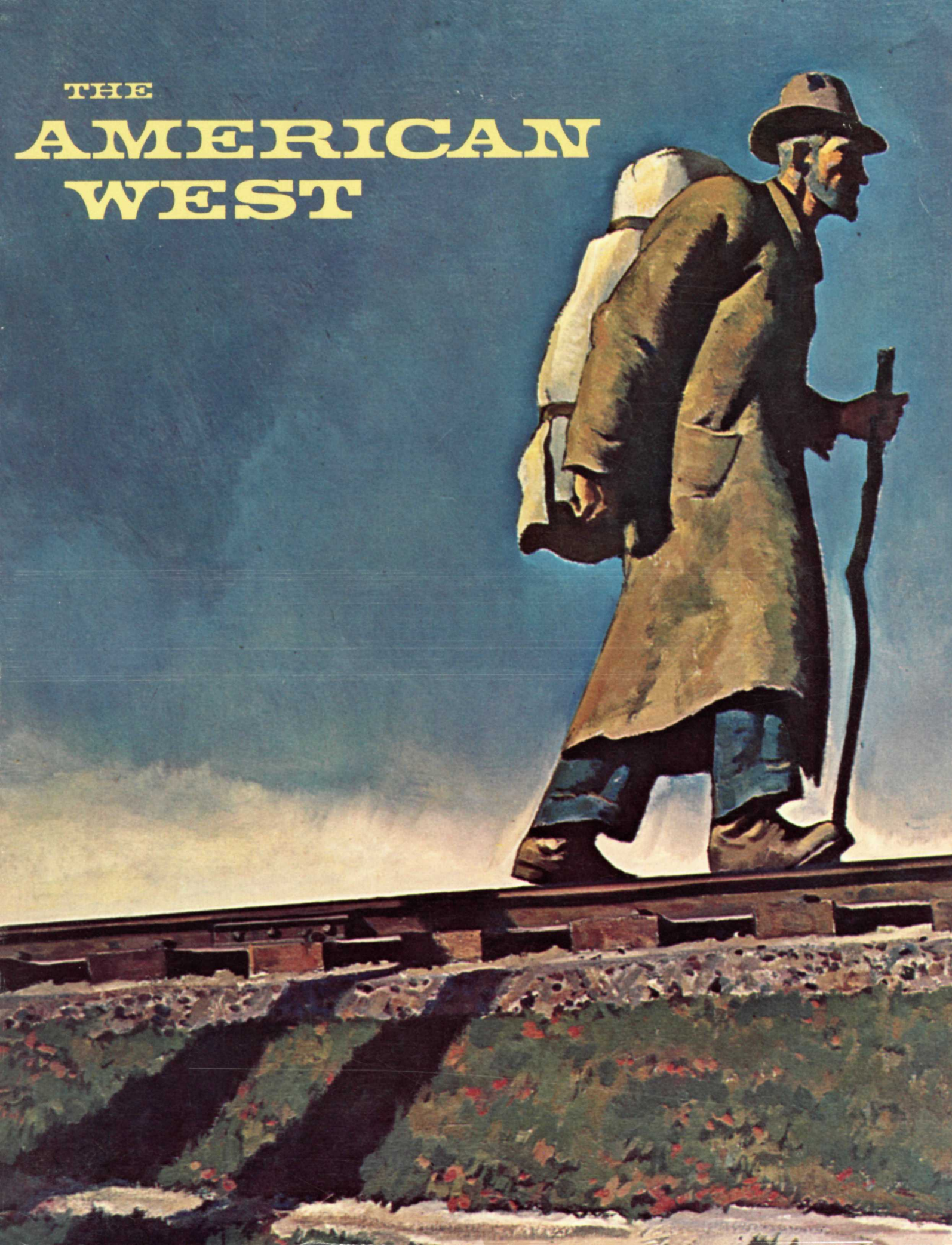
THE AMERICAN WEST



Cover: "Destination Unknown," by Maynard Dixon, a painter-poet whose love for the great sweeping land of the Southwest was illuminated by his painting, and whose understanding of the meaning of that land to himself and others was documented by his poetry:

Now I go out alone to ride the free hills,
bare-breasted and stark, these hills that make no concealment;—
where no woman is with me,—no woman shall ever be;
where stern and alone I face the thing that I am;
where I face the void of all that I fail to be,
and knowing my fear, shall be not afraid of that fear.
Now I put out my hand, touching the sky of evening. . . .
reaching, reaching between the stars, and it seems
there could be no time at which I did not exist
and no time ever at which I shall cease to be—
while here alone in my manhood-self I am.

—"I Am" 1936

For more on the life and work of Maynard Dixon, see "Free Man in a Free Country" on page 41 of this issue.

(Cover painting owned by Doctor and Mrs. Grant Southwick)

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Hub of an American La France steam-pump fire engine during restoration in the Cowell Hall of California History, Oakland Museum (Thomas Vano photograph).

THE HUNTER AND THE *Artist*

A Unique Partnership in the Documentation of the Mountain Man's West

BY JAY MONAGHAN

"The Cavalcade" (with Sir William Drummond Stewart on the white horse).

JOHNSON HAD HIS BOSWELL, Lincoln his Herndon, and Sir William Drummond Stewart had the rare distinction of having a Miller to perpetuate his eccentric adventures in the Old West. The two men's reputations are inseparable, and it seems safe to say that each of them would have been a historical nonentity except for the other. The Scottish-born Stewart made six trips to fur-trading rendezvous between 1833 and 1838, accompanying such notables as missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and Jason Lee; naturalist Thomas Nuttall of Harvard, and ornithologist J. K. Townsend. He became acquainted with Father DeSmet, John C. Fremont, and all the mountain men of note from Kit Carson to Jim Bridger. Yet out of these experiences he wrote two books which reveal far more of his dependence upon the prose style of Sir Walter Scott than his knowledge of the West; his place in western history would be shadowy indeed but for the artist, Alfred Jacob Miller. Similarly, Miller was a second-rate artist who most certainly would be unknown today but for William Drummond Stewart. Born in Baltimore in 1810, Miller studied art abroad and succumbed to the contemporary opinion that a true artist must not "fall into the vulgar error of making things too like themselves." This preachment marred all his work, but his connection with William Drummond Stewart nevertheless made him famous. The combination was a fortunate one for the uses of history.

Miller returned home from his European studies at the age of twenty-four. Two years later, in 1836, he opened a studio in New Orleans where he specialized in portraits and animal pictures. The great day in the young artist's life came when a man of striking appearance walked into the studio. The gray-clad stranger wore his forty years with an erect military physique, though his face, especially the aquiline nose, seemed flushed, perhaps from habitual drinking, perhaps from a lifetime in the open — most likely from both. The visitor was particularly impressed by Miller's misty landscapes. He introduced himself as Captain William Drummond Stewart, Scottish sportsman and big-game hunter, and added that he had made several trips to the Rocky Mountains with St. Louis fur brigades. Come spring he wanted to go again and this time take along an artist to record the scenery, the Indians, and the wild white men who lived with them.

Captain Stewart offered the opportunity to Miller and left his card. On investigation the stranger turned out to be all that he had professed — and in addition a nobleman, the brother of the lord of both Murthly and Grandtully castles in Perthshire, Scotland. Although receiving a captain's retirement pay amounting to about two dollars per day (worth perhaps twelve dollars by present values), Stewart also had an additional income from a small inheritance. With these assurances Miller decided to accept Stewart's invitation, and the two men left St. Louis with the fur traders' caravan to the mountains in 1837.

On the trip Miller sketched well over a hundred scenes. The exact number is indefinite because, of the several hundred that have been preserved, many are obviously duplicates. On some sketches he scribbled marginal notes that have become a priceless source of information about life at a trappers' rendezvous, as well as about the remarkable nobleman. "What he wanted out thar in the mountains," one trapper said of Stewart, "I never jest rightly know'd. He was no trader, nor a trapper, and flung about his dollars right smart."

Certainly the captain's most obvious reason for being "out thar" was the big-game hunting. Born and reared on vast

The Hunter: Sir William at the time of his mighty excursions.

Highland estates of semi-wild land well stocked with roebuck, fallow and red deer, grouse, and waterfowl, it seems natural that he would want to sample hunting elsewhere. Indeed, a large part of the estates' income came from leasing shooting privileges to wealthy sportsmen; but the captain, since his father's death, could hunt there only with his older brother's permission. The brother also managed William's small inheritance, and a quarrel between them over this had drawn from William the oath that he would never again sleep under the roof of Murthly Castle — an embarrassing vow to keep when he later inherited the estate.

The most frequently repeated reason for Stewart's trips into the West seems questionable in the extreme: he supposedly had suffered the humiliation of showing cowardice as a lieutenant in the Battle of Waterloo and, to exonerate himself was determined to demonstrate his courage among savage Indians and reckless mountain men. Several fallacies can be found in this hypothesis, although it has been recorded separately by Miller, who lived for a time at Murthly, and by John G. Millais, who enjoyed shooting on the estate. The story seems to have been common talk at Murthly and was probably started by Stewart's coachman, who served in his master's company during the battle. However, military records fail to confirm the tale, and the lieutenant eventually became a captain. Another weakness in the rumor is the length of time that elapsed between the battle and the captain's first trip to the mountains; a man suffering mental anguish over youthful cowardice would hardly wait seventeen years to prove his courage.

A much more plausible reason for Captain Stewart's first western trip has been overlooked by historians. This concerned a Scottish lass. Stewart was always peculiarly susceptible to females, red or white. As one mountain man said about Stewart's playful roguishness with squaws, "Thar was old grit in him, and a hair of the black b'ar at that." The captain's "unfortunate affair" occurred sometime in 1829 or 1830, when, as a bachelor of thirty-four or thirty-five, he visited a neighbor's farmhouse. In the courtyard he spied a serving maid holding up her skirts and, according to a contemporary, "fell in love with her nether limbs when he saw her tromping blankets in a tub." Their son was three months old when Stewart married the girl. He settled her in an Edinburgh flat and shortly afterward sailed to the United States.

Arriving in New York in 1832, Stewart rode on horseback to St. Louis in time to join the fur brigade going to the mountains in the spring of 1833. In the same year Maxmilian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, traveled up the Missouri on the American Fur Company steamboat. He had employed a young Swiss artist, named Karl Bodmer, to paint Indians for a future publication. Stewart may have heard about this arrangement and tucked the idea away in his own adventurous head, but it was not until 1837 that the Scotsman took artist Miller to the mountains on the trip destined to make both of them famous.

Thus Miller, riding with a fur brigade, was the first man to draw Chimney Rock, Scotts Bluff, Devil's Gate, Independence Rock — all the landmarks along what would later become the Oregon Trail. One day, while looking for buffalo, he rode off twelve miles from the caravan with the captain and his mixed-blood guide, Antoine Clemente. The captain quarreled with Antoine, who in turn showed fight. Employer and employee fondled their rifles savagely. Birth, breeding, and rank counted for nothing in the mountains. The mixed-blood, who would be fortunate to know his own father, glared at the nobleman, who could trace his ancestors back to the days of William the Conqueror. Neither man conceded the other superior cour-

age. Artist Miller, expecting murder, wondered whether he would be able to find his way back to the distant cavalcade in case both were killed. Then a herd of buffalo crossed the horizon, and, to his relief, the hunters galloped away, enmity forgotten in the excitement of the chase.

On Green River, not far from present-day Pinedale, Wyoming, the traders unloaded their wagons and built sales booths, and the great fair commenced. Miller had more time now to sketch. The villages of half a dozen tribes dotted the green flats. Shoshone warriors staged a parade in honor of their friend, Captain Stewart. Miller drew the prancing horses, embroidered shields, spinning eagle feathers. Many mountain men came to call on the traders, to get the first news from the States after a whole year; also to buy cloth, beads, needles, vermilion for their squaws — who liked to paint a brilliant red line along the white part in their shiny, blue-black hair — and "likker," made of raw alcohol diluted with honey and Green River water. Among them came Jim Bridger, dean of the mountain men. Captain Stewart presented him with a suit of armor, presumably from his brother's castle in Scotland. Old Gabe, as Bridger was called, careened through the tepees with liquor inside his belly and a breastplate outside, the plume of Navarre on a helmet capping his long hair and whiskers — a spectacle preserved for us by Miller's pencil.

After the "Saternalia," as Miller described the rendezvous, Captain Stewart and his party rode off to his favorite hunting grounds in the Wind River Mountains. Perhaps that area reminded him of the fey country in which he had grown to manhood — the Grampian Hills, Ben Lomond, glimmering Loch Katrine, the Valley of the Tay, or the Birnam Wood of Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* which was now part of his brother's estates. More likely he chose the upper tributaries of the Green because horse feed, wood, water, and big game were plentiful there.

By October, 1837, he and Miller were back in St. Louis. The artist hurried down to New Orleans to work his sketches into large oil paintings. The captain followed on a later steamboat and waited in the luxury of the Crescent City for spring and another trip to the mountains.

The Artist: Alfred Jacob Miller (self-portrait).

When next he returned to civilization in the fall of 1838, the captain learned that his brother, the baronet, had died. He was now the "remittance man" — Sir William, lord of both Grandtully and Murthly castles with their 33,274 acres of land. In addition, the new baronet inherited from his mother vast agricultural holdings in the Logiealmond area. He asked Bill Sublette, ex-fur-trader, for a loan of $700 to settle his affairs and purchase a ticket to the British Isles.

Miller, still in New Orleans, was slow in finishing the large oil paintings, and a year later Sir William sent for him to come to Scotland to continue his work. At Murthly Castle, Miller jotted down more tidbits about the baronet, which would otherwise be lost to history. One concerns the old vow never to sleep again under the Murthly roof, which he nearly managed to adhere to by dining in the spacious castle and retiring for the night to a cottage in the garden. Neighboring castles, notably Blair, where Sir William had often visited in his youth, had been remodeled after Scotland's last fight for independence. Castellations and corner turrets were replaced by clusters of chimney pots protruding from low-pitched roofs. Following the new style, Sir William built an uncastellated wing to Murthly — a roof, by the way, under which he felt he could sleep without violating his oath. In this apartment he installed a gigantic bathtub made from five slabs of marble.

The architectural revival of Murthly was to be enhanced by Alfred Jacob Miller's murals of the West, along with "tro-

"The Surround," which incorporated two of Miller's misconceptions—buffalo running with their tails in the air and horses running with legs extended fore-and-aft.

phies of the fight and chase." Western weapons, big-game antlers, broadswords, bows and arrows would mingle with ancestral furnishings of Persian prayer rugs and Florentine marble. All this was to be set to a Sir Walter Scott rhythm.

Outside Murthly's grim walls only two trees, a sycamore and a venerable oak, marked the site of Birnam Wood. To restore this forest, Sir William imported trees from the Rockies — blue spruce and hemlock. He also sent for flower seeds, no doubt remembering the Colorado columbine and yellow marigold that bloomed in the wet soil below melting snowbanks on his beloved Wind River Mountains. To pasture buffalo from the plains he enclosed an area, six miles in circumference with a stone wall seven feet tall with wires on top which joined the precipitous face of Birnam Hill at each end. Native fallow deer sometimes invaded the preserve by bounding down an almost perpendicular mountainside, much to the head game-keeper's dismay.

The strangest of all Sir William's imported fauna were some American Indians along with that mixed-blood hunter, Antoine Clemente, who — clad in a suit of black velvet — was taught to stand behind his master at table. Decked in kilts on holidays, he frolicked in the village and it is interesting to imagine the man born among blanket Indians adding some new steps to the Highland fling.

But, Sir William was not satisfied with his creation. The Tay and the Grampian Hills were not Wind River. Loch Katrine, Ben Lomond, the Trossachs, all of Sir Walter's balladry cloyed in the mouth of a Highland nobleman who had dared battle Blackfoot and Crow; had once dashed out of a Cheyenne village with Beaver Tail's squaw in front of his saddle; had shot buffalo, bighorn, and grizzly bear; and had sat in the cool shade of great cottonwoods on the banks of the Siskadee drinking diluted alcohol with the laughing liars of the mountains.

Miller stayed a year at Murthly Castle, painting eight-foot oils from the sketches he had made in the wilderness. True to his training, he abstained from "the vulgar error of making things too like themselves." He added Scottish rills and Highland fens to Rocky Mountain landscapes, placed Indian tepees where they suited artistic composition rather than a real Indian's needs. His mountain men set beaver traps in shallow water, where in real life the furry prize would tear off its foot and escape instead of drowning.

"The Trapper's Bride," an imaginative bit of chivalry in an unlikely setting.

In one painting Miller's antelope wear the antlers of fallow deer — antlers which sportsmen said grew larger on Sir William's mist-shrouded moors than elsewhere in the British Isles. Miller's running buffalo invariably carry their tails arched in the air — an error copied from George Catlin's paintings and accepted by other artists for more than a hundred years. Miller also, in the manner of all western artists of that time, depicted a horse galloping "belly to earth," fore and hind feet stretched out, front and rear. This error persisted until the Age of Remington, when photographs taken in California by Eadweard Muybridge finally settled the argument.

Noting these and many other false representations in Miller's work, a latter-day critic may wonder whether mountain men really picketed their horses with ropes around their necks, as Miller shows. Certainly any man of experience with horses in open country knows that this method is apt to knock out an eye or choke the animal down.

Before returning to America, Miller went to London to exhibit some of his pictures. There he met the famous artist, George Catlin, who had traveled up the Missouri to Fort Union on an American Fur Company boat in 1832 — five years ahead of Miller. Catlin never saw a rendezvous, but he had drawn pictures of wild Indians and gained great popularity as a lecturer on Indian culture, which he illustrated by dressing members of the audience in fringed and beaded costumes. In a book about his travels he described self-inflicted tortures he had witnessed at a Mandan sun dance. Skeptics pronounced the practice too horrible to be true, but it was later verified. Miller, who had never seen a sun dance on his trip to the mountains, wrote his sister, "There is, in truth, a great deal of humbug about Mr. George Catlin. He had published a book concerning some extraordinary stories and luckily for him, there are but few persons who have traveled over the same ground."

While Miller was displaying his pictures in London, the restless baronet was busying himself with projects of his own. He sold the lush farmlands of Logiealmond for a million dollars and began construction of an elaborate hunting lodge several stories high, two miles from Murthly and adjacent to the buffalo pasture. Named Rohallion, or Roebuck Head, the pinnacled monstrosity could be leased at a fine figure to shooting parties. He also built two shooting boxes, one close to the grouse-shooting moors some six miles away, the other in brushy roebuck country. He remodeled an old hospital, built by his ancestors in 1711, into a lodge for his own occupancy, called Dalpowie. Perhaps the site interested

A landscape interpreted: This superbly impressionistic scene depicted an encampment of Snake Indians in the Wind River Mountains.

him because the windows opened onto a view of pine-covered slopes resembling his favorite hunting grounds on the upper forks of Green River; more likely, by living here he could lease Murthly for a large sum. Sir William also created a magnificent chapel with a high spire and catherine-wheel window of brilliant stained glass. A myriad of lighted lamps and tapers illuminated a golden altar. Religious murals were to be executed by Alfred Jacob Miller.

When these projects had been finished, Sir William arranged for the proper education of his son, George. Although the boy's mother was established in Grandtully Castle, some eighteen miles north of Murthly, she never tried to assume her station among the landed gentry. Instead, she found other friends. With sufficient funds for trips to London and an intellectual sensitivity that was probably superior to her grouse-shooting husband's, she enjoyed concerts, art galleries, and museums. A devout Catholic, she renovated but did not enlarge the little chapel on a nearby Grandtully hill. Her few letters that have been preserved reveal a capable woman, deeply in love with her husband, never bitter about being neglected, occasionally inviting him to dinner — a life story, too improbable for fiction.

An event documented: With no time for imaginative flourishes, Miller caught the movement of wagons and men across a river.

Sir William, his domestic affairs settled, decided to visit the American West once more and stage the greatest hunting expedition any man had yet conceived. He wrote Bill Sublette in St. Louis to buy the best mules and horses available, to send word to Iron Bracelet, jovial Little Chief of the Flatheads, and other Indian intimates to join him at the rendezvous. Perhaps he also anticipated a night with some Shoshone damsel, for "a hair of the black b'ar" was still in him. Although Sir William may not have known it, the heroic days of rendezvous had passed — too much competition, too few beaver, too low prices since silk hats had become popular. Bill Sublette, hard-pushed for money since the market broke, responded to Sir William's project with approval and dispatch, and greeted the baronet most cordially when he arrived in St. Louis. This remarkable expedition was the first millionaire hunting trip into the Rockies; it marked the pattern that would henceforth give social status to the low standard of living necessary when camping in the wilderness.

When the grand excursion was over, Sir William returned to Scotland, where a few stories have been preserved about wild Indian guests dashing around the countryside in a lifeboat on wheels drawn by six horses. Sir William is said to have enjoyed their antics. Most of his time in ensuing years seems to have been spent in foreign travel, managing his farms, patronizing the local village fetes, beautifying the Murthly Chapel, and entertaining guests for the shooting.

In the 1860s it became stylish to restore Scottish manors to the turreted castles of an earlier generation, with interior decoration reflecting the Highland scene. The Murrays of Blair Castle adorned a hallway seventy yards long with stag antlers, and even deceptively cemented antlers that had been shed to the skulls of inferior bucks. They had a chair fashioned from stag horns, and Sir William, in like manner, made two equally uncomfortable-looking chairs from buffalo heads, with hoofs affixed to the legs. At Blair Castle murals depicted kilted lairds hunting otter and stalking stag; one was a life-size picture of the Fourth Duke, in Highland dress, holding before his admiring family a black cock he had shot. Skilled mechanics embellished these heroic murals with imitation picture frames made of plaster, following a fad of the time. Those frames are oddly connected with the eventual shipment of Miller's pictures to America.

