times," declared New York poet-editor William Cullen Bryant in a supporting editorial, "require a man who has something heroic in his character."

Jessie threw herself into the campaign with her usual vigor, helping to put together a Frémont biography and supervising the candidate's mail. But she was growing protective of her husband: she monitored both press reports and correspondence, allowing him to see only favorable comments.

The campaign was indeed a vicious one. Frémont was branded "a Frenchman's bastard" and accused of secret Catholicism, while the "Black Republicans" were damned as the party of "free soilers, Frémonters, free niggers, and freebooters." But to a significant part of the country, particularly in the North and West, Frémont was a national hero whose beautiful and vivacious young wife had won their hearts. To many the campaign was also a moral crusade, and eastern luminaries like Emerson, Longfellow, Henry Ward Beecher, and Horace Greeley worked actively for Frémont, while John Greenleaf Whittier contributed an epic poem.

Though the majority of northerners were willing to support Frémont, even at the risk of southern secession, the Democrat's compromise candidate, James Buchanan, carried enough northern states to win the election. The nation had gained four more years of uneasy peace before the election of the next Republican candidate—Abraham Lincoln—brought the country to the brink of war.

The campaign had been a difficult ordeal for Jessie. A fighter like her father, she had watched her husband vilified while he remained carefully aloof, leaving most of the speaking to others. But if Jessie was disappointed, she masked it well. Traveling to Europe while John Charles went to California to arrange once more for a new start,

"Strange isn't it that when a man expresses a conviction fearlessly, he is reported as having made a trenchant and forceful statement, but when a woman speaks thus earnestly, she is reported as a lady who has lost her temper."

she missed him terribly: "My sweetheart," she wrote to her husband of fifteen years, "I spoil quantities of my pretty paper writing you things that begin well enough [but] degenerate into the most selfish laments at not being with you. . . . I love you with all my heart and trust to you to give it health."

BY LATE JUNE 1858, John Charles and Jessie were together again, settled in a white-washed, one-story cottage near remote Bear Valley, California, close to the Mariposa mines. Though she may have felt the irony of the local name for her new home, "the Little White House," Jessie, with what visiting newspaperman Horace Greeley called her "executive ability," set about making it comfortable and attractive. John Howard, a young man who stayed with the Frémonts at Bear Valley, has described Jessie during this period: "She was incessantly interesting, well read, witty, genial, with a masculine grasp of affairs, feminine intuitions of policy, and a gift for irony that often pointed her observations. She was of an affectionate disposition, and overflowing with maternal instinct." Richard Henry Dana, author of *Two Years Before the Mast,* was another admiring visitor. To him she was "a heroine equal to either fortune, the salons of Paris and the drawing-rooms of New York and Washington or the roughest life of the remote and wild mining regions of the Mariposa."

Others were less complimentary, however, for what some saw as commendable energy and spirit others were beginning to view as unseemly ambition. Bank agent Edward Bosqui, for example, who also knew Jessie at Mariposa, found her "a highly accomplished woman of fine intellect, with a towering ambition and courage equal to her husband's. The acquisition of power and the love of display and leadership were her ruling passions."

Though Jessie managed gamely at Bear Valley, she preferred San Francisco, particularly after a group of angry miners attempted to take over a Frémont mine. In the spring of 1859, John Charles presented her with a small house at Black Point, magnificently located overlooking the entrance to San Francisco Bay. San Francisco was no longer the rough town of the early gold-rush years, and Jessie delighted in its thriving cultural life. Impressed with the writing of a shy young printer named Bret Harte, she invited him to tea; soon he was coming regularly to Sunday dinner, bringing his manuscripts for her enthusiastic review. Another frequent visitor was the young Unitarian minister and popular orator Thomas Starr King, who had himself just arrived from Boston. King, a brilliant and witty man, was captivated by Jessie, who shared his passion for the Union cause. "Yesterday," he wrote to an old friend, "I dined with Mrs. Frémont, and walked bareheaded among roses, geraniums, vines, and fuschias in profuse bloom." Another time he reported, "Mrs. Frémont stayed to tea. We have had a glorious talk and time." On still another occasion he confided, "She is a superb woman."

The Frémonts' pleasant San Francisco life ended abruptly in April 1861 when Southern gunboats fired on Fort Sumter and civil war became inevitable. President Lincoln appointed Frémont commander of the Department of the West, the region between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, with headquarters at Saint Louis. Jessie was elated that John Charles had the chance to act again on the national scene. "I have not been so happy in years for him as now," she wrote to their estate manager. Never enthusiastic over Frémont's preoccupation with the Mariposa mines, she commented, "I am so glad that I am going into an atmosphere where dollars and cents are not the first object."

Thomas Starr King saw Jessie off for New York, where she was to join her husband. Giving her a bouquet of violets and a volume of Emerson's essays, he told her to read and rest. Soon after her steamer arrived in the East, King wrote to the head of a New York war relief group: "Have you met Mrs. Frémont? I hope so. Her husband I am very little acquainted with but she is sublime, and carries guns enough to be formidable to a whole Cabinet; a she-Merrimac thoroughly sheathed and carrying fire in the genuine Benton furnace." But Jessie and her San Francisco friend would never see each other again, for King, who did more singlehandedly to raise funds in California for the Northern cause, died of diphtheria in the midst of the conflict.