Sir William had designed a new coat of arms and compiled an elaborate book of his family's genealogy, showing his son to have been born in wedlock. He also purchased an army commission for him, and the young man served gallantly in the Crimean War, survived the Charge of the Light Brigade, received the Victoria Cross "for extraordinary courage on the field of battle," and became a major in Her Majesty's Ninety-Third Highlanders.

With his son grown and gone from the castles, the aging baronet legally adopted twenty-year-old Francis Nichols, who had lived with him on the estates for five years and whose parents Sir William had known in Texas. When Major Stewart, who had not married, died suddenly in 1868, Sir William tried unsuccessfully to provide for his adopted son, Francis, by breaking the entail on his estates which specified that they, like the baronetcy, must descend only to "the

male heir of his body." In desperation, Sir William, now seventy-three, willed Francis all his "inheritable and movable property." Did this include the Miller murals on the walls with imitation picture frames around them?

On April 28, 1871, Sir William died. The tragedy of Macbeth and Banquo's ghost still haunted Birnam Wood: the dead baronet's tenants and retainers, despising the adopted son, hinted that he had murdered his father for the inheritance. Twice the body was disinterred from the family vault for post mortem examinations, which revealed nothing. Francis Nichols was exonerated, but he refused to concede title to the estates.

Legal complications arose immediately, which had an indirect bearing on the Miller murals. Sir William's younger brother, Archibald, claimed to be the logical inheritor of title and estates. But Sir William's son, the major, was alleged to have had a baby son, perhaps two, and one of them could be the rightful heir to title and property. The mothers of both babies filed suits. Here was what was then called "a pretty how-de-do" in which competing lawyers would probably get the castles.

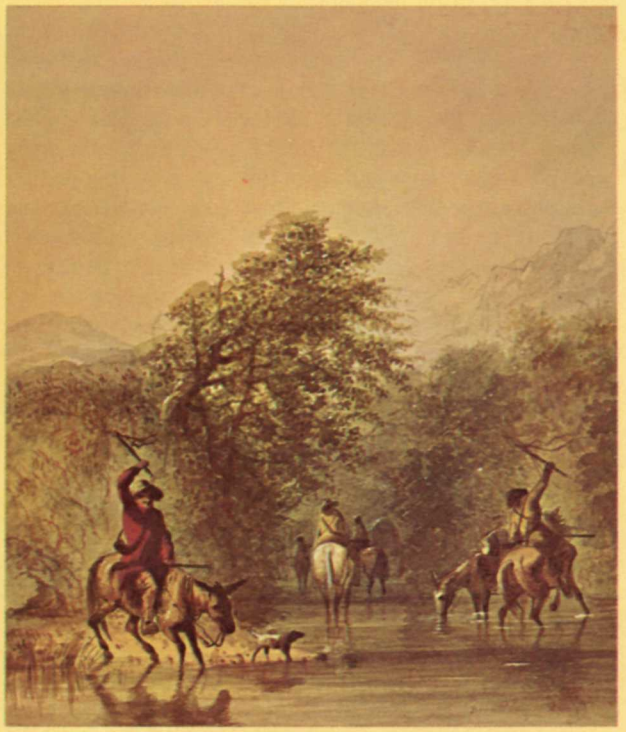
During these legal entanglements, Francis Nichols took everything movable — furniture, jewels, even ornamental vases from the lawns of Murthly Castle — to the "hospital" where he held undisputed residence. The artificial plaster frames around Miller's murals evidently justified Francis in claiming them as movable, and he stripped the pictures from the walls. Only two were overlooked — one of Stewart shooting a panther, the other showing him confronted by hostile Crow.

Before the cases came to trial both babies died. One mother dropped her complaint; the other filed an amendment claiming a widow's rights from the estate.

The Court of Sessions, reviewing the evidence, found that the major had become a heavy drinker after resigning from the army. When purchasing fishing tackle at George Wilson's shop in Edinburgh, he had spied the owner's sixteen-year-old daughter, called later in a cab, and took her riding several times. He had also secretly escorted the girl on a fishing trip to his father's estate, evaded the gamekeepers, photographed her in fishing togs, and sent the picture to his father labeled "A Poacher at Murthly."

The court's review of the evidence also disclosed that when the girl became pregnant, the major had driven with her and her father to Murthly Castle. Arriving late at night with no one answering his summons, the major — a survivor of Balaclava and wearer of the Victoria Cross — was not one to be dismayed by silent walls. He promptly kicked in the door of Murthly Castle and was told by a trembling servant that Sir William had leased the castle and was now living at the "hospital." The party drove on and sometime before dawn aroused Sir William. The sleepy baronet, according to evidence in the trial, sent down word

Joseph Reddeford Walker, mountain man extraordinary.



"Breaking Trail to Escape from Indians."

Bullboating on the Platte River, with Walker entering the river on the right.

that he didn't care if his son married the girl. This, the plaintiff claimed, was parental consent, legitimizing the marriage. The court did not agree and concluded the above review of the evidence by ruling against the plaintiff.

Thus the baronetcy, the castles, and the land with an annual gross income of £ 15,158/13/– passed to Sir William's brother Archibald. Francis Nichols sold much of the movable property in Edinburgh, auctioning the pictures, including the Miller murals, for a reputed £ 2,000, and then moved to Texas. In 1937 seven of the choice Millers, presumably from this sale, turned up in the hands of London book dealers, who sold them to that king of western Americana collectors, the late Everett D. Graff of Winnetka, Illinois.

Sir Archibald, last of the direct line of baronets, cared nothing for the American West. He neglected the Rocky Mountain animals, and within a decade the buffalo in the park had died or been killed. The last one broke through the stone wall and attacked the mail coach, tossing horses right and left. A passenger with a rifle in his hands and no particular respect for western fauna fired at the shaggy monster, thus bringing to an end the sole living relic of Sir William Drummond Stewart.

Jay Monaghan *is consultant to the Wiles Collection of Lincolniana and Western American Library at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and editor of the "American Trails" series. His books include:* Australians and the Gold Rush *(1966);* The Book of the American West *(1963); and* The Life and Adventures of Ned Buntline *(1952).*

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Three basic studies of William Drummond Stewart and Alfred Jacob Miller are Bernard DeVoto, *Across the Wide Missouri* (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), Mae Reed Porter, *Scotsman in Buckskin* (New York, 1963), and Marvin C. Ross, *The West of Alfred Jacob Miller* (Norman, Okla., 1968). Informed readers will also recognize citations in this article from well-known fur-trade and overland journals.

A few hitherto neglected sources in Scottish libraries have been consulted. Two volumes, *Game Birds and Shooting Sketches* (London, 1892), *British Deer and Their Horns* (London, 1897), and *Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais* (2 vols., London, 1897) — all by John G. Millais — contain pertinent gossip concerning Sir William, heard by the author while shooting at Murthly Castle. His father, John Everett Millais, leased Murthly Castle for thirteen years. The elder Millais, a founder of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, may have been responsible for the noticeable difference in style and composition between the sketches Miller executed in the West and the paintings he finished in Scotland.

A boyhood friend of Sir William's, Charles Augustus Murray, lived in an adjoining castle. His *Travels in North America during the Years 1834, 1835, and 1836* mentions "Captain S ———, a cousin and old acquaintance" and is important for an understanding of Scotsmen of Stewart's station in life. (Murray brought a hippopotamus back from Africa while Stewart imported buffalo.)

Thomas Hunter's *Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire* (Perth, 1883) and Stewart's letters in the Archives of Scotland describe the baronet's attempt to replant Birnam Wood with Rocky Mountain trees.

At the Sandeman Library in Perth, Scotland, various clippings from newspapers published at the time of Sir William's death were helpful. This library also provided reports dealing with the legal decisions which prevented a Texan from inheriting the estates and by so doing permitted many of the Murthly murals to reach the United States.

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE

OLD GABE

Of Her Majesty's English Life Guards

BY MILDRED GOOSMAN

Mildred Goosman, a native Nebraskan, is curator of Western Americana at the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha.

SOMEDAY, SOME TOURIST, NATURALIST, or communer-with-nature may stumble upon the weathered remains of a metal breastplate high in the Rocky Mountains of Wyoming. He will doubtless look upon it as one of the greatest historical finds of the century — incontrovertible proof that the Spanish conquistadores had somehow wandered into the far north of western America, contrary to all documented fact. The discovery would be a genuine find, all right, but not quite so earth-shakingly important as that; rather, it would more likely be evidence of a remarkable practical joke that took place more than a century ago.

The scene was the Green River Valley south of the Wind River Mountains. The occasion, the American Fur Company's 1837 Rendezvous. Assembled at the pre-arranged meeting were free trappers in from their lonely mountain camps, together with Indians by the hundreds — all with bundles of pelts accumulated from the year's catch, and eager for the trade goods brought overland along the Platte Valley route by Thomas Fitzpatrick, the company's agent. But they were there for more than trade, for the Rendezvous was a mountain "sociable," a great get-together that combined all the roistrous elements of New Year's Eve in Times Square, a college re-union, visitors' day at summer camp, the Olympic Games, and summer Chautauqua, plus high-jinks and revelries which couldn't be matched today or mentioned here. On a lovely level plain between Horse Creek and the Green River, with snowy peaks of the Wind River Range in the distance, each tribe set up its tipi encampment. The rough and ready trappers roared their welcomes and gathered around campfires to spin yarns, tell gargantuan lies, and exchange news of those who hadn't shown up — some who would never be seen again.

First came the main business of bartering furs for guns and gewgaws, ammunition and liquor, vermilion paint, hatchets, and other necessities. Taking enthusiastic part were the now-legendary trappers and guides who were America's pathfinders of the West — among them Kit Carson, Lucien Fontenelle, and the greatest of them all, Jim Bridger, nicknamed "Old Gabe," a veteran of fifteen years in the mountains at the age of thirty-three.

This year the American Fur Company's cavalcade to the mountains had a distinguished member—William Drummond Stewart, a Scottish nobleman who had adventured in the Rockies for several summers and was well known and liked by both the trappers and the Indians. His experiences brought new subjects to the fireside — the Napoleonic wars, travel scenes and customs of European capitols, tales of Shakespeare and the London theatre. We will never know just what running joke of previous summers may have prompted Stewart (later Sir William) to bring a cuirassier and helmet of the English Life Guards all the way from England. But it must have been worth the trouble to make an impressive presentation to Jim Bridger, first assembling an audience to share in the fun, then dramatically unwrapping the strange paraphernalia.

Without a doubt, Old Gabe — whose wry, mock-serious wit and outrageous tales already were a part of mountain folklore — would have been equal to the occasion. One can imagine his cool showmanship in accepting the gift, donning the breastplate and pulling on the plumed helmet. Riding his horse up and down, jaunty and regal in his worn leather leggings, he would deliberately assume a masterly nonchalance — as if he had been born to metal-rigged royalty. Doubtless, many other mountain men had their turns at wearing this unique departure from buckskin and beaver. Joe Meek and Joshua Pilcher have been mentioned in various accounts of the escapade, which had enough of horseplay in it to appeal to the crude but thoroughly enthusiastic humor of the mountains.

Bridger's poise and unconquerable dignity were captured in the sketch at the right, drawn by Alfred Jacob Miller, the young artist commissioned by Stewart in 1837 to make preliminary field sketches for the large oil paintings of the scenery and life of the mountain West that would ultimately hang in the ancestral Stewart castle in Scotland. Many of Miller's impressive paintings now reside in the collections of the Joslyn Art Museum, but it would be difficult indeed to find one to match the humor and charm of his rendition of the armor-clad Bridger — a lighthearted moment out of the mountain man's past.

ARIZONA VANQUISHED

Impressions and Reflections Concerning the Quality of Life on a Military Frontier

BY ROBERT M. UTLEY

MARTHA SUMMERHAYES STOOD ON THE DECK of the rickety old steamer *Newbern* as it closed on the Golden Gate after a sixteen-day voyage from Fort Yuma. Wife of a lieutenant in the Eighth Infantry, Martha was returning to her New England home to recuperate from the ravages of two years of military life on the Arizona frontier. Three decades after that day in 1876, she could vividly recall the emotion that overcame her at the sight of the "friendly green hills" and the "glorious bay of San Francisco." "I had left behind me the deserts, the black rocks, the burning sun, the snakes, the scorpions, the centipedes, the Indians, and the Ehrenberg graveyard; and so the tears flowed, and I did not try to stop them; they were tears of joy."

In 1908 Martha Summerhayes published *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of My Army Life*. Lively and engaging in style, it has become a minor classic of frontier literature, inspiring at least three reprint editions in recent years. The Arizona of Mrs. Summerhayes' recollections was a wretched land, seared by a wretched climate and inhabited by a population containing its full share of humanity's effluvia — altogether an intolerable place to live. It was an Arizona that began to vanish in the 1880s when brought under the benign influence of the Southern Pacific Railroad. That the army community shared this judgment is evident in a mass of literature, both contemporary and reminiscent, penned by officers and their wives.

The United States seized part of the territory that became Arizona as Mexican War spoils in 1848, and in 1853 sent General Gadsden to buy the rest. Not until the middle 1860s, when mineral strikes lured immigrants who stirred up the Apaches, did the army get a real taste of what it was in for. By 1886, the height of the Geronimo campaign, Arizona was occupied by five thousand soldiers — one-fifth of the U.S. Army. Long before that, General Sherman concluded that Mexico had got the better of the bargain in saddling her northern neighbor with "that miserable desert land." "If you, gentlemen," he told a congressional committee in 1874, "will get Mexico to take Arizona back, I will agree to knock two regiments of cavalry from our estimates."

Although Sherman was not wholly jesting, no such political improbability transpired. For better or worse, the army was stuck with Arizona, and Arizona with the army. The land, the climate, the isolation, the primitive living conditions, and the merciless, always elusive, Apache enemy combined to make it the most odious assignment at the command of a capricious, if not malevolent, adjutant general. "That most woe-begone of military departments, Arizona," recorded Captain John G. Bourke; "the officer or soldier who once got out there rarely returned for years." Men regarded it as a punishment to be endured, General Crook complained, and had to be constantly prodded to prevent their lapsing into time-serving lethargy.

Mainly it was the land and the climate that earned Arizona the harshest epithets in the military lexicon. To be sure, the Mogollon Plateau, the San Francisco peaks, and other high elevations invited scenic and climatic comparison with the best in the West. But the posts in such settings — Whipple Barracks, Fort Apache, new Fort Grant — were few. Rather it was from the scorched, malarial bottoms of the Gila and its tributaries that Arizona gained the image that characterized it in the army's memory.

Here were the vast deserts of sand and stone, boasting all the fertility of a brickyard; the clusters of precipitous, rocky, incredibly rugged mountains, webbed by treacherous canyons; the widely separated and uncertain sources of water; the profusion of vegetation armed with thorns that surrendered to

The high fashion of this pride of army wives softens their harsh setting—the wilderness that was Tucson.

Less uniform elegance marks these "always elusive Apache" prisoners (below) at desolate Fort Thomas in 1875.

man or beast on the slightest invitation; and the snakes, scorpions, centipedes, tarantulas, and Gila monsters that composed "veritable museums of entomology" to be found in every habitation or campsite. After an inspection tour in 1872, the quartermaster general of the army summed up his impressions: "It is impossible to convey to anyone who has not himself traveled in a sandy, stony, and rocky desert any clear idea of the desolation of the regions through which the Lower Colorado and Gila flow. They are a true Sahara." And in a masterpiece of understatement he added, "It is a most expensive country in which to conduct military operations and maintain an army."

Here, too, temperatures from 100 to 120 degrees were common, and persisted day and night without relief to the victims. A story current at Old Camp Grant on the San Pedro held that it once got so hot that two thermometers had to be strapped together in order to afford room for the mercury to rise. Hoary with antiquity is the story of the deceased veteran of Fort Yuma who sent back from hell for his blankets. As early as 1891, Captain Bourke apologetically justified the inclusion of this "mouldy military chestnut" in his book as assurance to readers inclined to doubt the authority of any writer on Arizona who did not tell it in the first chapter. To the wives who followed their husbands to Arizona, the effect of sun and heat on complexion and constitution was anything but a jesting matter.

The quality of Arizona service may be glimpsed in the memory of a cavalry subaltern with the improbable name of Camillo Casatti Cadmus Carr, assigned to Camp McDowell in 1866. En route from Fort Yuma, his only contact with civilization was at the periodic brush or adobe hovels called "stations." Here travelers up the Gila paused to water and feed their stock and to "poison themselves with . . . 'Pickhandle Whisky,' " a "murderer's inspiration" compounded of alcohol, water, red pepper, and tobacco, well stirred with a pickhandle.

An army wife bakes in the heat of her Fort Verde kitchen.

The "newest, largest, and best post in Arizona," McDowell turned out to be a cluster of windowless mud huts perched on the banks of the Verde, eight miles above its confluence with the Salt. No trees or grass relieved the barren scene. The buildings edged a parade ground of packed granite gravel "as white and painful to the eyes in the blazing sun as though it had been whitewashed." It absorbed heat during the day and retained it to the misery of all during the night. Two-room adobe huts for the officers lined one side of the parade, long adobe barracks for the men the other.

Everyone slept outside. The dirt floors "seemed to have some special attraction for a species of villainous and venomous red ant, which came up in swarms through them in one spot after another, overran the place, invaded the beds and held possession of them to the exclusion of their rightful occupants." Furthermore, the rooms were frequently "invaded by rattlesnakes, centipedes of 'monstrous size and mien,' and whole families of scorpions." Arising one morning, the lieutenant discovered in the folds of his dress coat "a whole family of about a dozen scorpions, looking like bleached prawns, except that each had ready in his upturned tail a sting, properly prepared for producing a lasting impression of warmth exceeding even that of the climate of the country."

During the rainy season the garrison tried to share the quarters with these inhabitants, only to be driven out by another kind of indignity. The roofs consisted of a layer of twigs laid on the rafters, then a layer of horse manure, then nine to twelve inches of clay. When the rains came in January and February, recalled Carr, "the water that poured through the roofs into the rooms was at first of a dark-brown color, then shaded off into a light yellow as the mud of the roof dissolved and made its way through the lower stratum. On such occasions the occupants of the quarters covered their bedding and other perishable articles with rubber blankets and passed their time outdoors, where, if there was more moisture, it was at least cleaner and less fragrant."

With slight variation of detail, Carr's description of Camp McDowell and life there fitted most of the posts in the territory — Thomas, Bowie, Lowell, Huachuca, Verde, and Old Camp Grant. So, too, did his Indian experiences mirror those reported by comrades at other posts. Such country around McDowell as "was not occupied by reptiles and cactus," he wrote, "seemed to be so well held down by the ubiquitous and 'perniciously active' Apache that no one was allowed to go half a mile away from the post in broad daylight without a suitable escort."

Rarely were they actually seen, however, and still more rarely were they brought to battle. Most scouts progressed like this one: "For five or six nights we climbed the mountains on one side and slid down the other, leading our horses, battered and bruised outselves among the boulders, pricked our flesh with the cactus spines we ran against in the dark, dodged

The moustache found favor (5–2) among infantry NCO's on campaign in 1885, and with this Fort Wingate trooper. Soldiers serving in "that most woe-begone of military departments, Arizona," considered duty there punishment to be endured. Apache scouts (below) thrived in their harsh homeland.

Fort Grant was home in 1898 for Col. Thomas McGregor (right rocker). Apprehensive but in command, he sits at ease with wife, young son, stylish daughter, her (officer and) gentleman caller, and the dog "Mike." Loco (left), chief of the Warm Springs Apaches, is authority at ease on a blanket.

the rolling stones sent crashing down by those above us on the trail, and suffered for want of water which was hardly to be had at all. We marched all night and lay during the day in the red hot cañons, their sides adding, by reflected heat, to the warmth of the sand on which we usually camped, without shade, and without having as much fire as would make a cup of coffee."

Of the human inhabitants, too, the troops held an unflattering opinion that was generally returned in full. A stormy marriage, tortured by a love-hate syndrome, united army and Arizonans. The latter cried for ever more soldiers and even applauded their occasional triumphs over the Apaches. But the same citizens drowned this testimony of affection in explosive denunciations of the military record of being so often where the enemy was not.

Knowing from agonizing experience the near impossibility of being where the enemy was, or even identifying *who* he was, officers and soldiers deeply resented these attacks. They could find a sprinkling of Arizona pioneers civilized enough for the society of officers and gentlemen. The rest were either Captain Bourke's genial illiterates and "rum-poisoned bummers" or the less discriminating Captain Carter's "most lawless aggregation of thieves and murderers ever assembled on our soil."

Too, the army viewed Arizonans as parasites, not only on the army but on the nation as well. General Ord's complaint in 1869 found support in reports of later commanders: "Almost the only paying business the white inhabitants have in that Territory is supplying the troops," he wrote. "I am informed from every quarter that if the paymasters and quartermasters of the army were to stop payment in Arizona, a great majority of the white settlers would be compelled to quit it. Hostilities are therefore kept up with a view to protecting inhabitants most of whom are supported by the hostilities. Of course their support being derived from the presence of troops, they are continually asking for more."

Such sentiments — and they contained more than a kernel of truth — hardly promoted fraternity between the citizenry and the territory's defenders. For the visible symbols of this commerce, the contractors who supplied the military posts and Indian reservations, the army reserved a very special place in the pantheon of villains. In military eyes they came together in a sinister combination labeled the "Tucson Ring," to whose conspiratorial machinations the troops charged many of the frustrations of Arizona service.

The Mexican population stirred little more than passing notice in military observers. From Captain Bourke they won a sympathetic description rather than the tolerant condescension granted by most officers and their wives. Mrs. Summerhayes envied the adaptation of the Mexican women to their environment. "If we must live in this wretched place," she exclaimed to her husband, "let's give up civilization and live as the Mexicans do!" But she could never overcome his insistence on New England standards of propriety that clothed ladies in long sleeves, choker collars, and voluminous undergarments even in the furnace of Ehrenberg.

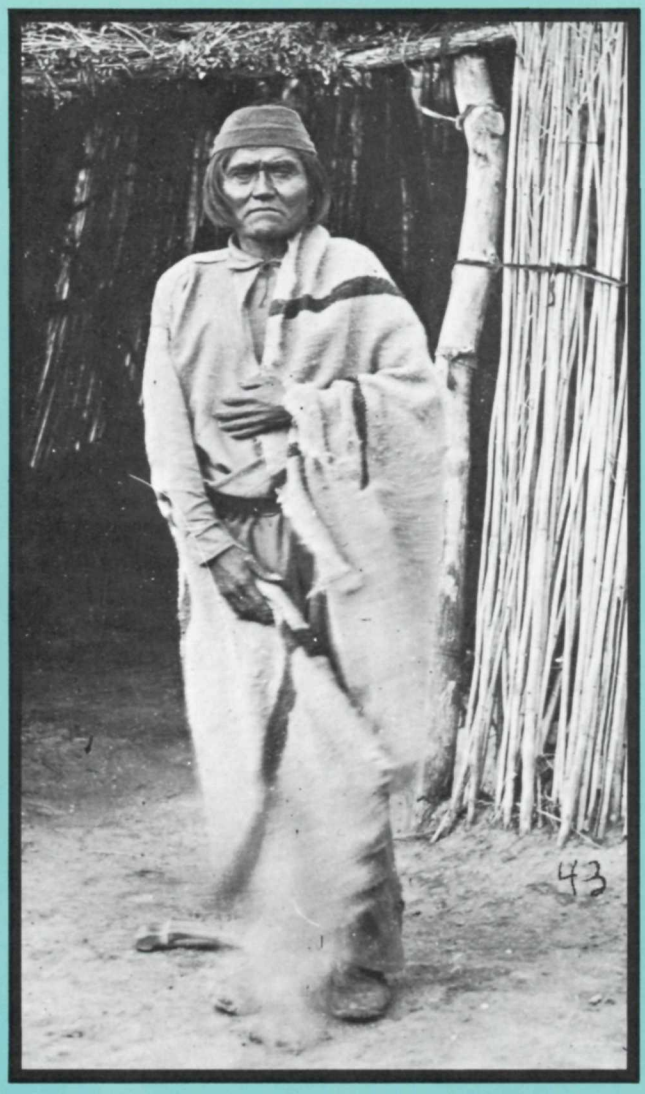
Of the Indians, especially the Apaches, the military had a good deal to say. Today their writings offer firsthand sources of high value to historians of these tribes. The picture that takes shape is one of cunning, stealth, endurance, perseverance, ruthlessness, fortitude, fighting skill, and mastery of the harsh conditions of their homeland unsurpassed by any other tribe the army faced in the Indian wars. Their ability to elude pursuit while wearing out the pursuers made a deep impression. So did their skill at ambush; most officers took seriously the admonition of a seasoned frontiersman: "When you see Apache sign, be *keerful;* 'n' when you don' see nary sign, be *more* keerful." All officers respected their enemy's prowess and skill. Some came to know them as people; one such declared himself less "Indian fighter" than "Indian thinker." Although most shared General Pope's view of the Apaches as "a squalid, untrustworthy people, robbers and thieves by nature," they did not believe this justification for the indiscriminate extermination favored by many of the territory's citizens, who, said General Ord, "regard all Indians as vermin, to be killed when met."

If all this adds up to a portrayal to induce nightmares in the Tucson Chamber of Commerce, it should be noted with emphasis that a strain of nostalgia pervades the recorded reminiscences of almost all the Arizona veterans and their ladies. It was a nostalgia evoked by images of the harsh beauty and sweeping vistas of the desert, of bracing dry atmosphere, of dazzling desert sunsets, of pine-clad high country and snowy peaks, of the ever-changing moods of a land repulsive yet also strangely inviting. It was a nostalgia, too, born of hardships endured, of obstacles overcome, and of human bonds forged by shared privation, danger, and even tragedy.

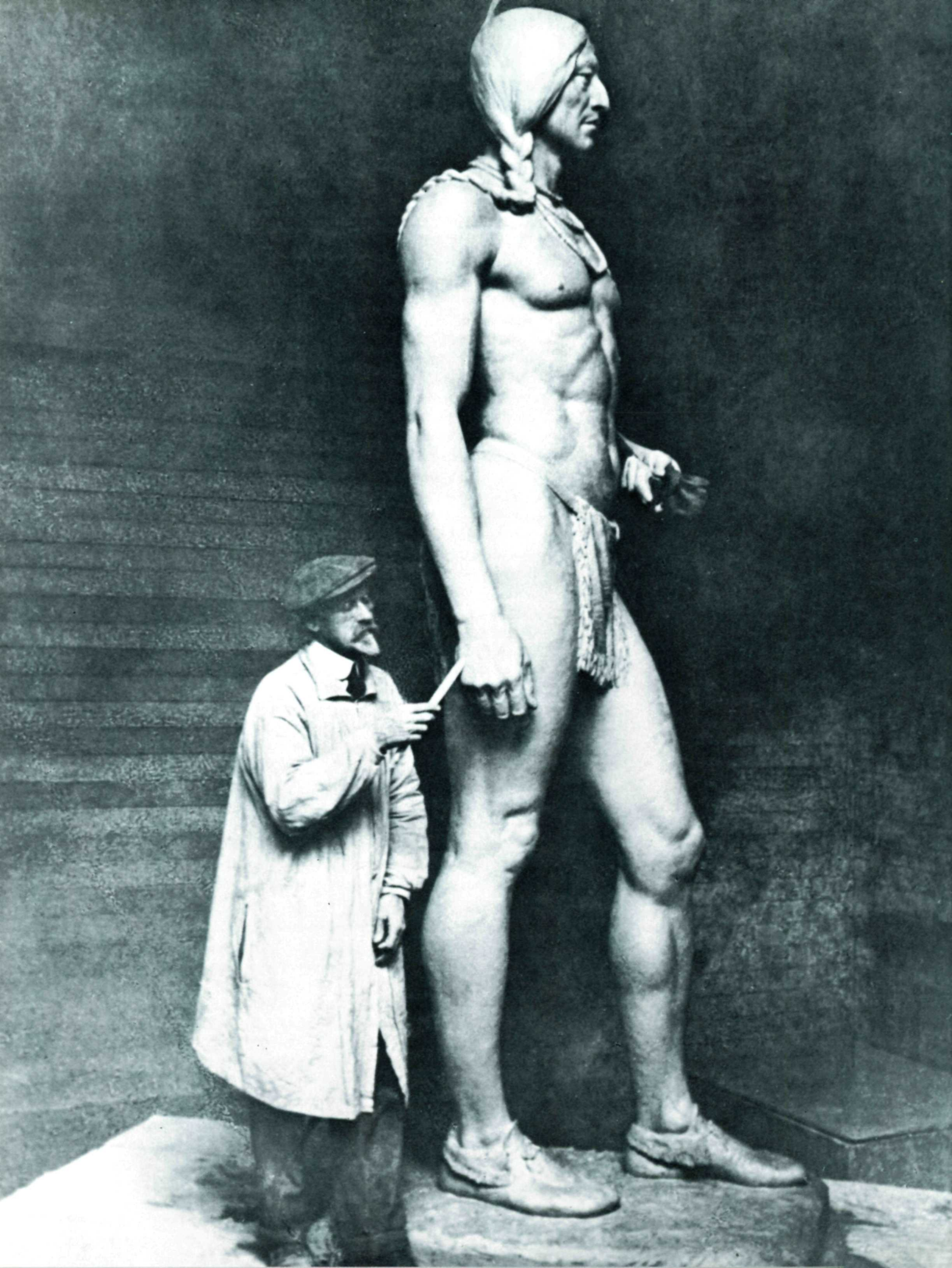
All who served in Arizona could appreciate the sentiments that moved Major Anson Mills and his associates as the steamer bearing them to a new station cast off from Fort Yuma: "We took off our shoes and beat the dust of Arizona over the rail, at the same time cursing the land." But they could also unite with Martha Summerhayes in a softer judgment: "With the strange contradictoriness of the human mind, I felt sorry that the old days had come to an end. For, somehow, the hardships and deprivations we have endured lose their bitterness when they have become a memory."

Robert M. Utley, *chief historian for the National Park Service and past president of the Western History Association, is a member of the editorial board of* THE AMERICAN WEST *and author of* Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848–1865 *(1967).*

Tucson provided food for thought and stomach. The Arizona Citizen *(left), established two years before this photograph, supplied the former; the determined Palace Restaurant staff fed the rest for twenty-five cents.*



Contenders for a desolate land, Americans confronted Apaches whenever they could find them. During pauses, they posed. At right is a native Arizonan, 1867, and below, a gathering of Fort Thomasites.



Sculptor Cyrus E. Dallin, who knew the horse and knew the Indian—

BY JOHN C. EWERS

ATOP COLE'S HILL, overlooking Plymouth Rock, stands a bronze Indian. It is a sculptor's interpretation of that worthy Wampanoag, chief Massasoit, who deserves to be remembered in these days of interracial tensions as an Indian leader whose friendship for the Puritans helped them to gain a haven in the New World. The creator of this impressive statue had no portrait of Massasoit to guide him in modeling the chief's face and form. But he brought to his task a life-long knowledge of, and admiration for, Indians, as well as a highly developed artistic talent.

Cyrus E. Dallin was a resident of Massachusetts when he fashioned this memorial to a New England Indian. Yet Dallin's roots were deep in the Indian country of the American West. And it is quite possible that the classic Indian profile of his Massasoit resembles more closely that of a twentieth-century Sioux than that of a seventeenth-century Wampanoag.

Like the Puritans, Dallin's parents were emigrants from England. They had crossed the plains to Utah in a covered wagon in 1851. Cyrus was born in a log cabin in the little settlement of Springville, some fifty miles south of Salt Lake City, on November 21, 1861. Six decades later the citizens of Springville unveiled Dallin's bust of his own sun-bonneted mother as their tribute to the "Pioneer Woman of Utah."

During Dallin's boyhood the Ute Indians paid frequent visits to Springville to trade hides and meat to the whites. On those occasions young Dallin joined the Indian boys in their play. He learned to play their rough and tumble games, to make and shoot bows and arrows, and to ride like an Indian. Sometimes he and his Indian friends modeled horses and wild animals of common clay. In school Dallin annoyed his teachers by drawing human figures on his slate when he should have been figuring his sums.

At the age of seventeen Dallin went to work as an ore sifter in his father's silver mine southwest of Springville. He hoped to earn enough money to enter the academy at Provo the next fall (1879). One day Dallin used some of the soft white clay the miners had encountered to model two life-sized Indian heads. Encouraged by the miners, he entered these heads in an exhibition at a fair in Salt Lake City that fall. These examples of the boy's natural ability so impressed two wealthy miners that they offered to stake young Dallin to train fare to Boston, where he would have an opportunity to develop his talents under the direction of a prominent sculptor.

Dallin arrived in Boston during the spring of 1880 with but fifteen dollars in his pocket. There Truman Bartlett, noted portrait and monument sculptor, agreed to instruct the young westerner in exchange for performance of menial tasks in his studio. As Dallin progressed in his studies he found employment in a terra cotta factory, where he modeled heads for department store displays. Eight years after he went to Boston, at an Association of American Artists show in New York, Dallin won the first of his many gold medals in sculpture—for a life-size Indian drawing a bow.

Cyrus E. Dallin's professional career as a sculptor spanned sixty-four years (1880 to 1944). Always seeking to perfect his talents, he twice studied for extended periods in Paris under leading French masters. His more than one hundred works reveal a remarkable range of talents—from the design of the Pilgrim Tercentenary half dollar of 1920, to a bust of Julia Ward Howe in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, to the statue of General Winfield Scott Hancock at Gettysburg.

Nevertheless, Dallin's best-known works are larger-than-life Indians. Four of them are so prominently placed in the public parks of great cities that they are seen annually by millions of Americans—though few of their admirers know the name of the artist who created these statues.

In Chicago's Lincoln Park Dallin's first monumental equestrian Plains Indian was unveiled in 1894. *The Medicine Man,* highly praised by art critics abroad and sought for a park in Vienna, was placed in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, in 1903. Dallin's sensitive *The Appeal to the Great Spirit,* one of the best-known pieces of American sculpture, was installed on a pedestal in front of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1911. Since 1917 his *The Scout* has stood on a hill in Penn Valley Park, overlooking Kansas City, Missouri.

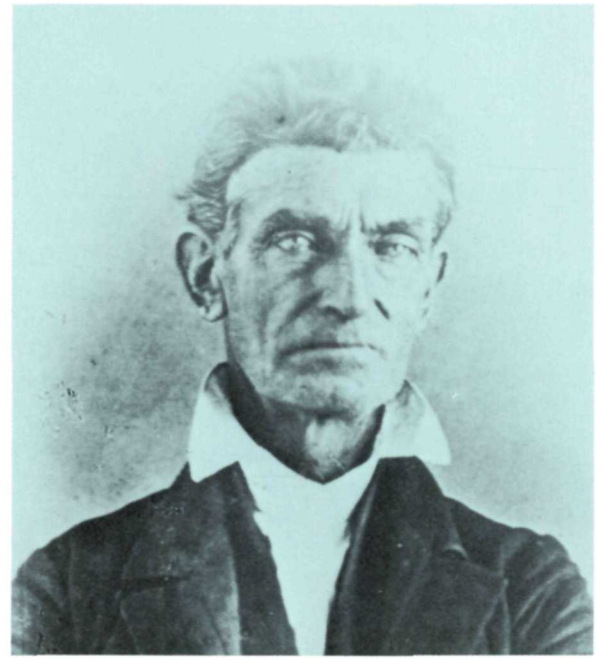
Two decades before Dallin's death in 1944, his heroic Indian statues received high praise from another leading American sculptor. In his *History of American Sculpture* (1924) Lorado Taft wrote: "Mr. Dallin knows the horse and he knows the Indian, he also knows how to model." Taft saw Dallin's *The Medicine Man* as "one of the most notable and significant products of American sculpture," and concluded that Dallin's "mounted Indians are among the most interesting public monuments in this country."

John C. Ewers, *ethnologist for the Smithsonian Institution, was the first curator of the Museum of the Plains Indian in Montana. His many books include* Plains Indian Painting *(1939),* Artists of the Old West *(1965), and the forthcoming* Indian Life on the Upper Missouri.

TO WASH THIS LAND IN BLOOD...

John Brown in Kansas – Part Two of a Two-Part Article

By STEPHEN B. OATES



His vision was freedom for the black men of the South and with the zealot's conviction of Godly righteousness, John Brown carried his dream to the Kansas frontier, where it blossomed into one of the bloodiest conflicts in the history of the West. In the July issue of THE AMERICAN WEST, *Stephen B. Oates outlined the story of Brown's long journeying and the growth of contention between the Free-Staters of Kansas and the proslavery forces of Missouri. He concludes the story here, a narrative of violence and death in a confrontation whose brutal characteristics foreshadowed the larger agony to come—the American Civil War.*

JOHN BROWN'S CONVICTION that the slavery issue was about to erupt into full-scale war in the Kansas prairie was strengthened when a company of Georgians encamped on the Miami Indian lands near Pottawatomie. There is a much debated story that he disguised himself as a government surveyor, visited the southerners' camp, and learned that, while they had come here to help themselves first and the South second, they still planned to annihilate "those damned Browns" and to stand by the proslavery decisions of Judge Sterling G. Cato "until every damned abolitionist was in hell." Whether Brown actually visited the southerners' camp is not important; for him, the invaders could have come only to burn and kill — a man did not have to talk with them to know that. At any rate, there can be little doubt that, gathering his unmarried sons around him on North Middle Creek, he girded himself for war.

Suddenly, the long-awaited storm broke. Trying to smash free-state resistance once and for all, a proslavery court in Leavenworth indicted a number of free-state leaders for "high treason." Then a proslavery United States marshal claimed that the town of Lawrence has resisted attempts to serve process on several men and called for all "law-abiding citizens of the Territory" to help him enforce the law. Here was the opportunity proslavery forces had been waiting for to wipe out Lawrence. On May 20 a "swearing, whiskey-drinking" horde of Missourians, reinforced by Kansas militia and Jefferson Buford's southerners, descended on Lawrence, vowing to wipe that "abolitionist hell hole" off the face of the earth.

Brown, hearing the news, organized his unmarried sons and his son-in-law Henry Thompson into "a little company by ourselves," then joined the Pottawatomie Rifles of John, Jr., and marched to the defense of Lawrence. But if Brown hoped that an armed conflict between freedom and despotism had finally begun, he was to be extremely disappointed. Messengers encountered on the way reported that the Missourians had already sacked Lawrence, that free-state leaders there had not resisted, and that U.S. troops had arrived. One messenger advised the volunteers to return to their homes; Law-

rence was drastically short of food, and anyway there was nothing they could do now.

Brown, outraged because the free-state party had not put up a fight, helped carry a vote for the Rifles to push ahead. But a short while later James Hanway proposed that they encamp to await reinforcements on their way from Osawatomie, and the volunteers voted to do so. Regarding this as a cowardly act, Brown became "extremely excited," Hanway recalled, "and remarked that he would rather be ground in the earth than passively submit to proslavery usurpation and wrong." The more Brown thought about the sacking of Lawrence and the inexcusable timidity of the free-state leaders, the more "frenzied" he became "at the condition of affairs." And in that state of mind, he decided to strike a retaliatory blow at certain proslavery men on Pottawatomie Creek, a blow that would avenge the Lawrence fiasco and compensate for the screaming threats, the murders, and all the other outrages that the Kansas proslavery party and its Missouri allies had perpetrated since this great struggle between good and evil had begun.

Can there be any doubt that he believed himself guided by an angry and vengeful God? He told Hanway that he was glad the volunteers had voted not to proceed to Lawrence, that it was a providential sign. "Something must be shown that we, too, have rights," he told the other men, and called for volunteers to accompany him on a *"secret mission"* to "regulate matters on the creek."

Only Theodore Weiner (a huge, savage Austrian) and James Townsley agreed to go with the old man and his "little company"— his sons Owen, Frederick, Salmon, and Oliver, and Henry Thompson. They honed the artillery broadswords Brown had collected in Ohio to razor-sharp edges, then, on the afternoon of Friday, May 22, set out for Pottawatomie — Weiner on a horse, the others in Townsley's wagon. All day Saturday they hid in a stand of timber near the creek, listening to the old man vindicate the grisly work ahead. According to Townsley, Brown declared that it was time to "fight fire with fire," to "strike terror in the hearts of the proslavery people." He said it was "better that a score of bad men should die than that one man who came here to make Kansas a Free State should be driven out."

That night, as a damp wind blew, Brown's self-styled "Army of the North" dragged James Doyle and his two eldest sons out of their cabin and two of Brown's boys hacked them to death with broadswords (as Gideon's men had slain the Midianites, as related in the Book of Judges). Although Doyle was already dead, Brown shot him in the forehead with a revolver, to make certain work of it. They they stole on to Allen Wilkinson's place, took him out into the night in his stocking feet, and cut him down in some dead brush nearby. Ironically, it was early in the morning of May 24 — Sunday, the Lord's Sabbath — when Brown's men summoned William Sherman from James Harris's cabin and hacked him to death like the others, throwing his mutilated body into the Pottawatomie. They would have got tavern-owner Dutch Henry, too, had he not been out on the prairie looking for stray cattle. Brown spared James Harris (a juror on Cato's court) and two others who were staying with him, because they declared that they had never assisted the proslavery party and had never harmed or threatened free-state settlers.

Confiscating a saddle and a horse that belonged to Dutch Henry, Brown's war party washed their cutlasses in the Pottawatomie, then started back over the California Road to rejoin John, Jr. The old man was silent, transfixed, as the wagon rattled up the road. The enemy had murdered six free-state men since the struggle had begun in Kansas. Now, in getting five slavery men, Brown and his boys had about evened the score.

WAR! WAR! raged the Westport, Missouri, *Border Times*. EIGHT PROSLAVERY MEN MURDERED BY THE ABOLITIONISTS IN FRANKLIN COUNTY. Already a war of reprisal had commenced, as proslavery gangs ransacked the Osawatomie-Pottawatomie area in search of the killers and plunged the entire region into an extraordinary state of "fear & excitement."