SAINT LOUIS in July of 1861 was no longer the vital, prosperous frontier city Jessie had once known so well. "Everything was changed," she wrote. "As we drove through the deserted streets we saw only closed shutters to warehouses and business places. . . . It was a hostile

"It's a luxury to be alone.
My dream is a writing table and a room of my own."

city and showed itself as such."

Jessie immersed herself in war work, writing most of John Charles's confidential letters and supervising charitable and relief activities in the city. Many citizens were antagonistic to the Frémonts, but Jessie found small kindnesses heartening: "Fine old linens, bottles of good wine, would be sent to me, without names, but with a line to say they were for the sick in hospital; and one said, 'Not sent to the wife of the Yankee General, but to the daughter of Mrs. Benton, who always gave to all needing help.' "

Frémont's command was made immensely difficult by inadequate supplies, troops, and funds, as well as by the constant guerrilla warfare of the state's Southern sympathizers. Barely one month after his arrival, he made a fateful decision. Without consulting President Lincoln, he freed the slaves of Missouri rebels, hoping by this action to force the rebels to give up their resistance and return to their homes.

Northern abolitionists hailed Frémont's emancipation proclamation, but Lincoln, still attempting by a moderate stance to keep border states like Kentucky loyal, instructed him to revoke the decree. Convinced of the rightness of her husband's act, "General Jessie," as critics had begun to call her, appealed directly to Lincoln. Arriving in Washington after two nights on a hot, dusty train, she hurried to the White House, carrying letters from Frémont.

The president received her coolly. As she forcefully presented the arguments for emancipation, he interrupted her to remark with scarcely concealed anger, "You are quite a female politician." It was, he said, "a war for a great national idea, the Union, and . . . General Frémont should not have dragged the Negro into it."

Jessie's mission was a failure. Not only did Lincoln disagree with her husband's actions, but he scarcely listened to her own words, reporting afterward, "I had to exercise all the awkward tact I have to avoid quarreling with her." Jessie herself commented, "Strange isn't it that when a man expresses a conviction fearlessly, he is reported as having made a trenchant and forceful statement, but when a woman speaks thus earnestly, she is reported as a lady who has lost her temper."

On November 2, 1861, Lincoln relieved Frémont of his command, and though John Charles served the Union cause intermittently during the war, his career as a national figure was virtually over.

DURING THE NEXT DECADE, the Frémonts made their home in New York, eventually settling at Pocaho, a beautiful estate overlooking the Hudson River. There the family—which now included two sons as well as daughter Lily—lived comfortably and contentedly, far from the limelight.

But Frémont was never a businessman. Almost from the beginning the Mariposa estate had been hopelessly enmeshed in lawsuits, and eventually Frémont had to sell it. Later his investments in the Memphis & El Paso railroad also failed. Ten years after they had returned to private life, the Frémonts were bankrupt.

Forced to sell Pocaho and most of their possessions in 1873, the Frémonts took temporary refuge with hospitable friends. Desperate for money, Jessie, now nearing fifty, turned to writing to support the family. "I am very pleased with myself," she noted of one early effort. "I have four columns all finished—$400 this week already, and now it runs easily." During the next fifteen years she produced a steady stream of articles and books, including children's stories, historical sketches, and personal reminiscences. All were written with a fine, light touch, for as Jessie wrote in her autobiographical narrative, *Souvenirs of My Time,* she chose to write "leaving out the shadows." Only in her incomplete and unpublished memoirs, written in old age, did she suggest some of the dark and unresolved aspects of her eventful life.

During these difficult years, Jessie must have pondered the erratic course her life had taken. While her husband's career had begun with flash and brilliance, it had guttered out in a strange series of failures that she, a woman, could do little to prevent. Though her marriage was an unusually passionate one, she remained an activist cast in a supporting part, her life constricted by her role as loving wife. "Whither thou goest," words spoken so long ago in her father's study, represented her first and last real choice as a woman in nineteenth-century America. In a letter to a friend, she once acknowledged her dilemma. After quoting the well-known lines, "For man is man and master of his fate," she wryly observed. "That is poetry. When one is not man but woman you follow in the wake of both man and fate and the prose of life proves one does not so easily be 'master' of fate." Still, during this time she came to know her own strength. "I am like a deeply built ship," she said. "I drive best under a strong wind."

BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Jessie Frémont was photographed in her Los Angeles home in the late 1890s, sitting beneath a portrait done fifty years before (and reproduced on page 5 of this issue).

In 1878 the Frémonts were given a partial reprieve from their financial difficulties when John Charles was appointed territorial governor of Arizona at a salary of $2,600 a year. By now Jessie's attitude toward her husband was deeply protective. "The General would find it exile but for me," she wrote from Arizona to a friend. "When I see [him] flagging a little under new discomforts or old memories, I get my chance and warm his heart again. . . . I never was so needed." Yet her own interior life suffered. "It's a luxury to be alone," she confessed. "My dream is a writing table and a room of my own."