Trying to restore order to the area, Governor Wilson Shannon dispatched a cavalry company to Osawatomie, requested that Fort Leavenworth send reinforcements to Lawrence, and wrote President Pierce about the murders, declaring that he feared the consequences unless the offenders were brought to justice. In the meantime, down in Paola in Lykins County, Judge Cato had issued warrants for the arrest of Brown and his band on May 28; and two days later the old man was indicted again, along with John, Jr., and eight others, for "treasonably" resisting the territorial laws. Brown escaped capture by fleeing to a secret campsite on Ottawa Creek, but John, Jr., Jason, and several other free-state men were apprehended and marched in chains "like a gang of slaves" all the way to Tecumseh, where they were given a preliminary hearing by a U.S. commissioner. The commissioner released Jason and four others, but bound John, Jr., and one H. H. Williams over to the U.S. marshal "on the charge of treason," to await the action of the grand jury (to convene in September).

Meanwhile, a "mingled and raging" guerrilla war had

"May God still gird our loins & hold our right hands, & to Him may we give the glory."

broken out in southeastern Kansas, as bands of armed men — one led by Brown himself — prowled the countryside, firing at one another and looting enemy homesteads. On June 2 Brown's company, with reinforcements from Prairie City, fought and captured a Missouri force under Henry Clay Pate at Black Jack — a victory that pleased Brown immensely. He wrote his wife that Black Jack was the "first regular battle fought between Free State & pro Slavery men in Kansas. May God still gird our loins & hold our right hands, & to him may we give the glory."

First the Pottawatomie Massacre, then the victory at Black Jack — Brown was now totally and irrevocably at war with slavery in Kansas. And because in his own mind this was a holy war, waged in the name of God against obstinately wicked men, he could justify many acts for the good of the cause — all the way from distortion, secrecy, and lies to terrorization, plundering, house-stealing, and midnight assassination. To the victor belonged the spoils anyway, for as God commanded Moses, as related in the Book of Deuteronomy (one of Brown's favorites): "But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shall thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee." As one of Brown's recruits put it, "A state of war existed and it was quite proper to despoil the enemy." And despoil the enemy they did: they raided Joab Bernard's store near the Franklin-Douglas county line, helping themselves to between three and four thousand dollars' worth of supplies and confiscating several horses and cows. They continued to steal horses and cattle throughout the summer. Brown, however, used none of this plunder for his personal gain; he mounted his men on some of the horses, sold the others in Lawrence and in Nebraska, and used the money and stolen supplies "for the continuation of the struggle."

On June 5 a company of U.S. troops discovered Brown's camp on Ottawa Creek. Perhaps because the commander was under orders only to disband irregular forces (free-state and proslavery alike), he did not arrest Brown but merely liberated his prisoners and compelled his company to disperse. Fearing that the Missourians themselves might return with reinforcements, Brown, his sons, and several others fled into the brush, where they hid "from our enemy," Brown said, "like the David of old, [finding] our dwelling with the serpants of the Rock, & wild beasts of the wilderness."

While Brown hid in the brush for twenty days, unbridled civil war raged in the territory. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" was the war cry of both sides in bleeding Kansas as the murders and atrocities multiplied. In an effort to terrorize and starve out free-state settlements, proslavery forces cut off the Missouri River to free-state immigration, blocked all roads along the Missouri border, and then constructed forts and blockhouses in a wide-swinging arc around Topeka, Lawrence, and Osawatomie. At the same time, all across the North antislavery crowds gathered to discuss proslavery terrorism in Kansas and to pledge money and start armed emigrants for the embattled territory.

"It was better that a score of bad men should die than that one man who came here to make Kansas a Free State should be driven out."

Did Brown, still hiding in the brush, know what was going on? He wrote Mary Ann that "we are not disheartened," even though "we are nearly destitute of food, Clothing, & money" and "Owen & Oliver are down with fever." For "God who has not given us over to the will of our enemies but has moreover delivered them into our hand; will we humbly trust still keep & deliver us." He directed Mary Ann that "if under God this letter reaches you so that it can be read, I wish it at once carefully copied in Ink. . . . I know of no other way to get these facts, & our situation before the world."

Was Brown contemplating some plan to expand his war against the "Philistines"— one that would involve Smith and other wealthy abolitionists in the East? Had he heard about the money and "Beecher's Bibles" which antislavery northerners were pledging for the defense of Kansas?

On July 1 he went to Lawrence and penned a reply to Pate's account of Black Jack, published in the St. Louis *Republican,* which accused Brown of violating the articles of war — and also called him the Pottawatomie murderer. Brown, ignoring the latter accusation, insisted in his own account that he had defeated Pate in a fair fight. He sent the piece to the New York *Tribune,* which published it on July 11. Was Brown only trying to set the record straight, or was this a deliberate effort to attract publicity for himself in the East? About July 2 he had a long conversation with William A. Phillips, a correspondent for the *Tribune,* and said things obviously for the correspondent's benefit. Brown remarked that the free-state party was run by "broken-down politicians" from the East (he meant Charles Robinson and former governor Andrew H. Reeder in particular) who would "rather pass resolutions than act" and who "criticized all who did real work"— such as Brown did. That was why Brown had broken with the free-state party and undertaken his own independent war against the proslavery forces. Anyway he was not "in the habit of subjecting himself to the orders of anybody. He intended to aid the general result, but in his own way."

Phillips was very impressed with this gruff, Bible-quoting soldier and his inflexible belief that "men were nothing, principles everything." And in a book he published later that year, entitled *The Conquest of Kansas by Missouri and Her Allies,* Phillips portrayed Brown as a courageous, God-fearing captain fighting in his own way to make Kansas free—"a strange, resolute, repulsive, iron-willed, inexorable old man" whom the Missourians both hated and feared. Such a portrait was

bound to impress wealthy abolitionists in the East who were worried about the fate of Kansas.

In late July, Brown decided to leave Kansas and wrote John, Jr., still in prison, about his plans. "Am very glad that you have started," John, Jr., replied, "as all things considered I am convinced you can be of more use where you contemplate going than here." Obviously Brown was up to something; but whatever his plans were, he did not reveal them to anybody besides John, Jr., and perhaps his other sons. In early August, they went to Nebraska City, one of the major stations on the "Lane Trail," which Kansas emigrants had recently opened through Iowa and Nebraska. There Brown encountered James Henry Lane's celebrated "Army of the North"—some four hundred colonists sent out under the auspices of the newly formed National Kansas-Aid Committee — and a company of Kansas volunteers under Samuel Walker. Brown talked at length with Lane and Walker. (Did they tell him they too were tired of conservative free-state leadership and were prepared to attack proslavery strongholds?) Brown now changed his mind about going on, and he and Frederick returned to Kansas with Walker, Lane, and about thirty others, ahead of the wagon trains. Henry Thompson and Brown's unmarried sons, however, went on to Iowa, where Owen mysteriously remained while the others headed for Ohio and New York. On August 10, Brown left the free-state column and alone headed for Topeka. There he wrote Jason (who had returned to Osawatomie) that "God still lives; & 'blessed be his great & holy name.' The boys may go on farther East; & may hold on for me to join them." *Now* what did Brown have in mind? There is evidence that he intended to liberate John, Jr., but if so, what did he plan to do after that? Did he plan to travel east, to solicit aid from the National Kansas Committee for his private war in Kansas — or for some larger scheme?

Brown's whereabouts during the next six days are not known. But contrary to reports in the Missouri press, he did not participate in the campaigns that occurred between August 12 and 17, when free-state forces raided slavery strongholds at Franklin, Fort Saunders, Treadwell, Washington Creek, and Fort Titus, once more plunging the smouldering border into a "raging fury." On or about August 17, Brown turned up in Topeka again, where he apparently received a letter from John, Jr., advising against a rescue attempt. A day or two later Brown left for Lawrence on an unknown mission.

On August 22, at some place in or near Lawrence, Brown initiated seven recruits into what he called the "Kansas Regulators" and had them pledge "their word and sacred honor" to fight "for the maintenance of the rights and liberties of the Free State citizens of Kansas." The "by laws of this association," which consisted of twenty-three articles of war, were tantamount to an official declaration of war against slavery.

"We are not disheartened. . . . God who has not given us over to the will of our enemies but has moreover delivered them into our hand; we will humbly trust still keep & deliver us."

Commander Brown had an immediate opportunity to go into action. He heard that Osawatomie was threatened with attack and took his company to help defend the town. When no attack was forthcoming, Brown joined with the companies of James B. Cline, Samuel T. Shore, and Samuel Anderson and raided proslavery settlements on Sugar Creek, a raid that netted the combined forces a number of horses, cattle and other property. Brown himself had personally "liberated" some "number one" proslavery beef from the plantation of a border ruffian, and herded all his "free-state" cattle onto the Crane Ranch across the Marais des Cygnes from Osawatomie.

Either before or just after the raid, Brown received a letter from his daughter Ruth, written on July 20 at North Elba, in the Adirondacks, where the women of the family still waited. She related that the family subscribed to the New York *Weekly Times,* and had read that John, Jr., has been driven insane because of the "inhuman treatment" he had received at the hands of U.S. troops (they had clubbed him with rifle butts, thinking him one of the Pottawatomie murderers). Everybody at North Elba was upset about John, Jr., but they did thank God that none of the boys had been killed and that Brown, too, had been spared (the *Times* at first reported that he had also fallen into the hands of the Missouri ruffians). Then, referring to Brown's account of Black Jack in one of his previous letters [which contained a deliberate distortion of facts], Ruth remarked that Brown "must have had very exciting times" in that battle — a statement unintentionally ironic. A few lines later she said: "Gerrit Smith has had his name put down for ten thousand dollars toward starting a company of one thousand men to Kansas." *One thousand men? Ten thousand dollars?* One can imagine what went through Brown's mind when he read this. If he could persuade abolitionist Smith to give him that kind of support, could he not, under God, wage a truly great war against Slave Power despotism?

The next morning (August 30) a messenger from Osawatomie ran into Brown's camp yelling that the border ruffians were attacking the town and that Frederick — Brown's son — and another free-stater, David Garrison had already been killed. Brown grabbed his gun, shouted to his men, and hurried into town, his recruits following in pairs and groups.

At Brown's recommendation, the town's defenders took

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CHRISTMAS and the COMET

The Remembrance of a Season on the High Plains

BY MILTON SHATRAW

ONE NIGHT when I was eight years old, my father, who had stepped outdoors before going to bed to take a weather-wise look at the sky, stuck his head back through the half-opened kitchen door and called to me, "Come on out, Mick; I want to show you something." I followed him out and around the woodpile where we could get a good look off to the west. The clear moonless night was brightly lit by a large star blazing high in the sky, trailed by a curved and narrowing band of silver that reached down almost to the mountaintops. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen, and I stared at it in wonder.

"That's Halley's Comet," he said. "And that long streak hanging down is its tail. Nobody knows much about it except that it disappears and comes back again every seventy-five years."

I was both fascinated and frightened by its unearthly appearance. Later my mother and my cousin Frank, who was working for us that year, joined us, and we stood gazing at it for a long time. However, due to a long spell of rainy weather that followed, I never did see it again.

One afternoon later in the summer, my younger sister Lucy and my cousin Ninnie and I were wading in the icy water that came down from the high snowfields of northwest Montana and flowed past our house, when I cut my little toe on a sharp stone. It seemed a pretty good cut to me, so I took off for the house spouting blood and tears in about equal amounts. My mother stopped me at the kitchen door and took in the situation at a glance. Operating on her rule-of-thumb that kids who cried loud were seldom hurt much, she said, "Sit down out there on the porch. I've just mopped the kitchen floor and don't want blood all over it."

After a quick inspection she said it wasn't much of a cut and hurried off for a pan of warm soapy water and part of an old bedsheet to tear into a bandage.

She had just finished tying up the clean white cloth, which mismatched the old dirty one on my big toe — the result of poor aim with the ax while chopping kindling a couple of days before — when she looked down the lane and said, "That looks like Lily coming."

Lily was my young married cousin who lived four miles upstream from us and who already had several children, all girls. They had gone by on their way to Dupuyer in the morning and would stop now on their way home.

After she tied the team to a fencepost in the lane, the girls scrambled out and joined Lucy and Ninnie at the creek. Lily, meanwhile, hauled our grainbag of groceries from the back of the buckboard, recovered the small handful of mail from under the seat cushion, and walked up the path to the house, stopping beside me where I was sitting, with my bloodstained bandage in good view, hoping for some words of sympathy.

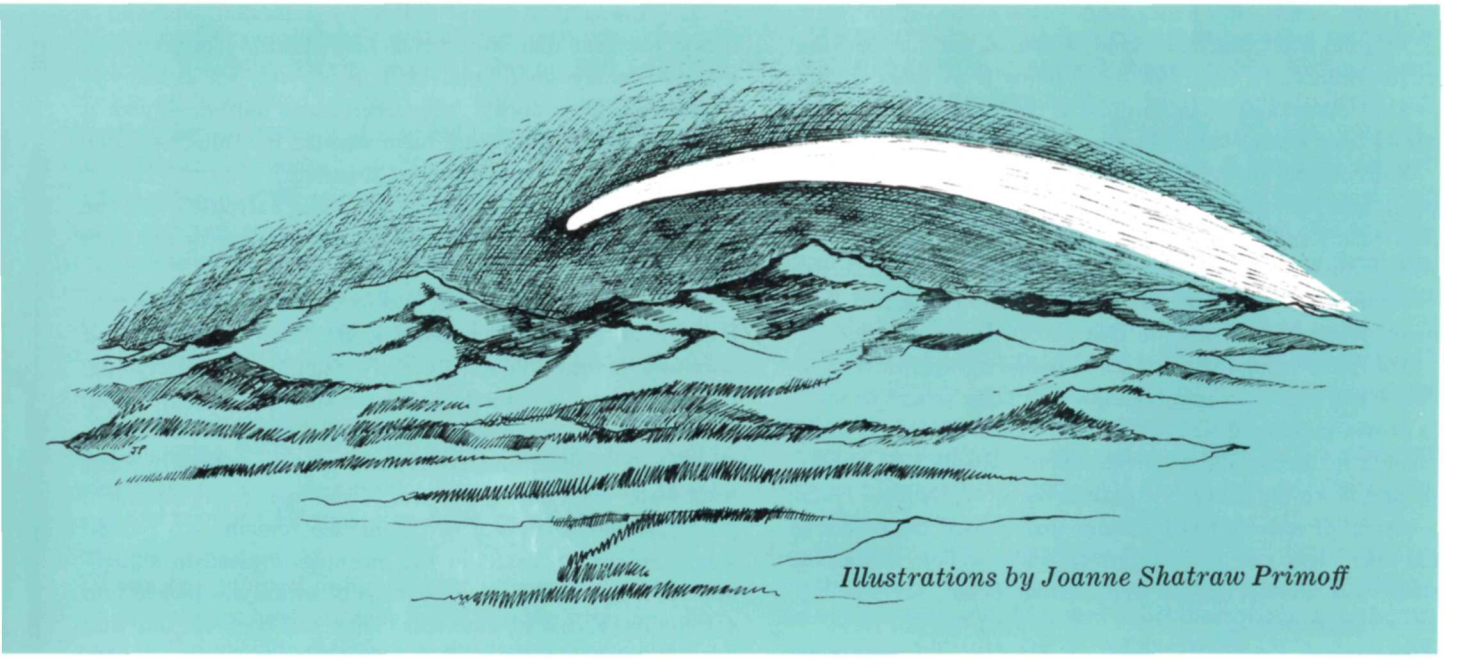
"What happened to you?" she wanted to know.

"Nothing but a scratch on his toe," my mother said — heartlessly, I thought. "What's the news?"

Lily carefully scrutinized the letters before handing them over. "A letter from your sister Annie in Helena. Uncle Ed's got a bill or something from the J. I. Case Company, and here's your paper — the *Acantha*. That's all I guess."

My mother tore open the letter from Aunt Annie and skimmed through it quickly.

"Everything's fine with her, and she's coming for a few



Illustrations by Joanne Shatraw Primoff

days' visit. Louis can't leave the store, so she's coming alone."

"She's lucky," Lily said. "No kids to think about. Can do anything she likes."

My mother snorted, "Well, I'll take my kids! She's welcome to her lonesome fun."

She laid the letter to one side and picked up the paper. Lily walked to the edge of the porch and called down to the kids still wading in the creek, "Come on up, all of you. I've got a peppermint stick for everyone."

There was a mad scramble as they ran screaming and pushing onto the porch. She had just passed out the last of the red and white striped candy when my mother gave a slow whistle.

"Remember that comet we all saw not so long ago? Well, listen to this," and she read from the paper: "Scientists think that if the world should pass through the tail of it, the poisonous gas it contains might kill all living things on our planet. It would be the end of the world."

We all looked at her in stricken silence. Finally Ninnie's chin began to tremble, and she came out with a loud wail, "We're all going to die."

It was a terrible moment, and all at once my cut toe didn't seem to amount to so much.

"Does it really say that?" Lily demanded, reaching for the paper.

But my mother pushed her away and continued — reading to herself now. Finally she looked up with a sigh of relief and said, "They say there's only one chance in a million that it could happen, and not to worry about it. The damn fools, to scare us like that!"

Ninnie was finally convinced that she wasn't going to die right away, and stopped her crying. Lucy just tossed her head — "I wasn't scared anyway," she said — and they all went back to playing in the creek.

But I sat on the porch and thought about that million-in-one chance and wondered if this might not be that particular time. I wondered how you would die. Would you kick and jerk like a dog or a coyote did when he ate meat poisoned with strychnine? Or would you just go to sleep and never wake up again? I looked at my mother and at Lily, and they didn't seem worried. But I just couldn't forget, the way the paper said to.

THE FOLLOWING WEDNESDAY my father and I went to Dupuyer to meet my mother's sister and bring her home for a week's visit. We stood in front of the Harris Brothers' store along with a number of the townspeople who were waiting around for the stage to come in when the high-wheeled, stiff-sprung wagon rolled up the dusty street and stopped in front of us. A floater cowboy sat in front with the driver; Aunt Annie, looking tired and mad, sat behind them, and a drummer with his sample case beside him occupied the last seat. My aunt's normally florid face had turned a light purple from the heat of the afternoon sun, and her heavy mass of bright red hair, which she wore piled high on her head, had slipped a little from the jolting of the wagon. As a result, the wide-brimmed straw hat that was pinned to it with a couple of gold-headed hatpins was now at a rakish angle over one ear. She looked down at my father and me with a pair of flashing blue eyes and smiled grimly.

"Hello, Annie," my father said. "Have a good trip?"

"A good trip!" She had a kind of hoarse, grating voice that carried well. "My God, Ed. After riding forty miles in this" — she stopped and looked around at the grinning faces below her — "this *blasted* thing, I'm just about dead!"

Aunt Annie always spoke her mind strongly and to the point, and her speech always sounded funny to me. We were used to my mother's light, cheerful Cockney tones, but her sister's voice was slower and heavier with a very broad accent. "Yorkshire" my mother said it was, because she had lived many years with relatives in that part of England.

My father helped her down and pulled a huge wicker suitcase from under her seat, along with a large parcel wrapped in brown paper and tied with a heavy cord. She stood firmly planted in the middle of the wooden sidewalk and glanced up and down the street. She took in the store, the Dell Hotel, a couple of nondescript buildings that housed the offices of the town clerk and our one lawyer, and a saloon. Across the street was another saloon and, farther down, the weather-beaten livery stable.

She shook her head despairingly and glared, first at me and then at my father.

"Look at this dump! And look at you two! You look like a couple of tramps."

I had started from home with perfectly clean (though well-patched and faded) shirt and overalls, but had spent the best part of an hour with Louis St. Dennis in his father's blacksmith shop and had managed to pick up a good coating of soot and wagon grease and just plain barn filth. My long shaggy hair hadn't been cut in months, and I was tanned dark as an Indian. My father, too, could have stood a haircut and even a shave. He had on clean clothes, but his pants hadn't been pressed in years, and the vest he always wore to town was wrinkled and needed a couple of buttons. But his beautiful light tan cattleman's hat was set jauntily on his head with just the hint of a tilt over his right eye.

I looked blankly at my unfamiliar aunt, wondering what on earth was the matter with her. My father was the strongest and smartest and handsomest man in Teton County. Anybody would have to be blind not to see that. And my father, too, looked rather amazed. He saw me looking so much worse most of the time that he considered me quite presentable just now. We didn't either of us say anything. After all, what could you say to a woman who talked like that?

She pointed a stubby forefinger practically in my father's face and continued loud enough for all the town to hear, "How can you bury your children and Emma in this awful hole?" She and my grandfather were the only two people I knew who used my mother's given name. Everyone else called her Peggy, so I had to think twice before I was sure who she meant.

Several of the men standing around snickered and winked at my father, but he just grinned in his easy way and said quietly, "Hell, Annie. This is the finest town in the state."

"Ed," she said, "I believe you really mean that. And you're lucky you feel that way." Her face suddenly relaxed into a wide friendly smile, and miraculously she was our kindly loving aunt who always remembered our birthdays with a card and a gift, and sent a huge wooden box filled with the most wonderful presents every Christmas.

My father picked up the suitcase while I wrestled with the package, and we started for the wagon standing by the store hitching-rail.

Aunt Annie stayed a week and spent most of her time fishing. She had been a successful angler for many years, but only as a "worm-dunker." Recently bitten by the dry-fly bug, she now insisted on practicing this art almost every day. Sheep Creek, though small, was fed by the melting snows of the Continental Divide and always ran a good stream of clear trout water even during the heat of summer. Being an ardent fisherman didn't prevent her from also remaining a modest lady, and she appeared in the morning, dressed in a high-necked, long-sleeved dress, the skirt of which was tucked into a voluminous pair of bloomers. They had been cut out with a lavish hand and drooped from her waist like sails on a becalmed schooner.

After breakfast she would pull on a pair of lady's gum boots and an old ten-gallon hat of Frank's, her long red hair braided and wound around her head so that the hat would fit.

"Come on, Mick," she would say. "Let's go get a basketful." And with a nod from my mother we would start out.

When we reached the first big pool above the house, she would stop and pull her fly-book from a secret pocket in those flapping bloomers, cast her eye around, then hold up a wet forefinger. "Let's see," she would say to our fresh Montana morning, "west wind and clear sky. Guess I'd better use a Royal Coachman."

No matter what the wind or weather was that day, or any other day, she always decided on a Coachman. It was probably the only fly she knew for sure, and it was, no doubt, as good as any as far as she was concerned.

She looped the fly on the six-foot gut leader and, after a few false casts, shot it out into the stream. Her fore-cast was pretty good, but she never paid the slightest attention to the back-cast. As a result I spent most of the day climbing around in the cottonwood trees and overgrown willows, retrieving the lure.

One day I asked her about the nagging worry in the back of my mind. "Aunt Annie," I said, "do you think we're going to get killed by the comet?"

She stopped her false casting and stared at me as if I had suddenly lost my mind. "What are you talking about, boy?" she demanded.

I backed off a couple of steps, then screwed up my courage to go on. "Mama read in the paper that we might all get poisoned by the comet's tail."

"Oh. *That* comet," she answered briskly. "Well — I don't think those old white-whiskered goats know which way is up,

let alone what a comet's tail is made of when it's a million miles away. Besides, there's nothing we or anyone else can do about it anyway, so why worry? Come on, let's fish!" and she reeled in her line ready to move on to the next pool, a hundred feet upstream and guarded by a tight ring of hook-snatching cottonwoods.

One afternoon we returned home with an especially fine catch of brook trout, and Aunt Annie bragged to my father that it was probably the finest catch of fish ever taken from the stream. He just smiled in a superior way and said, "Shucks, Annie, twenty-five fish are nothing. I went out one morning last June and was back in an hour with over a hundred, some over sixteen inches long."

Aunt Annie's quick temper flared up. "You're just like all fishermen, Ed Shatraw," she declared. "A damn liar. And if you think you can get me mad, you can just think again!" And she stamped off to her room to change from her fishing gear.

Later he confessed to her that the fish he had caught had swum from the main stream down the big irrigation ditch and out through the diversion channels to become stranded in the thick meadow grass. He had simply walked around picking them up till he had a gunny bag full.

Another thing Aunt Annie took very seriously was her religion. She was a dedicated Episcopalian and a pillar of St. Peter's Church in Helena. She looked upon Old Man Moon, our hired man, and his Free Methodist ideas as nothing short of criminal.

"Don't let that old man convert the children from the true faith," she warned my mother one day. "What *will* become of them out in this uncivilized place, anyway? No church or Sunday school! Why, they're little better than heathens as it is."

My mother rushed to our defense. "Old Moon is a good man and thinks the world of the kids. He'd never hurt them. Besides, we go to church every time they hold services at the schoolhouse. Last year we went three times." She might have added that we went mostly because we liked the hymn-singing and the visiting with the neighbors afterwards. The religious aspect of the services was largely wasted on us.

Usually when Aunt Annie visited us we talked about Christmas presents, too. One evening I got out the catalog and pointed out to her the one thing I wanted most in the world. It was a motion picture machine "that throws real moving pictures on a white sheet," so the description read. I had never seen a motion picture and couldn't figure out how it could possibly work, but I didn't question it because they called it a "Magic Lantern."

I knew from past experience that Santa paid considerable attention to my aunt's suggestions. But it cost almost five dollars, such an enormous sum that I was pretty sure it was out of the question.

Aunt Annie read the item about it very carefully and kind of shook her head.

"Sure costs a lot," I said sadly. "Don't it, Aunt Annie?"

She looked at me with her sharp blue eyes that seemed to see right into my head. "Maybe Santa can do something about it," she rumbled in her baritone whisper, and I cheered up some.

The days hurried by and all at once it was time for our aunt to pack her bag and her fishing gear and go back to that vague place where she lived with Uncle Louis. We had enjoyed her visit and missed her lively company, but there was an air of relaxation around the supper table the first evening after she left that had been missing the past week.

"Feels kinda good to be just our own ornery selves again," Frank remarked comfortably. And he was right. Company seemed to cramp our style, somehow.

A few weeks later the new teacher arrived and soon settled into our lives, not as company, but as a new member of the family.

As usual, I fell violently in love with her. Grace was so pretty and stylish, and so nice to us kids, that at first I couldn't believe she was real. In a very short time, though, she began to seem more human. She started to expect a lot from me, like bringing in wood for the school chunk stove, keeping the water pail filled, beating the chalk dust out of erasers, studying the times table and knowing the meaning of a lot of outlandish words such as "refractory," for instance. It was over this word that I began to see Grace in her true light.

In our school there were seven kids, so distributed as to age that we had seven grades. I was the only one in my class for five years, so when recitation time came there was no hope that chance would come to my rescue and someone else would answer the question that I didn't know. I was reading *The King of the Golden River*, a chapter a day, aloud, and was having rough going of it. I finally reached the part where the dwarf visits Gluck during a heavy rainstorm, and in describing the dwarf the author said his cheeks were as red as if he were trying to blow out a "refractory" fire. Naturally Grace asked me if I knew what the word meant. After some wild guessing, in which time I got the whole school in an uproar, she accused me of being a smart-alec and ordered me to go stand in the corner.

I went, feeling hurt and mad, and stared resentfully at the rough log wall. Almost immediately, though, I discovered a small colony of carpenter ants busily working on a new tunnel they were driving into the pine log. This activity proved so interesting that when the teacher finally explained that my punishment was over and I could return to my seat, I couldn't believe my ears. I wasn't being punished, I was having a grand time and wanted to stay where I was. When I didn't budge, she came over to me, got a good grip on my shirt collar, and hauled me back to my seat. The whole business was pretty unreasonable and high-handed on her part, I thought, and our relationship had a more down-to-earth quality from then on.

Still, I liked her and thought she was about the smartest

person in the whole county, except for my mother and father, of course. On the long walks across the prairie to and from school, my sister Iris and I often talked confidentially with Grace, asking her advice about things we didn't understand or were worried about. One day when Iris had stayed home for some reason and there were just the two of us, I confessed that I was still having fears about the comet. I was very offhand about it, fearing she might laugh at me, but she didn't. She even tried to explain something about comets and how there had been many others before this one, and no one had been poisoned *yet*. And also how the sun and moon and millions of stars and other worlds were flying around up in the sky, and none had ever collided with us *yet*. But she only left me with the uneasy thought that even if they hadn't crashed into us or poisoned everybody *yet,* no one seemed positive that it couldn't happen. Though I had no definite idea as to when this calamity might occur, I was on a constant lookout for signs of its approach. Unusual cloud formations or sudden violent changes in the weather would inflame my fears and send my eyes racing across the fields and foothills toward the high mountains. I half expected to see a thick green cloud roll over their jagged peaks and, spreading out over the peaceful prairie, cover us all with silent death.

Later in the fall, when all the crops were finally harvested and the threshing finished, my sixteen-year-old cousin Joe could be spared from the ranch work to return to school and finish the eighth grade. Because of his age and size, he bullied us younger kids and teased us a lot. He soon learned of my fears about the comet and would make sly remarks to me. "Enjoy your Thanksgiving dinner, Mick," he said the day before that holiday. "It'll probably be your last one." Or maybe, on a zero morning when I was stamping around complaining about my frozen feet, he would say, "Quit whining about your feet; you won't need them much longer anyway." Somehow he decided, and it seemed very logical to me, that the world would come to an end at daybreak on Christmas morning.

AS THE WINTER DEEPENED and December 25 approached, I became more and more uncertain and confused. Christmas was the most wonderful day of the year, of course, but my normal impatience for its arrival continually collided with the horrible fear that when that day did come it might also be my last. I didn't say anything about it because no one else seemed the least bit worried about the comet, and I knew from past experience that they would only make fun of me. And also, my own common sense had almost convinced me that Joe was a liar and I a fool to listen to him. Still, maybe those newspapermen were right. They had probably been to college and knew things we didn't know. The last couple of weeks I wavered back and forth between helpless dread and happy expectation.

Luckily I was kept so busy that I didn't have much time for worrying. It was only in the cheerless grey light of early morning while I lay "balled-up" under the warm, homemade comforters, waiting for the last bit of my mother's patience to run out before getting up, that my fears returned in full force.

School started as usual every morning, but as the day wore on our reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic disappeared under a flood of rehearsals for the play, practice for the Christmas carols, and work on our costumes.

One evening Frank and Grace left for a visit with Aunt Minnie, but the next morning the two school blackboards were covered with beautiful Christmas scenes done in colored chalk. We suspected them, but since we knew that neither of them could draw worth a hoot we were mystified as to who the artist really was. Grace later confessed that she had brought with her from home large sheets of paper perforated with holes that outlined these scenes, and a box of colored chalk. The paper was held against the blackboard and gently patted with an eraser well filled with powdered chalk. It was then a simple matter to fill in the dotted lines with the bright colors, adding a bit of gay charm to our small dismal schoolroom.

Frank rode into the schoolyard early one afternoon just before Christmas Eve, dragging behind him through the snow two small fir trees. The best one was set up for our Christmas tree, and the other we cut up for decorations. We spent the remaining two days making paper chains, threading popcorn and cranberries into long strings for the tree, and hanging evergreen branches above the blackboard and doors and windows.

Evenings at home we made greeting cards and simple presents and decorations for our own Christmas tree. I was pretty good at stringing cranberry chains with a needle and thread, but was a complete loss when working with popcorn because I ate all the big fluffy kernels and wound up with such a sorry-looking article that everyone agreed it was fit only to throw into the kitchen fire.

Twice during this final week I had the same nerve-shattering nightmare about some huge shapeless mass that was trying to get me. It seemed to surround the house, and although I shut and locked the doors and windows, it oozed in thick streams through the keyholes and spread out through the rooms. Then, hunting me down, it finally found me in my bed, cowering under the blankets, and began to slowly strangle me. I struggled and fought with this bodiless monster and finally woke up yelling and thrashing, only to discover that I had crawled so far under the bedding to escape the bitter cold of my bedroom that I was slowly smothering.

I kept on hoping, though, that if the world did come to an end it would wait till after I had opened my presents on Christmas morning. I just had to know if I'd gotten that magic lantern!

By eight o'clock Christmas Eve everyone from the surrounding ranches had arrived at the school. Torval, a bachelor homesteader who lived nearby and was shining up to the

teacher, had come early and fired up the stove and lit the three coal-oil reflector lamps. As each family arrived, the barn lantern that had served as a heater under the bobsled blankets was brought in and hung on a nail high on the log walls.

I peeked out from behind the bedsheet curtains that enclosed the stage and marveled at the change in our drab schoolroom. It didn't seem like the same place. The yellow lamplight softened the rough walls and shone on the fragrant evergreens and the brightly colored blackboard scenes. Our Christmas tree, draped with popcorn and cranberry strings and gaily-colored paper chains, towered so high that the cardboard and lace angel standing on its top brushed the ridgepole. There were tiny candles set in shiny tin holders clipped to the branches, but everyone was so scared of fire they were never lighted. The room was filled with the comfortable voices and well-known faces of our relatives and neighbors, who were all dressed up in their best store clothes, the men freshly barbered and shaved, the women in homemade curls and bits of treasured jewelry.

The teacher stepped in front of the curtain and announced that the program was ready to begin. She asked the men standing along the walls to turn down the lanterns so the actors would show up better under the stage lighting. This was done, accompanied by much shushing throughout the audience and some nervous giggling from behind the stage. Finally the curtains were pulled back to reveal Helen, our oldest student, standing under our two bracket lamps ready to start the entertainment.

She began, in a high, slightly quavering voice, "Welcome to our friends and relatives. We, the pupils of Sheep Creek elementary school, wish to present a Christmas program for your pleasure. We will begin with a poem, 'The Night Before Christmas,' recited by Miss Iris Shatraw." Helen had begun with a pale face and uncertain delivery, but rapidly picked up speed and finished with a rush and, blushing furiously, bolted from the stage.

Iris, my nine-year-old sister, stepped out and went through the poem with all the confidence of a Sarah Bernhardt. There was thunderous applause, and after a rather confused and hurried curtsy she turned and rushed from the stage to get a quick hug and kiss from Grace.

The program continued. Since there were so few of us, we all had several recitations and one or more parts in the different plays. This, added to our unreliable memories and stage fright, resulted in some badly fractured poems and strangely mixed-up dialogues, much to the embarrassment of the teacher and the uninhibited delight of the audience.

As a finale, I, being the youngest boy, was to run out on the stage and capture Santa Claus when he appeared with his sack full of toys at the end of the program. I had been well rehearsed beforehand, but always with Johnny Rappold or my cousin Joe as Santa, so I wasn't quite prepared for the real Saint Nick when he arrived. It was pretty dark, the lights having been turned way down, when he bounded out of the shadows and onto the stage. Only it wasn't the jolly little St. Nicholas of the poem I had been led to expect, but a huge black furry creature with great clumping hoofs. I stood rooted to the floor, too scared to move. Iris gave me a shove from behind and whispered loud and clear, "Go get him, stupid. He'll get away."

But I set my heels solidly and couldn't be budged. "That ain't Santa," I said loudly. "That's a bear!"

Santa, of course, was my cousin Leo in a bearskin coat and boots and cotton whiskers, his idea of how St. Nick should be dressed.

Long after midnight, with the lilting rhythm of "Turkey in the Straw" still echoing in my ears, and with the delicious

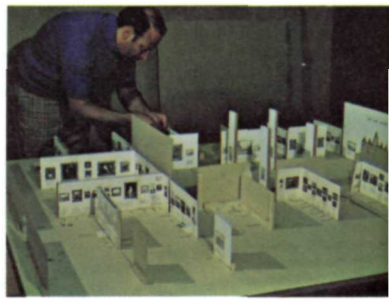
Continued on page 62

SOMETIME DURING LAST FALL there was an episode in the nationally syndicated comic strip "Peanuts" which undoubtedly delighted every Chamber of Commerce in the state of California save that of the city of Oakland. Charles Schultz's canine hero Snoopy was in training for the North-American Ice-Skating Championships to be held in that city when one of the strip's characters asked, innocently enough, "Where in the world is *Oakland?*" Earnest Charlie Brown provided the ready answer: "I looked it up; it's 50 miles south of Petaluma."

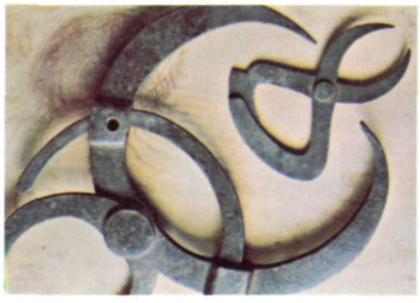
Perhaps this is regional humor, requiring foreknowledge of the relative social and political standing of California municipalities, but it is possible that Schultz felt that his national audience would get the joke too. For the city of Oakland has grown so rapidly under the shadow of its romantic neighbor across the bay during the last decades that even San Franciscans have had occasional cause for embarrassment when confronted with their "bedroom" city's achievements. Oakland's economical and cultural developments since World War II have enriched its standing to a point that may well recompense for its long endured anonymity in the history of the West. During this year of the centennial of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, it may be well for historians to recall that the western terminus of that great work was in Oakland, and not in colorful San Francisco.

This year may also be recorded as the date of the opening of what may be the most important new regional museum in the West, perhaps in the country. The Oakland Museum opened its doors this September with an offer to the people of California to bring them a tangible heritage of their life, art, and history under one roof, with a promise of insights into the complexities of the modern environment. It has been described by Arthur Drexler, of the New York Museum of Modern Art, as "the most brilliant concept of an urban museum in America."

The first distinction to mark the Oakland Museum as different from any other museum in the world is the uniqueness of its building design. Conceived



What goes into the making of a museum? People, primarily, plus an impossible aggregation of diverse elements. Talent, ideas, artifacts, equipment, expertise. Money, of course, and inestimable amounts of time and effort, anguish, hope, commitment, disappointment, and exhilaration. Given grace and luck, one day the whole goes together.



Painting the snow-crowned splendor of high-mountain country for a diorama in the Hall of California Ecology.

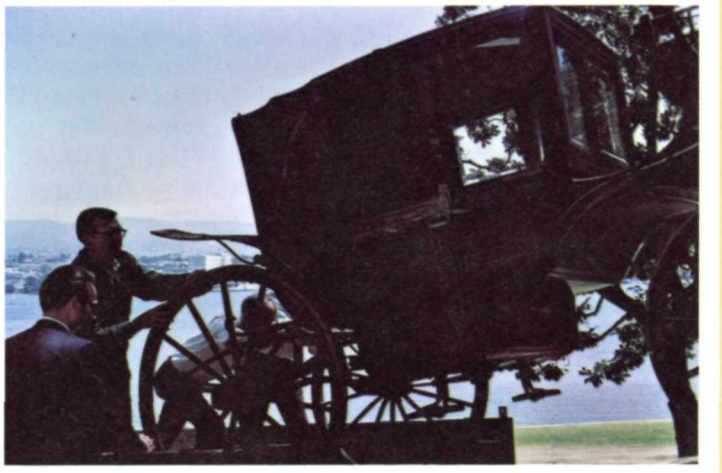
A NEW MUSEUM FOR THE WEST

BY JOHN BEYER

Traditions as old and sacrosanct as the very concept of public institutions in America are being vigorously challenged in Oakland, California, where the West's newest major museum of history, art, and natural science recently opened its doors. "Without a sense of history, no man can understand the problems of his times," Winston Churchill once said, and following that precept the Oakland Museum has abandoned institutional dogma in a determined effort to make itself relevant to the agonies and possibilities of this end of the twentieth century.

Potter and curator confer. Collections in the Gallery of California Art range from paintings to crafts.

Elegant Brewster brougham coach makes its final journey to a platform in the Cowell Hall of California History.



NOTICE

As this issue of THE AMERICAN WEST *entered production, the Oakland Museum suddenly became the center of nationwide controversy. Six weeks before the opening date of September 20, Director J. S. Holliday was dismissed, an action that immediately produced a rash of resignations—including that of Curator of History Roger Olmsted, this magazine's former editor—and the emergence of community antagonisms that for a time threatened the museum's completion.*

The museum did open successfully, but the controversy resulting from Holliday's dismissal raised several points of major concern. For this reason, we have canceled the first scheduled contribution to "Page 48," a feature of editorial opinion beginning in this issue, and have instead presented a statement by our publisher. *See "Page 48."*

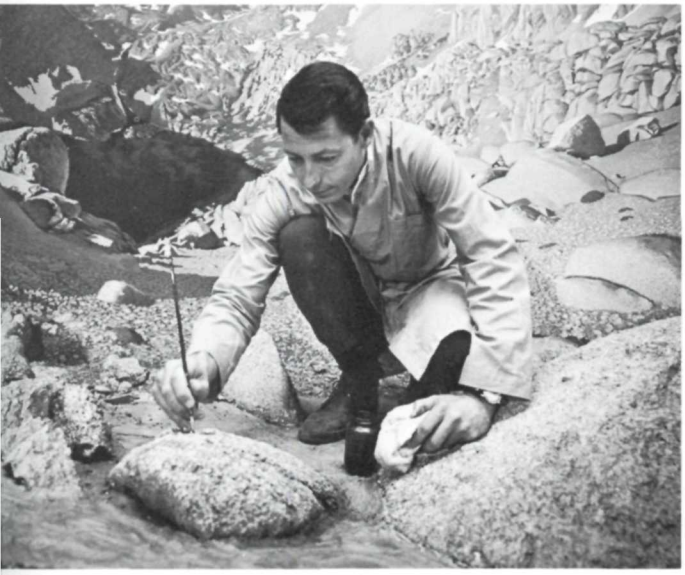
by Kevin Roche, an internationally-recognized architect formerly with Eero Saarinen & Associates, the museum has been virtually hidden in a four-square-block area near Lake Merritt, Oakland's downtown recreation area, in a park-like setting that invites comparison with the hanging gardens. The tree-studded site molds the three-tiered complex of galleries with gardens, pools, courts, and lawns; with the building so constructed that the roof of each level becomes a garden and terrace for the one above—a design that subtly emphasizes the museum's concept of interrelationships. Each level, housing one of the regional theme galleries of natural science, history, and art, offers vistas not only to the outdoor landscape, but invitations to the tiers above or below it.

The first tier is the Hall of California Ecology—the museum's division of natural sciences—and here begins the first departure from "standard" museum concepts. A museum of natural science might normally be expected to be a place for the layman to spend a rainy Sunday afternoon indulging his whimsy, or his children's curiosities by contemplating glass encased and labeled exhibits from the natural world, or a place for the specialist to familiarize himself with particulars and find a departure point for more esoteric studies. There is nothing new for either visitor here; Oakland's natural science museum offers no last word in comprehensive natural collections: the layman and his offspring cannot gaze at the region's largest dinosaur bones, and the expert will see little exhibited that he hasn't seen before. Instead, the visitor is led into an ecological "walk-across-California," a visual tour through the state from the tide-pools of the Pacific to the deserts of Nevada, a visual representation in miniature of the relationships and interrelationships of the natural environment.