Frémont spent much of his time as governor cultivating his own mining interests, making frequent and extended trips east to drum up investors for his mines. "My father . . . was in New York," daughter Lily commented on one eastern journey, "working for the territory and for himself, as men have a habit of doing now and then." Jessie, too, had money on her mind. A sad series of letters to influential people in the East concerning the Frémont ventures reveal an anxious woman desperately trying to contrive some financial security for her family. Less than a year after her arrival in Arizona, Jessie returned east alone, where she continued to write for publication as well as tend her husband's business interests. By late 1881, Frémont's

"I am like a deeply built ship.
I drive best under a strong wind."

neglect of territorial affairs had evoked enough criticism to force his resignation. So ended a tarnished episode, Frémont's last venture into public service.

But somehow, despite the outward failure of their lives, John Charles and Jessie were happy. "There is only one piece of news in the world today," Jessie wrote a friend when John Charles returned from Arizona. "The general is here. He tells me I am beautiful, but I tell him the truth. He looks young, rested, and as handsome as that day in '41 when I saw him swinging down the avenue in his new uniform."

Together they set to work, as in the old days, to write an account of Frémont's life. But the elaborate and expensive first volume, published in 1887, was not a financial success, and the second was never completed. Times had changed, and few in the industrializing nation were interested in an old man's memories, let alone tedious defenses of a thwarted career.

By late 1887, Frémont was seriously ill. A warm climate seemed essential for his health, but there was no money, after the failure of his *Memoirs,* even for train tickets. Swallowing her pride, Jessie appealed to an old friend, Collis Huntington, president of the Central Pacific Railroad. Huntington quickly furnished the tickets for a journey to California as well as money for expenses. "You forget our road goes over your buried campfires," he told Frémont. "I think we rather owe you this."

Friends helped the Frémonts find a house in Los Angeles, where they enjoyed the sunshine, the flowers, and the sea breezes. "We are in bliss here," Jessie reported to a friend. But Frémont, returning east in 1890 in hopes of obtaining a congressional pension, suddenly fell ill. As he lay dying in a New York boarding house, he spoke of going home. "Which home, General?" his physician asked. "California, of course," he replied.

Jessie lived twelve more years. Just before Frémont's death Congress had at last granted him a small pension, and she continued to receive a portion of it as his widow. The women of Los Angeles presented her with a small cottage, where she lived with her daughter Lily, who had never married. Her last years were often filled with physical pain, but she remained so vibrant and alive that noted writer/editor Charles Lummis, meeting her for the first time, found her "the most interesting woman I have ever met."

Talented, ambitious, courageous, admirably educated for an active part in the world, Jessie's role was limited by the dictates of the age in which she lived. Though she had once put on a cadet's uniform at a Virginia wedding, it had been only a prank; soon she had married a man who could act the part she could not play, loving him deeply and loyally. Still, during her long and adventurous lifetime, she must have wondered what the result would have been, had her own brilliant, active temperament been given full rein.

Yet in a time when such marital partnerships were rare, she had shared in her husband's life more fully than most women, learning to accept the limitations that both her sex and fate enforced. At fifty she had confided to a friend, "I tell my boys that I am 'very old and very wise' and have been alive all the days of my life." Until her death on December 27, 1902, at age seventy-eight, those words were still true. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

This article is based in large part on Jessie Frémont's own writings: her unpublished "Memoirs" and correspondence in the Frémont Papers at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; and her published books, *Souvenirs of My Time* (1887), *Far West Sketches* (1890), *A Year of American Travel* (1960), and *Mother Lode Narratives* (1970), the latter beautifully annotated by Shirley Sargent. Frémont's autobiography, *Memoirs of My Life,* vol. 1 (1887); the unpublished second volume, "Great Events During the Life of Major General John C. Frémont"; and daughter Lily's *Recollections of Elizabeth Benton Frémont* complete the family record.

Two books specifically about Jessie Benton Frémont have been written: Catherine C. Phillips's *Jessie Benton Frémont: A Woman Who Made History* (1935), a full but sometimes fictionalized account, and Irving Stone's *Immortal Wife,* a decidedly fictionalized rendition. Jessie Frémont's life in pre-Civil War San Francisco is recounted in Lois Rather's *Jessie Frémont at Black Point* (1974) and illuminated by Thomas Starr King's unpublished letters at the Bancroft. Frémont is amply treated in two biographies: Allan Nevins, *Frémont: Pathmaker of the West* (3rd edition, 1955) and Ferol Egan, *Frémont: Explorer for a Restless Nation* (1977). *The Expeditions of John Charles Frémont,* volumes 1, 2, and supplement (1970 and 1973), edited by Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence, form a vital collection of documents relating to the expeditions. Fresh light on the howitzer incident is provided in Donald Jackson, "The Myth of the Frémont Howitzer," *Bulletin* of the Missouri Historical Society (April 1967) and on Frémont's Arizona governorship in Bert M. Fireman, "Frémont's Arizona Adventure," *American West* (Winter 1964).

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