Upon the next, or middle, level is the Cowell Hall of California History, which deals with man's experience in California—a history crowded with two centuries of paradox, of explosive growth, of monumental achievement and sometimes agonizing change. In an attempt to capture these elusive qualities the hall presents the story of man adapting, or failing to adapt, to the California environment. Here, again, the visitor who may expect the ultimate in historical collections will be disappointed. The exhibits offer no revolutionary discoveries, but rather a varied potpourri of artifacts arranged to suggest the flow of the California narrative, highlighting those cataclysmic periods of her past in which the state's distinctive political, social, and economic characteristics were given form. The serendipity quality of the exhibits are similar to those of other museums but they are designed to escape the static, even stagnant qualities common to most collections of vintage memorabilia and paraphernalia.

The top level of the Oakland Museum is the Gallery of California Art. Here are examples of the paintings, sculpture, general graphics, and photography that have characterized the artistic development of California. Essentially—and inescapably, given the fact that too few California artists have received national, let alone international standing—the Gallery of California Art is a repository whose prime value lies in the pictorial documentation it provides for the state's social as well as artistic past, a particularly valuable accompaniment, as it were, to the thematic concepts of the Cowell Hall of California History. The chronological picture is all there, from such historical rarities as a 1671 illustration of Sir Francis Drake to Louis Choris's watercolors from the Russian expedition of 1817, from turn-of-the-century landscapes to decorative nouveau art. The collection is rounded off with works of California impressionists, social realists, and cubists of the '30's and concludes with a broad sampling of the post-war modern movements—providing a sweep of the history of California art that reinforces the museum's conviction that the past, present, and future of California—the "forecast of America tomorrow"—are one.

TO CHARACTERIZE A MUSEUM—or any other public institution—as "important," as the Oakland Museum has been described again and again, presupposes that it is motivated by certain concepts so different, even revolutionary, and so vital that it is potentially a major force for the shaping of community values, for altering in some degree man's approach to the past, his present, and his future. That supremely ambitious goal is precisely the intent of the Oakland Museum, and the simple fact that it has consciously set out to do so not only justifies the description of "important" but places the institution in that long tradition of hopeful, sometimes visionary, desire to ameliorate the agonies of man's lot that



Painting shadows on man-made rocks is part of the job of a natural sciences' staffer literally lost in his work—a high-mountain diorama.

Removable seat of "convertible" passenger-freight wagon is extracted for repair. Seats out, the wagon hauled produce. Seats in, it carried people.

Readying a Victorian dollhouse for the Cowell Hall of California History requires patience and a steady hand.

has so often characterized the West, and thus makes of it a uniquely western institution.

The goal was officially articulated by the museum in an open letter to the San Francisco Bay Area shortly before its opening; the letter admitted that the Oakland Museum was beginning during ". . . a time of crises, of demand and change; a time when the tyranny of relevance will not allow this institution . . . to stand on the sidelines or serve only a few. . . . The Museum must *itself* be a place of change and vitality—an educational force, a source of new awareness, a place where the past will provide insight to the present." Oakland has created a new institution in a time when *all* institutions are threatened; and perhaps its awareness of this paradox is the museum's best hope for fulfilling its stated intent, for the construction of a multimillion dollar edifice upon the cloistered institutional standards of the past would have been an affront in these times—an invitation to the poverty-ridden multitudes of east and west Oakland to storm the museum's ramparts.

That understanding is reflected in the basic exhibit design of the museum's three divisions, for each in its own way displays an awareness of the complex ecological, historical, and artistic factors that have contributed to what California is today.

If the museum's Hall of California Ecology is not the penultimate showplace of natural science, it does offer a visual impression of the natural environment which can lead to an understanding of that environment's beauty and fragility and of man's responsibilities toward it. It challenges the visitor to exercise some active thought processes rather than the merely passive ones of observation. The "Walk Across California" has been conceived as a truly contemporary educational experience.

If the Cowell Hall of California History is not a collection of important new contributions, it is a graphic presentation of the dynamic vicissitudes that have been the *main tradition* of California. As the visitor moves through the definitive exhibitions of the three different phases of cultural development—the Indian era, the Spanish-Mexican period, and the period of American hegemony—he is struck by the flow of history,

the relationships of past with present. The exhibits, profuse in artifact, depict the development of this region from the primitive Indian cultures to early explorations; from the development of the missions and the days of the Californios through the impact of the Gold Rush; and from the influx of immigrants and the development of industry and agriculture to California today—the "dream and the nightmare . . . the microcosm of the United States."

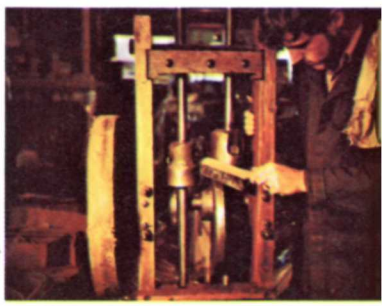
If the Hall of California Art is not a gallery of what might be called "art treasures," it is a significant summary of the development of the region's art, and by corollary, its history. No other art institution in the state has dedicated itself to preserving this particular heritage; it is a task that hopefully will enrich an understanding of both past and present.

Aside from what it is doing to enforce its intent within the physical walls of the building, the museum is extending its influence into the community, even into the country, through an educational program that includes the sponsorship of such traveling exhibits as a forthcoming showing of the photographs of Dorothea Lange, a major publication program that was recently inaugurated by *Westward to Promontory,* issued in conjunction with the American Geographical Society and American West Publishing Company, and a school program involving more than three hundred trained volunteers.

To create a museum of natural science, history, and art from nothing and make it a living part of the accelerating urban world is no mean task. It already has taken more than ten million dollars and the time of hundreds of people, from volunteers to city employees, and it will doubtless take a great deal more to satisfy the quest. How successful the attempt has been—and will be—is a judgment that will have to wait upon the future; that it has been attempted at all is a hope that the future has more going for it than it otherwise appears to have had from this end of the twentieth century.

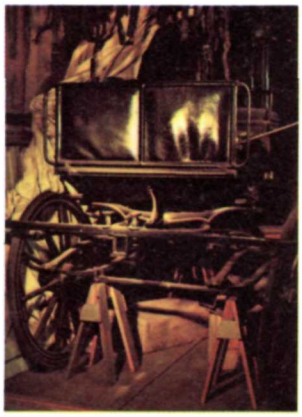
Whatever the Oakland Museum is, it's a long way from Petaluma.

James J. Ott's Nevada City Assay Office takes shape in the history gallery. Saved from a freeway, original counter, teller's window, ornamental gingerbread were carefully installed. Fittings include a stamp mill and scales. Ore samples assayed here in 1859 led to the riches of the Comstock Lode and fortunes for such Californians as Flood, Fair, O'Brien, Mackay, and Sharon, who joined the "rush to the Washoe."

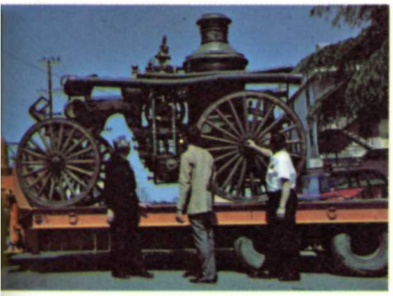


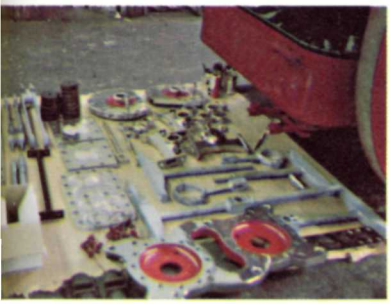
"Freeze-drying" produces the lively-looking small creatures in the natural sciences' division. The specimen is popped into a vacuum chamber where moisture is removed molecule by molecule, leaving the cellular structure intact. No shrinking, though he's a dry shell of his former self. No stuffing required.

Looking towards the West, the Oakland Museum is a place where people can discover relationships "with the past they have inherited, with the present they must live with, with the future they must plan. . . ."

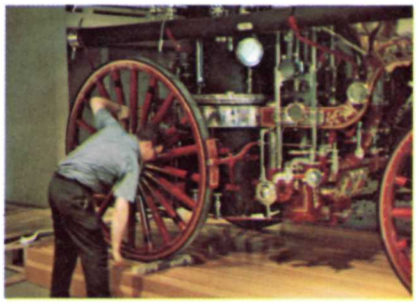


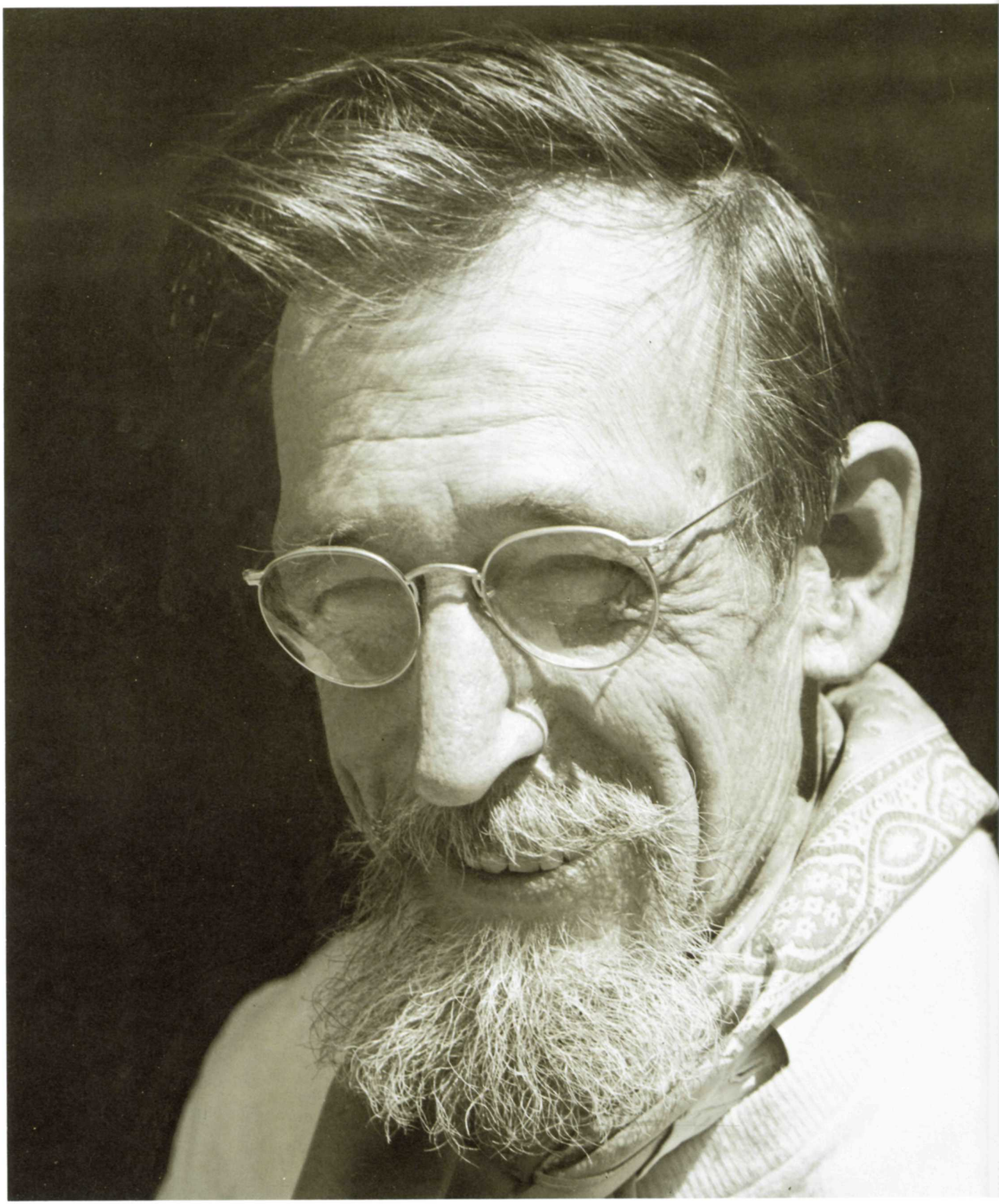
The Requa family coach needed only dusting to bring back its dark green glory.





Gleaming highlight of the Cowell Hall of California History is the American La France fire engine restored to its 1898 brightness by the combined efforts of Oakland firemen and the museum staff.





Portrait of the artist by Ansel Adams.

FREE MAN in a Free Country

The West of Maynard Dixon, with a selection of his paintings and poems, and an essay on understanding by

ANSEL ADAMS

CALL IT PANTHEISTIC IF YOU WILL— the devotion of many American artists to the wild gestures and grandeurs of the natural scene is part of our cultural heritage and is closely linked with our history and the structure of our society. Some eastern artists reacted to nature in depth, but it would be difficult here to describe the complexities of events and natural and human influences that shaped the character — creative and personal — of the men who chose to live and work in the West.

Many of the best American artists had, of course, common cultural origins. In various ways the tradition of the nineteenth century was firm upon them. Most were competent, and some were inspired. Some were nurtured in the sophisticated atmosphere of New England, New York, and Chicago, and chose to remain in urban environments. Others seeking adventure and livelihood came West and labored in the somewhat dry vineyards of a very practical frontier civilization. Still others were born in the West, and among these Maynard Dixon rose far indeed. His work mirrors the arid beauty of the land — chiefly of the Southwest — and his style emerged as a sparse, acrid, but compassionate statement of the world which enveloped him.

This thing called Art — is it not a stylistic, communicative construction based on what a man "sees" (what he *wants* to see), and representing his total experience distilled through the miracles of the mind and spirit? No answer is possible. Criticism is always behind the fact; verbalization never reaches the essence of the creative statement. Millions of words have been written about art and artists, yet art persists in its various and resonant ways.

The invasion of the Impressionists and, later, of the Abstract Expressionists disturbed and then deposed the ideals and styles of the "representative" artists in the early decades of the twentieth century. The new approaches were of only limited use to Maynard Dixon. For him there was something truly sacred in the primitive simplicity of the American Indian way of life and art. It was in close harmony with the primal realities — sun, sky, earth, and space. The West (so eloquently described by Mary Austin as "the land of room enough and time enough") was uncrowded, unsmogged, unorganized and free. Bad things and men there were indeed, but they were apparent, definite, and usually manageable. The horizons were sufficiently remote to create dreams and desires, with space enough for fulfillment. Even with the automobile the rims of glory were many hours away, and the secret havens were revealed to few. Mere possession of the land was inconsequential; the eye freely encompassed fantastic empires of plain, mountain, mesa, and sky.

The natives who moved amidst this grandeur reflected the qualities of their environment and became a part of the great vision. Physically, there was what we would consider now as squalor, poverty, and dirt. There was also great strength of body and will. And the per-

"The Wise Men" (owned by John Dixon).

"Scab" (owned by Edith Hamlin).

"Earth Knower" (owned by the Oakland Art Museum).

I love the grim gaunt edges of the rocks,
the great bare backbone of the Earth,
rough brows and heaved-up shoulders,
round ribs and knees of the world's skeleton
protruded in lonely places;
where from ledges of sun-silenced cliffs
the wild war eagle dips aslant
blue ecstacies of air
to the delicate deep fringes of the pines;
the long-returning curves of solid hills
that bend the wind along the dappled sky;
or far-drawn levels of red mesa-lands,
receding infinitely, step on step on step . . .
and grandeur of all grandeurs, over all
the high commanding glory of the sun!

MY COUNTRY — 1922

At last
I shall give myself to the desert again,
that I, in its golden dust,
may be blown from a barren peak
broadcast over the sun-lands.
If you should desire some news of me,
go ask the little horned toad
whose home is the dust,
or seek it among the fragrant sage,
or question the mountain juniper,—
and they by their silence
will truly inform you.

MD

May 16 - 1935

ceptions, comprehensions, and devotions were very real (not the fabrications of "Noble Red Men" escapism). Maynard Dixon caught this spirit of both the land and its people as no one else has done. It will be a long time indeed before he can be fully evaluated historically, not only as a creative artist but as a documentarian of a fast-vanishing society.

I can offer no consequential contribution to his biography or authoritative critique on his work. This has been approached in the *Maynard Dixon Sketch Book* (introduction and descriptive text by Don Perceval, with foreword by Lawrence Clark Powell; 1967) and *Maynard Dixon, Painter of the West* (a monograph by Arthur Millier; revised edition, 1967), among others. Dixon was born in Fresno in 1875 and died in Tucson in 1946. He was mostly self-taught and worked as a book and magazine illustrator in his twenties and thirties. His long series of trips throughout the West began in 1893 and continued until about two years before his death. His life was filled with beauty, tragedy, and accomplishment.

I can say that I knew him well. When I was with him — whether in Berkeley, San Francisco, Yosemite, Utah, or Arizona — I always experienced an amazing thrill of warmth, of recognition, of support for things believed in, and a universal compassion. I sensed the aura of the desert — of the wild, secret places which we all yearn to know in our hearts. I sensed his passionate effort to put all this down on paper or canvas and his dedication as an artist and a believer.

He was not an "easy" man; he could be infuriating in his demolition of the immediate idols of men — the things and ideals of a materialistic society. He had a devastating wit, a trigger-sharp scorn — and a comforting twinkle in his steely eye. He was not a poseur, although hard-boiled sophisticates would mutter at his black Stetson, his Stevensonian moustache, his cowboy boots, his cane, and his priceless Navajo silver belt. There wasn't anything about Dixon that did not legitimately belong in the West. As the years advanced, his interest in the politics of art and city life waned, and he related less and less to the worldly-wise aspects of San Francisco and other ports of sophistication. The "new wave" took over — for better or for worse —

"Elements of Nevada" (owned by W. R. Hewlett).

and Dixon sought the peace of Utah and Arizona. In the minds of the younger artists who had different things to say (and a vast confidence in the saying thereof), Dixon became a "period enigma."

The recent exhibit at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco was a good reconfirmation of his genius, for those who knew what it was all about. It did not (and I doubt if any exhibit could) awaken the modern art–involved person to the potential of personal expression free from the often calamitous impositions of the cults of contemporary art. Great modern artists there are (and I believe they would understand Maynard Dixon), but the stream of organized art today does not relate to the rigors, the basic honesty, and the obligation which the heart and mind of Maynard Dixon revealed (although his works now attract a substantial and widening collector audience).

Maynard Dixon did not confine himself to the Indian and pioneer life. The Spanish-American world of New Mexico added another taut string to his bow. He also essayed, in the grim 1930s, the plight of labor on the docks of San Francisco — not too successfully (better done by photography!). Recognizing this, he returned to the great human and natural realities as he saw and felt them. He chose to live in *his* world, which is the very best thing any man can do.

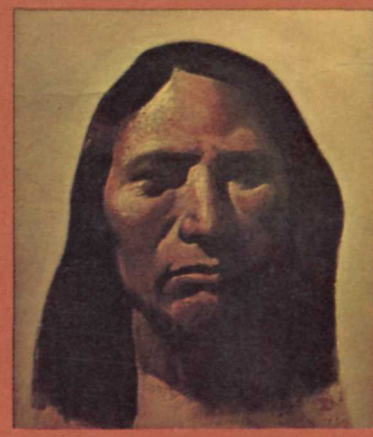
Maynard Dixon was "in vogue" during the first three decades of this century. In his drawings, paintings, and murals he gave no evidence that he was making a self-conscious effort to depict his times. He was simply and always himself — seeking, seeing, sketching, and revealing. He was touchingly tolerant of all who seemed to him to "have something," without regard for their obscurity or fame. He never tried to analyze *what* they had; he responded to the presence of perception, compassion, and the creative spirit.

"Art is the affirmation of life," said Alfred Stieglitz. And so, through his works, said Maynard Dixon.

Ansel Adams *is a photographer and conservationist whose work has been exhibited in major museums throughout the world. Among his books are* These We Inherit: The Parklands of America *(1962), and* This Is the American Earth *(1960).* He is director *of the Ansel Adams Yosemite Photographic Workshop, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.*

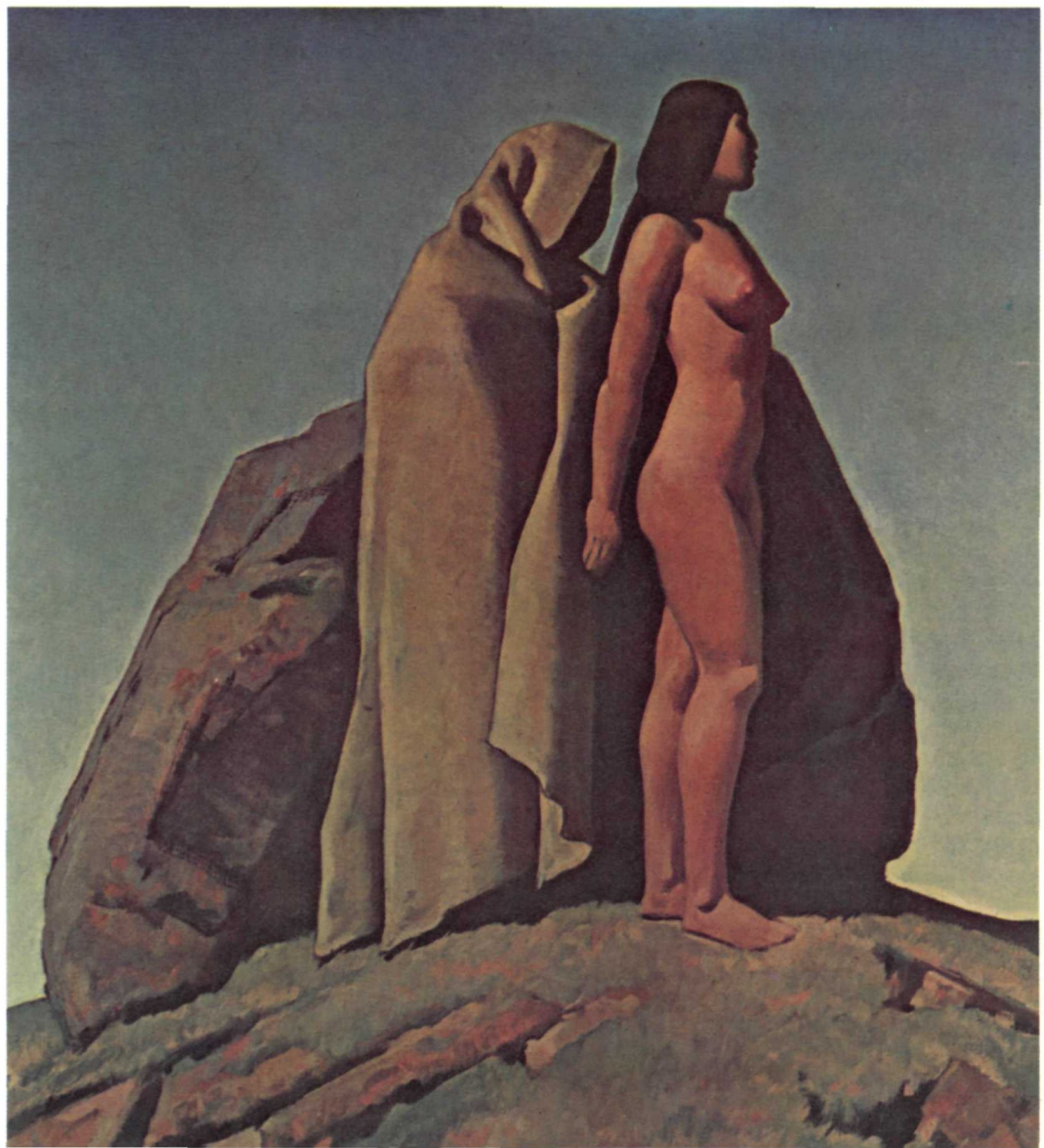
How should you not look grim, old chief?
How long, how well have you outlasted hunger? —
how many days outlived starvation? —
how long, how many ways endured
the white man's inhumanities? —
how surely shamed despair?
Turned toward darkness, unmoved, unterrified,
how long have you faced down the fear of death?
What power flows to you from the dim abyss
of old belief receding beyond arched miracles of rainbow
where dwell the Ancients and veiled mystery of the Trues?

LAST WARRIOR — 1936



"Ute Indian" (owned by Mrs. Paul Tomanoczy).

"Allegory" (owned by Daniel Dixon).



"Cloud-Drift and Prairie" (owned by Dr. Russell V. A. Lee).

There lies the great earth, flat and wide,
with only a thin gray fur of dry grass
spread over her under the sky.
The sky's deep-dipping blue fringes
pull through the grass, bending its pale tips over.
No life can I feel in the earth—Her great breast is dry . . .
From afar I can feel the darkness of death-wind
coming toward me, bearing me ghosts . . .
O ye great Dark Ones, do ye not breathe on my lance
turning the sacred feathers that sing of my deeds?
O shaggy Dark Ones with curved horns,
breathing great medicine power,
have ye also passed over?

from GHOST DANCE—

PAGE 48

A Museum Is a Museum Is a Museum – But Whose Is It?

Many months ago, when we planned and began to put together John Beyer's article on the Oakland Museum, which appears on page 32 of this issue, we also planned this new page of editorial opinion to add some fresh viewpoints to THE AMERICAN WEST. We certainly did not expect at the time that circumstances would force a joining of these two projects in the same issue.

But circumstances dictated otherwise. Barely six weeks before the opening of the Oakland Museum, with the usual thousands of details yet to be resolved, Director J. S. Holliday was fired by the museum commission—on the general grounds of "insubordination," and specifically because without formal permission he allowed the formation of a Community Relations Advisory Council, a committee designed to explore ways and means of encouraging a wide spectrum of public participation in this public institution, constructed with $6.6 million of public money. Holliday's dismissal was followed by the resignation of Roger Olmsted, curator of history, and by a general exodus of many others of the museum's key staff, and was attended by much conflict among various elements of Oakland's community life, conflict that for a time threatened the museum's successful completion.

THE AMERICAN WEST, of course, cannot presume to judge the rightness or wrongness of Holliday's dismissal, nor the general community situation in Oakland. It might even be argued that our view is prejudicial: aside from the fact that we have devoted a good deal of space in this issue to the museum, ex-Director Holliday has been closely associated with THE AMERICAN WEST since its founding, and ex-Curator of History Olmsted was our editor until he joined the museum staff last spring. Still, we remain reasonably concerned, for it seems to us that what happened at the Oakland Museum has a significance far beyond what might at first be considered an event of purely local interest.

Since the blowup on August 6, Bay Area newspapers (not to mention such remote journals as the *New York Times)* and radio and television stations have vibrated with coverage of meetings and confrontations between the museum commission and segments of Oakland's minority population—principally black people, who comprise some 40 percent of the city's population. The argument, if it can be so called, was that black people and other minority groups were not adequately represented *in* the museum, *on* its governing body, or *with* its paid staff.

The very fact that there were such confrontations presents several questions of interest. How and why are museums and similar public institutions born? Where does the money come from? Who owes what to whom? Perhaps some of the answers—and problems—are mirrored in the newspaper pictures one often sees commemorating "opening night" at such institutions—evening gowns, diamond tiaras, black ties, and white faces. Where in such pictures are the poor people? Were they ever in on it? (They most certainly were if the institution was built with tax money, as the Oakland Museum was.) Or did the wealthier people, with more time and money to spare and more so-called "cultural appreciation," get so involved that they began to think of it as of, by, and *for* them? It would be a most understandable feeling to develop after days, weeks, months, and even years of volunteer work on such a heartfelt and worthy project—but is it right?

Today, ours is a society of minorities—a new age of minorities, especially when we are dealing with tax dollars and public institutions. We are all of us minorities—the rich whites, the poor whites, the blacks, the browns, the aged, the miniskirted, the cultured, the under-cultured. In such a world, it is manifestly necessary to make an effort to involve *all of the people all of the time* in planning, creating, managing, and operating our public institutions. Otherwise, the very concept of public institutions loses meaning. A museum, for example, must ask itself if it is geared to the broadest cultural enlightenment of all the people: Does it make a major and sustained effort to promote knowledge throughout its community? Does it look upon its various committees as opportunities for a healthy mix of minorities to work together on common cultural grounds? If it charges admission, who is being deprived?

These are but a few of the questions brought to mind by the debacle at Oakland. We hope that Oakland will find good answers, and that museum directors and officials everywhere will rethink their own situations in the light of a changed world.

GEORGE PFEIFFER, *Publisher*

Because THE AMERICAN WEST *is convinced that it is neither possible nor desirable for a magazine of history and conservation to separate the life of the past from the demands and hopes of the present,* ***Page 48*** *has been created as a continuing feature of editorial opinion—opinion that hopefully will not only illuminate truth but reinforce the understanding that we are, after all, only what our history has made us. Contributions are invited; they must be signed and the editors reserve the right to accept or reject all submissions.*

THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

Population, Ecology, and Crisis

BY THOMAS RYTHER

HOPEFULLY MOST AMERICANS are becoming aware that we as a nation are in deep trouble—that our old ways of doing things do not solve our major contemporary problems. Moreover, there is unprecedented and nearly universal agreement among the scientific community on the nature and scope of the impending disaster, and their message bears repeating until it becomes engrained in our thinking. The message is very simple: population pressure in the U.S. is reducing open-space freedoms, polluting the environment, and contributing (in some poorly understood ways) to urban tensions. At the same time, the very techniques which have produced the great American affluence are moving environmental disaster from the pages of science fiction to the pages of the daily paper.

If we are to avoid destroying ourselves, it is clear that a collective effort of enormous proportions must be mounted. I am optimistic that such an effort can be made, for the value of open spaces, clean air and water, and freedom from urban tension crosscut those issues of right and left, black and white, communist and capitalist which polarize us today. But to survive, we will need visionary books, films, and television programs that state and restate the fundamental issues, theories, and facts. The following three books reflect both success and failure in this regard—success in the continued improvement in the quality of books aimed at the college audience and failure in the writing of books for an even younger generation.

The Subversive Science has a title that is both appropriate (in the sense of connoting the need for a new, ecologic life style) and inappropriate (in the sense of perhaps alienating those who most need to be reached). It is—title aside—the single most compelling collection of essays on ecology yet published. In one long sweep, this book contains essays by the best minds in the field on the biological, philosophical, psychological, sociological, and historical aspects of the man-environment relationship. It is artfully designed, and the photographs and graphic layout are a pleasure. It should be required reading for every person who calls himself a teacher.

The Population Bomb is the best of a recent spate of books in which prominent scientists have stopped beating around the bush in qualification of their statements about the effects of human population growth. The statistics are still there and in enough detail for new students of the problem to get their fill. But the book has two features which make it uniquely useful for high school teachers. The population problem is set in an ecologic perspective which defines the limits within which the "science will save us" argument must be considered. Secondly, a good half of the book is devoted to a consideration of what is actually being done and what should be done.

Open Space: The Choices before California is a source book of facts, figures, and bureaucracies dealing with California's land problems—basically a formal report by a private firm to the state Office of Planning. It is an uncommonly pleasing source book, however, because there are pictures and some text. Thus its potential use is special—as an adjunct to more general essays enabling students to understand the current status of land use in the urban and near-urban areas of California, to understand the agencies which deal with land use, and to understand the present ways in which the state may legally control land use.

I have purposely stressed the educational possibilities of each of these three books. The governor of California is probably correct when he says that the majority of the present student generation is not interested in violent confrontation with its own society, but they and millions of others are becoming increasingly ready to confront head-on the rapaciousness which has been so much a part of the history of the American West. Teachers had first better be ready to offer these people solid, integrated, and substantial instruction from a well-thought-out ecologic perspective. Then public officials, industrialists, land speculators—and each of us—had better be prepared to change.

Thomas Ryther *is a member of the Department of Sociology at San Francisco State College.*

The Subversive Science: Essays Toward an Ecology of Man by Paul Shepard *(Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1968; 439 pp., foreword, preface, intro., additional readings, $5.95).*

The Population Bomb by Paul R. Ehrlich, foreword by David Brower *(Ballantine Books, New York, 1968; 223 pp., $2.95).*

Open Space: The Choices Before California by Edward A. Williams *(Diablo Press, San Francisco, 1969; 160 pp., foreword, appendix, biblio., $4.95 paper, ($6.95 hard).*

A WESTERN GATHERING

Looking Westward

BY JOSEPH ILLICK

THE CLASH of white European and red North American cultures has so fascinated participants and historical observers from Captain John Smith to Leslie Fiedler that, at least until recently, it has required a feat of imagination to conceive of Indians existing apart from that conflict. Such books as Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi* or Margot Liberty's rendering of the life of John Stands-in-Timber in his own words have helped to remedy this distortion. N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (Harper and Row, $4.95) may do more than any other single volume to convey the way of life that was and is distinctively Indian, not only because of its intrinsic merits as a novel but as a result of the publicity it attracted as a Pulitzer Prize winner.

This is not to say that the cultural clash should be totally ignored; that would be impossible, given white domination of a political society in which Indians must survive. But Momaday, himself a Kiowa, is under no compulsion to apologize for, condemn, or even notice the Europeans except as an intrusive force. The setting of his book is one of those rare regions in North America (indeed, in the West) as yet undefiled by industrial culture; it is a land that can be known. So begins the novel:

> *Dypaloh.* There was a house made of dawn. It was made of pollen and rain, and the land was very old and everlasting. There were many colors on the hills, and the plain was bright with different-colored clays and sands. Red and blue and spotted horses grazed in the plain, and there was a dark wilderness on the mountains beyond. The land was still and strong. It was beautiful all around.

The lyrical quality of this passage is sustained throughout the book, as is its existential message. For if the land is old and everlasting (which, before the advent of advanced European technology, it seemed to be), then it would be pretentious of man to live more than a daily existence. (The New Testament warns against the accumulation of earthly treasures, but this caution weighed less heavily on English colonists to America than John Calvin's emphasis on the parable of the talents.) A house made of dawn is a day. Man's true existence lies in his closeness to the land, where the fact of his finiteness invests his life with integrity. Thus, Momaday introduces his protagonist:

> Abel was running. He was alone and running, hard at first, heavily, then easily and well. . . . He was naked to the waist, and his arms and shoulders had been marked with burnt wood and ashes. The cold rain slanted down upon him and left his skin mottled and streaked. The road curved out and lay into the bank of rain beyond, and Abel was running. Against the winter sky and the long, light landscape of the valley at dawn, he seemed almost to be standing still, very little and alone.

As Abel, the son of Adam, was slain by his brother Cain, so was Abel, the grandson of Francisco, wrenched from the land that was part of his being and spiritually slain by his white brother. Inducted into the army, he returned home drunk in 1945, only to kill an albino and be taken away once more. Paroled in Los Angeles, whose ethnic diversity and technological triumphs were the antithesis of his milieu in central New Mexico, he fell among Indians who had made their peace with an alien culture through drugs. His body (always superior to his mind, even superior to the white, as shown in one graphic sexual scene), having fallen into decay, was bruised and beaten. Again he went home, there to witness the death of his grandfather who had raised him. And so, cov-

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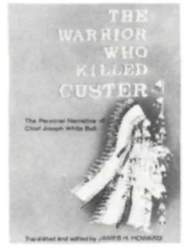

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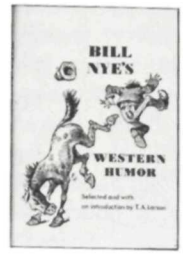

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ering his chest and shoulders with ashes:

> He was running and there was no reason to run but the running itself and the land and the dawn appearing. . . . Pure exhaustion laid hold of his mind, and he could *see* at last without having to think.

This final act, the experiential quality of Abel's existence, marks him as unreconstructed. He remains inarticulate while the Right Reverend John Big Bluff Tosamah, peyote-smoking Priest of the Sun, is a torrent of words. (His sermon is built around the opening line of the Gospel of St. John.) Even Milly, the sympathetically drawn white social worker who briefly lives with Abel, is devoted to "tests, questions and answers, words on paper." Momaday makes no secret of his preference for Abel's natural way of life.

> The people of the town have little need. They do not hanker after progress and have never changed their essential way of life. . . . They have assumed the names and gestures of their enemies, but have held on to their own secret souls; and in this there is a resistance and an overcoming, a long outwaiting.

House Made of Dawn is poetry posing as prose. It conveys a sense of place without a regard for time; the narrative moves backward and forward almost in the manner of stream of consciousness. It is a beautiful piece of writing, fully deserving of the prize which it (ironically) won.

Law and Public Lands

BY THOMAS LEDUC

TO FURNISH BACKGROUND for a study of current policies, Paul W. Gates has prepared for the federal Public Land Law Review Commission an account of the effects of laws governing the management and disposal of lands owned by the federal government. Set in a rough chronological framework, topical chapters deal with specific policies and categories of resources. The section dealing with mineral resources was prepared by Robert W. Swenson.

Earlier historians tended to concentrate on the legislative history of the public lands and its relation to other public policies and to the sectional controversy. Scant attention was paid to administration and to the actual effects of the legislation. In the last thirty-five years, Paul Gates, some of his students, and others have directed their research to the more difficult task of determining what actually happened under the law. Much has been accomplished, but all will agree that the surface has only been scratched. While Gates has embodied here the findings of some unpublished research, a book of this scope and length is necessarily a synthesis of the work of many scholars. If viewed as a reflection of the state of scholarship, this book tells us what we have done and where we stand.

History of Public Land Law Development by Paul W. Gates with a chapter by Robert W. Swenson *(Public Land Law Review Commission, Washington, D.C., 1968; 815 pp., biblio, appendix, index, $8.25).*

For a century after 1789, the central premise of federal policy was that the public interest required desocialization of land ownership. With conveyance of title, the American people also yielded to private interests the right to reap the unearned increment of value and to determine whether the land should be used wisely. On this basis Congress busied itself well into the twentieth century to speed the alienation of the public estate and to obstruct the belated efforts of the executive branch to preserve public ownership of valuable resources.

While the supply lasted, the public land contributed in a variety of ways to insulate Congress from harsh realities. Today the federal government must use money to buy its programs; in the nineteenth century land was used as currency for government purchase of many things—including cash. It went to buy migration, transportation, education, settlement, the contentment of veterans, the drainage of wet lands, and military

defense. Steadfastly refusing to treat the public lands as an exhaustible asset, Congress found their expenditure, either in acres or in the cash proceeds of sale, a painless alternative to levying taxes. Until the Civil War, the republic laid taxes only in trifling amounts and for two brief periods.

Despite the fact that debate on land policies occupied more time than any other subject, the legislation was badly drawn more often than not. To this defect Congress added the refusal to appropriate funds for adequate, competent, and honest administration and for enforcement.

Just as Congress today, responding to diverse pressures, legislates and spends to attain incompatible objectives, so did it then with the public land. In Gates's writings one of the recurrent themes is the incongruity of a system that offered cheap or free land to settlers while simultaneously pursuing a variety of goals the financing of which significantly depleted the supply of land available to settlers. For example, Congress donated to the states about as much land as was homesteaded.

Historians have been preoccupied, if not indeed obsessed, with the frustration of settlers in seeking exclusive access to the public lands. Following Populist rhetoric, they have inveighed against intermediaries who initially acquired the land and then retailed it to settlers. This point of view seems to equate the public interest with the special interest of a small segment of the population in perhaps three generations of the American past. This is at best a debatable thesis, and some will think it not terribly important. Are there not bigger questions? Should historians not be asking how the federal government could best have achieved the goal of resource development without sacrificing long-term social values? No one appears to deny that with grass, timber, and mineral resources congressional policy failed to meet objective standards for preserving the public interest. It is at least debatable whether they did any better with tillable lands. Final answers will have to await further study based on adequate differentiation of land according to physical character and economic value. Historians have tended to talk of acres as

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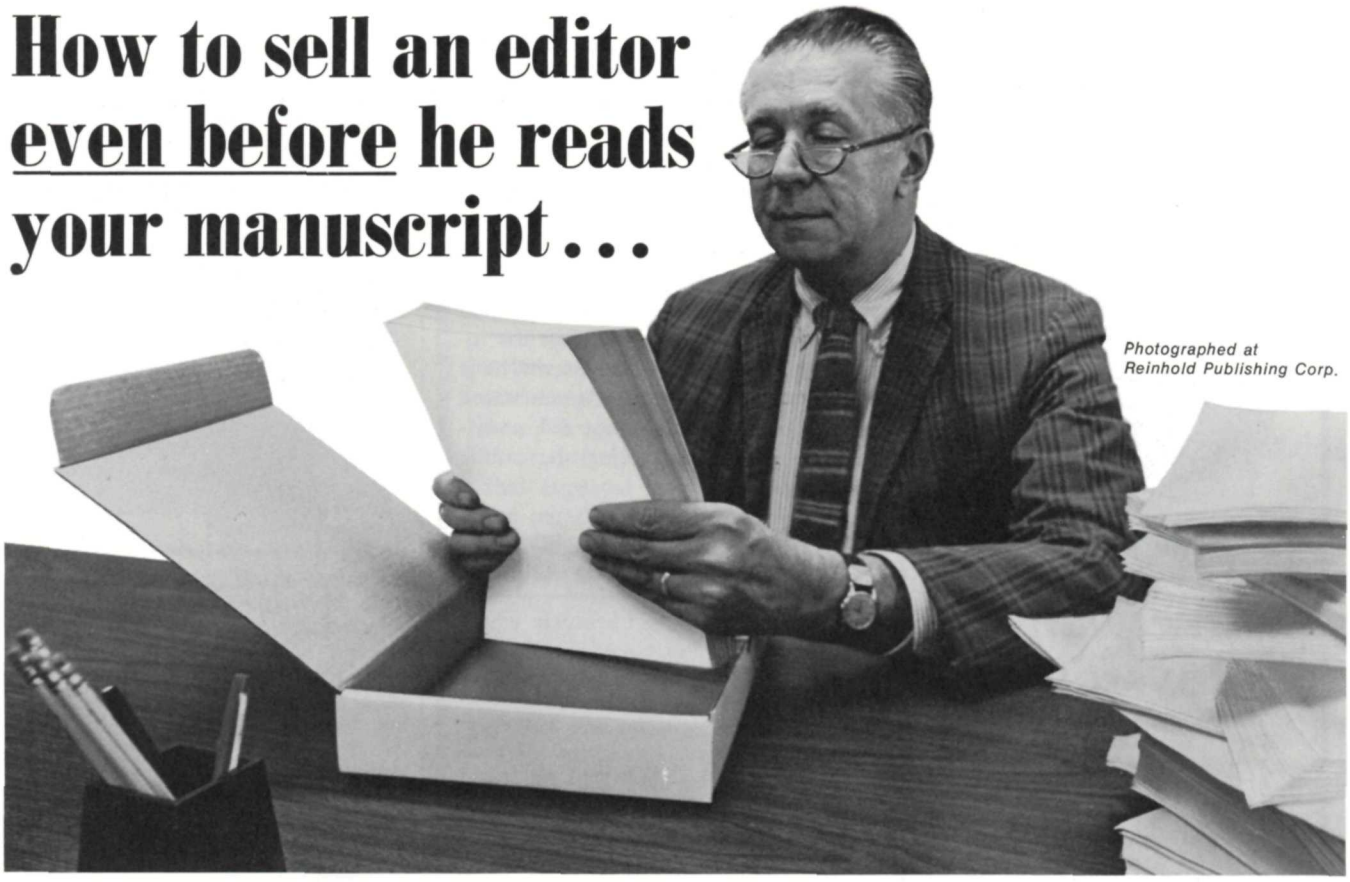

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though they are perfectly homogeneous. The emphasis on spatial quantity—perhaps generated by Turner and the Populists—tends to divert us from more refined discriminations.

This book supplies a mine of information, but generalization is scant. Gates's technique is to create a general impression by massive narration of specific incidents and then to qualify the implicit meaning by careful but brief qualification. Whether or not one shares the interpretations here suggested, he will have to agree that Gates has demonstrated that democratic government did a miserable job in administering the public estate. ☙

Thomas LeDuc *is in the Department of History at Oberlin College.*

California: A Literary Chronicle edited by W. Storrs Lee *(Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1969; 535 pp., key dates, $10.00).*

BY JACK BURROWS

CALIFORNIA: A LITERARY CHRONICLE edited by W. Storrs Lee is an effort to gather together the thoughts, reflections, and impressions of just about everyone who ever lived in, passed by, went through, over, or across California, from Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo to Eugene Burdick.

Altogether there are eighty selections. The majority are excerpted from larger works and carefully edited for clarity and brevity, with each selection prefaced by a cogent and illuminating essay. One wishes that equal care had been taken with the selecting itself; too many of the pieces are inconsequential and boring. The Sinclair Lewis selection on San Francisco, for example, may, as Mr. Lee claims, bear traces of the "irreverence" that later characterized *Babbitt* and *Main Street*. But rather than "irreverence" one finds a piece that is as contrived as it is meaningless. Other selections are equally unfortunate.

Other selections do injustice to the main body of the authors' works. "A Raisin in Every Pot" is not likely to produce a renascence of Saroyanism and send one loping off to rediscover the quaint delights of Old Fresno. The John Muir selection, "Storms Are Fine Speakers," is rich and colorful. But today's conservationists—many of whom have done nothing more strenuous than write their congressmen and join the Sierra

Club—need to see the whole man rather than just the rain-soaked recluse exulting among the wind-lashed trees.

Some selections are excellent. Ambrose Bierce's irony drips, his scorn demeans. Satire gives way to an infantile, almost collegiate cruelty, while the origins of his anger, with tap roots in the Civil War, remain intriguingly esoteric.

Those college professors and students today who believe they have discovered "relevance" would do well to read "The Privileged Vices of Berkeley," from the *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens.* "No one ever developed for me the relation of any of my required subjects to those that attracted me; no one brought out for me the relation of anything I was studying to anything else, except, of course, to that wretched degree." Disgusted with the lack of relevance, Steffens had a try at "jockstrapping." He had the wind, the stamina, but no speed. R.O.T.C. was next, where, to his disgust, he was successful: "Thus I led my class in the most unpopular and meaningless of undergraduate activities."

If one seeks continuous and universal themes, the most important selection is from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath.* Man's agricultural genius flourishes: he creates a bucolic environment with his hands out of the marvelous fecundity of the land, only to overproduce and fall victim to a system so badly flawed it must resort to planned scarcity while people starve. Inequities and iniquities follow. Corporate ownership obtains with its diminishment of human values. Injustice and exploitation are constant, from okie to bracero, from the Grapes of Wrath to Boycott Grapes.

One is inescapably trapped in the conclusion that the book is—at least in part—a collection of miscellany. We are surfeited with pieces that are so brief as to be fragments, so lacking in theme and significance as to bear a general sameness. Those that endure in mind and memory are notable exceptions. Perhaps Mr. Lee—whose prefaces are really the best part of the volume—should have cut his selections by half, with each receiving a fuller treatment so that they might speak more adequately for themselves and, incidentally, for California.

Jack Burrows *is in the Department of History at San Jose City College.*


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BOOKS IN BRIEF

BY FEROL EGAN

Pumpkin Seed Point by Frank Waters *(The Swallow Press, Inc., Chicago, 1969; 175 pp., map, glossary, $6.00).*

AT FIRST GLANCE, this appears to be a straight account of the author's experiences during a three-year stay with the Hopi Indians. But Waters has written a good deal more than a recollection. During his stay at Pumpkin Seed Point, he became totally *involved* with the Hopis. He observed their long and continuing conflict with the Navajos; saw the constant struggle between the values of the red and white worlds; became part of White Bear's household, and saw this returning Hopi's frantic search for his lost identity as a result of his long stay in the wilderness of the white world.

This is a rare book that deserves more than one reading. The prose is lean and haunted with the endless time and dreams of the Hopi civilization. Yet Waters does not try to identify with the Indians, does not try to give the impression that he somehow became one of them. Instead, he has the good sense to confine his narrative to one all important fact: the way that he was affected by his stay on the lonely mesa. Out of this experience has come a strange blend of emotional and cerebral reactions by a highly sophisticated Anglo, who had to learn to live with an alien but extremely powerful culture that long ago learned how to live not just on the earth but with it.

Shadow of Thunder by Max Evans *(The Swallow Press, Inc., Chicago, 1969; 78 pp., illus., $5.00).*

IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE that the man who wrote *The One-Eyed Sky* and *The Rounders* could have cranked out this short novel. At best, this is what might be called a Gothic Western minus the clanking chains, squeaking doors, and castles on the moors. At worst, it is no more than a "treatment" for a screenplay; and that—more than anything else—is what is wrong with this book.

In reading it, one is always aware of the offstage crew getting ready to begin shooting. Where the demon flimflam man and his victims should have been given life, Evans failed to complete their roles. Instead, he awaits the director, the cameraman, and the actors, for he knows—and he can't hide this from his readers—that it is the Hollywood gang who will take his skeletal characters and give them their much-needed flesh. Perhaps Rod Serling's screenplay will give this tale more that its present single dimension. Meanwhile, wait for the flick, unless you're interested in the birth of a movie.

Historical Atlas of New Mexico by Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Hasse *(University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1969; 74 pp., maps, charts, biblio., index, $2.95).*

FOR WRITERS, scholars, and readers with more than a passing interest in New Mexico, this is a *must* book. The authors have gathered data for maps and charts covering such diverse topics as Sites of Prehistoric Civilizations; Life Zones of

Native Vegetation; Spanish Expeditions; United States Military Expeditions after the Mexican War; Principal Towns and Cart Roads, 1850; Stagecoach Lines; Principal Cities and Roads, 1960; Present Indian Pueblo Towns; National Parks and Monuments; and County Boundaries from 1850 to the Present. All this and more is put together with the idea of giving the reader a handy reference book—one that presents textual material associated with maps and charts so that it is possible to refer to the text and look at the drawings without having to turn a page. Selective and scholarly brevity are the keynotes of this book. It is a supreme treat to look at a volume so well organized for easy access of information.

A Ride With Kit Carson by George D. Brewerton; introduction and editorial commentary by George R. Stewart *(Lewis Osborne, Palo Alto, 1969; 108 pp., illus., endpaper map, $15.00).*

THIS NEW, LIMITED edition of young Lieutenant Brewerton's account of his 1848 ride with Kit Carson will be welcomed by collectors of rare western Americana. First published in the August, 1853, issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* this essay gives a fine picture of Kit Carson in action: how a young greenhorn viewed the Great Basin, what he thought of the mountain men, and how he narrowly escaped from the Indians.

George R. Stewart's introduction and editorial commentary are scholarly but written with his usual good style and taste. Among many things, Stewart gives a good picture of Brewerton's life; he also points out that the Old Spanish Trail "was neither very old, nor very great, nor even very Spanish."

As a further bonus, this Osborne publication is a fine example of the dying art of putting together a beautiful book.

TO WASH THIS LAND IN BLOOD

(Continued from page 27)

up a position in the timber just northwest of Osawatomie only to see the Missourians wheel off the road and charge "down the hill in half-moon shape" with guns blazing. The fighting was hot and bitter, but at last the Missourians overran the free-state men and drove them across the Marais des Cygnes in panic and rout. Brown and his son Jason fled through the timber above Osawatomie, looking for a ford where they could cross the river and go to the cabin of his brother-in-law Samuel Adair, perhaps to find Frederick. At one spot on the riverbank, Jason pointed in the direction of town: smoke was billowing up over the trees. The Missourians were burning Osawatomie! Brown could hear their shouts and gunfire as they rode through the smoking settlement looting cabins and herding off the very cattle that free-state forces had stolen during the past few days. First the murder of Frederick and now this! "God sees it," the old man said, and stood there trembling with grief and rage. "I have only a short time to live — only one death to die," he told Jason, "and I will die fighting for this cause. There will be no more peace in this land until slavery is done for. I will give them something else to do than to extend slave territory. I will carry this war into Africa."

On September 7 Brown rode into Lawrence on his gray horse, with his gun across his saddle and a dazed expression on his face. The old man was well known in Lawrence, and as he moved down the street men cheered "as if the President had come to town, but John Brown seemed not to hear it and paid not the slightest attention." Somebody told him that a war council headed by hatchet-faced James Lane and James A. Harvey was then in session and was planning a raid against proslavery strongholds in and around Leavenworth. Brown, however, was not interested in either accompanying or leading the projected raid, and rode on. For several days he came and went, his mind busy with plots. One can only conjecture what visions played in his thoughts during these last days in Lawrence: perhaps a vision of striking a blow against "Africa" that would make the earth shake and tremble as the blood of evil stained this land, for one of his favorite biblical texts was Heb. 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Then was Brown mulling over the possibility that God now wished him to strike a blow at the Deep South itself, to incite an insurrection there as he perhaps had dreamed of doing for ten years now? According to an account by E. A. Coleman, who lived near Lawrence, Brown came to his house and told Coleman and his wife that God had used him as an instrument for killing men and would use him "to kill a great many more." Others heard him say that he had his mission just as Christ did — that God had appointed him "a special angel of death" to destroy slavery with the sword.

Certainly Brown was on the verge of something large in these mid-September days. He sent a letter to Mary Ann, notifying her of Frederick's death with scarcely a trace of emotion. In the exultant state he was in (for surely he viewed Frederick's death and the sack of Oswatomie, however tragic, as providential signs showing him what must be done), he seemed incapable of ordinary human emotions. In fact, he had not even had the presence of mind to bury Frederick after Osawatomie, but had merely taken the boy's cap and faded into the brush, leaving others to dig his grave. After writing Mary Ann, Brown then prepared an account of the Osawatomie fight for the press — obviously to publicize himself in eastern newspapers. Not insignificantly, he was soon calling himself "John Brown of Osawatomie."

Preoccupied with his visions and his plots, Brown played only a perfunctory role in the defense of Lawrence during the last Missouri invasion (September 13 and 14). Walking about the streets with his gun on his shoulder and a cloud on his face, the old man may have made some attempt to rally volunteers at the forts on the edge of town, but clearly his heart was not in it. The new governor, John W. Geary, soon arrived, and backed by United States troops, he persuaded the Missourians to withdraw. After that Geary embarked on a pacifi-

cation program that eventually brought an end to the guerrilla war which the sacking of Lawrence and the Pottawatomie Massacre had precipitated.

As Geary set about executing evenhanded justice, indicting free-state and proslavery "troublemakers" alike, he may have ordered the arrest of Brown as well. Brown himself seems to have thought so; he returned to Osawatomie where he made plans to leave the territory. Since fighting in Kansas had nearly ended (and since U.S. troops were allegedly prowling the countryside in search of him), Brown was ready to travel east and launch his "grand scheme." Sick with dysentery and a "Chill fever," the old man ordered his Kansas Regulators to continue terrorizing the enemy; then he took his sons and their families to hide out at a friend's place near Lawrence, trying to elude whatever troops were on their trail. Still ill in early October, Brown started the womenfolk for Ohio "by way of the River," then set out for Nebraska with John, Jr., (who had been released by the authorities on September 7) and two other sons. As the party headed across Nebraska, Iowa, and the northwestern states, Brown lay on a bed inside the wagon, his fevered mind filled with visions of carrying his war into Africa; and in December, he began writing down in a notebook, in his cramped, hurried style, the names of anybody (militant Negroes, "military" abolitionists) who might help in his mission to liberate the slaves.

To carry out his mission, Brown needed guns and money too — a great deal of money — and his experiences in the Kansas struggle were to prove invaluable in his efforts to get what he wanted. Indeed, without them Brown could never have embarked on his "grand scheme," for throughout his fund-raising campaigns in the East, he used Kansas as a blind, beseeching audiences to give money, guns, and supplies to save Kansas for freedom, when he secretly planned to use these for his larger mission in the South itself. However reprehensible such deception may seem, in Brown's mind it was perfectly justifiable because he believed his ends not only were right, they were the will of God. For Brown was convinced now that God was calling him to a greater destiny than the skirmishes he had been waging against slavery in the West, and (as he put it himself) he devoted "his whole being, mental, moral, and physical, all that he had and was," to the fulfillment of his divine task. And that task was to incite a slave insurrection in the South, one that in God's hands would either destroy slavery in a carnage of racial violence, or ignite a civil war in which slavery would die and the sins of this whole nation would be washed away with blood.

This account of John Brown in Kansas is adapted from my full-scale biography of Brown, to be published by Harper & Row. The article was read, in somewhat different form, at the annual convention of the Southern Historical Convention in November, 1968. I should like to thank Professor Donald R. McCoy, of the University of Kansas, for his trenchant criticism of my paper, which caused me to rethink many of my conceptions and conclusions.

As anyone who is reasonably familiar with the literature on John Brown has already discerned, I strongly disagree with the interpretation of Brown as given in James C. Malin's *John Brown and the Legend of Fifty-Six* (Philadelphia, 1942). While I have learned a great deal from Malin about the Kansas civil war and about the Brown legend, I am profoundly dismayed by the biased and distorted picture which Malin paints of Brown himself — all the more so because Malin claimed his interpretation was a "scientific" one, imbued with dispassionate objectivity and based on "the critical technique of modern historiography." Malin's view is that Brown was a crooked and dishonest ne'er-do-well with only a tangential interest in "the Negro question," that he went to Kansas (with a wagonload of guns and swords, mind you) only to find "a business deal," that he resorted to horse-stealing under the pretext of fighting for the free-state cause, that he instigated the Pottawatomie Massacre largely for political reasons (the victims had been associated with Cato's court and, according to Malin, were going to testify against Brown on a treason charge), and that in the guerrilla war that followed Brown was an insignificant petty horsethief — and a crazy one at that — who finally turned to his Harpers Ferry scheme, less to free the slaves, than to loot and plunder in the South itself.

This one-sided portrait ignores all other aspects of Brown's complex and contradictory personality (which I attempted to sketch in the first installment of this article), especially Brown's militant abolitionism, his hatred of the Slave Power, his pronounced sense of mission, and his intense religious beliefs and preoccupations (which Malin simply disregarded). Had Malin examined all the manuscript sources germane to the Brown problem in other libraries (he based his volume almost exclusively on materials in the Kansas State Historical Society), he might have given us a less biased, less hostile, and more rounded and open-minded portrait of the whole John Brown.

The present article, which attempts to show the whole Brown, is based in large part on the following manuscript collections: the John Brown letter holdings in the Chicago Historical Society; the Illinois State Historical Library; the Yale University Library; the Torrington Public Library and the Torrington Historical Society; the Kansas Collection of the University of Kansas; the Atlanta University Library; as well as numerous larger collections, as follows: the Boyd B. Stutler Collection (Charleston, West Virginia); the Clarence S. Gee Collection (Lockport, New York); the John Brown, Jr., Collection, Ohio Historical Society; the Franklin B. Sanborn Folder, Houghton Library, Harvard University; the John Brown Papers, Library of Congress; the John Brown Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library; the John Brown Notebooks (MS, 2 vols.), Boston Public Library; the Ferdinand Julius Dreer Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; the Oswald Garrison Villard Collection, Columbia University Library. I also made use of over a dozen manuscript collections in the Kansas State Historical Society — among them, the John Brown Papers; the James Hanway Papers; the Papers of John and Sarah Everett; the O.C. Brown Papers; the Richard J. Hinton Papers; the August Bondi Papers; and the W.I.R. Blackman Papers. In addition, I utilized the Journal of the U.S. Court of the Second Judicial District, Kansas Territory, 1856, now located in the Federal Records Center, Kansas City, Missouri.

Space does not permit a listing of all the printed sources and secondary works used in the preparation of this article. Among them are the "Howard Report," *U.S. House Committee Reports* (3 vols., 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1855–56), Vol. II, No. 200, which contains affidavits regarding the Pottawatomie Massacre; the "Report of the Commissioners of the Kansas Territory," *U.S. House Committee Reports* (3 vols.,

Stephen B. Oates, *a contributing editor of* THE AMERICAN WEST, *is in the Department of History at the University of Massachusetts and author of* Confederate Cavalry West of the River, Rip Ford's Texas, *and* Narratives of the Southwest, *and editor of* The Republic of Texas, *a book published by American West Publishing Company. His major biography of John Brown will be issued early in 1970.*

CHRISTMAS AND THE COMET

(Continued from page 33)

feeling of a stomach full of cold chicken and chocolate layercake, I stumbled along with the rest of the family to the bobsled and burrowed deep into the thick layer of straw that filled the long sleigh box. The horses, their long winter coats tinted silver with frost and their minds set on getting back to the warm stable as soon as possible, started off with a jerk and headed across the snowy prairie at a fast trot. My mother, holding the bundled-up baby in her arms, sat up front with my father under a big hairy buffalo robe and happily gossiped about everyone at the party. My two sisters, twined

together for warmth, disappeared under the heavy wool blanket that covered us. Frank and Grace sat at the very back of the bob with their shoulders and heads close together, talking softly.

LEFT TO MYSELF, I looked out across the frozen white world and suddenly remembered about tomorrow and the comet. Under the brilliant half-moon hanging just above the western peaks, the smooth glistening snow-covered prairie spread out in every direction, unmarked except for the occasional jackrabbit trails that crisscrossed it in ruler-straight lines. It looked to me as it had always looked on a moonlit night in deep winter. Then I noticed the long low bank of clouds off to the north that stretched all the way from Harte Butte to the Sweetgrass Hills. My heart skipped a beat and I watched it narrowly to see if it was coming any closer . . . getting any higher in the sky. But it didn't seem to be, and I sleepily decided that maybe it was just a storm coming up out of Canada after all.

"Wake up! Wake up, Mick!" Grace was shaking me gently, and I opened my eyes and saw we were home. As I stumbled across the footbridge and up the path to the house, I noticed the moon had set behind the mountains, leaving them standing close and black against the steel-blue sky. And off to the north, the long black cloud had climbed high above the valley's rim. There was something ominous about it, but I couldn't remember what it was. Somehow I reached the house, and someone helped me to get undressed and into bed. But there was still something I was supposed to remember. . . .

I woke with a start, one instant completely dead to the world and the next everything crystal clear. It was after daylight, I knew automatically, but the room was in deep gloom. My eyes darted to the window and I saw the snow falling, thick and quiet. Then I heard the rattle of stove lids and the clack of the pump and water splashing in the sink. I sat up with a jerk. It was Christmas morning and everything was just as it should be. A great wave of happiness flowed over me. I kicked the bedclothes off onto the floor and dashed barefooted out of the bedroom, across the corner of the living room, and slid to a stop just inside the kitchen door. My father, a red-hot stove lid on its lifter in one hand and a stick of stovewood in the other, looked at me over his shoulder. My mother stopped her pumping of water into the teakettle in midstroke. She too looked at me over her shoulder. They glanced at each other and smiled that certain kind of smile, then turned back to me and said, almost in unison, "Merry Christmas, Mick!"

Milton Shatraw's *previous articles for* THE AMERICAN WEST *include "School Days" (Spring, 1966) and "The Trip to Town" (November, 1967). He is presently completing a book-length collection of reminiscences of a boyhood spent in the high plains of Montana, which will be published by the American West Publishing Company in Spring, 1970.*

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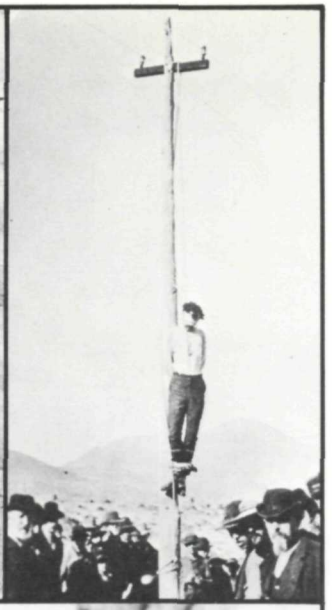

No one who opens a newspaper or listens to a politician's speech these days can avoid the conclusion that the cry of "Law and Order" is raised as if the problem were somehow peculiar to this uncommonly changeful period of the twentieth century. It has not been, of course, and there have been few places or periods in the nation's history when the issue of law and order **as** a problem was more significant than in the West as it evolved from frontier to civilization.

To point up this fact, we are devoting the January issue of **The American West** to a discussion of the vicissitudes of law and order in the West, from the Canadian Rockies to the American Southwest, from the 1851 Vigilance Committee of San Francisco to the lynch mobs of Arizona, from the era of hoglegs and saddle-leather to the age of submachine guns and getaway cars—the whole introduced by W. H. Hutchinson and lavishly illustrated.